



END OF YEAR REPORT – FY'20
(SMADC Fiscal Year: July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020)

*The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission
is a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland.*

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) is to support farms and the future of agriculture in Southern Maryland. We are committed to expanding and promoting a viable and profitable agricultural farming community in Southern Maryland, and while the primary focus is on the five southern counties of Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's, many of our initiatives do reach statewide.

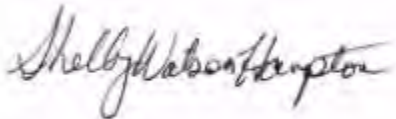
As we navigate the COVID pandemic, our farmers and agribusinesses have stepped up to the plate in a big way to continue to feed and support our consumers and the community, and SMADC has continued to play a vital role in supporting them.

From creating our Farmer Pandemic Mini-Grant and launching a Pandemic Resource Portal, to holding virtual meetings and adopting the Maryland Market Money food access program that reduces hunger through Maryland farmers markets, SMADC has pivoted to best serve the farming community during the new normal in which we find ourselves.

While adapting to the changes the pandemic wrought across the board, SMADC also experienced a direct hardship in the form of a severe budget cut from the state – losing 25% of funds received through the Cigarette Restitution Fund (CRF) in Fiscal Year 21 due to the COVID related deficit.

To continue serving the farming community to the best of our ability, SMADC is now moving further into seeking funding through other avenues including grants, sponsorships, and a new fundraising platform that is set to launch in Fall 2020.

- Shelby Watson-Hampton, Director



Mission: SMADC nurtures farms, farmers, and agribusinesses to foster positive agricultural economic benefits to the community.

Goal 1: Provide the resources, infrastructure and advocacy needed for market-driven farms and agribusinesses to thrive and be profitable

Goal 2: Expand the region's overall agricultural economic development

Goal 3: Preserve Southern Maryland farmland

Goal 4: Assure long-term viability of SMADC as a driving force of the regional agricultural economy

SMADC Director and Staff Collaborations Across the State: The SMADC staff is a dedicated and driven group of individuals who are passionate about furthering SMADC's mission. In pursuit of that mission, staff has collaborated with the following entities across the state and beyond in FY'20:

- American Association of Meat Processors
- American Farm Bureau Federation
- Baltimore Food Policy Initiative
- College of Southern Maryland
- Colonial Farm Credit

- Colorado State University Extension
- Cornell Food Venture Center
- Dirigo Food Safety
- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
- F3 Tech Accelerator Program
- FRESHFARM
- Future Harvest – Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture (FHCASA)
- Good Meat Project
- Greenwell Foundation Equine Program
- Grow & Fortify
- KCD Cooperative Solutions
- LEAD Maryland Program
- Little Free Library
- MarketLink
- Mereleigh Foods
- Maryland Agricultural and Resourced-Based Industry Development Corp. (MARBIDCO)
- Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation
- Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Maryland Department of Health
- Maryland Department of Human Services
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Farm Bureau
- Maryland Grain Producers
- Maryland Horse Council
- Maryland Horse Industry Board
- Maryland Soybean Board
- MidAtlantic Women in Agriculture
- Montgomery County Food Council
- National Corn Growers Association
- NC Choices Carolina Meat Conference
- Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network
- Prince George’s County Food Equity Council
- Rural Maryland Council
- Southern Maryland Economic Development Offices
- Southern Maryland Shellfish Growers Association
- Southern Maryland Soil Conservation Districts
- University of Maryland’s Equine Studies Program
- University of Maryland Extension (UME)
- University of Maryland’s Institute of Applied Agriculture
- University of Maryland’s Research and Education Centers
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA)
- Washington Council of Governments

SOUTHERN MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION PROGRAMS:

INFRASTRUCTURE

THE SOUTHERN MARYLAND REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL CENTER (RAC)

The goal to bring local meat processing and a multi-purpose regional agricultural center to the region continued throughout FY’20.

In 2020, as a result of two unsuccessful RFP’s that attempted to find a complete turnkey operation for regional meat processing, SMADC re-envisioned local meat processing by separating the primary services into two constituent parts: humane slaughter of livestock; and further processing into retail cuts and finer meats, i.e., salamis, hams and sausages. Both operations are regulated and inspected by the

USDA. Two partners were enlisted to meet these demands: the Amish community in St. Mary's County for the slaughter, and St. Mary's County Government for the construction of the Regional Agricultural Center (RAC) for further processing.

The humane slaughter of livestock, under USDA inspection, is being pursued with an Amish owned and operated company in Mechanicsville. SMADC staff has been working with the owners providing regulatory and meat processing expertise to assist with the construction and USDA compliance of their facility, and has trained the staff in sanitation and process protocols. USDA Enforcement Investigations and Analysis (EIAO) officers toured the building and reviewed the supporting Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point and Standard Operating Procedures (HACCP/SOP) created by SMADC in cooperation with the Amish.

The Amish slaughter facility has been approved for custom-exempt (non-retail). Since the onset of COVID, the demand for these custom processing services dramatically increased by producers who opted to sell whole animals to customers for personal use, rather than butchering for retail cut sales. Resulting pandemic-related production stresses have impacted the day-to-day operations of the facility and fractured the existing management partnership; consequentially key members left the business. In the interim, the owner of the building has installed a new management team and looks forward to swift USDA approval later in 2020.

The Regional Agricultural Center (RAC) completes the meat processing cycle by receiving USDA inspected carcasses from the Amish slaughter facility, then further processes and adds value to Southern Maryland produced meats. SMADC will be the managing entity. Planning and design of the RAC continued through FY'20 with anticipated completion in 2021. **The RAC was awarded \$200,000 in funding from Governor Hogan's budget to fund an additional area to be used specifically for space dedicated to cold storage, aggregation, and distribution.** SMADC is grateful to Senator Jack Bailey for his assistance in bringing funding to this important project.

Regional Agricultural Center Mission:

Local Producers working with Local Processors to feed Local Consumers

When completed, the RAC will operate under FDA, USDA, State and County Health department inspections. **Anchored by these vital services, the RAC will offer the following enhancements to the Southern Maryland region:**

- Regional Butcher Shop/Cut and Wrap Facility
- Meat Locker and Cold Storage Facility
- Finer Meats Processing Facility
- Warehouse and Distribution Site
- Creating a Southern Maryland Meats Charcuterie Brand
- Commercial Kitchen
- Apprenticeship Programs and Job Training
- Instructional Kitchen Classroom
- Regional Farmers Market
- Retail Store
- Product Storage Facility

FY'20 Highlights:

- **RAC was awarded \$200,000 from Governor Hogan's budget (for cold storage, aggregation, and distribution of local produce)**

FARM EQUIPMENT RENTAL PROGRAM

SMADC continues to support a farm equipment rental program in the region. Through the years, SMADC has invited agricultural entities to identify farm equipment needs to be shared and rented by farmers across Southern Maryland. Funds have been made available as grants for agricultural entities to purchase the equipment. In addition to popular pieces of equipment, priority is placed on equipment that promotes long-term environmental benefit to the Chesapeake Bay and/or supports new farm initiatives. The equipment is managed by local agricultural entities. Rental fees are expected to cover routine maintenance and other costs of the program, such as insurance. The equipment is listed on the 'Farmer Resources' page of the SMADC website, and on the websites of the managing entities.

Mobile Poultry Processing Unit

In FY'19, SMADC awarded a \$15,000 grant to the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation to purchase a Mobile Poultry Processing Unit to support the region's farm-raised poultry producers. In FY'20, SMADC provided an extensive HACCP Plan with required SOP's and SSOP's and worked with the Maryland Department of the Environment for the successful certification of wastewater and offal disposal. **Available for just a few months before the COVID pandemic interrupted processing schedules, the unit processed 443 birds in six uses by Anne Arundel County producers.**

FY'20 Highlights:

- **To date, 38 pieces of equipment are in inventory and are available for farmers to rent across the region**
- **1,877 acres positively impacted by conservation tillage across the five counties**
- **Mobile Poultry Processing unit processed 443 birds by Anne Arundel County producers**

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

SOUTHERN MARYLAND FARMER MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

The Farmer Mini-Grant Program was launched in FY'17 and has become more popular and competitive as each new round is offered. The program is open to applicants age 16 and older, residing and farming in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's or St. Mary's counties. Grant awards are up to \$2,000 per applicant, as a one-to-one match and can be used for a variety of projects. The Mini-Grant program is designed to assist new and beginning farmers with small start-up projects and assist existing farmers looking to diversify or expand. Projects must be completed within one year. **To date, the program has received 122 applications with 87 funded for a total of \$132,780.**

At the end of FY'20, the SMADC Board approved a special round of mini-grants dedicated to Pandemic Relief.



