

Maryland extension director to retire

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — John M. Curtis, director of the University of Maryland's statewide Extension Service, has announced that he will retire prior to the end of 1980. He has agreed to remain until a new director has been designated.

Curtis has been chief administrative officer for the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service since Jan. 1, 1976. He has more than 30 years of service as an Extension worker both in Maryland and in his native state of North Carolina. He also worked one year as an extension specialist in Virginia.

The Prince Georges County resident served as chairman of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the College Park campus for over 14 years prior to taking over as the sixth director of the Maryland Extension Service.

As Maryland Extension director for nearly five years, Curtis has headed a statewide educational endeavor that brings practical information from land-grant universities and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the people in their local environment.

He has also served as a board member, or ex officio member, of various statewide groups related to agriculture. These groups include the State Soil Conservation Committee, the Maryland Food Center Authority, Maryland Rural

Affairs Council, and the Maryland Farm Bureau Board of Directors.

Curtis has played an active role in revitalizing the Maryland 4-H Foundation, and he has demonstrated keen interest in the development of youth through the statewide 4-H program.

During his tenure, a statewide advisory council for the Cooperative Extension Service was

organized in 1977. Two new Extension educational efforts receiving emphasis have been a marine advisory program, directed toward both commercial watermen and pleasure boaters on the Chesapeake Bay, and an energy use and conservation program aimed at the total public.

At the regional and national levels, Curtis serves as chairman of the Northeast Extension Directors

association and as a member of the legislative subcommittee of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy.

Curtis said he is proud of the fact that, under his leadership, the entire Maryland Extension Service has made substantial gains

in the area of equal opportunity and affirmative action. These gains apply both to Extension employees and to the audiences served.

As to the future, he said that he plans to do some consulting work, overseas travel, land development, and a little writing. He and his wife plan to continue


living in the College Park area. They have three grown sons.

A retirement banquet honoring Curtis was held Friday evening in the Fort McHenry room at the Center of Adult Education on the University of Maryland campus in College Park.

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