



Nutrient Management News

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

SUMMER 2021

Secretary's Message

Maryland's Nutrient Management Program is one of the oldest in the country and continues to serve as a model for other states to follow. On July 1, our Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) regulations will be fully implemented. In this issue, you can read about improvements we've made to MDA's Manure Transport Program, additional practices that are now eligible for cost-share funding, and other aggressive actions the department has taken to ensure a smooth transition to the PMT for farms with high soil phosphorus levels.



Also in this issue, you'll read about one of the Nutrient Management Program's best-kept secrets — a highly successful internship program for high school and college students seeking careers in agriculture.

Finally, please mark your calendars for our annual cover crop sign-up. For a second year, enrollment will be entirely by mail. Be sure to take advantage of this once-a-year opportunity to apply for grants that can help you build healthy soils and protect local waterways. You can find out more about our cover crop grants in the accompanying article (see right).

Best wishes for a safe, healthy, and productive planting season.

Joseph Bartusiller

Grants to Plant Cover Crops

Don't let your fields sit idle this fall. Use our grants to plant cover crops instead! Cold-hardy cover crops work all winter long to capture nutrients, fight erosion, smother weeds, and build healthy soils for spring crops.

Mail-in registration for this year's annual cover crop sign-up runs **July 1 through July 16**. If you participated in last year's cover crop program, check your mailbox for an application packet. Applications will also be available at mda.maryland.gov beginning July 1.



Rent Me!

The Queen Anne's County Soil Conservation District has added a new Lanco poultry litter spreader to its rental equipment fleet, thanks to a grant provided by the Nutrient Management Program. The spreader allows farmers with acceptable soil phosphorus levels to try out manure as a fertilizer and soil conditioner without having to make an initial equipment investment. It can also be used as an additional spreader by farmers who are already using poultry litter. For rental information, call the district at 410-758-3136, ext. 3.

Best Practice Spotlight

Satellite Storage

New cost-share funding for satellite storage facilities is now available to farmers who want to use poultry manure to build healthy soils. Eligible farms can now apply for grants that cover up to 87.5% of the cost to erect storage structures to protect poultry manure and its valuable nutrients until conditions are right for field application. Apply for these grants through your local soil conservation district.

More Good News for Farmers

Governor Larry Hogan has signed off on a new law that authorizes MDA to cover up to 100% of the cost to install certain high priority conservation practices that improve water quality, provide additional environmental benefits, and help Maryland meet its 2025 Chesapeake Bay cleanup goals. To find out which practices qualify, contact your local soil conservation district.

Where We Stand—PMT Update

With the deadline for full implementation of the Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) just weeks away, the majority of farmers with elevated soil phosphorus levels are now in full compliance with the regulations. MDA continues to ensure that affected farmers have adequate resources in place to protect local waterways from phosphorus runoff (see related articles) and is pursuing new research, technologies and markets for manure. Questions? Please contact your regional nutrient management specialist listed on the back of this newsletter.



Hauling Poultry Manure Just Got More Affordable

Farmers or manure brokers can now receive up to \$28/ton to haul poultry manure away from areas with high soil phosphorus levels to qualifying fields that can benefit from this natural fertilizer and soil conditioner. The new rate was announced as part of a broader effort to encourage farmers to try Maryland's own homegrown poultry manure as a nutrient source for crops.

Poultry manure builds healthy soils and is an ideal fertilizer for corn, hay and organic certified field crops. Farmers with qualifying fields (soil phosphorus levels below MD P-FIV 101) should visit mda.maryland.gov/manure or call 410-841-5864 to apply for Maryland's Manure Transport Grants. Want to expedite transport? Check out the program's *Fast Track* option.

Funding for Climate-Friendly Practices

Several new climate and water friendly practices are now available for state cost-share funding. These include windbreaks, hedgerows, tree and shrub establishment, silvopasture systems that integrate trees into active pastures, and pasture fencing for improved management. Contact your local soil conservation district to see if these practices can benefit your operation.



ELECTRONIC REPORTING OFF AND RUNNING

Maybe it was the lure of going paperless. Or the bonus of having an electronic reporting form that actually does the math for you. Whatever the reason, 1,250 Maryland farmers submitted their annual implementation reports (AIRs) electronically this year, through **Maryland OneStop**. The figure represents nearly 25 percent of regulated farmers.