SMADC offered two rounds of mini-grants in FY'20. A total of 29 grants were awarded totaling \$48,245. All projects provided matching funds. Below are the recipients:

- **5th Street Farm** (\$2,000) – Livestock shelters in Charles County
- **Ancient Oaks Farm** (\$2,000) – Grape vineyard planting in Prince George's County
- **BoonDoggie Farm** (\$2,000) – Increasing production of added value farm products in Charles County
- **Chesapeake's Bounty** (\$2,000) – Laying hens and pastured goats in Calvert County
- **Dahlstrom Farm** (\$2,000) – Equine hay storage in St. Mary's County
- **Deale Farm** (\$2,000) – Greenhouse expansion in Anne Arundel County
- **Destiny Acres Farm** (\$1,000) – Cattle operation in Charles County
- **Dicot Farm** (\$2,000) – Deer fence expansion in Charles County
- **Double Tree Farm** (\$2,000) – Barn for livestock breeding and birthing in Charles County
- **Floating Lotus Farm** (\$1,000) – Potato digger in Anne Arundel County
- **Food Love Farm** (\$1,380) – High tunnels for season extension in Charles County
- **Glory Fields** (\$1,650) – Walk-in cooler and expansion area in Prince George's County
- **Hannah Knoll Farm** (\$1,300) – Heritage turkey housing in Charles County
- **Hidden Lake Christmas Tree Farm** (\$2,000) – Stump removal for new tree plantings in Calvert County
- **March Meadows Farm** (\$1,000) – Goat shelters and rotation grazing in St. Mary's County
- **MIB Farm** (\$1,900) – Goat operation buck pen in Calvert County
- **One Tree Orchard** (\$1,800) – High tunnel for Aronia in St. Mary's County
- **Palmer Farms** (\$2,000) – Farm wagon and sprayer in Prince George's County
- **Red Tree Farm** (\$1,325) – Creation of a regional flower cooperative in Charles County
- **Rolling Stone Farm** (\$1,295) – Cattle pasture establishment in St. Mary's County
- **South Hatton Farm** (\$2,000) – Rotation grazing and livestock fencing in Charles County
- **Suttler Post Farm Clydesdales** (\$2,000) – Establishing a farm store in St. Mary's County
- **Sweet Love Flower Farm** (\$550) – Establishment of hydrangea grove in Prince George's County
- **Tobacco Barn Distillery** (\$900) – Tasting room marketing in St. Mary's County
- **Turtle Rock Farm** (\$2,000) – Farm fencing in St. Mary's County
- **Tyverne Creek Farm** (\$2,000) – Squeeze chute to expand business in Calvert County
- **Ugly Duckling Farmstead** (\$1,145) – Paper pot planting system in Charles County
- **Willowmere Farm** (\$2,000) – Orchard establishment in Charles County
- **Windy Willow Farm** (\$2,000) – Expanded pasture fencing in Calvert County

Featured below are three projects funded through the Mini-Grant Program that were started and/or finished in FY'20. These projects illustrate how the mini-grant program assists farms at the beginning of their project, during expansion, and how a relatively small amount of funding can have a huge impact on a farming enterprise.

Rolling Stone Farm – Cattle Pasture Establishment

The Spring 2020 Pasture Planting Project is one of the first steps of the farm's beginning grass-fed beef cattle operation. This small, startup project constituted planting and establishing a robust grazing pasture for cattle. The project was fundamental to the future success of the family farm and their overall goal of rejuvenating the health of the farm's soil. Cultivating strong plants combined with intensive grazing and good management is anticipated to add weight more quickly to the cattle allowing for increased profits and product offerings to the community in the future.

Grass seed was purchased locally and approximately 16 acres of crop fields was planted. The farm rented the Great Plains 7 ft. No-Till Drill from SMADC's Equipment Rental Program through St. Mary's Soil Conservation District. A sprinkler head



and cart were purchased for irrigation. Irrigation and pasture establishment are projected to be completed in September 2020. Project implementation has already reduced runoff on the farm due to successful grass plantings.

The next phase is to obtain fencing to continue the project.



Xella Winery and Vineyard – Vineyard Expansion Project

The project included establishing five new rows and 250 new Vidal Blanc vines for a total of half-acre expansion to the current vineyard. Pictured are the new Vidal Blanc vines in plastic grow tubes. One half-acre of Vidal Blanc grapevines will produce approximately 3.7 tons of grapes, resulting in roughly 245 cases of wine for sale. This project is anticipated to increase the farm's agricultural yield and help to expand agritourism in the area, as Xella Winery plans to open the farm up to the public in the future.



BoonDoggie Farm – Increased Production of Added-Value Farm Products

In 2019, BoonDoggie Farm completed the required Acidified Foods Better Process Control training and licensing to take what was previously a hobby and create a fully licensed farm value-added product. Through the Mini-Grant program, the farm was able to enhance their budding farm business and grow the operation and production of specialty jams and pickles.

During the past year, the grant and matching funds were used to buy new canner/burners, commission rolling shelving for storage/usage at farmers markets, create an inventory of stock/supplies, purchase growing materials to increase vegetable production and upgrade commercial-level equipment for enhanced production.



The business has since grown three times beyond their projections. Production has increased two-fold, thanks to the infrastructure improvements. In what has turned out to be foresight, the farm was able to purchase bulk stocks of jars to keep on-hand (lowering overall costs), which ultimately was brilliant strategy, as the COVID pandemic has resulted in jar shortages and manufacturing delays. The pandemic has also greatly affected the food supply system, increasing costs in produce as well as manufactured goods. As a result, demand for BoonDoggie's products sky-rocketed. Nevertheless, they were able to meet this demand due to the improvements made with the mini-grant purchases.

“In short, the mini-grant truly set us up for success. We were able to professionalize our operation, increase productivity, create professional jars/labels, and have stock on-hand and ready to go as demand increased overnight. Our projections for the business were greatly exceeded and our growth continues. We are very grateful to the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission for awarding us these funds and are excited for the future of our business.” – Kenna Pope Williams, BoonDoggie Farm



EQUITY INCENTIVE MATCHING FUND

This joint partnership with MARBIDCO is designed to incentivize loan requests from Southern Maryland farmers and to help them meet certain down-payment (equity) requirements, in order to help improve the credit quality of their applications. Each established MARBIDCO program has its own eligibility criteria and application/approval process. Southern Maryland applicants simply follow the regular application process and meet the rigors of MARBIDCO's underwriting criteria for each loan program. **As of June 30, 2020, \$147,050 has been funded; \$147,550 has been approved for this program.**

In FY'20, SMADC again partnered with MARBIDCO on their new Pandemic Adjustment Loan Fund Program, specifically to assist Southern Maryland food and fiber producers, harvesters and primary processors adjust to business disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Eligible farms and rural businesses applied directly to MARBIDCO for loans up to \$3,000 in working capital and up to \$10,000 for equipment purchases at low interest rates with flexible terms. Southern Maryland loan recipients received a grant (SMADC funded) of an additional 5% of the loan amount. The grant was turn-key and administered seamlessly through MARBIDCO.

In FY'20, seven applicants used this program and were approved for a total of \$45,850. Three applicants applied the grant to the Maryland Resource-Based Industry Financing Fund Loan (MRBIFF) Program (\$42,050), one for Forestry Equipment and Working Capital Loan (\$2,300) and three for the special Pandemic Adjustment Loan (\$1,500).

SOUTHERN MARYLAND REVOLVING LOAN FUND

This loan program, designed by MARBIDCO, is offered exclusively for Southern Maryland applicants to assist with purchases and upgrades.

Under this program, only the activities of agricultural businesses located in the five Southern Maryland counties are eligible for farm business financing. Loan amounts may range between \$10,000 to \$20,000, with no collateral security pledge required. The personal guarantees of all the borrowers is needed. MARBIDCO administers the loan program on behalf of SMADC. Borrowers that pay on time will receive approximately 20-25% loan forgiveness at the end of the loan term.

Loan funds may be requested for the following types of projects:

- Purchase livestock and/or enhance existing herds and flocks
- Incubate the production of small fruits and hops and increase acreage by existing small fruit/hops growers
- Upgrade for the safe growing, harvesting, packing and holding of produce in line with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)
- Shellfish Aquaculture foundation development

In FY'20, no new loans were approved.

SMADC SCHOLARSHIPS

SMADC recognizes the importance of educational and networking opportunities for farmers and for young adults (high school and above) that promote and support agriculture, stimulate interest in agricultural careers and grow a new generation of farmers. To address this need, SMADC offers both sponsorships and scholarships to residents in Southern Maryland.

