

AGNR

FIVE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Advance Innovative, Profitable, and Sustainable Agricultural Production Systems



- **Increase plant and animal productivity through new technologies, cutting-edge research, and Extension programs.**
- **Improve and conserve soil health and water quality to sustain farms through the generations.**
- **Address measures to manage the changing climate and its impact on agricultural production in Maryland.**
- **Contribute to the success of agricultural businesses and industries.**
- **Create the next generation of agricultural leaders by providing educational and career development opportunities.**

OVERVIEW

Maryland agriculture is diversified and includes a variety of crops and livestock on 2 million acres and 12,400 farms. The market value in 2017 exceeded \$2.4 billion, and agriculture has remained Maryland's number one industry. The University of Maryland (UMD) College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) will advance innovative, profitable, and sustainable agriculture production systems through integrated teaching, research, and Extension. AGNR education and outreach will increase the productivity of plant and animal systems while improving soil health, water quality, and the changing climate. Programs will launch students into successful careers in agriculture, expand the boundaries of agricultural science, and empower agricultural businesses to apply the latest research to improve not only their bottom line, but also their community well-being and environmental stewardship.

AREAS OF FOCUS

This strategic initiative reflects the heart of AGNR through our agriculture production programs that support Maryland and beyond. There is a strong traditional agriculture base in Maryland with grain crops, dairy, and poultry, while vegetables, fruits, aquaculture, urban agriculture, and the green industry have added to the economy. AGNR programs in cover crops, nutrient management, poultry, animal nutrition and health, IPM, and aquaculture are highly regarded nationally. This team will focus on teaching, research, and Extension in the areas of production agriculture with an emphasis on soil health, water quality, and a changing climate. Business success, profitability, and training the next generation of farmers, researchers, and agricultural professionals are key areas of focus. AGNR programs in formal and non-formal education will provide youth, students, entrepreneurs, and beginning farmers with opportunities, skills, and network development.



To learn more about this strategic initiative or to connect with an initiative team leader, please visit go.umd.edu/AGNR_AgProd

The team will create two virtual centers:

1. Center for Excellence in Crop and Animal Production (CECAP) to address plant and animal productivity and improve and conserve soil health and water quality.
2. Agriculture Careers and Entrepreneurship (ACE) to prepare the next generation for careers in agriculture and contribute to the success of agricultural businesses.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As a team, we have developed common goals and activities that will move this initiative forward. Monthly meetings, hiring student workers, and clear objectives have led to the team's accomplishments.

Crop and Animal Production

The first goal is focused on agricultural production systems. This goal will use census data to share the importance of the industry, production, and economic impact. The second goal is focused on UMD research center projects. Forms are being digitized and will provide the opportunity to share the extent and scope of applied research in the state.

Careers and Entrepreneurship

The second goal is an inventory and construction of a forward facing website of agricultural career opportunities, job search resources, and provide space to host virtual training opportunities and highlight career and entrepreneurship events to those that aspire to farm or be in the agriculture profession. In 2020 the Agricultural Careers and Entrepreneurship (ACE) Virtual Center was officially published at go.umd.edu/5xW and hosted 5 webinars with 145 participants.

TAKING ACTION

The team is committed to the ACE Virtual Center and will continue to provide new content and webinars. In the area of crop and livestock management the team will create summaries of statewide research projects and enhance them through the use of virtual reality technologies. The team has also begun discussing possibilities for outside support. One of those opportunities will be to write an Extension Internship proposal to USDA NIFA.

