



**END OF YEAR REPORT – FY’21
(SMADC Fiscal Year: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021)**

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

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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 the effects of the COVID pandemic are still being weathered, SMADC is playing a vital role providing support for our farmers and agribusinesses as they continue to feed and support consumers and the community.

From launching another round of our popular Farmer Mini Grants, to more than doubling the number of farmers markets across the state that are now participating in the Maryland Market Money food access program, SMADC has pivoted to best serve the farming community during the new normal in which we find ourselves.

We thoroughly appreciate all the farmers and agribusinesses who utilize our programs, as well as our valued industry partners, and we look forward to continuing to offer expansive opportunities to our farming community.

- 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’21:

- American Association of Meat Processors
- American Farm Bureau Federation
- Baltimore Food Policy Initiative
- 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 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)

Regional Agricultural Center Mission:

Local Producers working with Local Processors to feed Local Consumers

When completed, the Regional Agriculture Center 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
- Finer Meats Processing Facility
- Creating a Southern Maryland Meats Charcuterie Brand
- Apprenticeship Programs and Job Training
- Meat Locker and Cold Storage Facility
- Warehouse and Distribution Site
- Commercial Kitchen
- Instructional Kitchen Classroom
- Regional Farmers Market
- Retail Store
- Product Storage Facility

In FY'20, 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 for further processing.

Amish Slaughter Facility – In May 2021, with SMADC assistance, the Westham Butcher Shop achieved USDA/FSIS Grant of Inspection status and was assigned dedicated USDA/FSIS inspectors. The USDA considers the Westham Butcher Shop project (unique in its off-the-grid construction) a significant benchmark achievement for the agency and SMADC. *See full report, page 11.*

Regional Agriculture Center – The RAC will complete the meat processing cycle by receiving USDA inspected carcasses from the Amish slaughter facility to further process and add value to Southern Maryland produced meats. **In September 2020, the RAC was awarded a Maryland Agriculture Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) Grant of \$30,000 for instructional kitchen equipment.**

RAC Timeline – In FY'21, SMADC and Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSMD) Directors and RAC Project Manager continue to meet weekly with St. Mary's County Government departments to finalize the RAC budget, planning and design. At time of reporting, the RAC construction/completion timeline proposed by St. Mary's County Government is not satisfactory. SMADC and TCC leadership are aggressively pursuing acceleration of the timeline.

- February 2021 – St. Mary's County Government RFP issued for Site and Building design; winning bid identified, and contract awarded in March 2021.

- May 2021 – First draft of RAC building layout/footprint presented for review. The design consultant has up to three months to produce a final design plan.

FY’21 Highlights:

- **\$30,000 MAERDAF grant awarded for RAC kitchen equipment**

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. 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 and rental fees are expected to cover routine maintenance and other costs of the program, such as insurance.

In FY’21, the SMADC Board made it a priority to offer another round of equipment grants to support regional farmers during the Pandemic. Requests were received and reviewed. **In the Fall of 2020, a total of \$57,485 funding was awarded to purchase three new pieces of equipment.** The equipment is listed on the ‘Farmer Resources’ page of the SMADC website, and on the websites of the managing entities.

FY’21 Highlights:

- **3 new pieces of equipment added to the program: Anne Arundel County – 6 ft. No Till Drill; Charles County – No Till Overseeder; and St. Mary’s County – 16 ft. Poultry Litter Spreader**
- **To date, 41 pieces of equipment in inventory, available for farmers to rent across the region**

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 with each new round. 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. The program is open to applicants ages 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. Projects must be completed within one year. **To date, the program has received 138 applications with 101 funded for a total of \$157,007.**

In FY’21 a special round of mini-grants was launched dedicated to Pandemic Relief.

The mini-grant round was designed to support established farms that were financially adversely affected by the onset of the pandemic and support new and innovate business models to serve customers more safely and effectively.



SMADC offered one round of mini-grants in FY'21. 14 grants were awarded totaling \$24,225. Below are the recipients:

- **804 Cattle Company** (\$2,000) – Freezers and insulated to go bags in Prince George’s County
- **Fairfield Farm** (\$2,000) – Cold storage expansion in St. Mary’s County
- **Harmony Farms** (\$2,000) – Squeeze chute in St. Mary’s County
- **Holiday Memories Farm LLC** (\$1,500) – Cold storage expansion in Anne Arundel County
- **Holly Hill Ranch** (\$995) – Upgrade an egg incubator and hatcher combo and perimeter fencing in Prince George’s County
- **Hollywood Farm** (\$2,000) – Online store and livestock expansion in Anne Arundel County
- **Jacob Bowen** (\$1,000) – Meat goat expansion in Calvert County
- **Just Holden** (\$2,000) – Breeding stock expansion in St. Mary’s County
- **Linden Farm** (\$1,560) – Equine pasture maintenance in Charles County
- **Prosperity Acres** (\$2,000) – Cold storage in Calvert County
- **Russell Farms** (\$2,000) – Farm store equipment in St. Mary’s County
- **Serenity Farm** (\$1,680) – Petting animal/livestock upkeep and maintenance in Charles County
- **Thomas Family Farm** (\$2,000) – Seasonal grain farming in St. Mary’s County
- **Trossbach Produce** (\$1,490) – Online store in St. Mary’s County

Featured below are three projects funded through the Mini-Grant Program that were started and/or finished in FY'21. 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 significant impact on a farming enterprise.

Willowmere Farm – Orchard Establishment



Grants funds to purchase materials for deer fencing and an irrigation system enabled the farm to scale their orchard project from 60 pilot trees to 198 trees between two orchards. The irrigation system will be used to irrigate future small fruit patches that the owners plan to establish over the next three years. Trees are individually irrigated with a 5.5 GPH drip line loop to maximize water



efficiency in the orchards and minimize moisture (and thus disease prevalence). The trees have been in the ground for two months and there is minimal evidence of deer browsing or damage.