In FY'20, SMADC awarded scholarships to five individuals totaling \$5,275. These scholarships ranged in price and scope – from \$900 or less to attend a leadership class, to over \$1,000 to assist in offsetting costs for LEAD Maryland Class XI Southern Maryland Fellows.

"I've been very fortunate to be a part of the LEAD program and a recipient of a SMADC scholarship. I've seen, done, and met people that I would never have had the opportunity to before. I cannot recommend this program enough nor extol the benefits it provides." - Karl Shlagel, 2019-2020 SMADC Scholarship Recipient



SMADC SPONSORSHIPS

SMADC continues to support workshops, conferences, and continuing education opportunities for farmers. **In FY'20, SMADC sponsored 11 events and initiatives (listed below) for a total of \$17,650.**

• 2019 Farm Safety Day, St. Mary's Co. Farm Bureau	\$150
• 2019 Buy Local Dinner, Anne Arundel Econ. Dev. Corp.	\$1,000
• 2019 Bounty of the County, Charles Co. Chamber of Commerce	\$1,000
• 2019 Rural Maryland Summit, Rural Maryland Foundation	\$1,000
• 2019 Ag Law & Education Initiative Conference, University of MD Ext.	\$250
• 2019 Dining in the Field, Calvert Farmland Trust	\$1,000
• 2019 Chesapeake Harvest Workshop, Chesapeake Harvest Benefit, LLC	\$250
• 2019 Young Farmer Event at Maryland Farm Bureau Convention	\$300
• 2020 Grow & Fortify Impact Study	\$350
• 2020 Ag Law Section of Legal Services Directory	\$350
• 2020 SMILE Show - Postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19	\$12,000

Southern Maryland Invitational Livestock Expo

SMADC has sponsored the SMILE livestock show for 14 consecutive years. This unique youth Expo combines education, competition and fun for youth (ages 6 – 21 years) involved in raising livestock. In early FY'20, SMILE Board of Directors met with sponsors and leadership and, due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, voted to not hold SMILE in 2020 in the interests of the health and safety of the exhibitors and their families. **The SMADC Board voted to allocate \$12,000 in budgeted funds for the 2020 show which will be used to support SMILE 2021.**

FY'20 Highlights:

- **29 Farmer Mini-Grants awarded totaling \$48,245**
- **7 producers approved through the Equity Incentive Fund for a total of \$45,850**
- **5 scholarships awarded totaling \$5,275**
- **11 events sponsored for a total of \$17,650**

MARKETING & OUTREACH

SOUTHERN MARYLAND MEATS

Over the last 10 years, SMADC has undertaken the challenge of building the local meat industry. The Southern Maryland Meats (SMM) program was developed in response to high consumer demand for local, farm-raised meats where the livestock is raised on pasture, and fed a diet free of antibiotics and growth hormones. Producers agree to abide by the program standards of quality and humane care, and use clearly defined terms for their raising practices. **In FY'20, 55 producers participated in the SMM program with 5 new participants confirmed.**

Southern Maryland Meats Mission Statement and Program Goals:

The Southern Maryland Meats brand is building upon the area's rich farming legacy by enhancing farm profits and bringing naturally crafted, humanely raised foods to your table.

In order to fulfill the SMM Mission, SMADC provides education, marketing support, and infrastructure for livestock producers. The emphasis in 2020 was on education and value-added products with two sold out workshops led by world-renowned instructors.

SMADC is proud to have hosted a two event workshop series with world class presenters that began in November with Whole Animal Butchery taught by Camas Davis and Adam Danforth, and continuing in February with Value-Added Meat Processing: Charcuterie Workshop taught by Meredith Leigh. By providing regulatory guidance to a localized meat processing center at a St. Mary's County Amish facility, and by funding and operating butchery and charcuterie services at the Regional Agricultural Center also in St. Mary's, SMADC is assisting Southern Maryland in the creation, marketing and distribution of its own unique brands and products directly to consumers in the region and throughout the country. The future of Southern Maryland Meats has been charted by these dynamic events.

SMADC is proud to be leading the effort to solidify the local food supply chain and enable its growth. By providing vital infrastructure to amalgamate and distribute new and unique products to customers, the entire farm-to-table process can be kept close to home, efficient and creative, capitalizing on Southern Maryland's producers efforts to raise meats in a natural, healthy and environmentally friendly way.



Promotion and Marketing

Little Free Libraries - Marketing for Southern Maryland Meats continued with multi-platformed outreach featuring the SMM logo on 100 Little Free Libraries to locations in Southern Maryland that have family-friendly attractions.

Little Free Library (LFL) is a worldwide non-profit organization that increases access to books through the creation of book-sharing boxes. Southern Maryland Meat's Little Free Libraries, funded in part by a grant awarded by the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund Grant (RMPIF) Program, are designed in a way that encourages awareness of the importance of agriculture in everyday life, as well as to promote the Southern Maryland Meats livestock producers, and to provide free reading materials to the community. **Seventy-five locations were**

selected throughout Southern Maryland through a voluntary application process. Libraries will be installed in the fall of 2020 and housed in parks, playgrounds, neighborhood common areas, on school grounds, at government buildings, at farmer's markets, and other regional public/private venues.

The libraries are promoted with signage featuring the SMM logo. Each library will be stocked with bookmarks that feature tasteful images of SMM livestock, a copy of SMADC's coffee table book 'Taking Stock' and the children's book 'The Girl Who Thought In Pictures: The Story of Dr. Temple Grandin'. A total of 3,000 bookmarks and 150 brochures were designed in-house and printed. Additional books will be provided by library hosts.

"The Friends of the Baden Library is excited to put our Little Library to use. We are hopeful that it will serve our community for those who aren't able to access the public library because of time constraints. Being located near the Community Center, it will be a great place for "grab and go" reading material. Thanks to you, Rachel, for walking us through the process; your enthusiasm is contagious!" - Gwen Ashley, Baden Community Center

"The Little Free Library has been a well-loved blessing to our neighborhood. We are so grateful!" - Sara Giles, Andover Estates Community

Infrastructure

Freezer Trailers – In 2011, SMADC awarded funds to Calvert, St. Mary's and Prince George's County to purchase freezer trailers to assist with the transportation of processed locally raised meats from regional USDA processing facilities back to the farms for sale. In FY'20, five-year agreements termed with Calvert and Prince George's Counties. All three trailers are in regular use and available to any livestock producer in the five-county region to rent. In the Spring of 2020, overall trailer use and cargo was significantly less than in previous years, directly due to the impact of COVID-19 related facility closures and processing scheduling issues. **In FY'20, a total of 56,028 lbs of meat was transported with an estimated retail value of \$335,887. Cumulative trailer cargo totals since the inception of the program are over 157,000 lbs of meat (beef, lamb, goat, pork) with estimated retail value of over \$951,000.**

SMM Education

Educational opportunities were advanced through stellar workshops, and the ultimate goal of building supporting infrastructure to truly create a local, and uninterrupted food supply chain from farm-to-table was planned, funded and advanced. **The two workshops attracted 50 regional livestock producers.**

"As we tasted, we worked together to build a new vocabulary of good meat, one that all good meat producers could take with them to the marketplace."

– Instructor Camas Davis, regarding SMM Butchery Workshop

See page 25 for more information about the workshops.



SMM Junior Promotion

Since the inception of the Junior Promotion Program in FY'17, 72 youth have signed up to participate. The Junior Program seeks to inform a new generation of young/beginning farmers about SMM livestock quality and raising standards, and ultimately incentivize participants in the adult SMM program. Participants receive a free t-shirt and stall card to promote their animals during the fall county fair livestock auctions and receive a stipend of \$100 to help finance on-going livestock projects when they complete the program. **In FY'20, there are 23 Juniors participating. In FY'19/20, 35 youth completed the program to receive stipends for a total of \$3,500.**

At the conclusion of the program and sale of their animals, applicants submit an essay. Topic choices for the 2020 season were:

- Describe the history of your farm and raising livestock. Would you like to continue the farm's history of raising livestock?
- Consumers have a choice in purchasing food. Why is it important for them to "Buy Local?"
- Use of agricultural land dedicated to raising livestock is cited by some reports to not be environmentally useful. Do you agree or disagree?

The following are excerpts from essays written by SMM Juniors about the "Importance of Buying Local". Full essays are showcased on the SMM blog.



"Starting 4-H six years ago was one of the best decisions I have ever made. The knowledge I have learned, the relationships I have built and the work I have put in has made me into the person I am today. The program is more than just getting an animal, raising it for a couple months and then selling it. When kids go into the ring with their animal, they hope to bring top dollar for their animal. Why should people spend more money than they would at a grocery store just to buy a steer that was raised a couple miles down the road from them?"

