

Sustainable Agriculture *Workgroup*

Progress Report

April 2011



Presentation Outline

A. SAW Goals

B. SAW Progress

1. Communication/Education

a. Marketing Workshop

b. Tobacco Barn Workshop

c. Organic Farming Workshop

d. Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm

e. SMADC Grants

f. Thrive newsletter

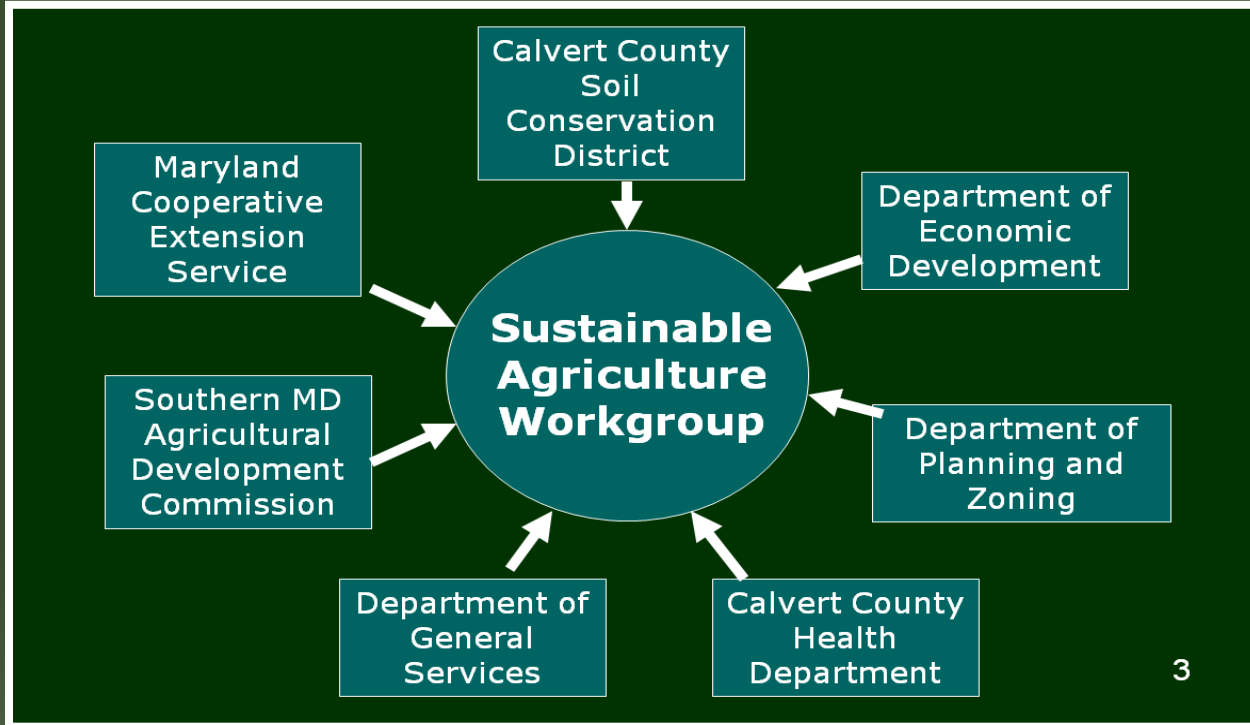
2. Farmers Market News

B. Sustainability Awards



A. Sustainable Agriculture Workgroup

Stronger Together



B. SAW Goals

- Continue with Thrive Newsletter
- Hold two workshops, including a meat trailer workshop and small fruits/vegetables workshop.
- Continue to work with the state to improve regulatory environment for value-added products
- Continue to pursue farm co-op or Food Hub



Marketing Workshop

Successful Marketing Strategies for Farmers

Wednesday, November 17, 6:30 p.m.
Calvert Library, Prince Frederick



Featuring
Shannon Dill
County Extension Director
& Agriculture Educator –
UMD Extension
Talbot County

Ms. Dill grew up active in 4-H and FFA on the Eastern Shore. She earned a BS in Agriculture Business and a MS in Agriculture Economics at the University of Wyoming.