“The Mini-Grant program is a terrific program I hope to take advantage of in the future again. I live close-by, so if anyone sees me out on the tractor while driving by please feel free to come in to chat about this project or my future plans!” – Mike Spahr, Willowmere Farm

Dicot Farm – Deer Fence Expansion

The goals of the project were to expand a 10-foot deer fence by putting up woven wire for the entire perimeter to enclose 3.5 acres for Certified Organic vegetable production and enhance the effectiveness of the overall deer fence. This expansion/enhancement was necessary to minimize deer predation and ultimately increase vegetable production to expand sales potential in Southern Maryland.

The new woven wire fence resulted in zero crop loss to deer damage in 2020 and the farm is set to increase sales by an additional \$30,000 by the end of season.

Photos:

Pounding in one of the many 10-ft t-posts Unrolling the woven wire fencing



Hidden Tree Christmas Tree Farm – Stump Removal for New Tree Plantings

The acquisition of the stump grinder has proved to be a valuable piece of equipment, allowing the owners to quickly eliminate approximately 150 field cut stumps yearly, and expedite the annual spring planting process. The new transplants are in very close proximity of the removed stumps, with little to no difficulty in drilling a new planting hole.



The stump grinder has been used in the expansion areas to eliminate much larger stumps/roots that are in the new field, clearing locations that were difficult to access.

*2021 season/expansion,
eliminating Christmas tree stumps*



EQUITY INCENTIVE MATCHING FUND

This partnership with MARBIDCO is designed to incentivize loan requests from Southern Maryland farmers and to help them meet certain down-payment (equity) requirements, 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. **Since 2017, a total of \$147,050 has been funded; \$147,550 has been approved for this program.**

In FY'21, there were no new applications for this program.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND REVOLVING LOAN FUND

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

In February 2021, the loan eligible use criteria were expanded to value-added products, including alcohol production, the making of jams/jellies, acidified foods/pickles, ferments, hydrated vegetables and fruits, milling artisanal grains, processing of poultry/meats, forestry products, fur/fiber, etc., and for the foundation and development of the equine industry - riding instruction, boarding barns, horse rescue and horse breeding facilities.

Loan amounts may range between \$10,000 to \$20,000, with no collateral security pledge required. The personal guarantees of all the borrowers are 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/enhance existing herds/flocks, and shellfish aquaculture foundation/expansion
- The production of small fruits and hops
- Upgrades for the safe growing, harvesting, packing and holding of produce in conformance with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)
- Value added processing equipment and related professional services
- Costs related to the development and expansion of the regional equine (horse) farm industry

In FY'21, there were no new applications for this program.

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'21, SMADC awarded a scholarship to one individual for the Acidified Food Workshop, 'Better Process Control School training' totaling \$80. See full report on page 24.

SMADC SPONSORSHIPS

SMADC supports workshops, conferences, and continuing education opportunities for farmers. **In FY'21, SMADC sponsored 6 events and initiatives (listed below) for a total of \$2,150.**

- 2020 Anne Arundel Co. Farm Bureau, Youth Online Livestock Auction \$150
- 2020 Calvert Co. Farm Bureau, Youth Online Livestock Auction \$150
- 2020 St. Mary's Co. Farm Bureau, Youth Online Livestock Auction \$150
- 2021 Rural Maryland Council, Maryland Day Sponsorship \$700
- 2021 Agriculture & Environmental Law Conference Sponsorship \$500
- 2021 Southern High School, National FFA Convention \$500

Southern Maryland Invitational Livestock Expo (SMILE)

SMADC has supported the SMILE show as the major sponsor for 14 consecutive years. This unique youth Expo combines education, showmanship preparation competitions and fun activities for youth (ages 6 – 21 years) involved in raising livestock. The 2020 and 2021 SMILE shows were cancelled due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing public safety concerns; the SMILE Board has retained \$12,000 of previously allocated FY'20 funding to support SMILE 2022.

FY'21 Highlights:

- **14 Farmer Mini-Grants were awarded totaling \$24,225**
- **1 value-added training scholarship awarded totaling \$80**
- **6 events sponsored for a total of \$2,150**

MARKETING & OUTREACH

SOUTHERN MARYLAND MEATS

Over the past 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 livestock is raised with access to pasture and fed a diet free of antibiotics and growth hormones. SMM producers agree to abide by the program standards of quality and humane care and use clearly defined terms for their raising practices. **In FY'21, 54 producers participated: AA – 10, CA – 10, CH – 7, PG – 8, SM – 19.**

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.

To fulfill the SMM Mission, SMADC provides education, marketing support, and infrastructure for livestock producers. 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 producers' efforts to raise meats in a natural and environmentally friendly way.

In 2021, SMM program emphasis was on the creation of infrastructure to support the region's expanding meat production industry with associated processing services, namely slaughter, butchery and finer meat processing that are currently only available at locations considerable distances from Southern Maryland.

Slaughter/Process – In May 2021, the Amish-owned and operated Westham Butcher Shop with SMADC staff technical and instructional assistance achieved USDA Grant of Inspection status. Pending a 90-day verification period, the facility will be permitted to slaughter and process whole, half and quarter sides under constant observation of USDA/FSIS inspectors; product approved for retail sale prominently displays the USDA stamp. The Westham Butcher Shop is one of, if not the only, off-the-grid meat processing facilities in the United States and impressively meets the stringent USDA documentation and logging standards without computerized or automated technological assistance.

Butchery/further meat processing – SMADC is now working to ensure the region can avail itself of complete meat processing services by facilitating a seamless flow of USDA inspected meat carcasses from the Westham Butcher Shop to USDA approved regional processing locations for 'cut and wrap' and labelling. Staff is currently assisting a small butcher shop (in Calvert County) to upgrade from Custom-exempt to USDA Process for retail sales. It is anticipated this butcher shop will be open for business in late fall 2021.