“I wasn’t sure what to expect,” said Dwight Dotterer, who heads the Nutrient Management Program. Dotterer has been working with the technical team at **Maryland OneStop** for more than a year to create an electronic version of the AIR.

“They say the devil is in the details, and I couldn’t agree more,” said Dotterer. “But from the very start, the goal has been to use technology to make AIR reporting simpler and easier. It’s an ongoing process, but we’ve come a long way.”

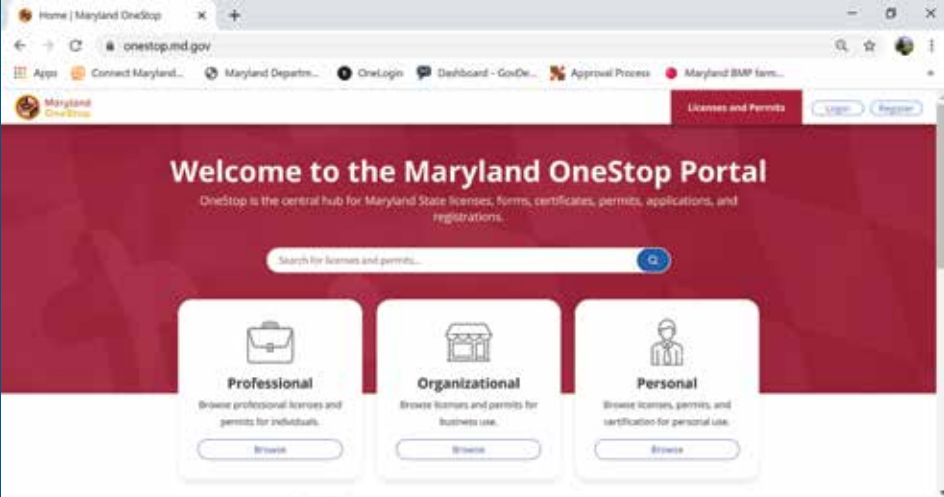
Developed in 2018, **Maryland OneStop** serves as a central hub for permits, licenses, certifications, and registrations from across state government. The portal continues to add services as additional departments and agencies come online.

Michelle Chesnick, a Wicomico County chicken farmer, had this to say about her **Maryland OneStop** experience...

“MDA has done an outstanding job of working with developers to provide an online reporting tool that is efficient, easy to use, and provides immediate feedback. As a CAFO operator, we previously used the OneStop portal last summer when Maryland offered relief to poultry operations due to COVID. We greatly appreciate the efforts of all involved to get this accomplished and I encourage all operators to consider using electronic submission of their AIR next year.”

Special Maryland OneStop Workshop Planned

Do you want to file your AIR electronically but don’t have computer or internet access? We have a solution for you! Next winter, the Nutrient Management Program will offer a special **Maryland OneStop** workshop for farmers who do not have the technical resources needed to file their AIRs electronically. MDA will provide laptops along with tech support from our nutrient management specialists to all workshop participants. Look for registration information in the next edition of *Maryland Nutrient Management News* or contact the nutrient management specialist serving your area for more information.



MDE Taps Darren Alles to Head CAFO Program

Darren Alles, MDA's long serving nutrient management specialist for Baltimore, Cecil and Harford counties, has joined the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) as head of its Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) discharge permit program.

Hired by MDA in 1999 following the creation of the Nutrient Management Program by Maryland lawmakers, Darren was a member of the department's original team of nutrient management specialists. With more than 22 years in agriculture, Darren knows his way around the barnyard and is well qualified to manage the CAFO program. Congratulations, Darren.

For the time being, farmers in Baltimore, Cecil and Harford counties should contact Howard Callahan, for compliance assistance. Howard can be reached at 410-279-4003 or howard.callahan@maryland.gov

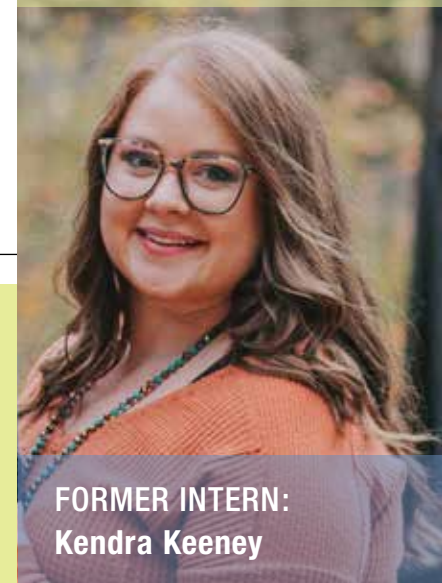


Where Are They Now?