Buying local allows one to build a relationship with the local farmers that are firsthand growers and raising their own food to put on their own dinner table. It allows them to ask questions and know what the lamb was eating and how it was raised to get the best quality meat possible in a local environment instead of hoping you buy a "nice piece of meat" from a store. Buying local benefits everyone, the consumer, the farmer, and the community." - Kelsey Winters, 19 Years Old, Anne Arundel County

"It is important to buy local because it keeps the local farmers and families in business. Small family farms are the backbone of America. Shopping local keeps four times the money in your community's economy compared to shopping chains. Buying local increases your county's economy! Another reason to buy local is it actually saves money. If you buy local in bulk, you will save money for the price per pound. If not, it will teach you to buy only the meat you need. Buying local also is very healthy. You know exactly where your food is coming from." - Hayley Spicknall, 14 Years Old, Calvert County

FY'20 Highlights:

- **55 producers participate in SMM (5 new in FY'20)**
- **75 Little Free Library location selected for installation in Fall 2020**
- **56,028 lbs of processed meat transported, estimated retail value \$335,887**
- **2 training/workshops attract 50 producers**
- **23 youth signed up for FY'20/21 Jr. Program**
- **35 youth program completers received stipends totaling \$3,500 (FY'19/20)**

MARYLAND BUY LOCAL CHALLENGE

First conceived as a regional initiative in 2007, the BLC is now jointly promoted statewide in partnership with Maryland Department of Agriculture. The promotion is designed to encourage consumers to try local foods, and to commit to buying local by inviting them to take an informal pledge to “enjoy at least one Maryland grown product every day during Buy Local Week,” always the last full week in July.

2020 Buy Local Challenge Celebration – SMADC’s scheduled annual on-farm BLC Celebration event, was postponed due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and continuing uncertainty regarding large public gatherings. The in-person promotion was replaced with a virtual month-long celebration of Maryland’s farms and food. The BLC website, the virtual Celebration hub, was re-designed to host a dynamic suite of new online resources to inspire and entice consumer support for Maryland farms during BLC week and beyond. The promotion experienced phenomenal engagement throughout July; **Overall, the promotion reached 54,700 people on the Buy Local Challenge Facebook page; the BLC Website registered 3,024 Total Users.**

Promotional highlights included:



Follow-Me-To Video Series - SMADC staff visited farms and took consumers on 9 virtual tours across the state to get to know their farmers and discover the exciting selection of specialty products they offer. The featured producers included flower growers, ferment producers, locally raised meats, orchard and fruit growers, sheep cheese dairies and creameries, and the makers of delicious locally produced foods such as garden inspired desserts, locally made kombucha, summer rum cocktails, beer, wine and more. **This series reached more than 16,000 people on Facebook.**

Celebration Recipe Book - This year SMADC added an extra incentive to engage consumers during Buy Local Challenge week, a Recipe Book featuring original recipes submitted from Maryland chefs and home cooks. To be considered, the recipes had to include a minimum of two Maryland-grown, Maryland-caught, or Maryland-raised products. 14 recipes were submitted and chosen for this year’s edition. The digital version of the 2020 BLC Recipe Book can be found on the BLC website under the ‘Tips & Recipes’ page. 250 books were printed and offered as a free ‘giveaway’ for BLC week contests and incentives. **The recipe book reached 1,181 people across social media.**



BLC Cookery Demonstration - A special edition Buy Local Challenge cooking class featuring a succotash recipe was created for the 2020 Virtual Buy Local Challenge, taught by SMADC's Livestock and Marketing Manager Craig Sewell and produced by Edwin Remsburg Photography. The video can be found on SMADC's YouTube channel; the showcased recipe is included in the 2020 Buy Local Challenge Recipe Book, available to download for free on the Buy Local Challenge website.

BLC Promotional Items - In addition to the recipe book, 1,000 BLC insulated totes paired with a small hand sanitizer were delivered to 41 farmers markets around the state for market managers to incentivize shopping local during BLC week. A stack of advertisement postcards was included with each delivery, containing information about the virtual event and a sample recipe from the 2020 Buy Local Challenge Recipe Book. **10,000 Postcards, 1,000 insulated totes, and 1,000 sanitizers distributed to 41 farmers markets.**

BLC Pledge & Photo Contests - For the fourth year in a row, the Buy Local Challenge offered three contests for consumers to participate in the BLC for a chance to win several prizes. The general public was encouraged to 'Take the Pledge' and post pictures of their fun finds on Facebook and Instagram. Over 300 photos and 80 pledges were submitted for consideration. A total of 50 winners were selected this year, including 30 pledge winners, 10 Facebook photo winners, and 10 Instagram photo winners.



FY'20 Highlights:

- **52,183 People Reached through BLC Facebook page engagement**
- **3,024 Total Users on the BLC Website**
- **16,000 People Reached through the 'Follow Me To' Video Series**
- **1,181 People Reached through the BLC Recipe Book**
- **12,000 BLC Promotional Items delivered to 41 farmers markets**
- **Over 300 Photos submitted for the BLC Photo Contest**

MARYLAND FARMLINK

The Maryland FarmLINK program and companion website are designed to help farmers locate farmland for lease and purchase, featuring an interactive Farm Forum for members to exchange ag-related information, find mentors and business partners, find equipment for rent, and workshops and educational opportunities happening around the state. The website also hosts a 'Property Exchange' that provides a two-fold service approach: helping landowners keep their farmland in production and helping farmers (many new and beginning farmers) find farmland for sale or lease.



FY'20 Highlights:

- **1,446 followers on Maryland FarmLINK's Facebook (328 new in FY'20)**

MARYLAND MARKET MONEY

As of June 2020, the cornerstone food access program of the now-disbanded Maryland Farmers Market Association, Maryland Market Money (MMM), has become a program of a partnership between the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, and the Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO).

SMADC and MARBIDCO have worked collaboratively to rejuvenate and restart the MMM program for the consumers and farmers of Maryland. Moreover, SMADC and MARBIDCO have brought both Juliet Glass and Heather Hulse, formerly of Maryland Farmers Market Association, on as staff to run the program. **There are 24 Maryland farmers markets in 9 counties slated to participate in the 2020 season, reaching over 450 farmers and value-added vendors.**



Maryland Market Money is a powerhouse food access program that reduces hunger and builds community through Maryland farmers markets. MMM seeks to level the playing field for food-insecure shoppers and create equity in food access at Maryland farmers markets. At the same time, the program strengthens Maryland foodways by increasing revenue for local farmers selling at farmers markets. The way the program works is simple: Maryland Market Money removes economic barriers for food-insecure shoppers, providing a dollar-for-dollar match for purchases made using federal nutrition benefits—SNAP/EBT/P-EBT, eWIC, and Senior and WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) benefits—at farmers markets. MMM is a multi-tasking program that helps shoppers, farmers, and markets equally. It helps shoppers, by lowering economic barriers to

healthy foods; farmers, by improving their economic viability; and markets, by increasing their customer base and creating positive community spaces.

A Maryland Market Money website will be developed in the near future; in the interim, an informational landing page has been added to the SMADC website with program details and list of participating markets.

FY'20 Highlights:

- **24 Maryland farmers markets in 9 counties slated to participate in the 2020 season, reaching over 450 farmers and value-added vendors**

SOUTHERN MARYLAND FARMERS MARKETS

Farmers markets continue to be popular for several reasons: more informed consumers desire to support the local growers and the economy, and consumers want to know where their food comes from. Additionally, markets can be a means to boosting income for farmers.

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers embraced Maryland farmers markets as vital food access points. In March, Governor Larry Hogan declared farmers markets an essential business on par with grocery stores. Many shoppers, wary of crowded grocery stores, turned to open-air farmers markets offering food with a shorter supply chain. At the same time, some local farmers lost significant

revenue because of the shuttering of restaurants and schools and increasingly relied on farmers markets and other direct-to-consumer platforms (such as CSAs) as an essential source of revenue.

SMADC Support

SMADC assists farmers markets in the five counties through education, promotion, advice for start-up, and acting as a conduit of information about regulations and other pertinent information.

SMADC provides promotional assistance grants, ranging from \$500 – \$2,000, directly to farmers markets where the majority of farm vendors are from Southern Maryland. **In FY’20, 11 farmers markets were granted \$18,000.** Since 2003, over \$325,000 has been awarded to eligible farmers markets for promotion. In 2019, gross revenue from these farmers markets was over \$3.3 million, from 330 Southern Maryland vendors. Over the years that SMADC has worked with markets, a cumulative estimate of over \$41 million has been earned through the markets; which amounts to over a \$75 million impact on the local economy, as farms and their employees reinvest their earnings in the community. For a relatively small amount of SMADC grant funds, the overall return on investment in the farmers markets has been significant.