Meat transportation – SMADC purchased an existing "Mobile Meat Processing" cab and trailer equipped with the necessary requirements (refrigerator and rail hanging capabilities) to fulfill USDA standards for the transport of carcasses from the Westham Butcher shop to the Calvert County butcher shop and other USDA approved regional processing locations (including some grocery stores).

SMM Promotion and Marketing



Little Free Libraries - Marketing for Southern Maryland Meats continued with multi-platformed outreach featuring the SMM logo prominently displayed on 80 Little Free Libraries in locations around Southern Maryland.

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 are designed to promote the Southern Maryland Meats brand and participating livestock producers, encourage awareness of the importance of agriculture in everyday life, and provide free reading materials to the community.

In FY'21, sixty-one libraries have been installed throughout Southern Maryland through the voluntary online application process. Libraries were installed in parks, residential neighborhoods, schools, governmental buildings, farmer's markets, and other regional public and private venues. Remaining libraries will be installed as suitable locations are identified. *The LFL program was funded in part by a grant awarded by the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund Grant (RMPIF) Program.*

"These locations are great! We collected a ton of books, as well as monetary donations. I was able to purchase \$385 worth of brand-new books to add to what our members collected! We will begin delivering books immediately, and will check back every so often to refill the Little Free Libraries." – Kristen Halstead, a Calvert County SMM LFL Steward

Infrastructure

SMM 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 locally raised meats from regional USDA processing facilities back to the farms for direct-to-consumer sales. Five-year Agreements with Calvert and Prince George's counties termed in FY'20. The remaining Agreement with St. Mary's County Home Grown Farm Market will end in August 2021, officially terminating SMADC's involvement in the Freezer Trailer program. County managing entities continue to manage and maintain all three trailers which are available to rent by regional livestock producers.

SMM Education



"In A Cook's Kitchen" – In February 2021, a 15-part instructional video cookery series developed and presented by Craig Sewell, SMADC's SMM Livestock and Marketing Manager, was launched on the newly created 'Recipes' page on the Southern Maryland Meats website. Thirteen episodes and two introductory classes, filmed by Remsburg Photography in Craig's home kitchen, demonstrate 'back-to-basics' cooking classes through which home cooks learn foundation recipes that build essential cooking and preparation skills using farm-fresh ingredients. The series was promoted across SMADC social media platforms, additionally "What's Up? Media" of Annapolis (the online edition of the printed magazine) debuted the series with a six-part "Virtual Cooking Class" live webinar including interviews and audience 'Q & A' sessions. **Classes averaged over 100 participants each week. Over 2,000 people were reached.**

SMM Junior Promotion

Since the inception of the Junior Promotion Program in 2017, 83 youth have signed up to participate. Southern Maryland Meats has always seen one of its missions as supporting the next generation of livestock farmers. Through sponsorship of the Southern Maryland Invitational Livestock Exposition (SMILE Show), and the Junior Promotion Program, SMM has sought to provide financial, instructional, and marketing support to the youth (aged 8 through 21 years) of our 5 Southern Maryland counties. Participants receive a free t-shirt and stall card to promote their animals during the fall county fairs and, at the completion of the program, a stipend of \$100 to help finance their on-going livestock projects. **In the FY'20/21 season, 16 Juniors successfully completed the program to receive stipends for a total of \$1,600.**

In FY'21, the Junior Program webpage was enhanced with new graphics, updated program details and a new simplified application process. **A Junior Program Sponsorship Campaign was developed** in conjunction with the 2021 Jr. Promotion Membership launch; sponsor donations will be used to offset the cost of Junior Promotion completion awards and promotional items. The sponsorship opportunity was promoted to over 20 regional farm equipment and agriculture service businesses. **There are 30 Juniors participating (11 new participants) in the FY'2021/22 season.**

As part of the Junior Program, each participant submits a short essay about their project animals and experiences. **Topic choices for FY' 20/21 season were:**

- The COVID-19 Virus has severely disrupted our communities and our interactions. How did the pandemic affect your family and your farm? Did it change the way you raise your livestock?
- Have you considered farming and raising livestock something you would like to do as a career? What do you think the challenges and successes would be?
- Consumers love to buy local foods, however, there are also many other choices available to them at the supermarket. How do we convince them to buy local foods all the time?

The following is an excerpt from an essay submitted by SMM Junior Participant Maci Childress on how COVID-19 pandemic affected her family, farm and raising her animals; more essays are showcased on the SMM Blog.



“My name is Maci Childress, in end of March – early April, COVID-19 hit hard. Everything about raising my new goats became a challenge. I was no longer able to go to my cousins who were teaching me all about goats. I couldn't go into the store to buy my feed and supplies, my mom had to do it for me. I was super excited about the SMILE show in June but that was cancelled. My 4-H meetings moved to zoom, and I no longer had the ability to have hands on training. I decided my only choice was to learn things for myself. I began looking up things online to help me. I played with my animals everyday so I could get to know their needs. I learned that I needed to feed them at the same time every day to keep them happy and on schedule. In

conclusion, things were not as I was expecting them to be this year. However, I have my first open show next week and I am excited to bring everything I have learned and do my best. COVID-19 has presented me with some challenges, but I was determined to overcome.” Maci Childress, 10 years old, Anne Arundel County

FY'21 Highlights:

- **First ever, 'off-the-grid' So.MD slaughter facility receives USDA Grant of Inspection**
- **54 producers participate in SMM**
- **30 youth (11 new participants) signed up for FY'21/22 Jr. Program**
- **16 youth program completers received stipends totaling \$1,600 (FY'21/22)**
- **2,000+ attracted to “In A Cook's Kitchen” virtual cookery classes**
- **2 applications submitted for USDA Grant of Inspection for retail processing**
- **61 new Little Free Libraries installed throughout Southern Maryland**

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.