Did you know that investing in young people is a top priority for the Nutrient Management Program (NMP)? In 2014, the NMP launched an internship program to help high school and college students gain essential but sometimes elusive on-the-job training needed to start a career in agriculture and natural resources planning.

To date, 13 students have taken part in our internship program. These interns provide vital job functions for the NMP. They check AIRs and urban fertilizer reports for completeness, make corrections noted by our nutrient management specialists, and provide critical data entry to support the Chesapeake Bay Program's watershed model.

All of our interns have graduated from high school or college and many have gone on to begin their careers at state and federal agencies. Others remain active in agriculture in a variety of ways. In this issue of *Nutrient Management News*, we are pleased to highlight one of our very first interns, Kendra Keeney. Future issues will feature other remarkable interns that we've had the privilege to mentor.



**FORMER INTERN:
Kendra Keeney**

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|---------------------------|--|
| Former NMP Intern: | Kendra Keeney |
| Internship Date: | Summer 2015 |
| Education: | B.S., Business Management and Marketing, the Pennsylvania State University, 2018 |
| Employer: | Maryland Department of Agriculture, Nutrient Management Program |
| Position: | Nutrient Management Specialist Trainee |

What She Said...

"The internship program is a great place to build relationships that can lead to new business opportunities and friendships. It's also a great place to learn how truly diverse Maryland agriculture is. We have so many different types of operations, from grain and vegetable farms to poultry and livestock operations, vineyards, greenhouse operations and even cannabis farms. Nutrient management planning helps these farms operate more efficiently and protect local water quality. Growing up in the agricultural community I knew I always wanted to have a career in agriculture and the NM intern program was a great place to start."

SOILS DATA DUE IN 2021

It's that time again. Maryland's Phosphorus Management Tool regulations require new soils data to be submitted to the department once every six years by certified consultants and farmers who prepare their own nutrient management plans. The reports are due September 30, 2021. Reporting instructions will be mailed later this summer. Questions? Email bryan.harris@maryland.gov





Urban Update

Electronic Reporting is Here

This year, regulated businesses had the option to submit their Annual Fertilizer Application Reports electronically through **Maryland OneStop**. Almost 500 businesses took advantage of this time and paper-saving option. Next up, certification and business license renewals are scheduled for online renewal later this summer. To register for an account, go to onestop.md.gov

Top Compliance Issues – and How to Avoid Them

Do any of these violations ring a bell? It's never too late to practice good fertilizer management and get into compliance.

- 1. Do you record your target application rate?** Rate should be determined before you apply fertilizer, not after. Record the rate of fertilizer or nitrogen that you plan to apply.
- 2. Do you over-apply lawn fertilizer?** Do you apply nitrogen to lawns at the rate of 1 lb./1,000 sq. ft.? If so, you are over-applying fertilizer. Unless you use an approved enhanced efficiency fertilizer, the maximum nitrogen application rate is 0.9 lb./1000 sq. ft. per application.
- 3. Have you applied N or P to lawns during the fertilizer blackout dates?** This is a clear violation of Maryland's Lawn Fertilizer Law. Adjust your fertilizer program to ensure that you are finished applying N by December 1 and P₂O₅ by November 15.
- 4. Do you apply more than 0.5 lb. N/1000 sq. ft. per application between November 15 and December 1?** This is another clear violation of Maryland's Lawn Fertilizer Law. Adjust your program accordingly.
- 5. Do you keep product labels?** MDA's enforcement staff are required to check product labels to determine the amount of slow-release nitrogen in the fertilizer. Even if you apply less than 0.7 lb. N/1000 sq. ft. per application, the law still requires you to keep a copy of the label. There is an easy way to comply with this requirement—use your cell phone to take a photo of the label information on the fertilizer bag.