SMADC will be retiring this program as the new involvement with the Maryland Market Money program highlighted above opens a new horizon for increased opportunities for farm vendors.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS

Corporate design continuity delivering a consistent image is a priority for all SMADC’s communications platforms. SMADC’s identity (branding and visual image) sets a unified standard for program marketing materials, websites, social media platforms, printed and digital guides, newsletters, blogs, advertising, and promotion.

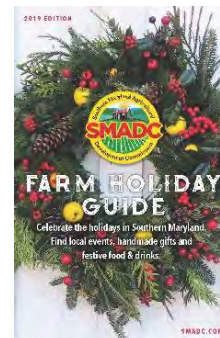
SMADC Creative Services Position - In FY’20, SMADC established a new in-house creative services position, capitalizing on staff skills, to streamline and enhance the design and development, brand recognition and marketing of SMADC websites, social media platforms and other outreach materials.

SMADC marketing resources and events (Buy Local Challenge, Meat & Seafood Guide, SOMD Oyster Guide, Farm Holiday Guide, Southern Maryland Meats, SOMD Horse Extra, SMADC.com, MarylandFarmlink.com, Marketing Conference and Horse Forum) have directly engaged and benefitted over 364 Southern Maryland farms in FY’20, (72 new farms/ag businesses in FY’20).

SMADC Guides

SMADC consumer resource guides are available in print, or to view and download on the ‘Get Our Guides’ page at SMADC.com. Since the spring of FY’20, printed issues for annual guides have been paused temporarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as distribution partners and pick-up points (libraries, welcome centers, farms and businesses) are not regularly accessible to the public. To ensure the continuity of SMADC’s marketing support for farms and consumers through the pandemic and ongoing, all consumer guides are now formatted for online viewing or free download. Online digitized resources will also help to minimize date-sensitive redundancy as seasonal updates and new listings can be added throughout the year.

2019 Farm Holiday Guide – Published in November 2019, the annual mini-brochure showcases 84 Southern Maryland farms, wineries, distilleries, breweries

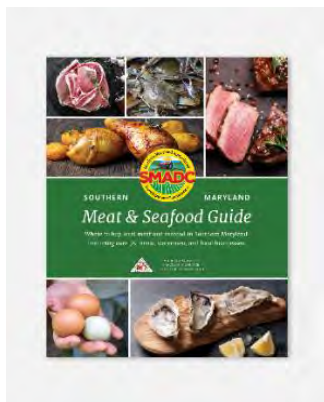


and other agriculture-related businesses offering farm products, tastings, tours, events and more for the holidays and winter months, (10 new ag. businesses listed in FY'20). Regional stores and restaurants that source from local farms, seafood and oyster wild harvest and aquaculture producers are also featured. **84 ag. businesses promoted (10 new in FY'20). 5,000 guides printed and distributed in FY'20.**



2020 Farmers Market Guide – In response to COVID-related distribution limitations, the annual printed brochure was re-developed in digital format only. The online guide provides the latest updates for regional farmers markets including seasonal openings and closures, market social distancing policies for safe shopping environments, purchasing and payment options (curb-side pickup, online orders, drive-through) and supplemental nutrition benefit redemption (FMNP, FVC, EBT/SNAP). 24 Southern Maryland farmers markets are currently listed, as well as 10 regional markets in the Metro DC area and Virginia that host Southern MD farm vendors. **24 Southern Maryland farmers markets and 10 regional markets promoted in FY'20.**

2020 Southern Maryland 'Horse Extra' Guide – The new Horse Extra is a consumer guide to all things horse-related in Southern Maryland, which brings together resources for the region's equine community, horse owners and equine-related businesses as well as those who are exploring the world of horses for the first time. The new online guide (updated version of SMADC's printed Equine Guide) was launched in early June 2020, and features over 100 business profiles. 50 regional horse barns/farms and facilities are showcased that offer riding lessons, equine-assisted therapy programs and summer camps, horse-boarding, training, sales, breeding, horse rescue and more. Additional sections are dedicated to essential support services for the horse and rider, including 17 local hay producers, feed suppliers, tack and saddlery, farm equipment and services, vets and farriers, plus information on area riding clubs, noteworthy Maryland equine organizations and state and county park trails that welcome equestrians. **50 regional horse barns/farms and 17 hay producers promoted in FY'20.**



Southern Maryland Meat & Seafood Guide – Published in FY'19, the 36-page, full-color booklet showcases 58 producers of local meats and poultry, and 20 regional seafood businesses including aquaculture and wild harvest oyster producers. **58 livestock and 20 seafood producers promoted. 7,500 guides printed, total distribution 7,100 guides.**

Southern Maryland Oyster Guide Rack Card – The printed rack card compliments and promotes the Southern Maryland Oyster Guide website which was launched in FY'19. A 'call to action' - "Eat, Savor and Experience", directs consumers to the website URL: somdoysterguide.com, to find out more about the Oyster Guide resources. **5,000 rack cards printed, total distribution 4,400 cards.**

SMADC Video Promotions

In the new COVID environment, many farm businesses have pivoted their sales and marketing platforms online and increasingly the general public has moved attention to the internet for alternative shopping opportunities, information and virtual entertainment. In FY'20, SMADC has utilized 'videos' as a dynamic marketing tool to reach and support both consumers and stakeholders. SMADC's videos have

promoted the Buy Local Challenge (virtual cookery demonstrations and farm tours), and Southern Maryland's key agriculture sectors (Farms in Focus agriculture industry promotion series).

Farms in Focus Industry Product Promotional Video Series – The "Farms in Focus" videos are made possible by a grant awarded to SMADC through the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPPIF). This project enabled SMADC to produce open source videos as a combination resource of educational information and promotional marketing to help bridge the knowledge gap between consumers and their local farmers and encourage consumers to purchase Maryland products from local small businesses. The 8-part series highlights the key areas of Southern Maryland's agricultural industry: agritourism, aquaculture, equine, forestry, fruits/vegetables/row crops, livestock, nursery/cut flowers, and value-added products. Videos are hosted on SMADC's YouTube channel free to use or view by farmers, producers, school systems, economic development offices, libraries, tourism offices, and anyone who wishes to promote Maryland's agricultural businesses.

As of June 30, 2020, three promotional videos featuring Southern Maryland Oyster Aquaculture, Equine and Value-Added Products industries have been released and promoted.



“Farms in Focus” Oyster Edition – Launched October 2019 – promotes Southern Maryland's oyster industry (aquaculture and wild-harvest) with the goal to increase public appreciation for oyster farming; where and how oysters are grown and harvested and the economic, cultural, gastronomic and ecological assets the oyster industry contributes to the region. Both

aquaculture and wild harvest oyster producers are featured in the video, plus a top local chef and restaurant owner shares tips to prepare and enjoy locally harvested oysters.

“Farms in Focus” Equine Edition – Launched March 2020 – features Southern Maryland's equine (horse) industry, with the goal to inspire public appreciation for the many economic, recreational and health attributes that horses and horse businesses contribute to the region's quality of life.



“I'm so happy we could be helpful in sharing the benefit and need for equestrian programs in Southern Maryland. Huge kudos to SMADC. The video team did a fabulous job and the results make that obvious. We're delighted that we had a part in it.” - Jolanda Campbell, The Greenwell Foundation



“Farms in Focus” Value-Added Agriculture Edition – Launched May 2020 – shines a spotlight on value-added agriculture with the goal to give consumers an appreciation for the exciting products that stem from this section of the farming industry, as well as the economic and cultural benefits that these products provide.

“When I agreed to participate in this video this winter, I knew it would be a great opportunity to showcase Boondoggie Farm and be a part of something so important to Southern Maryland’s Value-Added producers. While filming, it never occurred to me just how important our local farms would become to our community (during COVID). As supply chains are stretched thin, Buying Local has become even more vitally important. We THANK YOU for your support and patronage.” - Kenna Williams, Boondoggie Farm

The videos were promoted across SMADC’s entire social media campaign audience reaching over 10,000 people (4 websites, 3 Facebook pages, Instagram, Twitter), and also delivered to dedicated subscriber contacts through SMADC’s email distribution channel, comprising regional and statewide news organizations, farm bureaus, economic development, agriculture associations and partners, regional educational institutions, farms and agri-business and the general public.