2021 Buy Local Challenge – Building on the considerable success of the all-virtual FY’20 BLC promotion, the BLC website was updated with new illustrative graphics and a suite of ‘virtual’ and ‘in-person’ resources, activities and incentives to help consumers find, buy, eat, sip, and enjoy locally produced Maryland farm products during BLC week and beyond. **Overall, the promotion reached 54,670 people across social media platforms, including the Buy Local Challenge website.**

*“Thank you so much for sharing and everything y’all do to support local” - Mama Bears Elderberries,
 “Thanks so much for creating these spotlights and including us!” - Chesapeake Bay Roastery*

BLC Promotional highlights included:

Buy Local ‘Follow Me To’ Videos – 8 new episodes were added to the popular mini video series launched in FY’20. This season’s video theme focused on ingenious value-added farm products and unique collaborations between the farmers and producers who create them. **26 local farms and small businesses promoted. This series reached more than 5,900 people on Facebook.**



BLC/logo insulated bags – Southern Maryland farmers markets received a quantity of free insulated BLC shopping bags to be given out to consumers during BLC week. Markets also received informational postcards promoting BLC website resources and ‘buy local’ competitions and incentives. **1,000 bags distributed to 29 Southern Maryland Farmers Markets. 15,000 cards distributed to consumers statewide through 29 Southern Maryland markets, 50 statewide markets, and over 50 Maryland farm stands/stores, farms/producers.**



BLC Incentives/Competitions – new this year, a Buy Local Scavenger Hunt kicked-off the month-long BLC promotion; consumers took photos/selfies completing five ‘buy local’ activities to be entered into a drawing for a Swag Bag of farm products. ‘Showoff Your Buy Local Shopping Spree’ photo competition and ‘Take the Pledge’ incentives offered more chances to win BLC prizes. **Over 300 photos and 100 pledges were submitted. A total of 24 winners were selected, including 4 Scavenger Hunt winners, 2 Facebook photo winners, 8 Instagram photo winners, and 10 pledge winners.**

“How totally fun to have won...I did get the bag and sanitizer and gave it to my sweetie, who had also signed up for the pledge. I love the Buy Local Challenge week and am grateful doing the challenge is so easy for

us.” – 2021 Buy Local Pledge Winner

2021 BLC Media Tool Kit – a custom designed media tool kit offered a versatile collection of 13 free downloadable BLC marketing materials for farms and the buy local enthusiast, including Facebook Cover images/banners and posts, Instagram and Twitter posts, Profile Pictures, Pledge Certificates, and recent Press Releases.

Maryland Money Markets (MMM) ‘Buy Local Bucks’ – participating Maryland Market Money markets across Maryland



offered customers shopping with their federal nutrition benefits an extra \$5 Buy Local Bonus in addition to their Maryland Market Money match during Buy Local Week. **45 MMM markets participated in the promotion; 316 MMM transactions for the period, approximately \$1,580 disbursed.**

FY'21 Highlights:

- **98,136 People Reached through BLC Facebook page engagement**
- **3,645 Total Users on the BLC Website**
- **5,900+ People Reached through the 'Follow Me To' Video Series**
- **Over 300 Photos submitted for the BLC Photo Contest**
- **16,000 BLC Promotional Items distributed to 79 farmers markets statewide**
- **45 MMM markets offer \$5 BLC Bonus Bucks**

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.

In FY'21, Staff worked with FarmLINK website designers and Peake Technology IT to improve functionality of the website in preparation for future expansion of existing website tools and additional resources and updates to specific to Urban and Peri-Urban agricultural endeavors including added criteria for Urban/Peri-urban Property Exchange listings, new Urban/Peri-Urban Farming landing page/s, Zoning and Realtor Tutorial updates and more.

FY'21 Highlights:

- **1,546 followers on Maryland FarmLINK's Facebook (100 new in FY'21)**
- **10,920 Total Users (91.9% New) on the Maryland FarmLINK Website**

MARYLAND MARKET MONEY

Maryland Market Money (MMM) is a statewide food access program that feeds Marylanders and supports farmers through farmers markets. MMM removes economic barriers for Marylanders experiencing food insecurity, providing a dollar-for-dollar match for purchases made using federal nutrition benefits at Maryland 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.

Maryland Market Money is jointly administered by SMADC and the Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO).





The goals of Maryland Market Money are threefold:

To increase purchasing power and access to locally sourced, nutrient dense foods for economically disadvantaged households experiencing food insecurity.

To support the viability and sustainability of Maryland farmers markets, especially where access to fresh foods is otherwise scarce due to food deserts and apartheid.

To generate additional revenue and diversify customer base for local farmers and producers.

Following the acquisition of the Maryland Market Money program in June 2020, SMADC and MARBIDCO staff worked collaboratively throughout the first and second quarters to reinvigorate the program and acclimate it to its new home. Former funding sources from the previous parent organization, the Maryland Farmers Market Association (MDFMA), were reallocated and realigned.



The SMADC staff brings decades of collective experience with food systems, farmers markets, farming, and federal nutrition benefits/incentive programs and is uniquely positioned to efficiently operate Maryland’s only statewide incentive program during a time of unprecedented need. In July 2021, Cristina Berthelot was hired as the External Relations & Development Coordinator to assist the Program Manager, succeeding Juliet Glass, who left the organization.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in continued record levels of food insecurity in the state; maintaining Maryland Market Money has continued to help thousands of Marylanders eat healthier whole foods and provide additional sales to farmers at the participating farmers markets, thus boosting our local farm economy.