TRAINING CALENDAR

Agricultural Nutrient Management Program

Fundamentals of Nutrient Management Training

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|--------------------------|---|
| Dates | June 21-24, 2021 |
| Format | Online |
| Who Should Attend | Individuals who plan to take the Maryland Nutrient Management Certification Exam |
| How to Register | Visit mda.maryland.gov and type "Nutrient Management Training" in the search box at the top of the page. Follow the link to training classes. |

Maryland Nutrient Management Consultant Certification Exam

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|--------------------------|--|
| Date | August 6, 2021 |
| Format | In Person |
| Locations | Annapolis |
| Who Should Attend | Individuals who want to become certified to write nutrient management plans for farmers. |
| How to Register | Visit mda.maryland.gov and type "Nutrient Management Training" in the search box at the top of the page. Follow the link to the exam notice. |

Learn and Earn Continuing Education Credits On-Line

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| Dates | Our on-demand webinar library lets you earn continuing education credits anytime. Several new webinars were recently added to the library in 2021. |
| How to Access the Webinar Library | Visit mda.maryland.gov and type "Agricultural Nutrient Management Webinars" in the search box at the top of the page. Click the link to go to the webinar library. Don't forget to download the quiz for the webinar you plan to attend before you begin. |

Turfgrass Nutrient Management Program

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training/Exam

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|--------------------------|--|
| Dates/ Locations | July 14, 2021 / Annapolis, MD |
| Who Should Attend | Individuals who want to become certified to apply fertilizer to lawns that they manage. Optional training sessions are available |
| How to Register | Visit mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer . Check back often for new offerings. |

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Continuing Education Classes

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|--------------------------|--|
| Dates | New two and six credit offerings are being planned and will be posted on the website as soon as they are finalized. |
| Format | Online |
| Who Should Attend | Certified professional fertilizer applicators who want to renew their certifications. |
| How to Register | Visit mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer . Check back often for new offerings. |

- 6. Are your trained employees registered with MDA?** Employees who apply both fertilizer and pesticides should carry 2 cards—a Registered Employee photo ID card from MDA's Pesticide Regulation Section and a fertilizer Trained Employee (TE) card issued by the Nutrient Management Program.

- 7. Do you apply phosphorus to lawns without a soil test?** You must have a soil test that shows the need to apply phosphorus to lawns for routine maintenance or for over-seeding.
- 8. Have you signed your records?** This is the most common record-keeping mistake that we encounter. Please sign your records!



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation
Nutrient Management Program
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mda.maryland.gov

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*
Joseph Bartenfelder, *Secretary*
Julianne A. Oberg, *Deputy Secretary*



Western Maryland

Maryland Department of Agriculture Nutrient Management Offices

Allegheny, Garrett and Washington counties

P.O. Box 459
Hancock, MD 21750
Contact: Keith Potter, 410-279-3506 or
keith.potter@maryland.gov

Carroll and Frederick counties

92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110
Frederick, MD 21702
Contact: Moana Himes, 410-353-4320 or
moana.himes@maryland.gov

Central and Southern Maryland

Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery counties

92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 110
Frederick, MD 21702
Contact: Kenny Favorite, 410-507-4811 or
kenny.favorite@maryland.gov

Baltimore, Cecil and Harford counties

P.O. Box 549
Cordova, MD 21625
Contact: Howard Callahan, 410-279-4003 or
howard.callahan@maryland.gov

Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's counties

P.O. Box 652
Leonardtown, MD 20650
Contact: Weylin Anderson, 410-980-9479 or
weylin.anderson@maryland.gov

Eastern Shore

Caroline and Dorchester counties

P.O. Box 340
Marydel, MD 21649
Contact: Steve Szelestei, 410-353-5660 or
steve.szelestei@maryland.gov

Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties

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Contact: Howard Callahan, 410-279-4003 or
howard.callahan@maryland.gov

Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties

27722 Nanticoke Road, Unit 2
Salisbury, MD 21801
Contact: Robin Culver, 410-507-4949 or
robin.culver@maryland.gov

Nutrient Management COVID-19 Update:

- **We're open for business!** To serve you better, we have updated our mail and phone directories (see left).
- **Maryland is taking decisive action to address COVID-19.** The Hogan-Rutherford Administration's highest priority is to keep Marylanders safe. Visit covidlink.maryland.gov for the latest updates.

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

- Electronic Reporting Takes Root
- PMT Update
- Sign up for Grants to Plant Cover Crops

Maryland Nutrient Management News is published by the Maryland Nutrient Management Program. It is designed to help farmers, consultants, and lawn care professionals comply with Maryland's nutrient management regulations. Comments and suggestions should be directed to the Maryland Nutrient Management Program, Maryland Department of Agriculture. Email: ninfo.mda@maryland.gov