In her current position in Maryland she offers agriculture production and farm management workshops.



Sponsored by **Calvert County**
Sustainable Agriculture Workgroup

There is a growing market for local produce and meat. Farmers ~ come learn about the joys and challenges of marketing your farm products and get ready to offer them at farmers' markets and farm stands next year

For information call Denise Cherry at 410-535-2348 or email CherryDM@co.cal.md.us



Save the Tobacco Barns

The Calvert County Historic District Commission
PRESENTS

SAVE THE TOBACCO BARNS!

Tax Credits and Other Strategies



Featuring

Liz Creveling Petrella
LEED, AP
Technical Preservation
Services
National Park Service

Ms. Petrella grew up in Southern Maryland and is familiar with budget and maintenance issues facing barn owners who no longer grow tobacco.

THURSDAY, January 13, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church Parish Hall
on Church Street in Prince Frederick

The doors of the Parish Hall at St. Paul's
Episcopal Church will open at 6:30 p.m. –
light refreshments will be served

For more information, contact
Kirsti Uunila at (410) 535-1600 x2504 or
email UunilaK@co.cal.md.us

- Learn about Federal, state, and local programs that provide financial assistance for barn repair.



In partnership with

Calvert County
Sustainable Agriculture Workgroup



The Mechanics of Going Organic



Organic Farmer: Ed Fry encourages farmers about the economic opportunity of going organic.



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BISCOE GRAY HERITAGE FARM MASTER PLAN

A Comprehensive Design + Implementation Plan for a Unique, Public Cultural Heritage Destination
Calvert County Board of Commissioners • August 2010





Figure 23. Artistic vision of Farmyard, showing Kitchen Garden (on left), Animal Barn, Coops, Paddocks, and Community Supported Agriculture Fields (on right).

Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission (SMADC) Grants

- High tunnel – Partnering with ACLT – Location will be Double Oak Farm (September 2011)
- Continue marketing meat trailer to encourage local meat production
- Pursue co-op or food hub



Thrive

Volume 1, Issue 6
Winter 2010



Sustainable Agriculture in Calvert County

Welcome

...to *Thrive*, a newsletter focusing on sustainable agriculture in Calvert County, Maryland.

The Board of County Commissioners of Calvert County formed The Sustainable Agriculture Workgroup with members from the Soil Conservation District, the Department of Economic Development, the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Office, the County Health Department, the Department of General Services and the Department of Planning and Zoning to promote agriculture in the County.

ISSUE 061010



Three generations of the Swann family accept the Sustainable Farmer of the Year award



Sustainability Awards Recognizing Calvert County Efforts



As Calvert County adjusts to life without tobacco, some farmers have shifted their focus to crops that can be sold at local markets, are profitable, are more diversified, and provide options for "value-added" sales. Recognizing consumer interest in environmentally friendly practices, they are

Swann's Farm

using growing methods that enrich the soil and allow for minimal use of chemical pesticides. To recognize the efforts of farmers, markets, and restaurants helping to make "buy-local" happen in Calvert County, the Board of County Commissioners recently presented the first ever annual Calvert County Sustainability Awards. Nominations were accepted for "Sustainable Farmer of the Year." Farms that were nominated were to have had a Soil Conservation Plan in place, were to be utilizing best management practices in soil conservation, have a diversity of crops, have implemented a plan to reduce pesticide use and have sold a crop directly to consumers. Four strong applications were submitted. Nominco Spider Hill, owned by the Cox family, now produces grain and produce. It has a corn maze in the fall and has hosted the Calvert Farm Tour for the past several years. The Bourne family owns Lamb's Quarter, was nominated for producing healthy, organically managed food and promoting farming as an honorable profession. They have operated a very successful CSA and growing in Calvert County for the last several years. Managed by Jeff Klapper, the American Chestnut Land Trust's Double Oak Farm crop variety includes everything from arugula to zinnias. ACLT has worked with Bill Clark of the Calvert County Soil Conservation District to provide a cover crop program to integrate with their crop rotation plan. Double Oak plans to attract beneficial insects and minimize the application of pesticides. The "Sustainable Farmer of the Year" award was presented to Swann's Farm, a family farm owned and operated by seventh generation farmers J. Allen and Jody Swann. The nearly 400 acre farm is an active supplier of local grocers and restaurants with a large variety of vegetables, fruits and flowers. Swann's has a reputation for providing high quality products. Swann's recycles runoff onto their land through a series of catchment basins and ponds and uses it for irrigating crops in cranberry-variety of the environment.

