



AUGUST 2019

Farmers Encouraged to Aerial Seed Cover Crops by September 1

The Maryland Department of Agriculture reminds farmers who signed up for grants to plant fall cover crops that it pays to plant early. Farmers who hire an airplane or helicopter to aerial seed cover crops into standing corn can qualify for an additional \$10 per acre incentive payment if they plant between **August 15 and September 1**. A county-by-county directory of contractors who can plant cover crops for farmers is available [here](#). Additional early planting incentives are available to farmers who signed up to plant cover crops using other methods. For more information, farmers should visit the department's [website](#), contact their local soil conservation district, or call the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program at 410-841-5864.

Maryland Department of Agriculture Launches Soil Health Website

To help farmers understand the many environmental benefits of building healthy soils, along with management practices they can use to improve soil health and productivity, the Maryland Department of Agriculture has launched a new Healthy Soils [website](#). Signed into law by Governor Larry Hogan, Maryland's Healthy Soils Act directs the Department to provide tools and resources to assist farmers who want to explore new technologies and farming techniques that promote soil health and its numerous corresponding agronomic and environmental benefits. The website will develop and expand as new research and resources emerge. Visit the website [here](#).

Last Day to Sign up for CRP and CREP is Nearing

The USDA's Farm Service Agency will accept new applications and extensions for expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts through August 23, 2019 at USDA Service Centers throughout Maryland. In addition, the Agency will accept extensions for existing Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) agreements to protect environmentally sensitive cropland through the August 23 deadline. Interested producers should contact their USDA Service Center. For more information, visit the Farm Service Agency [website](#).

Homeowners Urged to Use Responsible Lawn Care Practices During Summer Months

With summer in full swing, the Maryland Department of Agriculture urges homeowners to allow established lawns to go dormant during the hot, dry weather. Applying fertilizer to force a lawn to turn green during its dormancy period can damage the grass and contribute to nutrient pollution in streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. Dormant lawns will green up when cooler temperatures arrive and rainfall increases. To help shade grass and conserve moisture, raise the mower's cutting height by ½ inch to 1 inch during periods of hot, dry weather and leave grass clippings on the lawn as a source of free fertilizer. For more tips and information on Maryland's Lawn Fertilizer Law, visit the department's [website](#).

Ag Education Golf Outing and Fundraiser Set for September 11, 2019

The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation, Inc. (MAEF) and the Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association will co-host their Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament on Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at the Oakmont Green Golf Course in Hampstead, Maryland. The 18-hole tournament begins with registration and lunch at 11 a.m., followed by a shotgun start at noon. Following play, a steak dinner will be provided, awards will be presented to teams and players, and sponsors will be recognized. The goal of the fundraiser is to have fun and to raise money for ten \$1,000 scholarships. Players may form a team of four or be placed on a team. The registration fee is \$125 and includes a \$38 donation to the scholarship fund. Register by September 5, 2019. Sponsors are welcome. For a registration form, visit the MAEF [website](#) or contact Amie McDaniels at (301) 751-7962.

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The Maryland Agricultural Awareness Alliance is a coalition of federal, state and local agricultural agencies and commodity groups dedicated to educating Marylanders on agricultural issues.