

# Garrett Soil Conservation District

## Conservation News

1916 Maryland Hwy, Suite C Mt Lake Park, MD 21550

<https://garrettscd.org>

301-501-5886

### Important Dates

Aug 20 – GSCD Board Meeting, 7 pm

Sept 2 – GSCD Office Closed

Sept 17 – GSCD Board Meeting, 7 pm

Oct 1 – Mix Seeding Deadline Cover Crop

Oct 10 – Aerial Seeding Deadline Cover Crop

Nov 5 – Cereal Grain Deadline Cover Crop

Nov 22 – Late Season Deadline Cover Crop

Dec 2 – Certification Deadline Cover Crop

Visit the Website often for important notices and updates.

<https://garrettscd.org>

### NRCS Totals for FY24

NRCS has approved contracts to bring around **\$875,000** into the hands of our Garrett County producers to help fund various conservation projects.

There were **5 energy audits** funded for **maple syrup** producers in Garrett County. Once the audit is complete, producers can apply for funding to help pay for costs to purchase equipment to make their operations more energy efficient. **2 of these** producers have already completed the audit and been contracted for **funding for equipment**.

**11 High Tunnels** were contracted in Garrett County for this FY. **3 of these have been fully constructed** and the producer already paid. Payment has been averaging around 85% to 90% funding.

Also funded were contracts for **Forest Stewardship, Invasive Species, Grazing Systems, and Pollinator Plantings**.

No more funding is available until **January**. However, the District already has numerous contracts ready to go at that time.

### MACS Totals for FY24

MACS has approved contracts totaling **\$266,573.97 for Garrett County** producers for projects in process for FY24.

Projects include: Roofs and Covers, Roof Runoff Structures, Waste Storage Facilities, Heavy Use Area Protection, Lined Waterway, Subsurface Drain, Underground Outlet, Fencing, Watering Facilities and Spring Development.

**17,750 foot of fence** is included in these contracts.

The highest contract funded for the FY in Garret County was **over \$160,000**. The lowest was a **little over \$1,000**.



Photo by Elisa Frazee

There are 680 farms in Garrett County.

Those farms sold almost \$32 million worth of products in 2022.

Most farms in the County are 50 to 179 acres, followed by 10 to 49 acre farms.

*\*According to the US Census of Agriculture*

## 2024 GSCD Scholarship Winner

The [2024 Garrett Soil Conservation District \\$1000 Scholarship](#) winner is Anna Martin of Accident.

Anna graduated from Garrett College this past spring with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology and will be attending Frostburg State University in the fall to continue her studies in Natural Resources. She has a 4.0 GPA. She was a 2016 Southern High school graduate.

Anna has extensive work and volunteer experience in soils, wetlands, vegetation, wildlife, mapping, and forestry.

After graduation, she says that she would like to work in conservation, restorative ecology, wildlife management, and education. She enjoys helping individuals and groups find connections and interests in the natural world.

Anna has a good understanding of the District's goals. "What landowners can accomplish in conservation will affect the watersheds intersecting their properties, influencing the overall quality of surrounding ecosystems and watershed health," states Anna. "The assessments and plans the GSCD provides to these landowners are essential elements in this process."

"My interest in the outdoors began, not surprisingly, in my childhood,.." Anna continues. "I decided to cultivate my interest in plants and wildlife and returned to college to pursue my degree.."

Anna has worked with the Kempton Mine Reclamation and Northern Saw-Whet Owl Banding. Her volunteer experience includes: DNR Wild Turkey study, Ring-necked Pheasant stocking, Rare Plant Survey, Cranesville Swamp plantings, Aravaipa Canyon Preserve, and Blackwater Canyon Trail invasive species removal. She was the Co-President of the Garrett College Wildlife Club.



### Drought Assistance Available

The Farm Service Agency [offers relief for loss caused by drought](#). Garrett County has been listed as D3 on the US Drought Monitor. D3 means conditions are drier than 98% of past conditions resulting in devastating crop losses, pasture losses and water restrictions.

**Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)** – for livestock producers suffering grazing losses.

**Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm Raised Fish Program (ELAP)** – feed and grazing losses and transportation costs associated with feeding.

