The dry conditions of 2012 throughout much of America has definitely tested the resilience of the American farmer as growers see their hard work dry up and blow away with warm summer winds.

Russia is expected to lose seven million tons of grains due to drought, China is purchasing more soft red winter wheat than in recent years, and the losses continue to be reported across the globe.

What our growers are experiencing demonstrates the need for sound farm policies, both at the state and national levels. We need Congress to move quickly and pass a 2012 farm bill this year. Crop insurance and risk management tools are necessary for our country, by providing critical assistance to farmers when they face crop losses due to adverse weather conditions, crop disease or volatile markets. We need a farm bill that delivers aid to farmers when they need it in a way that is faster, simpler and smarter.

We applaud the Maryland Assembly for passage of several initiatives in support of Maryland farms, and encourage their work in developing policy that is based on proven science and fairness to all. It supports our state’s economy and our state’s family businesses.

A recent USDA report notes "Nearly 98 percent of farms are family-owned, and they account for about 88 percent of production." It is true that family farms have become larger to take advantage of efficiencies of scale. However, this does not detract from the importance of the hands on involvement and the personal investment of these individuals. Family farmers are combining generations of accumulated knowledge with modern tools and practices that save soil, clean water and help us meet the needs of a growing world population.

Are you ready to get more involved with projects involving the Maryland grain industry? We are seeking new Board members to both the MGPA and MGPUB boards to represent the lower shore, central and southern Maryland. Volunteers are very welcome. Board members can serve three consecutive two-year terms. Contact me or Lynne Hoot at 410-956-5771 or LynneHoot@aol.com. Join us in making a difference for our Maryland farmers.

Headlining this year’s Commodity Classic on July 26 is Al Pell, the Farm Director for AgDay Television and U.S. Farm Report since 1999. Born and raised in Indiana, Al also owns and operates a 400-acre farm near Brazil, Indiana. On the program is Sam Willett, NCGA, to provide an update on the 2012 Farm Bill. David Hula, Virginia grain farmer and National Corn Yield Contest Winner, will also speak at the Classic.

Farms tours at the Wye Research and Education Center will provide insight on the latest research being conducted for grain and soybean growers. Exhibits at the Queen Anne’s 4-H Park provide the full range of projects funded with grain and soybean checkoff funds. See back page for more details on the Commodity Classic.
result in about $11.5 million. After 2017, the funds can be used for a broader range of activities, including stormwater, and the increase in the fee (not the full fee) terminates in 2030. Additional funding should be available to support other agricultural activities in the Chesapeake Bay 2010 Trust Fund, including $2 million for grants to farmers to assist in implementing proposed new requirements of management of manure, $0.5 million for additional manure transport, and $2.5 million for loan guarantees and grants for construction of manure to energy facilities at the farm level.

Education - Development of Guidelines to Incorporate Sustainable Agricultural Education passed, requiring a task force including MAEF, MFB, MGPA, MPMA, MASCID, and DPI to work with the State Department of Education to incorporate the subject of agriculture, including sustainable agriculture and other agricultural issues, in all existing curricular areas. The bill was amended based on MGPA testimony, to provide discussion on the complexity of the term sustainable and the need to maximize yield per acre with new technology.

Agriculture - Cost Sharing for Water Pollution Control passed, raising the per practice MACS cap from $100,000 to $200,000. The per farm cap will need to be adjusted by regulation.

Department of Agriculture - Animal Waste Technology Fund passed, moving the Animal Waste Technology Fund from the Department of Business and Economic Development to MDA. Established as part of the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998, this fund has received no funding for many years. The fund can be used for research development implementation or market development of technologies to reduce nutrients in animal waste, alter the composition, develop alternative uses, or systems that use animal waste in the process.

Stormwater Management - Watershed Protection and Restoration Program requires urban counties to collect stormwater management fees and establish a program for stormwater maintenance and restoration. An amendment allows for the county to establish guidelines to reduce the fee for properties with advanced stormwater BMPs relating to agricultural activities or facilities that are exempt from stormwater management requirements. Rural counties that are not required to have an NPDES stormwater permit are exempt.

Income Tax - Subtraction Modification - Enhanced Agricultural Management Equipment legislation would provide a 100% subtraction modification for GPS and optical sensing equipment and a 50% subtraction modification for Vertical Tillage equipment. The legislation passed Senate, but ran out of time at sine die on the House floor. It will be reintroduced in 2013.

Voluntary Agricultural Nutrient and Sediment Credit Certification Program passed, adding sediment to MDA nutrient trading law. Ag-related legislation that MGPA opposed and did not pass included establishing water use fees, adding background checks to pesticide licenses, restricting dates for application of nutrients, and requiring additional testing of stormwater.

