



Nutrient Management News

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

WINTER 2022

Reporting Forms Due March 1st



*Save time and paper—
File your report electronically*

Farmers and turfgrass professionals have until **March 1** to submit annual implementation reports (AIRs) and fertilizer application reports (AFARs) to the department. For a second year, the reports can be submitted electronically using the **Maryland OneStop** portal.

Electronic filing offers many advantages. Users report that it is faster, easier, and more accurate than paper reporting. **Maryland OneStop** will send you a delivery confirmation when your report is submitted along with status updates as data is verified. To get started, go to onestop.md.gov and register for an account. Next, browse through the state agencies for the Department of Agriculture. Follow the instructions to complete your report. For those who want to continue to submit paper reports, a mail-in option remains available this year. Questions? Please contact your regional nutrient management specialist for assistance.



Secretary's Message



In recent months, I have heard from many farmers about concerns over rising fertilizer costs. By many indications, fertilizer prices are anticipated to remain high in the new year. Now more than ever, it is important to spend time evaluating your nutrient management plan for efficiency and effectiveness. Having a targeted, accurate plan can save valuable time, money, and resources. In this newsletter, you can learn about the steps you can take now to fully utilize the nutrients that are already available in your soil.

In this issue, you can also review our restrictions on spreading manure in winter. These restrictions are now in effect for all farms, regardless of size. You can also read up on best management practices that qualify for up to 100% cost-share. Many of these practices can help you comply with environmental regulations and protect local water quality.

As we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to thank our farmers and producers for your incredible hard work and resilience in keeping our industry strong and our food supply chain moving forward. The citizens of Maryland and the department appreciate all that you do each and every day. Wishing you all the best for a healthy, productive, and prosperous 2022.

Joe Bartenfelder
Maryland Agriculture Secretary

Winter Manure Restrictions Run DECEMBER 16 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28



Spreading manure in winter is prohibited for all livestock operations—regardless of size—from December 16 through February 28. Farmers may resume spreading manure on March 1 as long as fields are not saturated, snow-covered, or hard-frozen. These rules are aimed at protecting local waterways from nutrient losses over the winter months.

Do...

- Store liquid manure sources generated on the farm in structures.
- Apply potash and liming materials, if needed.

Do not...

- Apply organic nutrient sources to fields before March 1.
- Apply chemical fertilizer before March 1. There are exceptions to this rule. Please contact your regional nutrient management specialist or University of Maryland Extension advisor for guidance.

Remember...

- Manure deposited directly by livestock is not restricted.
- Spreading can resume March 1 as long as fields are not saturated, snow covered, or hard-frozen.
- Maryland's winter manure spreading restrictions apply to all livestock operations—large and small. Contact your soil conservation district for free help with storage solutions.



Emergency Winter Spreading Needs Approval

Spreading manure in winter is not allowed in Maryland. If winter spreading becomes unavoidable, call 410-841-5959 or your regional nutrient management specialist before any spreading takes place. We will work with you to prevent overflows from liquid or non-stackable manures to minimize impacts to water quality. Stackable solids may not be applied to fields in winter, but temporary stockpiling is allowed for solid manures.



Rules for Temporary Stockpiles

Temporary field stockpiling of poultry litter and other “stackable” organic nutrient sources (60 percent or less moisture content) is allowed only when all other storage options are unavailable. Here are the rules:

- Stack the stockpile at least 6 feet high with a peak to allow it to shed rainfall.
- Make certain that the stockpile area is:
 - At least 100 feet from surface water and irrigation or treatment ditches
 - At least 35 feet away if a vegetative buffer is in place
 - At least 150 feet from wells, springs, and wetlands
 - At least 300 feet from wells that are downhill from the stockpile
 - At least 200 feet from homes not on the operator's property
 - Outside flood prone areas and areas prone to ponding
 - No farther than 150 feet from the top of a 3 percent slope with no diversion
- Spread stockpiled manure on fields no earlier than March 1 the first spring after the stockpile was created. Follow your nutrient management plan.
- After the stockpile is removed, thoroughly scrape or clean the ground and restore the area to its original condition.
- Reseed the area with grass or a crop.

Questions?

Contact your regional nutrient management specialist listed on the back of this newsletter.

SAVE MONEY

Follow Your Nutrient Management Plan

With rising fertilizer costs making front page news, this is a good time to take a closer look at your farm's nutrient management plan. Believe it or not, your nutrient management plan can actually save you money by maximizing fertilizer efficiency.