**Tree Disaster Assistance Program (TAP)** – For losses greater than 15% of normal mortality on trees, bushes, or vines.

**Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** – Crops not eligible for crop insurance in the county.

For more information go to <https://garrettscd.org/drought>. To apply, call FSA at 301-501-5857 or go to the FSA office at 1916 Maryland Hwy, Ste A, Mt Lake Park, MD 21550.

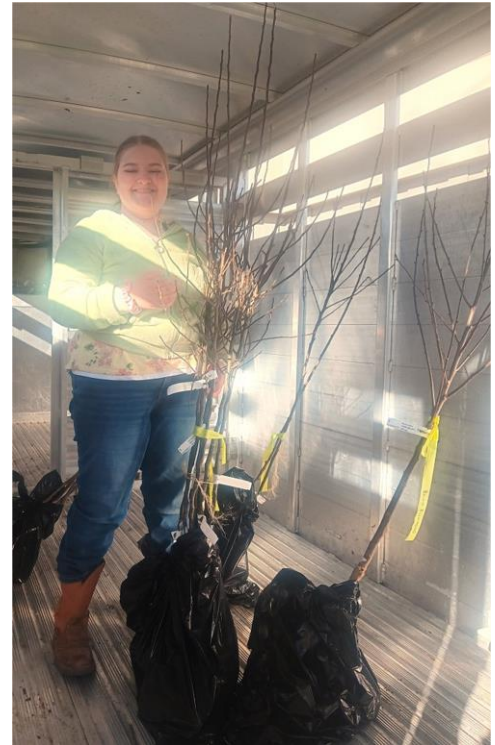
## The District's Fruit Tree and Bush Fundraiser

The District held its first ever [Fruit Tree and Bush Sale](#) this year. Orders were taken starting in October 2023, and running through the beginning of April. Distribution was April 17 and 18.

Soil Conservation Districts throughout the state have been conducting tree sales every year for many years. But this was Garrett's first. Proceeds are being used for the District's outreach endeavors, and to take care of needs not paid for by other funding sources to make it possible for the District to help farmers and landowners with conservation efforts.

The Tree and Bush Sale was a huge success, with 515 trees and 511 bushes being purchased.

It was a win for everyone. The District was able to offer the trees and bushes at a substantial savings, which made it possible for residents to buy more trees and bushes. Over a thousand more trees and bushes were planted, which is part of the District's goals to help with conservation and to provide food for families and wildlife. And the District made funds to help pay for more conservation and things like the [GSCD Scholarship](#), [Envirothon](#), [GSCD 4-H Booth Awards](#), and other necessary expenses not covered by grant funding.



*Tree & Bush Sale Volunteer, Elisa Frazee, helps gather some of the trees during distribution.*

**Thank you so much to everyone who supported our fundraiser!!!**

Plans are underway for next year's Fruit Tree & Bush sale which will be announced later this summer.



The District wants to thank....  
Dorsey Guard and Guard's Farm for the use of their trailer during the Tree Sale...  
And Miranda Rounds for the use of her pick-up and trailer to haul the trees.

## High Tunnel Workshops



The University of Maryland Extension office held a couple of high tunnel workshops earlier this year about high tunnel construction. During the workshops, attendees had the opportunity to learn about construction and help build a tunnel.

If you have any interest in a workshop or training involving growing in a tunnel, please let Willie Lantz know at **301-334-6966**, or [wlantz@umd.edu](mailto:wlantz@umd.edu). Individuals do not need to live in Garrett County, and they do not have to have a working farm to attend UME workshops.

## 2024 Envirothon

The [2024 Garrett County Envirothon](#) was held on April 30, at Camp Hickory.

Envirothon is a conservation training and competition for high school students. It challenges students to learn about environmental and natural resource conservation.

There are over 25,000 high school students across the United States, Canada, China, and Singapore that participate each year.

Envirothon covers areas such as aquatic ecology, forestry, soils and land use, wildlife, and current environmental issues.

Students compete in County level competition first, and those winning County go to [State](#). Those winning State go to International competition.