Maryland’s legislature went into a special session in May when the regular session ended without passing a funded budget. The new legislation passed increases tax rates for single filers making over $100,000 ($150,000/couple) with a new top rate of 5.75% on income over $250,000 ($300,000/couple). The bill also raises taxes on snuff and smokeless tobacco from 15% to 30% and the rate on ‘little’ cigars to 70%. The bill repeals telecommunication utilities’ corporate tax credits for property taxes and includes in taxable income some of the income from small business trusts.

The budget does allow for the transfer of $250,000 from the UMD Law Clinic to the UMD system to assist farmers with estates and trusts issues, compliance with environmental laws, and other matters necessary to preserve family farms.

Additional information on bill status and amendments can be seen on the state legislature’s site (http://mlis.state.md.us/).
**Medical Industry Supports GM Foods**

The American Medical Association (AMA) adopted a formal position against mandatory labeling of foods made with biotechnology. The AMA official position reads: "Our AMA believes that as of June 2012, there is no scientific justification for special labeling of bioengineered foods." This position, from one of the nation's leading health organizations, once again affirms that labeling foods produced using biotechnology is unnecessary and that these foods are safe.

**Looking for Answers?**

Many farmers are asked questions about how they operate - from the crops they grow to the source of seeds they use. Here are two resources for information and to share with consumers:

Food experts tell it like it is on Best Food Facts, where viewers can connect with food experts from around the country who have done the research, checked their work and want to share the results. [www.bestfoodfacts.com](http://www.bestfoodfacts.com)

Farm women sort through the myths, gather the research, and answer questions about food and farming practices. [www.findourcommonground.com](http://www.findourcommonground.com)

**Set The Record Straight**

Heard a misleading or unfair statement about Mid-Atlantic farming? Share the misinformation with the Farmer and Rancher Mobilization Team, who will review and research the article, and provide a response which can be copied and shared. Consider joining their field of experts so as questions come up about farming in the Mid-Atlantic region, they have people with the hands-on experience to provide the correct answer. Visit [www.fooddialogues.com](http://www.fooddialogues.com) for further information.

**Call for Proposals:**

2013 Funding Requests are due in the MGPUB office by December 1. For details, visit [www.marylandgrain.com](http://www.marylandgrain.com).

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**#99 Sports New Graphics**

Kenny Wallace sported the new graphics promoting ethanol with the theme of “American Ethanol from Family Farmers” in NASCAR’s Nationwide Series at the Kentucky Speedway. The NASCAR series is consistently one of the top five sporting events viewed by two million viewers on average for every race. This coverage drives home the message that E15 is the preferred choice of professional drivers for its improved safety and high quality performance in extreme driving conditions. Find out more on American Ethanol and its growing presence on the [www.nasa.com](http://www.nasa.com) website.

**EPA Clears E15 For Sale**

EPA announced that E15 has cleared the final Federal hurdle to get E15 to market. The agency approved a plan submitted by the ethanol industry to address residual fuel that may be left in blender pumps that offer both E15 and other fuels. The plan addresses the possibility of a gas station having a single pump to provide both E15 and other fuels like E10, and the concern that residual E15 could mean that customers wanting E10 may fill up a tank with gasoline that contains more than 10 percent ethanol. To release E15 in the market nationally, the next step is addressing some state regulatory issues.

**The Face of Farming Seen Throughout Region**

The Corn Farmers Coalition program has returned to DC this summer. Messages have been in Capitol publications and metro stations each of the last four years, and have expanded to the online community. Fact-based, non-issue oriented messages are designed to educate at a very basic level to help leaders make informed decisions long term. Similar ads have been running at the Maryland minor league baseball games and will be utilized in ads throughout the year at events and media outlets across the state.

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99% of regulated Maryland farmers utilize nutrient management plans to efficiently raise food, feed and fuel without impairing the environment. (MDA)

Sign up to win a $100 grocery card and discover more about what Maryland farmers do to grow your food, fiber and fuel. [www.MarylandGrain.com](http://www.MarylandGrain.com)
Maryland Grain Producers Association
53 Slama Road
Edgewater, MD 21037-1423

Sign up now! New e-bulletin with the latest news for grain farmers emailed right to you. What's the latest on the Farm Bill? Trade agreements? Bay policy? Call 410-956-5771, email mdagric@aol.com, or visit www.marylandgrain.com to sign up!

AGENDA

Thursday, July 26, 2012
Queen Anne’s 4-H Park

Route 18 between Queenstown & Centreville

TICKETS: $10 prior to 2:30 pm; $20 after 2:30 pm (no entry after 3:30 pm)

Complimentary tickets are provided to members of the Maryland Grain Producers Association - see page 2 for membership information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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