How Maryland Market Money Addressed Food Access in FY'21:

- On average, every \$1 spent in Maryland Market Money is accompanied by \$1.30 in federal benefits spending, resulting in \$2.30 for local farmers.
- Maryland Market added Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) to the lineup of federal nutrition benefits (SNAP/EBT, P-EBT, FMNP (WIC or Senior), and eWIC FVB) matched by the program to strengthen access to healthy, fresh food.
- MMM participating farmers markets provided at least \$10 per market day in matching dollars to food-insecure market patrons.
- Easily sanitized plastic tokens replaced metal tokens used for any SNAP-eligible food items available at market.
- Developed and distributed bi-lingual flyers to market patrons.

MMM COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

To ensure equity and inclusion, many MMM resources were developed in multiple languages in FY' 21. Resources include a comprehensive MMM information trifold brochure, how to use your benefit information cards, scrip receipts for markets as well as individual flyers and marketing materials in Spanish. Additional resources include flyers and materials in Russian. To continue efforts, SMADC is seeking long-term translation tools for the MMM website.

Maryland Market Money Website - The informational platform for Maryland Market Money (MMM), a statewide food access program, provides federal nutrition benefit matching program details, resources to customers, farmers, and farmers market markets as well as a list of participating farmers markets and farm stands. **1,724 Total Users (11.6% returning visitors) in FY'21.**

Maryland Farmers Markets social media - These spaces are used to promote the MMM program, celebrate seasonality, connect communities to the farmers that grow their food, share resources, and disseminate federal nutrition benefit information.

Instagram

@MDFarmersMarkets

5,566 followers, 1,178 new in FY'21

Facebook

@MDFarmersMarkets

7,003 followers, 690 new in FY'21

Twitter

@MDFarmersMkts

1,686 followers, 191 new in FY'21

FY'21 Highlights:

- **46 Maryland farmers markets, farm stands, and pop-ups in 12 Maryland counties participated in the 2021 season, including 12 Southern Maryland markets**
- **Over 265 raw agricultural producers (farmers, ranchers, and watermen) represented**
- **\$485,420 Awarded to MMM Program – including Maryland Department of Agriculture, Rural Maryland Council, Baltimore City, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and Amerigroup**
- **\$382,276 Granted to Farmers Markets and Stands in FY'21 (\$219,246 distributed to customers as of 10/1/21)**

SMADC 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 all programmatic outreach: websites, social media, consumer guides, newsletters, blogs, advertising, and promotion. In-house creative services regularly review, refresh and update marketing platforms to maintain a dynamic and engaging social media presence.

SMADC marketing resources and events (Buy Local Challenge, Meat & Seafood Guide, SOMD Oyster Guide, Southern Maryland Holiday Farm Guide, Southern Maryland Meats, SOMD Horse Extra, SMADC.com, MarylandFarmlink.com, have directly engaged and benefitted over 400 Southern Maryland farms in FY’21 (36 new farms/ag businesses).

SMADC Guides

To ensure year-round outreach to consumers and continuous marketing support for farms/producers all SMADC consumer guides are available for online viewing on the ‘Get Our Guides’ page at SMADC.com. Annual/seasonal updates can be facilitated minimizing date-sensitive content, and platforms refreshed with new information and illustrative material as needed. Printed rack cards alert consumers to seasonal guide launches and are distributed regionwide through ag. partners, farms, libraries, welcome centers and other businesses by request.



Southern Maryland Holiday Farm Guide – The first entirely online edition of the annual Holiday Farm Guide was launched in November 2020. The new guide hosts a virtual shop window of over 80 Southern Maryland farms and businesses, including 10 regional winter farmers markets offering locally produced foods harvested from the land and water, tastings, tours and other farm-hosted events during the holiday season and throughout the winter months. In response to changing consumer buying preferences during the Pandemic and ongoing, listings describe online order/purchase options, touchless payment, home delivery and curbside pickup. **87 agriculture businesses promoted (15 new in FY’20). 2,500 promotional rack cards distributed to 35 regional locations.**

So. Maryland, So Good: Buy Local Guide – The former (printed) Southern Maryland Farmers Market Guide was migrated to a virtual format with a fresh new look with an expanded directory of more than 30 farmers markets in the five-county area (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George’s and St. Mary’s), 22 Southern Maryland farm stands and stores with regular in-person business hours, and 10 additional markets in Maryland, Washington, D.C and Virginia that host one or more Southern Maryland farm vendor. Listings also provide vital food access information – Maryland Market Money locations and others accepting Federal Nutrition Benefits, hours, social media, and payment options. **30 Southern Maryland farmers markets and 22 farm stands/stores, and 10 regional markets promoted in FY’21.**



Southern Maryland Meat & Seafood Guide – In print and to view/download online, showcases regional livestock, aquaculture and seafood producers. **58 livestock and 20 seafood producers promoted in FY’21.**

Southern Maryland ‘Horse Extra’ Guide – Online guide to horse farms and equine-related businesses. **50 regional horse barns/farms and 17 hay producers promoted in FY’21.**

SMADC Video Promotions

In FY’21, SMADC continued to utilize ‘videos’ to engage consumers and promote farms and producers. SMADC videos showcased the Buy Local Challenge (virtual cookery demonstrations and ‘Follow me To...’ farm tours), and Southern Maryland’s key agriculture sectors (Farms in Focus 8-edition agriculture industry series). The videos are available to use by farms/producers, educational and community organizations, schools, individuals, and anyone wishing to learn more and/or promote the region’s agriculture.

