

# Md. Ag Continues To Develop International Ties

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Despite pressures from urban development, labor shortages and governmental restric-

tions, Maryland agriculture is still thriving, according to a recent study.

The study was conducted by a committee representing the University of Maryland System, several state government agencies, and Maryland citizens and organi-

zations representing a broad range of interests important to agriculture, natural resources, and the environment.

A preliminary draft of the committee study was available in time for last month's National Agriculture Week observance, March 17-23. Dr. Raymond J. Miller, vice chancellor for agriculture and natural resources in the University of Maryland System, co-chaired the blue-ribbon panel.

## 4th Weigh Period In For Bull Test

HARFORD, N.Y. — Serious selection time is here for beef producers seeking to add positive plus genetics to their cow herd this year.

After 112 days of eating, loafing, and growing at the NYBCA Bull Test Center at the Cornell

Research Center at Harford, N.Y., a large group of individuals, in most breeds, have emerged as outstanding beef herd sire prospects.

There will be an NYBCA bull sale on May 3, 1991, at Cornell Livestock Pavilion.

Those interested are encouraged to begin their selection process by

viewing the bulls at the Test Center. Visitors can also travel to the consigning farm to view the dam of the bulls.

The following is a summary of the totals of each breed and the bulls currently at the head of the class in each breed.

	No. Bulls	Cum.		Owner	Cum.	
		ADG	WPDA		ADG	WPDA
Red Angus	4	4.12	3.28	Watkins	4.36	3.14
				Watkins	4.24	3.82
Shorthorn	14	4.04	3.12	Stony Brook	4.91	3.15
				Stony Brook	4.76	3.17
Simmental	15	4.00	3.32	Shoemaker	5.10	3.43
				Allegro	4.75	3.79
Angus	28	3.88	3.13	Rosebank	4.90	3.62
				ShiRaLoKen	4.42	2.96
				Bippert	4.42	3.42
Charolais	9	3.82	3.17	Mary & Bob's	4.45	3.38
				Sleepy Valley	4.27	3.35
Hereford	2	3.64	3.00	Wadsworth	4.04	3.08
Polled Hereford	21	3.62	3.09	Schubel	3.25	2.92
				Sapp Valley	4.56	3.46
Limousin	1	3.42	2.67	Brandywine	4.36	3.10
				Locust Lane	3.42	2.67
Gelbvieh	1	3.29	2.92	Double Eagle	3.29	2.92

You may view the bulls any day during working hours Monday through Friday at the Test Center, phone 607-844-8385 or Director Bill Greene at 607-255-4501.

Commenting on the committee report, Miller noted the following highlights:

- Total cash receipts for Maryland agriculture grew from \$667 million in 1975 to \$1.4 billion in 1989. Even after adjusting for inflation, this represents a real growth of 42.4 percent.

- Overall growth in Maryland agriculture during the past 15 years can be attributed to big increases in broiler and soybean production, as well as the greenhouse, nursery, and turfgrass industry. The horse business is also thriving. But equine statistics are not included in this study. Their inclusion would boost Maryland agriculture's growth even further.

- Decreased cash receipts have occurred for Maryland producers of corn, wheat, tobacco, processed vegetables, and peaches. Dairying and livestock operations also have declined in relative importance.

- Since 1964, total Maryland farmland has been reduced from 3.2 million acres to 2.4 million acres. During the past 15 years, however, the total number of harvested acres has remained fair-

ly constant. Recent decreases in farmland have occurred mainly in pasture and forest areas.

Virtually all of Maryland's agricultural industries are in a state of transition, said Miller.

During the past 20 years, poultry has replaced dairying as the No. 1 animal industry. Corn and soybeans to feed those broilers dominate the state's field crop production.

Being situated in the midst of a major metropolitan area has been a boon to Maryland farmers producing fruits and vegetables for the fresh market.

Biotechnology holds the likelihood of helping scientists develop new crop varieties in four to five years — about half the time previously required.

Cut flowers are becoming a major commodity in Maryland, and a great potential for expansion appears to exist. A similar situation exists for aquaculture — the rearing of finfish and shellfish in captivity.

Production of sheep milk on a commercial scale is virtually nonexistent anywhere in the United States. But possibilities for Maryland appear promising and are being explored.

Over the next 30 years, it is estimated that Maryland will nearly double its amount of developed land to accommodate an expected influx of one million new residents. But nursery and turfgrass production should expand accordingly.

Maryland's racing and pleasure horse industries are flourishing. Its thoroughbred racing component alone is estimated to have an annual impact of \$1 billion on the state's economy. Horse farms appear to be less susceptible to development pressures than farms which produce crops or animal products.

Maryland's central and southern counties have borne the brunt of farmland conversion to real estate development in recent years. This trend is likely to continue because of their proximity to the Baltimore-Washington, D.C., metropolitan corridor.

Although Maryland has both state and county agricultural land preservation programs, only seven percent of the state's farmland has been locked into a preservation status. During the past decade, three acres of Maryland farmland were converted to real estate development for every acre entered into a preservation program.

Dr. Craig S. Oliver, director of the Cooperative Extension Service, University of Maryland System, contributed to the natural resources and human capital sections of the study.

He said that Maryland is likely to be a competitive force in the emerging "global marketplace," and at least some of that promise will benefit agriculture.

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