Teams can be formed through public schools, private schools, 4-H, Boy Scouts, and other nationally recognized organizations.

Here in Garrett County the Envirothon competition currently consists of a team from Northern High and a team from Southern High.

The Garrett Soil Conservation District teaches students through a training day, which was held this year on April 16, and the District helps oversee the Envirothon competition.



Congratulations to this year's winners – the Southern Salamanders!!!

The District presented each member of the winning team with a folding shovel and saw.



Above: Miranda Rounds (Maryland Dept of Ag Planner), Zobiana Dillsworth, Fontana Moreland, Rylee Iden, Lani Daugherty, Ayla Rodeheaver, and Seth Metheny (GSCD District Manager)

## The Meese Farm Honored as a Maryland Century Farm

Garrett County's Meese Farm was designated a 2023 Century Farm. They were one of three inductees across the state for 2023 recognized for the honor by the Maryland Department of Agriculture and Governor Moore and Lt. Governor Miller.

*Nestled in the serene landscapes of Garrett County, the Meese Farm stands as a testament to a rich tapestry of history and agricultural heritage.*

*Originally composed of three separate farms purchased by John Meese in the early 20th century, this sprawling 276-acre property has been a cornerstone of the community since its inception.*

*John, who initially tilled the land with horses, laid the foundation for a legacy that would endure for generations. Beyond its agricultural significance, the farm holds a wealth of natural wonders, from Native American artifacts and outcropping flagstone to the tranquil Piney Run Creek.*

*Since 1940, the farm has been known for its production of maple syrup, a tradition that continues alongside the cultivation of corn, oats, and grass hay.*



*With ties to Revolutionary soldiers and Governor Thomas Johnson's land acquisitions, the Meese Farm embodies a unique blend of historical significance and rural charm, ensuring its place as a cherished landmark in Garrett County's landscape.*

Thank you, Meese family, for your commitment to agriculture in Garrett County!



### The Golden-Winged Warbler

The Golden Warbler is a little bird that nests along the Appalachian Mountains, including here in Garrett County. Their numbers have been declining because of a loss of suitable habitat.

These Warblers need a mixture of aged hardwoods and young forest growth to nest and thrive. Many of the forests here in the area are mainly older growth, making them unsuitable to Warbler survival.

Landowners with 10 acres or more can help restore the Warbler's habitat with forest management practices designed specifically to benefit these small creatures.

Funding is available through NRCS to help pay for a Forest Stewardship Plan and to help remove some older trees and plant new growth to create a more diverse forest, as outlined in the plan.

The program has open enrollment, so individuals can sign up any time, but funding occurs once or twice a year.

If you would like more information, visit our website at <https://garrettscd.org/goldenwarbler> and contact Will Gindlesberger at [will.gindlesberger@usda.gov](mailto:will.gindlesberger@usda.gov)

## Maryland Deer Management Initiative

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has partnered with the Department of Natural Resources to create a [Deer Initiative](#) to help address the problem of crop destruction on farms due to deer overpopulation.

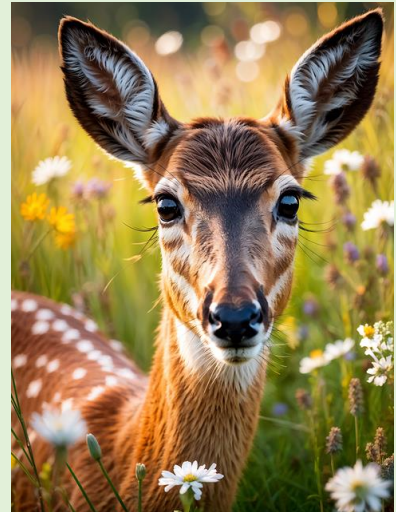
The initiative will connect farmers with hunters and educate farmers about good deer management techniques.

Deer overpopulation has led to widespread destruction of agricultural crops in Maryland. This was a concern expressed by Maryland farmers at the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Deer Summit and by a survey of farmers who indicated problems with ongoing crop damage.

The initiative will allow hunters to harvest deer from agricultural land in a way that is controlled and appropriately managed.