Farms in Focus Series Highlights:

- **SMADC promoted the videos reaching over 10,000 people on websites, social media and at events (Southern Maryland Horse Forum, 2019 U.S. Oyster Festival)**
- **4 Websites/combined registered users 7,000 people**
- **Facebook: combined posts reached 4,525 people, with 108 combined ‘shares’**
- **SMADC YouTube: 1,778 combined views**

SMADC Websites and Social Media Platforms

SMADC Website - SMADC.com is the primary portal for SMADC’s expansive suite of ‘go-to’ resources in Southern Maryland (and beyond) for farmers, and producers who want to increase their potential and for consumers who want to connect with local farms and food. **SMADC.com registered 13,210 Total Users (88.3% New Users) in FY’20.**

COVID-19 Resource Portal Launched - In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with SMADC’s core mission to support farms and the future of agriculture in Southern Maryland, a new COVID-19 Resource Portal was launched for both farmers and consumers of compiled links to information gathered from local, state, and federal organizations regarding the pandemic and its impact on the agricultural community in Maryland. Resources are organized into key support categories that are continuously updated as new information is released including general business and farm labor, small business relief programs, food safety and nutrition benefit programs, equine updates, farmers market and agritourism guidelines and Maryland Farm Bureau resources. The portal also features a regional foods map (created by MDFMA, Future Harvest, and others) of over 500 local food resources open for direct sales (farms, farm stands, and markets). **The COVID-19 Resource Portal gained 1,508 pageviews between March 15 and June 30, 2020.**

Southern Maryland Oyster Guide - The SOMD Oyster Guide is a comprehensive region-wide industry online guide showcasing 70 profiles that highlight the oyster’s unique regional, cultural and maritime heritage. Sections include: Producers (wild caught and aquaculture), Attractions (heritage/education sites and museums), Restaurants (2 new in FY’20) and Stores, Tours (experiential waterman operated tours), plus additional resources, (research organizations, associations, institutions) connected with oyster production in Southern Maryland. **21 oyster producers promoted. The Oyster Guide website registered 2,274 Total Users in FY’20.**

Southern Maryland Meats Website – A ‘virtual’ marketplace for 55 participating SMM producers in addition to support resources for producers and consumers. The website is illustrated with photography by Edwin Remsberg Photography, made possible by a grant from RMC. **55 livestock producers promoted (5 new in FY’20). The SMM website registered 13,465 Total Users, (87.4% New Users) in FY’20.**

Buy Local Challenge Website – The main portal and promotional platform for the statewide Maryland Buy Local Challenge (BLC) provides year-round information on ‘buy local’ resources for consumers to find Maryland farm products and participate in BLC contests and events. **The BLC website registered 3,024 Total Users (89.3% New Users) in FY’20.**

SMADC News and Social Media Platforms

The SMADC ‘News and Events’ portal at SMADC.com invites the agricultural community and consumers to engage in the development of SMADC’s programs, outreach and support with suggestions, tips, comments, and ideas. Farmers and consumers can access the latest information on grant opportunities, workshops and events, subscribe to SMADC news, and connect with SMADC on social media. SMADC social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) focus on outreach to help area farmers grow, thrive and be informed. SMADC staff continuously update and oversee content for effective continuity and timely response to user queries and posts.

SMADC Facebook – SMADC’s Facebook page is designed to be an interactive interface for the farming community and enhance engagement with consumers and stakeholders. **SMADC’s Facebook registered 2,983 followers (920 new) in FY’20.**

SMADC Instagram – SMADC on Instagram connects with the farming community in a dynamic and pictorial way. The trending social media ‘app’ enables photo and video sharing and instant graphic news feed for mobile devices. To see SMADC on Instagram search: *@southern_maryland_ag*. **1,393 Instagram followers (345 New Followers and 20 new posts) in FY’20.**

SMADC Twitter – SMADC utilizes Twitter as an additional information conduit for specific subject updates and quickly broadcast ‘calls to action’ and other information of importance and general interest to regional farm businesses. **766 Twitter Followers with a total of 18,113 Tweet Impressions registered in FY’20.**

FY’20 Highlights:

- **364 So. Md. farms/ag. enterprises engaged, promoted, and benefitted. (72 new farms/ag. businesses in FY’20)**
- **84 ag. businesses (10 new listings in FY’20) promoted – 2019 Farm Holiday Guide**
- **24 So. Md. Farmers Markets and 10 regional markets – 2020 Farmers Market Guide**
- **50 regional horse barns/farms and 17 hay producers promoted – Horse Extra Guide**
- **55 So. Md. meat producers promoted (5 new in FY’20) – SMM Website**
- **58 livestock and 20 seafood producers promoted – Meat & Seafood Guide**
- **21 aquaculture and wild harvest oyster producers promoted – Oyster Guide**
- **2,983 Facebook followers (920 New) in FY’20**

SERVICES

REGULATORY ASSISTANCE

SMADC's regional and statewide programs strive to create economic opportunities for farmers and provide the research and resources for existing and new farm entrepreneurs to be successful. SMADC works cooperatively with farms and with federal, state and local agencies to facilitate a vital regulatory information conduit for the farming community.

Liaison – SMADC is frequently sought out regionally and statewide as a knowledgeable resource to help producers navigate the complex regulatory requirements of multiple agencies (FDA, USDA, FSIS, MDH, SHA) that oversee value-added food production and farm enterprise. SMADC capitalizes on its relationships with regulatory entities and industry partners to leverage positive outcomes for farms.

Consultation and Workshops – SMADC partners with regional regulatory entities and industry experts to develop workshops and trainings and offers one-on-one support for licensing and certifications for specialty value-added products and helps farmers with zoning, permit and other land use issues as farms expand their revenue options with diverse agritourism activities and services.

Tutorials – SMADC's online tutorials are endorsed by Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and provide current step-by-step guidelines for Acidified Foods and On-Farm Processor/Meats certification and licensing; both tutorials are reviewed annually for compliance accuracy and available to Southern Maryland farms and statewide producers.

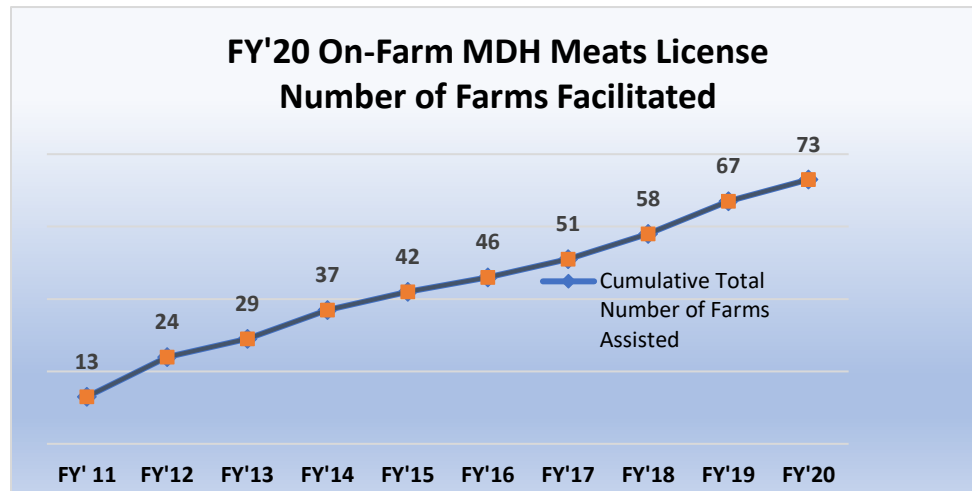
Staff Training – SMADC places great importance on keeping pace with the changing regulatory climate and advancements in food entrepreneurship and technology and regularly attend trainings offered by MDA, UME, MDH, Cornell, NMPAN, and others. Trainings in FY'20:

- **KDC Cooperative Solutions Academy:** meat cooperative development
- **Colorado State University Extension Online Class:** meat science sessions
- **Carolina Meat Conference:** supply chain hands-on training, technical, business, networking
- **MDH Cottage Law Webinar:** product and retail changes to the law

Examples of SMADC regulatory outreach in FY'20:

- **Slaughter Facility** – Staff continues to assist with the construction of Amish community slaughter facility. HACCP, SOP/SSOP plans and training completed. Composting unit approved. Facilitated meetings with USDA officer (EIAO) to assess facility readiness. USDA Grant of Inspection has been submitted, and approval for operation awaits final USDA /FSIS inspection.
- **Mobile Poultry Processing Unit** – Successfully conducted unit wastewater disposition trial; received exemption approval from Maryland Dept. of Environment.
- **Poultry Smoked Meats** – Staff assisted with planning/certification of a farm processing kitchen for smoked chicken products. SSOP/HACCP plans completed and approved. Coordinated preliminary USDA Grant of Inspection site reviews and attended county zoning public hearings resulting in zoning approval.
- **MDH Process Reviews** – Staff facilitated MDH annual acidified foods process reviews and license renewals; 6 farms reviewed and licensed, (1 new).
- **Acidified Recipes** – 4 new acidified foods recipes facilitated and FDA/MDH registered.
- **On-Farm Processor Meats License** – 6 new on-farm processor meat licenses facilitated.
- **Cottage Industry Law** – Staff presented regulatory updates and labelling requirements. 50 producers attended.