“Farms in Focus” Farm Industry Promotional Video Series - The "Farms in Focus" videos are made possible by a grant awarded to SMADC in FY’20 through the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF). The 8-part series showcases Southern Maryland’s key agricultural industries: agritourism, aquaculture, equine, forestry, fruits/vegetables/row crops, livestock, nursery/cut flowers, and value-added products. Three industry videos were released and promoted in FY’20 (Aquaculture, Equine Value-added). **In FY’21, SMADC developed and launched five videos to complete the agriculture series: Livestock, Cut Flower and Nursery, Forestry, Row Crops and Vegetables, plus a promotional flagship video “Why We Farm”.**



“Farms in Focus” Agritourism Edition – Launched September 2020 – showcases a rapidly diversifying agricultural sector that attracts over a million visitors in Maryland annually. Four regional farms are explored; pick-your-own strawberries, fall-fun, farm tours and cut-your-own Christmas trees. Farmers share their passion for their work, and why their loyal customers are so important to their farms and the future of agriculture in Southern Maryland.

“Farms in Focus” Cut Flower and Nursery Industry Edition – Launched October 2020 – reveals an industry that generates over 750 million dollars annually and explores through the experience of three growers engaged in different cultivation and business models, the technology, skill, and artistry involved in production. The video includes wholesale, horticulture and landscaping operations and smaller flower farms developing a competitive niche in the marketplace through cooperative partnerships.



“Farms in Focus” Livestock Edition – Launched November 2020 – interviews illustrate how a balance of art and science, combined with environmental stewardship, humane raising standards, and strong customer relationships go hand in hand to bring quality Southern Maryland meats from farm to table. Five regional farmers with a different livestock focus (pigs, cattle, sheep and poultry), share their commitment

to provide the ideal environment and forage for their animals. Featured producers are participants of the Southern Maryland Meats (SMM) Program of SMADC. *“Each of the people to whom I sent the (video) link have commented without fail on the quality production. It is evident to me that your hard work has culminated in something very special. A job very, very well done.” Jason Leavitt, Wilson Dowell Farms.*



“Farms in Focus” Forestry Edition – Launched January 2021 – showcases the region’s forestry industry comprising professionally and privately managed woodlands, logging companies and sawmills that contribute more than \$585 million to the state and local economy and support upwards of 3,000 jobs. Forest stewards, professional foresters, and loggers demonstrate how careful forest management and judicious logging ensure Southern Maryland forests are continuously replenished and remain profitable, renewable

resources. *“Absolutely wonderful product. I am proud to have been able to work with all of you on this video production.” David Gailey, Regional Forester Maryland Forest Service, DNR*

“Farms in Focus” Row Crop & Vegetables Edition – Launched February 2021 – the final video in the series is a thoughtful expose of these core agricultural products. Emerging themes encompass cultivation and production and emphasize the fundamental act of farming - why producers do what they do, how farmers keep the bay and soils healthy and productive, build community, keep the food chain flowing, and ultimately how they are working to ensure the future of farming in Southern Maryland.

“This was beautiful and so nicely made.” Floating Lotus Farmstead. “The video is great! We received lots of compliments at the market. Thank you for inviting us to be a part of it.” Jose Prieto – Manager, Anne Arundel Farmers Market.



“Farms in Focus” ‘Why We Farm’ Promotional Edition – developed as a promotional introduction for the entire 8-part series; a collage of excerpts from each edition highlights the featured industries and entices the viewer to explore further.

A dedicated landing page/platform was created on SMADC.com to host the series. Through SMADC websites, associated social media platforms and YouTube channel videos engaged an estimated audience of more than 12,700 people.

Farms in Focus Series Highlights:

- **Facebook:** combined posts reached 6,570 users, with 141 combined ‘shares’
- **SMADC/Farms in Focus Page:** 462 Pageviews
- **YouTube:** 5,715 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 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 16,755 Total Users in FY’21.**

In FY'21 four new farmer/consumer informational landing page resources were launched:

- **Maryland Market Money (MMM)** – provides program details, FAQ's, and links to the main MMM website at marylandmarketmoney.org. *See full report page 15.*
- **Small Fruits Portal** – hosts 9 workshops on growing, selling and marketing small fruits and hops in Maryland. Presentations, associated research, and training videos are available to view or download. See report page:
- **Little Free Libraries (LFL)** – provides program details, information for prospective hosts, and interactive map of regional LFL locations. See report page:
- **Farms in Focus** – hosts the 8-edition video series, available free to view/use by farmers, producers, school systems and public. *See report page 19.*

Southern Maryland Oyster Guide - a region-wide online guide showcasing 70 profiles that highlight the region's oyster industry: producers (wild harvest and aquaculture), heritage/education sites and museums, restaurants and stores, waterman operated tours, plus research organizations and institutions, etc., connected with oyster production in Southern Maryland. **21 oyster producers promoted. The Oyster Guide website registered 2,906 Total Users in FY'21.**

Southern Maryland Meats Website – in January 2021 the SMM website was updated with new illustrative graphics and content to enhance user experience and information access for farmers and consumers, including revisions to 'Buyer and Cut Sheet Guides', 'For Farmers' page (marketing, grants, regulatory compliance, rental equipment), and Junior Program. **53 regional livestock producers promoted. The SMM website registered 7,614 Total Users in FY'21.**

Buy Local Challenge (BLC) Website – updated and refreshed in FY'21 with new signature graphics and content (recipes, contests, media kit, 'find/buy local' videos). The website is the main portal for the Maryland BLC hosting year-round statewide 'buy local' resources for consumers to find Maryland farm products and participate in BLC contests and events. **The BLC website registered 3,645 Total Users in FY'21.**

SMADC News and Social Media Platforms

The 'News and Events' portal at SMADC.com invites the agricultural community and consumers to contribute to the development of SMADC's programs and outreach 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 regularly review/update content for accuracy and continuity.