The initiative will also work with local jurisdictions to expand access to public lands.

Hunters who do not wish to eat their harvested venison will be encouraged to donate it to the Maryland Food Bank to help feed those in need.



Maryland farmers who are experiencing economic loss from deer to commercially grown crops may be eligible to receive a Deer Management Permit (DMP). The DMP allows farmers to remove deer from the designated property outside the established deer hunting season or Deer Bag Limits. In Garrett County, farmers should contact Rob Harvey at [rob.harvey@maryland.gov](mailto:rob.harvey@maryland.gov) or 301-334-4255 for more information.

### Cover Crop Program Facts

This year's sign-up for the [Cover-Crop program](#) ended on July 17. The program provides farmers with cost-share assistance to offset seed, labor, and equipment costs to plant cover crops.

Each year there is a sign-up period statewide. Applications are taken only during that time. Farmers should sign up for the highest amount of cover crop assistance that could apply to their farm. This is because after planting, they can't add on to the contract, but the amount on the contract can be reduced.

There are extra payments for planting cover crops earlier in the season. Farmers can sign up for those incentives, but if they can't get cover crops in by that date for whatever reason, it doesn't void the contract. They just don't get the extra payment.

Finally, signing up does not obligate the producer to follow through with the contract.

For more information go to <https://garrettscd.org/covercropprogram>



### Cover Crops

Sign up for Cover Crop has ended for this year, but you can apply for next year during the 2025 sign up period. Look for it around the end of June 2025.

## Kristen Enlow Receives 20 Year Pin

GSCD Board of Supervisors Treasurer, Kristen Enlow was recognized this past July by the [Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts](#) for 20 years of service as a Board member of the Garrett Soil Conservation District.

Thank you for your dedication and service to conservation and agriculture in Garrett County, Kristen! We appreciate you and all that you have done to better our community!



## Income Tax Subtraction for Equipment

There is a [tax break for Maryland farmers](#) on their Maryland Income Tax for certain types of conservation equipment purchased.

100% of the cost can be subtracted on Maryland Income Tax returns up to the Adjusted Gross Income. 50% for vertical tillage equipment. If the subtraction exceeds the Adjusted Gross Income, any excess can be taken in succeeding tax years, up to five.

Individuals must own the equipment for at least three years after the tax year the subtraction was made. Tax returns must be adjusted if the equipment is sold or traded before the three-year retention.

If a deduction is claimed for manure spreading, injection equipment, or equipment to manage nutrient applications, you may be subject to a spot check.



Shipping, handling, freight fees, travel time fees, auction buyer premiums, upgrades on equipment, subscription renewals, discounts, federal or state taxes, internet fees, and other fees are not eligible for the subtraction.

