

Agriculture & Seafood Update

Seasons Greetings

Winter 2007

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TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)

On July 24, 2007, a new zoning text amendment affecting Transferable Development Rights, more commonly known as "TDRs," went into effect. The TDR program has actually been around for several years but participation by landowners and developers was not sufficient to achieve the preservation and growth goals established by the County. The TDR program needed improvement to increase participation.

This program is one of several important measures of a broader rural land preservation effort. In the coming months more information will be shared about TDRs in particular and rural preservation in general. One of the County's major initiatives is to maintain our rural heritage while enabling needed development in a growing community. This is a delicate balancing act.

Why are TDRs important? Land is required for development, residential or otherwise. Most land in the County is in the Rural Preservation District (RPD). The traditional use of much of this land is farming. As the economy has shifted away from farming there is a need to protect this land from more intensive development. To accommodate growth there is also a need for new housing, shopping, etc., which is generally designated in other parts of the County. Under zoning regulations, landowners also own the "right" to develop their property based on the amount of property owned. TDRs allow a landowner to sell (or transfer) these rights to someone else who needs them elsewhere for development allowed by zoning. This transfer is done in the open market.

Note that the "right" to develop is only what's transferred. Ownership of the land itself does not change.

What is a TDR? TDRs are a mechanism permitting owners of rural land to separate the development rights of their property from the property itself and sell them for use elsewhere. Developers who purchase these development rights may then develop areas deemed appropriate for growth at densities higher than otherwise permitted. Once the development rights of a property are sold the land will be permanently restricted from further residential development and preserved as open space, farmland or woodland.

Where can TDRs be created? TDRs can be created in the RPD or from any non-conforming lot of record. The number of TDRs on a piece of land is determined by the total acreage of property divided by 5 and then subtracting

the number of dwellings (development rights already used). The remainder is the number of TDRs available. For example, say a farmer has a 95 acre parcel with 2 dwelling units (homes). This landowner would have 17 TDRs available (95 divided by 5 = 19, subtract 2 dwellings).

What can be done with TDRs? TDRs can be used to create additional residential density in the RPD, Development Districts, or increase the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for commercial zones. For example, the current expansion of Wal-Mart became possible through the purchase of TDRs. Depending upon the amount of land on a site and the number of dwelling units desired, a person may use their own TDRs or purchase additional TDRs. Each property is unique and a determination of your situation will need to be analyzed by the Department of Land Use and Growth Management.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Answers has been produced and is available at the Department of Land Use and Growth Management or on the County's website at <http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/lugm/docs/TDRBrochure.pdf>

Agriculture Tax Credit

St. Mary's County Land Preservation District 5-Year Agreement was implemented on July 1, 1998, and updated on May 19, 2003. The tax credit provides a 100% *county* tax credit on agriculturally assessed land of and on the first \$40,000 of assessed value on agricultural improvements. One hundred forty-nine (149) parcels of land are currently enrolled under the program representing approximately 16,887 acres of land. This represents a total of \$47,612 in property tax savings to landowners. The average savings per tax account is \$320 with actual discounts ranging from \$4 to \$1,870.

If you have agricultural assessed land with no intentions to subdivide or develop within the next 5 years and would like to participate in this program, please contact the Department of Economic & Community Development, at 301-475-4200 extension 1402.

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the two-day, regional Women in Agriculture Conference - January 24-25th, 2008, at the Dover Downs Conference Center, Dover, DE. Keynote Speaker will be Carolyn Cooksie, Deputy Administrator, Farm Loan Programs, USDA. A variety of educational workshops will be offered throughout the conference, for example:

- Sessions for equine producers and poultry producers
- A pre-harvest grain marketing session
- Strategies for direct marketing
- Wine-grape production, Organic production, and many more.

Special Thursday afternoon/evening event with featured Speaker Linda MacDonald, horse owner, breeder, trainer and harness racing driver. Linda's presentation will be followed by a reception where conference participants can enjoy networking and watching harness racing.

For more information, please contact Laurie Wolinski at 302-831-2538 or email Lgw@udel.edu.

