



MAKING NUTRIENT  
MANAGEMENT WORK  
IN MARYLAND

## MARYLAND'S FARMER TRAINING & CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

In the time it  
takes to clean the  
combine, you  
could become  
certified to write  
your own Nutrient  
Management Plan.

# FARMER TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Producers understand their own operations and needs better than anyone. So, it makes good sense for farmers to become certified by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to write their own nutrient management plans—a **process that takes just two days**. MDA, in partnership with University of Maryland Extension (UME), has developed specialized Farmer Training and Certification workshops for producers who want to become certified to develop their own nutrient management plans and get the most from this important management tool.

There are many benefits to becoming certified. The Farmer Training and Certification Program makes it easier and less costly to comply with Maryland's nutrient management law. The program also provides valuable insight and knowledge into the latest research findings and management techniques aimed at improving production, increasing yields, and maximizing nutrient efficiency.

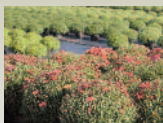
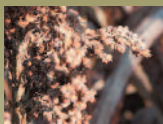
## How it Works

Farmers interested in becoming certified to write their own nutrient management plans will need to attend a two-day workshop. The first day covers the fundamentals of nutrient management planning and participants are given the opportunity to work through a model plan. Take home study materials and reference guides help farmers prepare for the open book nutrient management certification exam.



During a second day—scheduled within four weeks of the initial training session—participants take an open book certification exam. After passing the exam, farmers work with an Extension expert to develop a nutrient management plan for their operations that meets MDA requirements.

Farmers who pass the exam and successfully complete their own nutrient management plans are certified by MDA. Certified farmers are required to attend six hours of continuing education classes once every three years in order to remain eligible to update and revise their plans. Importantly, the certification workshop and continuing education classes fulfill the applicator training requirement for farmers who apply nutrients to 10 or more acres of cropland. Therefore, there is no need for certified farmers to attend an applicator training course once every three years.



## Choose the Workshop That's Right for You

Farmer Training and Certification classes geared toward specific types of operations are offered regionally throughout the state in fall and winter. Specific types of operations covered include:

- Pasture-Based Operations
- Crop Operations Using Fertilizer and Manure
- Crop Operations Using Commercial Fertilizer Only
- Poultry Operations with Cropland
- Poultry Operations with No Cropland
- Nursery and Greenhouse Operations

# Getting Started

Contact MDA or your local Extension office for a list of training sessions. Regional contacts are located on the back of this brochure. Training classes are listed on MDA's web site at [www.mda.maryland.gov](http://www.mda.maryland.gov). Scroll down the left column to "nutrient management" and click on "training classes." Register for the class that most closely describes your operation. In order to develop a nutrient management plan for their operations, farmers should bring the following information to the workshop:

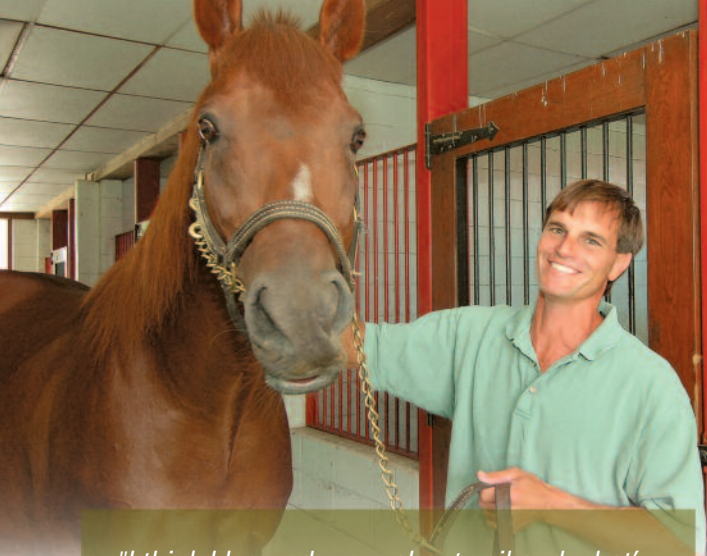
- Farm map or sketch of the operation
- Soil test results that are less than two years old
- Recent manure analysis (if manure is applied to the land)

Remember, your county Extension office can help you obtain this information.

# Certification Fee

A \$20 certification fee is required at the time of application. The fee includes all materials. There are no additional fees for retaking the exam or renewing the certificate. Directions and an agenda will be sent with confirmation letters to all registrants.





*"I think I learned more about soil and what's required to grow things in those two days than in my entire sophomore biology class... I walked away with a better understanding of the need for nutrient management and the knowledge to improve my farm's pasture."*

**—William Boniface, General Manager and Partner, Bonita Farm**

## Maryland's Nutrient Management Law

The Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998 (WQIA) requires all farmers grossing \$2,500 a year or more or livestock producers with 8,000 pounds or more of live animal weight to run their operations using a nutrient management plan that addresses both nitrogen and phosphorus inputs. The requirement applies to all agricultural land used to produce plants, food, feed, fiber, animals or other agricultural products. Farmers are required to update their nutrient management plans before they expire and take new soil samples a minimum of once every three years. In addition, an Annual Implementation Report (AIR) describing how farmers implemented their nutrient management plans must be filed with MDA by March 1 of each year. AIRs are available from MDA regional nutrient management offices or online at [www.mda.maryland.gov](http://www.mda.maryland.gov). Producers who fail to comply with the law face penalties and fines.

## Nutrient Management Regional Offices

### **Alleghany, Garrett and Washington counties**

12407 Naves Cross Road, NE  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
301-777-1747, ext 3

### **Frederick County**

92 Thomas Johnson Drive,  
Suite 110  
Frederick, MD 21702  
301-694-9290, ext.136

### **Baltimore, Cecil and Harford counties**

2205 Commerce Road,  
Suite C  
Forest Hill, MD 21050  
410-838-6181, ext. 118

### **Anne Arundel, Carroll, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's counties**

50 Harry S. Truman Parkway,  
Suite 201  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-841-5959

### **Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties**

26737 Radio Station Way,  
Suite B  
Leonardtown, MD 20650  
301-475-8402, ext.122

### **Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties**

28577 Mary's Court, Suite 4  
Easton, MD 21601  
410-822-8120 or 8126

### **Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties**

27722 Nanticoke Road, Unit 2  
Salisbury, MD 21801  
410-677-0802, ext. 4



## Maryland Department of Agriculture

*Office of Resource Conservation*

### **Nutrient Management Program**

50 Harry S. Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
[www.mda.maryland.gov](http://www.mda.maryland.gov)

UNIVERSITY OF  
**MARYLAND**  
EXTENSION

*Solutions in your community*