- **Dairy Food Safety** – Staff acted as intermediary for Center for Milk and Dairy Product Safety and Amish-run cheese dairy for day-to-day COVID-19 communications (policy, regulation, plant operation). 2 new cheese recipes assisted/approved.



FY'20 Highlights:

- **2 USDA Grant of Inspection for meat and poultry processing facilitated/submitted**
- **2 meat/poultry valued-added processing USDA-SSOP/SOP/HACCP plans completed**
- **1 MDE waste-water disposition permit exemption facilitated/approved**
- **6 acidified foods MDH annual process reviews facilitated/approved**
- **1 new MDH licensed acidified foods producer**
- **4 new acidified foods recipes facilitated and FDA/MDH registered**
- **6 new on-farm processor meat licenses facilitated**
- **50 producers attend Cottage Industry workshop**
- **2 new cheese recipes facilitated**

EDUCATION & WORKSHOPS



Grain Growers Workshop, July 2019 – Developed by SMADC in partnership with the University of Maryland Extension, and co-hosted by Chip Bowling (former National Corn Growers Association President, and current Chairman of the U.S Farmers & Ranchers Alliance) the workshop was designed to inform current and prospective grain growers about local market opportunities for grain farmers, and provide a forum to discuss issues facing the industry. Speakers and panel members represented all agricultural grain sectors (growers, processors, buyers, feed stores, bakers and chefs). Topics included growing

grain for brewers and distillers for specialty production and local feed, diversification of on-and-off farm income streams, resources for retiring farmers and young farmers, grain growing challenges and assessments, high quality grain production, transport and storage, national grain outlook update, and drone technology. **64 attended.**

“I’m glad to see SMADC offering information and opportunities to conventional Southern Maryland agriculture. We have a lot of acreage in our area that lends itself well to grain. The panels at the workshop examined a wide range of possibilities and encouraged discussion. We need more of these forums, this was just the tip of the iceberg.” - Susie Hance-Wells, Taney Place Farm

“The Grain Growers Workshop was very well run and a great forum for the growers and distillers to meet together, and hear about the different issues and what the needs are on both sides for symbiotic success. This would be a great annual event.” - Ed May, Beginning Farmer

Hops Farm Tour and Field Day, July 2019 – Followed on from SMADC's 2018 workshop series developed with University of Maryland Extension for farmers looking to expand and diversify their current operations of small fruit and hop production. The field day featured University of Maryland Western Maryland Research & Education Center hopyard experimental research plots of 24 variety trials, and a tour of Milkhouse Brewery at Still Pont Farm, which specializes in classic styles of beer using Maryland hops. Topics included commercial fertility and irrigation, weed, insect and disease management, harvesting, trellis systems, and commercial on-farm brewing. *The field day was funded in part by the Maryland Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. 30 attended.*



Getting Your Meat to Market: A Whole Animal Butchery Workshop, October 2019 – Southern Maryland Meats hosted two nationally renowned authors and butchers, Camas Davis and Adam Danforth, who taught the revived art of whole animal butchery skills in the new Amish-owned and operated meat processing facility in St. Mary's County. Danforth and Davis demonstrated exemplary butchery skills and knowledge of the growing industry of niche meat processing. Topics included exploring costs and opportunity for value-added products, regulatory requirements, and marketing tips to help regional livestock producers capitalize on the potential for finer meat production. **30 attended.**



“The workshop was so much of an education in one of the last phases of true farm-to-table. I was able to learn more effectively how to take my local meats from the field to the fork.” - BJ Bowling, Newport Valley Farm

“The workshop was amazing and everything that I had hoped it would be as a producer. Adam and Camas were wonderful teachers. It was amazing to see Adam do his magic on one of our homegrown pigs. I honestly was kinda star-struck. I appreciated his passion and love for the deep red and well marbled pork of our MKONO Farm KuneKune pigs and Glen Mary’s Farms Ossabaw breed as he explained all of the amazing dishes and uses of a pig from nose to tail.” - Amanda Hand, MKONO Farm

Post-Harvest Handling for Improved Quality Workshop, November 2019 – SMADC co-sponsored a full-day workshop, hosted by Chesapeake Harvest, on handling fresh fruits and vegetables for growers selling to wholesale and farmers markets, and those entering wholesale markets for the first time. Topics

included industry quality standards related to harvest techniques, packing, grading, pack size, packaging, and shelf-life. **17 attended.**

Local Food Listening Session, November 2019 – SMADC hosted The Local Food for Maryland Institutions Study Group’s first listening session at the SMECO Auditorium. The task force conducted statewide sessions to investigate the potential to increase the amount of locally grown and produced food served in Maryland institutions and research solutions that get more local food into the supply chain, and help farmers sell more products. Local farmers and representatives from several county public school Food and Nutrition departments and County Economic Development attended. Collaborative efforts for regional processing and aggregation were also discussed, offering an opportunity for the Regional Agriculture Center to be a pivotal component of this new initiative. **20 attended.**



Southern Maryland Agricultural Marketing Conference, November 2019 – SMADC’s first ever full-day conference was designed to support both beginning and experienced growers and farmers looking to brush up their marketing skills for the 2020 season and beyond. The conference included four tracks with 15 total sessions: New and Beginning farms (strategic marketing analysis and business planning); Advanced Marketing (branding, pricing, product display, social media strategy); three Statewide trainings (farm to market, value-added regulatory), and Emerging industries (industrial hemp, urban ag., small grains, agritourism). Highlights featured ‘Lead the Charge’ rapid fire farmer panel, keynote address and networking reception. **150 attended.**

During the conference, F3 Tech, an entrepreneurship program for start-up companies that provides funding, support and industry investment resources, was introduced and gave a brief presentation about agritech and aquatech; a debut for F3 Tech to the Southern Maryland region. F3 Tech’s exhibit featured their Accelerator Program with start-up founders in attendance. This partnership was made possible through a grant from the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) to encourage the increase of entrepreneurial activity and commerce in Southern Maryland.

“Attending the conference both as a farmer who direct markets to the public and as a session panelist, I found the event very interesting and well attended. The guests were engaged and asked lots of questions, and as a panelist I was happy to pass along some of the knowledge I’ve gleaned over the years in the business.”- Karl Shlagel, Shlagel Farms

“It was awesome. We learned what has worked for other farmers, in regards to value-added products and services, that have made their farms more profitable. It was a great place to connect with and learn from service providers and fellow farmers.” - Jeni Malott, Misti Meadow Farm Creamery

Cottage Food Law Presentation, December 2019 – Staff presented an overview of the Maryland Cottage Foods Industry Law to members of the Loveville Mennonite community. Discussion covered recent changes to the law that went into effect in October 2019, labelling requirements, how to sell cottage food products to a retail food store, and next steps for on-farm cottage food businesses seeking a retail license. **50 attended.**

Annie's Project – Southern Maryland, January 2020 – SMADC partnered with Calvert County Economic Development in January to host Annie's Project, a University of Maryland Extension program, focused on networking and educating women in agriculture on farm management resources. Annie's Project is also approved for USDA FSA Borrower Training. **14 participants completed the program with 5 sessions featuring 12 guest speakers.**



Value-Added Meat Processing: Charcuterie Workshop, February 2020 – In this two-day workshop, Meredith Leigh demonstrated and taught the processing, production and marketing of value-added meat products, including sausages, pates, cures and fermented hams. Throughout the workshops, the discussion topics enhanced the training focus including livestock production for ideal meat and fat quality for processing, best slaughter practices, and the importance of charcuterie within viable local meat supply chains. As an additional attendance benefit, participants were able to take home projects to continue learning and receive ongoing access to mentoring from Leigh. **31 attended.**



Southern Maryland Horse Summit, March 2020 – In FY'20, SMADC was awarded \$10,000 from a *Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund Grant (RMPIF)* to plan and execute a regional equine conference to support the regional Southern Maryland equine community. The full-day Summit offered three simultaneous tracks and 12 seminars for horse businesses and horse riders/owners. Topics included best management practices for soil/water quality and pasture management, equestrian basics for riders (beginner, youth and advanced), creative marketing strategies

and goal planning for equine business, regulatory updates, horse nutrition and disease management. Summit highlights included welcome remarks by Stuart Pittman, Anne Arundel County Executive, a Keynote presentation by celebrity equestrian Lynn Symansky, and lunch presentation by Jeff Newman, President of Fair Hill International. The Summit was presented in partnership with Maryland Horse Industry Board, University of Maryland Equine Studies, and AAEDC's Arundel Ag Program, and the Maryland Horse Council. **125 attended.**

"The staff was outstanding, the organization and management stupendous, and the overall programming exemplary! Your experience, expertise, and hard work were evident. The attendees were treated to a very special event." - Kathleen Tabor, Esq. Law Office of Kathleen Tabor, LLC

FY'20 Highlights:

- **10 SMADC-funded/sponsored workshops and presentations engaged a total of 531 individuals, farm businesses and producers**

LAND PRESERVATION & STEWARDSHIP

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

The land preservation component of the Tobacco Buyout should not be understated. While the buyout of individual farmers radically changed the *culture* of agriculture in the five-county region, investment in land preservation has made a significant impact on the region's agricultural industry. Land preservation

efforts have slowed the development of prime agricultural land, helped to stabilize farming operations and foster renewed enthusiasm for agriculture in Southern Maryland.