SMADC Facebook – SMADC's Facebook page is designed to be an interactive interface for the farming community enhancing engagement with consumers and stakeholders. **SMADC's Facebook registered 3,333 followers (350 New Followers) and engagement of 133,629 users in FY'21.**

SMADC Instagram – SMADC on Instagram engages with the farming community in a dynamic and pictorial way. The graphic news feed 'app' enables instant photo and video sharing. To see SMADC on Instagram search: @southern_maryland_ag. **1,656 Instagram followers (263 New Followers and 22 New Posts) and engagement of 7,930 users in FY'21.**

Twitter – While the SMADC Twitter is still active, the account took a hiatus during FY'21 as Facebook and Instagram became the primary communication platforms.

SMADC YouTube channel – A total of 28 videos published including the Farms in Focus Series, In A Cook’s Kitchen Series, and Small Fruits Portal webinars **gaining more than 3,800 total views.**

FY’21 Highlights:

- **400 So. Md. farms/ag. enterprises engaged, promoted, and benefitted. (36 new farms/ag. businesses in FY’21)**
- **87 agriculture businesses promoted (15 New in FY’21) – 2021 Farm Holiday Guide**
- **30 So.MD farmers markets, 22 farm stands/stores, and 10 regional markets promoted – 2021 Buy Local Guide**
- **50 regional horse barns/farms and 17 hay producers promoted – Horse Extra Guide**
- **53 So. Md. meat producers promoted – SMM Website**
- **58 livestock and 20 seafood producers promoted – Meat & Seafood Guide**
- **21 aquaculture and wild harvest oyster producers promoted – Oyster Guide**
- **3,333 Facebook followers (350 New) in FY’21**

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 regulatory assistance is frequently sought by regional and statewide producers/farms to help them navigate the complex requirements of multiple agencies (local, state and federal) 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 regulatory entities and industry experts to develop workshops and trainings, and offers one-on-one staff support for licensing, certification, permits, zoning and other land use issues as farms continue to explore new and diverse agritourism activities and value-added products.

Tutorials – SMADC’s online tutorials are endorsed by Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and provide step-by-step guidelines for Acidified Foods and On-Farm Processor/Meats licensing, and are available to producers in Southern Maryland and statewide.

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

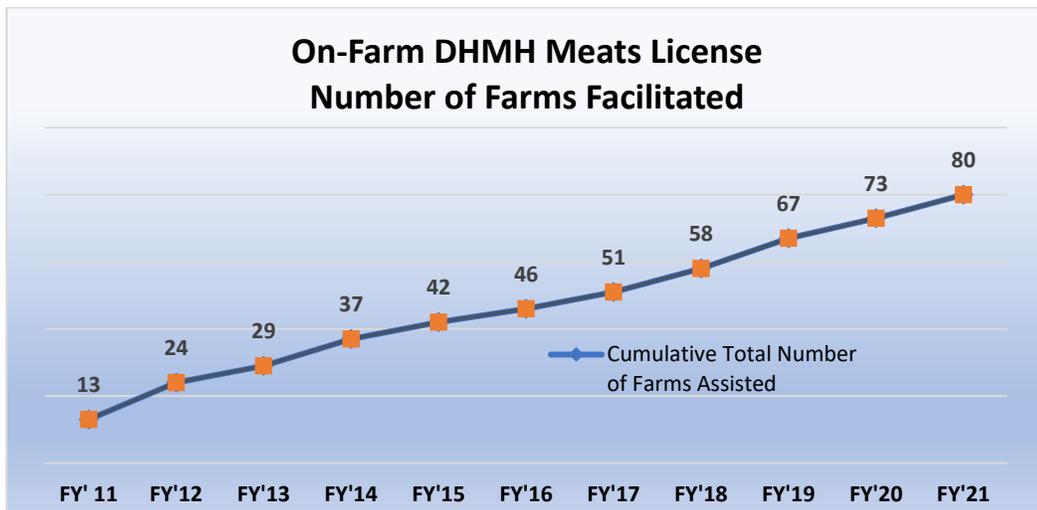
Trainings in FY’21:

- **COVID Pandemic support and communications** – staff attended multiple online webinars, discussion groups, and conferences designed to assist in financial or support recovery, and methods to keep communications between agriculture groups open and useful.

- **The Legal Side of Direct Farm Marketing** – attended webinar developed by the Agriculture Law Education Initiative (ALEI); topics featured direct and online sales, contract and liability. sales.

Examples of SMADC regulatory outreach in FY’21:

- **Westham Lane Butcher/Slaughter Facility** – USDA Grant of Inspection submitted, awarded, and implemented. Retail-exempt HACCP plan, SOP, SSOP, and GMP developed for retail “over the counter” cuts from facility production.
- **Butcher Shop USDA Upgrades** – staff is assisting two regional butchers with preliminary HACCP plans and facility upgrades for USDA Grant of Inspection processor licensing.
- **Mobile Poultry Processing Unit** – operational plans approved by multiple state agencies implemented. SMADC continues to monitor HACCP and sanitary documentation.
- **Acidified Foods Training Workshop** – SMADC hosted a virtual Better Process Control School training workshop in October 2020.
- **Maryland Food Ventures Curriculum and Online Portal** – staff provided expertise on acidified foods and value-added processing for new UME food entrepreneur training/sourcing resource.
- **Cottage Food Guidelines Working Group** – at the request of Senator Hester and Delegate Charkoudian and MDH Director Environmental Health Bureau Prevention and Health Promotion, SMADC staff and statewide ag. professionals reviewed and informed suggested revisions/updates to MDH Cottage Food guidance.
- **FDA Food Facility Registration** – 6 on-farm processors’ exemption status confirmed.
- **MDH Process Reviews** – 5 annual acidified foods process reviews/license renewals facilitated
- **On-Farm Processor Meats License** – 7 new producer licenses facilitated
- **Dairy Food Safety** – regulatory and communication assistance facilitated for Center for Milk Dairy Product Safety and Amish cheese dairy. 1 new recipe assisted/approved.
- **On-Farm Processor License Tutorial** – regulatory updates completed for freezer specifications and SOP for frozen meats storage during power outage.