Retailers who purchase and offer a variety of local products when in season and who feature local products in advertising and business promotions were nominated for the "Green Grocer of the Year" award. Businesses nominated were Chesapeake Bounty and Bowen's Grocery. Both sell a significant amount of local produce and help the local economy. Located in St. Leonard, and owned by William Kreamer, Chesapeake's Bounty offers a wide selection of local products including seasonal products, plants, local seafood, and other products like firewood, straw, local canned goods, and free-range eggs. Additionally, local crops are grown on the property, including rye, kale, etc. The "Green Grocer of the Year" award was presented to Bowen's Grocery of Huntingtown.

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THRIVE

Thrive

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March 2011



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ISSUE 071011



Melons in the field - ACIT Double Oak Farm



Potato field at Lamb's Quarter

Community Supported Agriculture

Does the idea of having a guaranteed customer willing to pay a negotiated price for your produce appeal to you? How about having cash flow at the beginning of planting season? You're not alone.

Does the idea of receiving a freshly picked box of produce every week, grown locally appeal to you and your idea of healthy living? Does the idea of supporting a local farm, respond to your own ideas of community sustainability?

Community supported agriculture (CSA) is not a new concept. Over the last 20 years, (CSA) has become a popular way for consumers to buy local, seasonal food directly from a farmer. Here are the basics: a farmer offers a certain number of "shares" in the public. Typically the share consists of a box of vegetables, but other farm products may be included. Interested consumers purchase a share (aka a "membership" or a "subscription") and in return receive a box (bag, basket) of seasonal produce each week throughout the farming season. This arrangement creates several rewards for both the farmer and the consumer.

Advantages for farmers:

Get to spend time marketing the food early in the year, before those 16-hour days in the field.
Receive payment early in the season, which helps with the farmer's cash flow. Have an opportunity to get to know the people who eat the food they grow.

Advantages for consumers:

Eat ultra-fresh food, with all the flavor and vitamin benefits.
Get exposed to new vegetables and new ways of cooking. Usually get to visit the farm at least once a season.
Find that kids typically favor food from "their" farm - even veggies they've never been known to eat.
Develop a relationship with the farmer who grows their food and learn more about how food is grown.

It's a simple enough idea, but its impact has been profound. Tens of thousands of families have joined CSAs, and in some areas of the country there is more demand than there are CSA farms to fill it. The government does not track CSAs, so there is no official count of how many CSAs there are in the United States. Currently there are two CSA programs in Calvert County. The Lamb's Quarter (a community supported family farm) owned and operated by the Bourne family provides a 22-week or 11 week CSA program. The beginning and end of the program depends on the needs of the crops.

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Farmers Markets



Solomons – Thursdays – 4 to 8pm
North Beach – Fridays – 6 to 9pm
Fairgrounds – Saturdays – 7:30am to 12pm
Calvert Memorial-Tuesdays-3 to 7pm
Makers Market (first Saturdays) 9am – 12pm



SAW Award Nominations Open

- **Buy Local Restaurant** – recognizes a local business that utilizes locally grown foods
- **Sustainable Farmer of the Year** - recognizes sustainable farm practices
- **Green Grocer** – recognizes a merchant who buys/sells local produce

Awards to be presented Oct 2011



Suggested 2011 Goals

- Hold two informational workshops
- Continue Thrive newsletters
- Trial operation of the high tunnel
- Continue to work to ease regulatory issues.
- Pursue co-op or food hub