Land preservation is a high priority for SMADC, as Southern Maryland has been one of the fastest growing areas in the state. The average age of the tobacco farmer is now well into their 70's. These funds assure that farmland will persist not just for today, but for farmers and food production into the future.

Unfortunately, SMADC did not received funding in FY'20 for agricultural land preservation.

FY'20 Highlights:

Although SMADC did not receive any funding, at the end of the Legislative Session, SMADC was awarded a state grant funded through the Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan. The grant is for one million dollars to be used in conjunction with MARBDICO's new Small Acreage Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program (SANG). The grant maybe used through seven years. SMADC will begin working with MARBIDCO to launch this program in FY'21.



Southern Maryland Regional Agricultural Strategy 2012—2021

Measuring for Results FY'20

GOAL 1: Provide the resources, infrastructure and advocacy needed for market-driven farms and agribusinesses to thrive and be profitable

Farm Share Equipment:

- 38 pieces of equipment are in inventory and available for farmers to rent across the region
- 1,877 acres positively impacted by conservation tillage across the five counties
- Mobile Poultry Processing unit processed 443 birds by Anne Arundel County producers

Southern Maryland Meats (SMM):

- 55 producers participate in SMM (5 new in FY'20)
- 75 Little Free Library location selected for installation in Fall 2020
- 56,028 lbs of processed meat transported, estimated retail value \$335,887
- 2 training/workshops attract 50 producers
- 23 youth signed up for FY'20/21 Jr. Program
- 35 youth program completers received stipends totaling \$3,500 (FY'19/20)

Education & Workshops:

- 10 SMADC-funded/sponsored workshops and presentations engaged a total of 531 individuals, farm businesses and producers

GOAL 2: Expand the region's overall agricultural economic development

Financial Incentives:

- 29 Farmer Mini-Grants awarded totaling \$48,245
- 7 producers approved through the Equity Incentive Fund for a total of \$45,850
- 5 scholarships awarded totaling \$5,275
- 11 events sponsored for a total of \$17,650

Marketing & Outreach:

- 364 So. Md. farms/ag. enterprises engaged, promoted, and benefitted. (72 new farms/ag. businesses in FY'20)
- 84 ag. businesses (10 new listings in FY'20) promoted – 2019 Farm Holiday Guide
- 24 So. Md. Farmers Markets and 10 regional markets – 2020 Farmers Market Guide
- 50 regional horse barns/farms and 17 hay producers promoted – Horse Extra Guide
- 55 So. Md. meat producers promoted (5 new in FY'20) – SMM Website
- 58 livestock and 20 seafood producers promoted – Meat & Seafood Guide

- 21 aquaculture and wild harvest oyster producers promoted – Oyster Guide
- 2,983 Facebook followers (920 New) in FY’20

Regulatory Assistance:

- 2 USDA Grant of Inspection for meat and poultry processing facilitated/submitted
- 2 meat/poultry valued-added processing USDA-SSOP/SOP/HACCP plans completed
- 1 MDE waste-water disposition permit exemption facilitated/approved
- 6 acidified foods MDH annual process reviews facilitated/approved
- 1 new MDH licensed acidified foods producer
- 4 new acidified foods recipes facilitated and FDA/MDH registered
- 6 new on-farm processor meat licenses facilitated
- 50 producers attend Cottage Industry workshop
- 2 new cheese recipes facilitated

Maryland FarmLINK:

- 1,446 followers on Maryland FarmLINK’s Facebook (328 new in FY’20)

GOAL 3: Preserve Southern Maryland farmland

SMADC did not receive funding in FY’20 for agricultural land preservation.

GOAL 4: Assure long-term viability of SMADC as a driving force of the regional agricultural economy

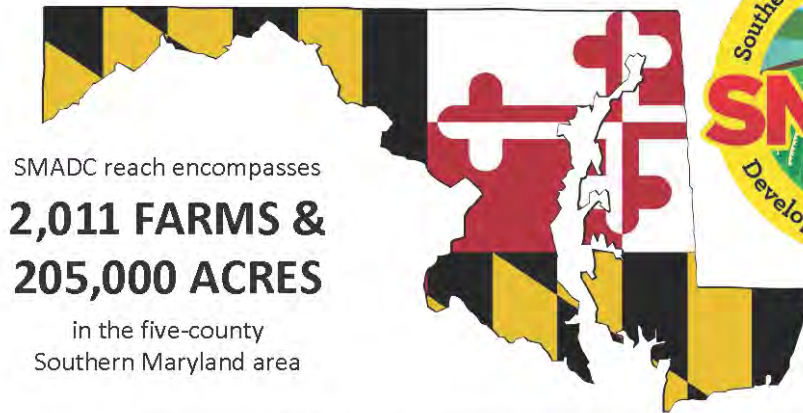
Maryland Buy Local Challenge (BLC):

- 52,183 People Reached through BLC Facebook page engagement
- 3,024 Total Users on the BLC Website
- 16,000 People Reached through the ‘Follow Me To’ Video Series
- 1,181 People Reached through the BLC Recipe Book
- 12,000 BLC Promotional Items delivered to 41 farmers markets
- Over 300 Photos submitted for the BLC Photo Contest

Maryland Market Money (MMM):

- 24 Maryland farmers markets in 9 counties slated to participate in the 2020 season, reaching over 450 farmers and value-added vendors

SMADC is valuable to Maryland



SMADC'S CONTRIBUTIONS IN FY'20



364 FARMS

directly benefited from SMADC
marketing, resources and events.

72

**NEW FARMS &
AGRIBUSINESSES
ADDED IN 2020**

251 ag. businesses
promoted with
SMADC printed and
'virtual' consumer
guides.



29 FARMS

AWARDED \$48,245

since the inception of the program, SMADC has
awarded \$132,780 in mini-grants to the regional
farm economy.



\$22,925

awarded to the community
through scholarships and
sponsorships.



31,973 USERS

across all SMADC
websites.

**WEBSITES IN FY'20 : SMADC.COM,
OYSTER GUIDE, FARMLINK and
SOUTHERN MARYLAND MEATS**



\$335,887

value of local meats cargo
transported with SMADC
freezer trailers.



10 workshops & events

531 attendees

15 food process certifications



\$30,000

grant funding awarded through
USDA to SMADC in FY'19

\$297,000

grant funding awarded through
Rural Maryland Council in FY'20



\$1 MILLION

REGIONAL AG CENTER IN PROGRESS



NEW USDA-CERTIFIED
SLAUGHTERHOUSE IN
PROGRESS

LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

18,165 ACRES

of farmland (172 properties) have been preserved in
Southern Maryland with *direct* SMADC funds
with an overall goal to reach 35,000 acres.



38
UNITS OF FARM RENTAL EQUIPMENT
FUNDED BY SMADC & MANAGED
BY AREA PARTNERS TO ENHANCE
RESOURCE CONSERVATION

BOTTOM LINE: SMADC IS GOOD FOR MARYLAND



SMADC is a division of the
TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL
for SOUTHERN MARYLAND

SMADC...

- is dedicated to creating a strong dynamic supply chain for value-added products.
- generates consistent positive press coverage for the entire state of Maryland.
- yields large returns on small investments.
- proves that Maryland is *Open for Business*.
- brings additional funding to Maryland through federal and national programs.

SMADC PROJECTS ARE **STRONG ECONOMIC MULTIPLIERS**. FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW SMADC IS
SUPPORTING FARMS & THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE IN SOUTHERN MARYLAND AND BEYOND.

VISIT SMADC.COM OR CONNECT WITH US   

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