For more information go to <https://garrettscd.org/taxbreak>

### **Eligible Equipment**

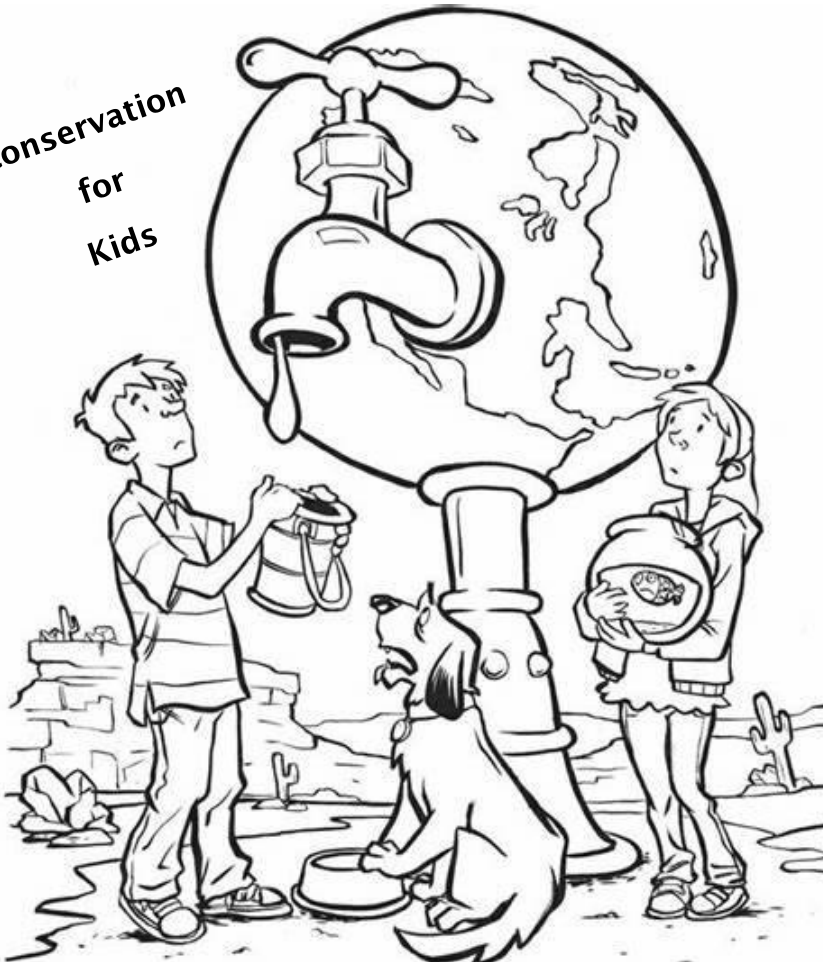
- No-Till Planting Equipment
- Liquid Manure Injection Equipment
- Poultry or Livestock Manure Spreading Equipment
- Deep No-Till Rippers
- Global Positioning Devices
- Optical Sensing and Nutrient Application Systems
- Vertical Tillage Equipment

Equipment must have a useful life of four years.

### **To Certify the Equipment Expense**

1. Submit an equipment certification and signed and dated equipment receipt to your local soil conservation district. The form is located on the Garrett Soil Conservation District's website at <https://garrettscd.org/taxbreak/>
2. Provide serial numbers for equipment
3. The District will verify eligibility and forward the completed certification form to MDA for final approval.
4. You will receive two copies of the form, one for your tax return, and one for your records.

## Conservation for Kids



### Help Us Get the Word Out

Do you know someone who you think may want our newsletter? **Please refer them to us!**

Did you know that only 2% of the world's water is drinkable? All living beings depend on that 2% for survival. That's why **Water Conservation** is so important!

The average American uses over **100,000 gallons** of water a year!

A jellyfish and a cucumber are both made of **95% water**.

In Africa, people pay **10 times more** for water than people do in New York because clean water is lacking there.

A 2000 lb beef cow requires about **3,598,000 gallons** of water.

Visit us at <https://garrettscd.org> and on [Facebook](#) at **Garrett Soil Conservation District**

### Garrett Soil Conservation District

**Business Hours:**  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 am – 4:30 pm

**Phone: 301-501-5886**



#### Office Staff

[Seth Metheny](#), District Manager (MDA)  
[Chad Bucklew](#), District Conservationist (USDA-NRCS)  
[Will Gindlesberger](#), Soil Conservationist (USDA-NRCS)  
[Jarrod Sisler](#), Soil Conservation Technician (MDA)  
[Craig Zimmermann](#) – Soil Con Technician (USDA-NRCS)  
[Jillian Mason](#), Conservation Planner (MDA)  
[Miranda Rounds](#), Conservation Planner (MDA)  
[Tricia Kipp](#), Soil Conservation Technician (MDA)  
[John Grose](#), Program Support Specialist (RC&D)  
[Jeannie Frazee](#), Administrative Specialist/Web Developer (GSCD)



The Garrett Soil Conservation District (GSCD) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or family status.

#### Board of Supervisors

**James "Smokey" Stanton**, Chairman  
**Kristen Enlow**, Vice Chairman, Acting Treasurer  
**Bill Buckel**, Member, *Farm Bureau Representative*  
**Butch Helbig**, Member, *UMD Representative*  
**Nevin Sines**, *GC Commissioner's Representative*

If you would like to know more about being a supervisor or associate supervisor, please contact the district office at 301-501-5886.

[Editor](#) – Jeannie Frazee