The 2008 Women in Agriculture Conference will be presented by the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension in collaboration with the Cooperative Extension Services of University of Maryland, Rutgers the State University of New Jersey, and Delaware State University.

Go to the Women in Agriculture website for more conference information:

<http://ag.udel.edu/extension/kent/womeninag.htm>

25th ANNUAL MADMC

The 25th Annual Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference (MADMC) will be held on February 6-8th 2008, at the Sheraton Inn in Dover, Delaware. This conference features a trade show, workshops, break-out sessions and a bus tour. It is a great conference for any farm selling products or services directly to the consumer. For additional information call 302-831-1317 or visit www.madmc.com.

CENTURY FARM PROGRAM

Calling All Families Who Have Been Farming for 100 or More Years! MDA Encourages Farm Families to Apply to the Century Farm Program

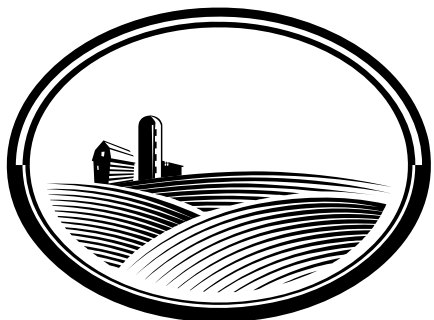
Has your family been farming the same land for at least 100 years? Then contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture to be inducted into the Maryland Century Farm Program.

"Eligible farm families are encouraged to apply to the Century Farm Program to be recognized for their commitment to continuing the tradition of agriculture in Maryland," said Agriculture Secretary Roger Richardson. "Our farmers and family farms provide Maryland with much of her beauty and her character. We will continue to be defined by the strength of our farmland, our farming community and our rural business."

In 1994, former Governor William Donald Schaefer established the Maryland Century Farm Program to recognize farms that have been in the same family for at least 100 consecutive years, contain a minimum of 10 acres of the original parcel, and gross an annual income of \$2,500 or more from the sale of farm products.

From its inception, the Century Farm Program has honored families who have passed their farming operations down from generation to generation, making it possible for future stewards of the land to continue in their family tradition. To date, the program has recognized 134 families for their commitment and dedication in helping agriculture continue to be a leading industry in Maryland.

A Century Farm Program application is available at: www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/centapp.pdf. For a complete listing of Maryland Century Farms, visit: www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/cflist07.pdf. For more information about the program, please call Buddy Bowling, Program Administrator, at 410-841-5882.



“FARMS FOR THE HOLIDAYS”

GUIDE RELEASED

The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), has released the “**Farms for the Holidays 2007**” guide. This popular mini-guide provides a listing of regional farms offering locally grown or produced products as well seasonal activities for a memorable, Southern Maryland holiday experience.

Instead of shopping online or heading to the mall, “**Farms for the Holidays 2007**” offers a creative alternative to holiday meals, gift giving and family outings. Make this season special by creating a home grown holiday.

Organized by category of item (greenery and home décor, gifts, wine, poultry, meat and seafood, winter vegetables and holiday farm events) the Guide identifies where to find the perfect Christmas tree, fragrant live or fresh-cut. Many farms offer fresh greenery including wreaths, garlands, swags and beautiful table centerpieces, or “make your own” farm craft workshops. Also available through visiting these sites are farm products which make unique homemade, hand crafted gifts such as jams, jellies, savory vinegars and fragrant local honey. Scented soaps made from local goats milk or woolen scarves woven from local sheep or Alpaca wool are other examples of the type of items featured.

If looking for a way to enjoy a holiday outing that celebrates the true spirit of the season and the natural beauty of this region, there are also an array of farm-hosted family events including live nativity scenes, horse carriage rides, candlelit caroling walk or a fantasy trip to the North Pole.

“Buying local is not just for the summer months,” said Christine Bergmark, Executive Director of SMADC. “We have a vibrant farm community in southern Maryland producing wonderful local products and offering memorable experiences throughout the year. As the seasons change, so do the farm sites and the products being offered. Buying locally is important to support our local rural economy and is an enjoyable year-round experience.”