FY'21 Highlights:

- **1 USDA Grant of Inspection (slaughter process) awarded to Westham Butcher Shop**
- **1 Retail-exempt plan for Westham Butcher Shop submitted**
- **2 USDA Grants of Inspection for butcher shop custom-exempt upgrades submitted**
- **1 Mobile poultry unit USDA-SSOP/SOP/HACCP plans approved, implemented**
- **1 Acidified foods training workshop facilitated**
- **6 FDA food facility exemption registrations facilitated**
- **5 MDH acidified process reviews facilitated**
- **7 new MDH on-farm processor meat licenses assisted**
- **1 new cheese recipe facilitated**

EDUCATION & WORKSHOPS

Small Fruits & Hops Information Resource Portal, September 2020 – developed and launched in partnership with the University of Maryland Extension (UME), **the new** virtual resource portal offers an extensive library of free information on everything producers need to know to grow, sell and market small fruits and hops in Southern Maryland and throughout the state of Maryland. Features include workshop presentations and associated research, marketing/sales strategies, and video tutorials on production techniques and pest management specific to Southern Maryland’s growing region. Also featured are the



results of 16 cultivar trials, conducted by UME at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center in Upper Marlboro. *The ‘Small Fruits Portal’ is made possible in part by a Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund Grant (RMPIF) and the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A total of 358 New Users registered on the Portal and 214 views of the video tutorials.*

Acidified Foods Workshop, October 2020 – developed in partnership with Dr. Y. Martin Lo, Process Authority and Ambassador of the International Union of Food Science & Technology, the full day virtual workshop offered Acidified Foods Better Process Control School training on food safety and regulation to satisfy Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Food and Drug Administration mandated certification requirements. Post-workshop surveys affirmed producers will implement practices to increase profitable outcomes for their farm/business. Workshop participants included farmers, chefs and staff from MDH and U.S. Department of Defense Commercial Auditors/Regulatory Inspection Fort Belvoir. **18 people attended** “*This was great - the acidified foods guide is an amazing resource. Thank you!*” – Workshop Participant.

Maryland Farm Bureau Winter Webinar, November 2020 – SMADC Director and Southern Maryland Meats Marketing Manager joined a panel hosted by Maryland Farm Bureau Winter Webinar Series to discuss livestock processing in Maryland. Discussion topics included how to increase the number of meat processing facilities available to producers. **203 people reached on social media.**

FY'21 Highlights:

- **2 SMADC-funded/sponsored workshops and presentations engaged a total of 221 individuals, farm businesses and producers**



Southern Maryland Regional Agricultural Strategy 2012—2021

Measuring for Results FY'21

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

Infrastructure:

- \$30,000 MAERDAF grant awarded for RAC kitchen
- 3 new pieces of equipment added to the program: Anne Arundel County – 6 ft. No Till Drill; Charles County – No Till Overseeder; and St. Mary's County – 16 ft. Poultry Litter Spreader
- To date, 41 pieces of equipment in inventory, available for farmers to rent across the region

Southern Maryland Meats (SMM):

- First ever, 'off-the-grid' So.MD slaughter facility receives USDA Grant of Inspection
- 54 producers participate in SMM
- 30 youth (11 new participants) signed up for FY'21/22 Jr. Program
- 16 youth program completers received stipends totaling \$1,600 (FY'21/22)
- 2,000+ attracted to "In A Cook's Kitchen" virtual cookery classes
- 2 applications submitted for USDA Grant of Inspection for retail processing
- 61 new Little Free Libraries installed throughout Southern Maryland

Education & Workshops:

- 2 SMADC-funded/sponsored workshops and presentations engaged a total of 221 individuals, farm businesses and producers

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

Financial Incentives:

- 14 Farmer Mini-Grants were awarded totaling \$24,225
- 1 value-added training scholarship awarded totaling \$80
- 6 events sponsored for a total of \$2,150

Marketing & Outreach:

- 400 So. Md. farms/ag. enterprises engaged, promoted, and benefitted. (36 new farms/ag. businesses in FY'21)
- 87 agriculture businesses promoted (15 New in FY'21) – 2021 Farm Holiday Guide

- 30 So.MD farmers markets, 22 farm stands/stores, and 10 regional markets promoted – 2021 Buy Local Guide
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- 3,333 Facebook followers (350 New) in FY’21

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- 1 Acidified foods training workshop facilitated
- 6 FDA food facility exemption registrations facilitated
- 5 MDH acidified process reviews facilitated
- 7 new MDH on-farm processor meat licenses assisted
- 1 new cheese recipe facilitated

Maryland FarmLINK:

- 1,546 followers on Maryland FarmLINK’s Facebook (100 new in FY’21)
- 10,920 Total Users (91.9% New) on the Maryland FarmLINK Website

GOAL 3: Preserve Southern Maryland farmland

SMADC did not receive funding in FY’21 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):

- 98,136 People Reached through BLC Facebook page engagement
- 3,645 Total Users on the BLC Website
- 5,900+ People Reached through the ‘Follow Me To’ Video Series
- Over 300 Photos submitted for the BLC Photo Contest
- 16,000 BLC Promotional Items distributed to 79 farmers markets statewide
- 45 MMM markets offer \$5 BLC Bonus Bucks

Maryland Market Money (MMM):

- 46 Maryland farmers markets, farm stands, and pop-ups in 12 Maryland counties participated in the 2021 season, including 12 Southern Maryland markets
- Over 265 raw agricultural producers (farmers, ranchers, and watermen) represented
- \$485,420 Awarded to MMM Program – including Maryland Department of Agriculture, Rural Maryland Council, Baltimore City, Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, and Amerigroup
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SMADC is a division of the
TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL
for SOUTHERN MARYLAND