Here are some ways to reduce fertilizer costs next spring:

- If your soil tests in the optimum range for phosphorus or potassium, it is not necessary to add more nutrients to grow a healthy crop. Research shows that additional fertilizer applications result in little to no yield increase when soil test levels are optimum.
- If you have a limited budget, adjust your soil's pH before you buy additional fertilizer. Correcting your soil's pH will improve nutrient availability and chemical effectiveness.
- If you have access to poultry litter, animal manures, or other organic nutrient sources, revise your nutrient management plan to include these natural alternatives to commercial fertilizer.
- If you currently use animal manures, consider strategies to reduce nitrogen loss from volatilization. This will increase the amount of nitrogen that is available for crops.
- If you use commercial fertilizer, split nitrogen applications for greater efficiency. Split applications will more than pay for the extra application cost. Consider using urease inhibitors or other nitrogen treatments to prevent or reduce nitrogen losses through volatilization.

Wanted: Soil P Data

Soil phosphorus test results required by Maryland's Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) regulations were due to MDA by September 30, 2021. Nutrient management consultants and farmers who prepare their own nutrient management plans are required to submit this information to the department once every six years. If you have not submitted field level soil Phosphorus-Fertility Index Value (P-FIV) results for farms that you manage or service, please do so immediately to avoid penalties. Please contact Bryan Harris, at 410-841-5951 or bryan.harris@maryland.gov to report your soil data.

AIR Workshops Postponed

Due to rising COVID-19 cases, the Maryland OneStop workshops for electronic AIR reporting have been postponed until further notice.

Urban Update

Fertilizer Blackout Dates Now in Effect

Fertilizer blackout dates authorized by Maryland's Lawn Fertilizer Law are in effect through February 28, 2022. Products containing nitrogen and phosphorus may not be applied to turf during this time. Potassium and lime may still be applied during the blackout dates since they are not considered a threat to water quality. Fertilizer applications containing nitrogen and phosphorus may be resumed on March 1, 2022, as long as the ground is not frozen or heavy rain is not predicted.

Fertilizer Reports Due by March 1

Business license holders are required to file Annual Fertilizer Application Reports (AFARs) with the department by March 1, 2022. These reports summarize nitrogen, phosphate and potash applied to lawns that they managed in 2021. Postcards containing instructions on how to e-file fertilizer reports through the **Maryland OneStop** portal will be mailed to all license-holders in January. Paper AFAR forms are available for download at mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer.

Online Recertification Training

The department will hold virtual recertification training on February 9 and May 18, 2022. Each session offers 2 continuing education credits. Professional fertilizer applicators are required to earn 6 continuing education credits within a 3-year cycle. The current cycle began July 1, 2020 and ends June 30, 2023. See the training calendar for registration information.

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Exams

Indoor Professional Fertilizer Exams have resumed with limited attendance. This policy is subject to change. Check the website for updates.

Fertilizer Record Reviews

In-person fertilizer record reviews will resume in February. We will continue to work with individuals who prefer not to meet in person.

Questions?

Contact Judy McGowan at judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov or 410-980-9084.

Where Are They Now?

Since 2014, the Nutrient Management Program has provided on-the-job training to talented young people who share a deep commitment to agriculture and the conservation of our state's natural resources. In his issue of *Maryland Nutrient Management News*, we are pleased to profile our former intern, Kristina Stair. Future issues will feature other outstanding interns that we have had the privilege to mentor.

Name: Kristina Stair

Education: Bachelor of Science in Earth Science, Minor in Sustainable Studies, Frostburg State University, 2018

Current Employer: Maryland Department of Agriculture

Position: Agricultural Resource Conservation Specialist

Internship Duties: Checked Annual Implementation Reports (AIRs) and urban fertilizer reports for accuracy and completeness; made corrections noted by the program's nutrient management specialists and provided critical data to support the Chesapeake Bay Program's watershed model.

In Her Words: I am very happy to be working for MDA in a field position at the Washington County Soil Conservation District. I grew up in Keedysville, where my grandfather has a farm, so I know the area well. I believe that the experience I gained during my internship helped me to land this position. As an intern, I learned a lot about how farmers raise crops and manage manure. I even earned my nutrient management certification. I enjoyed working with the employees at the Nutrient Management Program. I feel that the program really helps farmers become conscious about how they are doing things. ”



100% Cost-Share is Here!