The “**Farms for the Holidays 2007**” can be found on www.somarylandsogood.com and at area destinations including The Royal Tea Room, LaPlata; Blue Wind Gourmet, California; St.

Mary's Welcome Center, Charlotte Hall; Wild Orchid Restaurant, Annapolis; Willow Oak Flower & Herb Farm, Severn; Cedar Hill Farm, Waldorf; Nick's of Calvert, Prince Frederick; The Ice Cream Factory, Brandywine; Accokeek Foundation, Accokeek; Serenity Farms, Benedict; Greenstreet Growers, Lothian or the SMADC offices in Hughesville.

SMADC, The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, was established to promote diverse, market-driven agricultural enterprises, which, coupled with agricultural land preservation, will preserve Southern Maryland's environmental resources and rural character while keeping the region's farmland productive and the agricultural economy vibrant.

To find out more about the guides or to learn more about additional programs and resources, contact SMADC, P. O. Box 745, Hughesville, MD 20637; phone: 301-274-1922; fax: 301-274-1924; email cbergmark@somarylandsofgood.com; or visit these websites: www.somdtrails.com or www.somarylandsofgood.com.

Commissioner Mattingly Appointed to the Governor's Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture

Commissioner Thomas A. Mattingly, St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners, has been appointed to the Governor's Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture.

His nomination for this Commission was forwarded to the Maryland Secretary of Agriculture by the Maryland Association of Counties (MACO). Commissioner Mattingly currently serves on MACO's Board of Directors.

The Commission was created by Executive Order in 1996 and formalized a positive year-long effort led by the Department of Agriculture to bring local officials, planning agencies, and farming interests together to address issues of concern. The Commission is charged with promoting the economic profitability of farming by ensuring that all appropriate State agencies work in a cooperative, coordinated manner with local government and industry groups. Voting members are not state agency officials, but rather farm industry groups and local government interests.

National Oyster Cook-Off

How would you like to win \$1,300? Submit your favorite original oyster recipe by August 1, 2008 to:

National Oyster Cook-Off

C/O: St. Mary's County Department of Economic & Community Development

P.O. Box 653

Leonardtown, MD 20650

For a complete list of rules, please contact the Department of Economic & Community Development at 301-475-4200 extension 1402.

Congratulations to Lisa Grant of Cherry Hill, New Jersey who was the 28th Annual National Oyster Cook-Off Grand Prize Winner with her "Oysters Saltimbocca with Lemon Butter and Sage Sauce".

1 dozen Maryland oysters

Rock salt

2 tablespoons olive oil

3 thin slices, prosciutto (1 to 2 ounces), chopped

1 clove garlic, crushed

2 tablespoons fresh sage, chopped

8 round buttery crackers, finely crushed

2 tablespoons white wine

1 tablespoon lemon juice

½ tablespoon lemon zest

2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

black pepper to taste

Sage Sauce Recipe

¼ cup butter

juice of lemon

1 tablespoon fresh chopped sage

dash of hot sauce

black pepper to taste

Garnish

Fresh lemon slices

Sage leaves

Directions: Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Scrub the oysters with cold water. Shuck the oysters, keeping the oyster meat in the deep part of the shell. Arrange the oysters in a baking dish on a bed of rock salt. Heat the oil in a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add the prosciutto, garlic and sage. Cook for one to three minutes or until prosciutto is slightly crisp; stirring often. Place the prosciutto mixture, cracker crumbs, wine, lemon juice, zest and cheese in a small bowl. Add pepper to taste and mix well. Top each oyster with some prosciutto mixture. Bake for 5 to 7 minutes or until edges of oysters begin to curl. To make sauce, melt butter in a small pan. Add lemon juice, sage, Tabasco and pepper to taste. Serve the oysters with the sauce and garnish with lemon slices and sage if desired.

FIREWOOD

Cool Weather Signals Start of Fire Wood Purchases
Officials Urge Residents - Particularly in Prince
George's County - Not to Transport Firewood to
Prevent the Spread of the Emerald Ash Borer

With the onset of cooler autumn weather, many Maryland residents are turning on their furnaces and stocking up on wood to heat their homes. Anyone buying or selling wood should be familiar with regulations governing the measurement of firewood so that consumers get what they pay for. The Maryland Department of Agriculture's Weights and Measures Section regulates the sale of firewood.

