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FARMING AT



METRO'S EDGE

www.farmingatmetrosedge.com

*Farming at Metro's Edge: Sustaining Agriculture
in Frederick and Montgomery Counties*

An Agricultural Planning Conference

To be held at The Universities at Shady Grove

9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville, MD 20850

January 11 and 12, 2013

The view from Sugarloaf Mountain of fertile fields next to burgeoning subdivisions, captures the threat and the promise facing agriculture in Frederick and Montgomery Counties in the coming decades. This two-day conference will look back on 30 years of protecting farms and farming enterprises in both counties; the current state of agriculture with its challenges and its opportunities, and explore potential strategic collaborations among farmers and the public that can serve to sustain a vibrant agricultural heritage in the region.

The two-day conference will draw together farmers, consumers, citizen advocates, government agencies and experts from the two counties and beyond. Through focused discussions and planning, the conference will seek to layout strategies for ensuring that farming in the two neighboring counties will remain sustainable and productive in years to come.

For more information: www.farmingatmetrosedge.com or Peg Coleman: peg@pleasantspringsfarm.com, 301-972-3452

We welcome your participation!

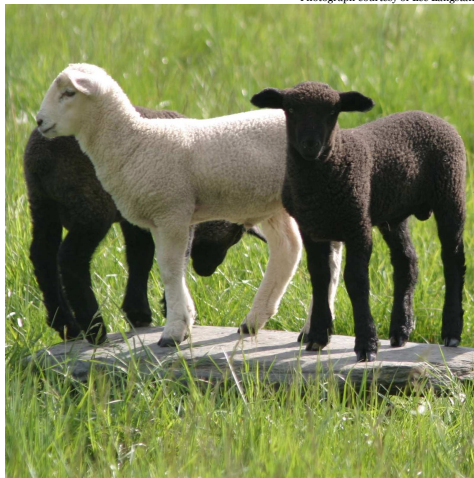
In **Montgomery County** 100,000 acres are set aside by ordinance for the preservation of agriculture. Farmers harvest commodity crops, hay, fruits and vegetables, both conventional and certified organic. Livestock raised include, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas, pigs, chickens, horses and cattle. The last are raised largely for meat, as the dairy industry in the County has dwindled greatly, while the equine population continues to grow.

The **Frederick County** agricultural community is strong in dairy and grain. More than 80% of Frederick's land zoned for agriculture is used to grow corn, soybeans, wheat, barley and hay. The dairy industry makes up 40% of the annual gross agricultural sales in the county. Frederick has seen a strong diversification in the agricultural industry over the last ten years with Christmas tree farms, wineries, nurseries, organic and specialized agriculture farms becoming more prevalent.

Nevertheless, farmers in the area face increasing challenges associated with continuing residential development, limited marketing opportunities, challenges transporting commodities to market, increased local and state regulations and difficulty incorporating new opportunities on the farm such as alternative energy production. To ensure the continued viability of agriculture in Frederick and Montgomery counties, as well as similar areas nearby, a concerted effort must be made to understand agriculture as it exists today, and to encourage its continued growth in the metropolitan area.

Invitees will include state and local elected and appointed officials, business, civic, and farm community leaders.

Photograph courtesy of Lee Langstaff



The Conference Advisory Committee

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