Soil conservation districts are now accepting applications for high-priority conservation practices that qualify for up to 100% cost-share through the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program. Increased state funding for these practices was approved earlier this year by Governor Larry Hogan. Applicants must be in good standing with MACS and the Nutrient Management Program. Other restrictions may apply. Practices now eligible for up to 100% cost-share funding include:

- Conservation cover
- Conservation drainage practices
- Critical area planting
- Diversion
- Field border
- Filter strip
- Grade stabilization structure
- Grassed waterway
- Lined waterway or outlet
- Riparian forest buffer
- Riparian herbaceous cover
- Sediment basin
- Stream exclusion fencing
- Terrace system
- Tree and shrub establishment
- Wetland restoration or creation

Best Practice Spotlight



Stream Exclusion Fencing

This practice can help you meet nutrient management setback requirements and protect local water quality. Up to 100% cost-share funding is now available to install stream exclusion fencing for livestock through the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program. Apply for this practice at your local soil conservation district.

Back By Popular Demand...

MDA's Conservation Buffer Initiative returns for a second year with attractive incentive payments to plant streamside buffers on farms to protect water quality. New this year, farmers can receive up to \$4,500/acre to install riparian forest buffers with pasture fencing. Deer fencing next to grass buffers is also eligible for funding. Under this program, farmers can apply for financial and technical assistance to install riparian forest buffers, grass buffers planted next to waterways or field ditches, and watercourse access control areas adjacent to pastures. Applications will be accepted by mail or e-mail from January 10 through February 18, 2022. Learn more at bit.ly/MDA_Buffer

TRAINING CALENDAR

Agricultural Nutrient Management Program

Maryland Crop Production Meetings

Dates	Agronomy: February 3, 2022 / February 15, 2022 / February 16, 2022 / February 23, 2022 / March 4, 2022 / March 30, 2022 Fruit Growers: February 10, 2022 / March 1, 2022 Forage: January 25, 2022 / January 27, 2022 Vegetable Growers: January 27, 2022 / February 8, 2022 / February 16, 2022
Format/Locations	Virtual and in-person meetings at locations statewide.
Times	Various; average length of each meeting is 3-4 hours
Who Should Attend	Farmers and consultants who want the latest research and data to make informed 2022 growing decisions for agricultural crops. Attendance is free.
Credits	Qualifies for nutrient management voucher training and continuing education credits. Pesticide applicator and certified crop advisor credits are also offered.
How to Register	Go to https://extension.umd.edu/news-events/news/agriculture-extension-winter-crop-production-meetings

Nutrient Management Voucher Training and Recertification

Dates	February 17, 2022 / March 8, 2022 / March 10, 2022 / April 19, 2022
Format/Locations	Virtual and in-person at locations statewide.
Who Should Attend	Farmers who apply nutrients to 10 or more acres of cropland are required to attend this free two-hour training once every three years. (Farmers who are certified to write their own nutrient management plans are not required to attend voucher training. Instead, they are required to earn 6 continuing education credits every 3 years.)
How to Register	Go to https://extension.umd.edu/resource/pesticide-and-nutrient-management-meetings

Nutrient Management Exam

Date	February 10, 2022
Time	9-11 am
Who Should Attend	Individuals who want to become certified to write nutrient management plans for farmers.
How to Register	Go to mda.maryland.gov and click on Nutrient Management in the Quick Links Bar. Follow the link to training classes.

Learn and Earn Continuing Education Credits On-Line

Ongoing	Many education programs qualify for Maryland Nutrient Management continuing education credits. Even if you can't attend a webinar session "live," you might be able to earn continuing education credits at a later date.
How to Register	Go to mda.maryland.gov and click on Nutrient Management in the Quick Links Bar. Follow the link to training classes.

Turfgrass Nutrient Management Program

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training/Exam

Date	February 16, 2022
Location	MDA Headquarters, Annapolis
Who Should Attend	Individuals who want to take the exam to become certified to apply fertilizer to lawns that they manage. An optional training session is available.
Website	Go to mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer . Check back often for new offerings.

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Continuing Education Classes

Dates	February 9, 2022 / May 18, 2022
Format/Locations	Virtual or in-person at locations statewide
Who Should Attend	Certified professional fertilizer applicators who need to renew their certifications.
How to Register	Go to mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer . Check back often for new offerings.



Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*
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Maryland Department of Agriculture Nutrient Management Offices

Western Maryland

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Nutrient Management News

What's Inside:

- How to Fight Back Against Rising Fertilizer Costs
- File Your Annual Reports Electronically
- Winter Manure Spreading Restrictions Now in Effect

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: nminfo.mda@maryland.gov