There is currently a quarantine in Prince George's County prohibiting the movement of ash wood materials and all hardwood firewood out of the county. The restriction is to prevent the spread of the emerald ash borer, an invasive species that kills ash trees and was shipped illegally to the county on infested nursery stock in 2003. Officials urge county residents and sellers of firewood not to transport firewood out of Prince George's County to homes, hunting or camping locations, rather buy it where it will be burned.

"It is important that any Maryland resident buying firewood understand the way it is measured and that any person selling firewood in Maryland know and follow the law so that consumers get what they pay for and so that we protect our forests and neighborhood trees from damaging insects," said Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Roger Richardson.

Maryland regulations require that firewood sold in the state only be sold by the cord, or fractional parts of a cord. Any other term, such as truckload, rack, face cord, or pile, is illegal.

"Most consumers do not understand the meaning of a cord, or they are unaware of the many ways wood can be stacked to look like a cord when it isn't," said Weights and Measures Chief Will Wotthlie. "If the seller uses a term other than a cord or a fraction of a cord, consumers should be suspicious."

A cord is the amount of wood stacked and stowed in a well-compacted manner in a space of 128 cubic feet, typically in a stack measuring four feet wide, by eight feet long, by four feet high ($4 \times 8 \times 4 = 128$ cubic feet), with no internal gaps. When properly

stacked, the individual pieces of wood are in a line, parallel to and touching each other. Cubic feet is calculated by multiplying the width of the stack by its height and length.

Bulk sales of firewood must be accompanied by a delivery ticket containing the date of delivery, the name and address of the seller and buyer, the quantity of wood delivered, the cost of the wood, the type of wood delivered, and the license number or other identifying number of the vehicle that transports the wood. Any seller who refuses or is reluctant to provide complete information should be considered suspicious.

Wotthlie recommends that wood be delivered and stacked when the buyer is home if possible so that he or she can promptly measure the stack with a tape measure and determine the correct quantity is received. If the buyer cannot receive the delivery in person, he or she should measure the stack as soon as possible. Do not burn any of the wood before measuring it or resolving any discrepancies.

"We recommend that consumers contact the seller immediately if there appears to be any discrepancy and attempt to resolve the matter," Wotthlie said. "If the seller can't or won't correct the problem, consumers should call us before burning any of the wood."

The Weights and Measures office in Annapolis can be reached at 410-841-5790, or 1-800-492-5590, or online at: www.mda.state.md.us/weights_measures.

For more information about the emerald ash borer and restrictions on firewood, log onto www.emeraldashborer.info and click on the Maryland link. Information is also available by calling the University of Maryland Home and Garden Information Center at 800-342-2507 (in state) or 410-531-1757 (out of state) or the Maryland Department of Agriculture at 410-841-5920.





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Agriculture & Seafood Division
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Volunteers Needed

The Board of Commissioners for St. Mary's County is seeking applications from citizens interested in serving on the Agriculture, Seafood and Forestry Commission.

The Agriculture, Seafood and Forestry Commission holds bi-monthly meetings on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room at the Governmental Center. The mission of the Commission is to identify and implement activities aimed at preserving agriculture and seafood harvesting as prosperous components of the County's economy; to promote the

agriculture, aquaculture and forestry industries of the county; to provide a permanently established forum for the discussion of public policy issues relating to concerns of agriculture, seafood and forestry; and to recommend and advise the Board of County Commissioners on issues related to agriculture, seafood and forestry.

Interested candidates should contact the Public Information Office at 301-475-4200 extension 1341. Volunteer Applications can be downloaded from <http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/voluntr/>

This publication was produced and published by the St. Mary's County Department of Economic and Community Development under the authority of the Board of Commissioners for St. Mary's County. Comments are encouraged and should be addressed to (301) 475-4200 extension 1402 or lisa.ledman@stmarysmd.com.