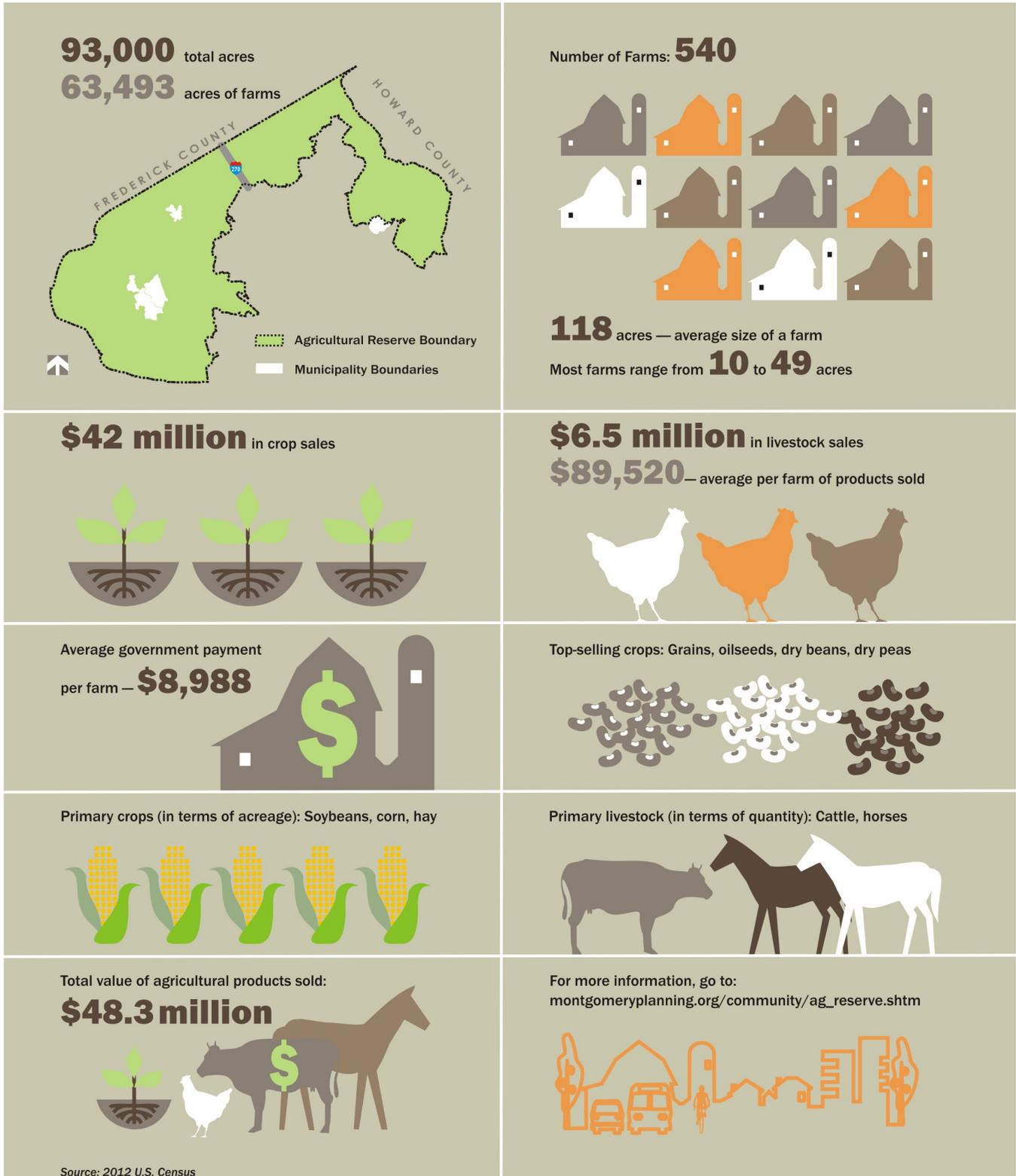


# MONTGOMERY COUNTY AGRICULTURAL RESERVE



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY AGRICULTURAL RESERVE AT A GLANCE





## Welcome to Montgomery County!

Located north of Washington, DC, our County began as a primarily agricultural area and experienced enormous development pressures as the metropolitan area grew in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Planners began to brainstorm about ways they could preserve a significant amount of the County's historic farmland before it was swallowed up by subdivisions and shopping centers.

In 1981, the Montgomery County Council approved the Functional Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space. This Plan established the Agricultural Reserve of more than 93,000 acres in the northern and western parts of the County.

The success of this model land-use program rests on its pioneering program of transferable development rights (TDRs). In order to compensate the farmers and landowners for reduced development densities on their properties in the Reserve, the County granted them one TDR per five acres. Each TDR can be sold to designated receiving areas in more densely developed areas of the County.

In addition, many farmers have elected to place their land under more restrictive protective measures by participating in conservation easement programs with the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, Montgomery County Agricultural Easement Program, Maryland Environmental Trust and other state and local programs.

Those efforts have contributed to the continued vibrancy and economic success of the Agricultural Reserve over the past 35 years. The Ag Reserve has been called "the country's most successful farmland preservation program" and is still a rural green landscape where farms and farmers thrive, and Washingtonians drive to enjoy its pastoral scenery and healthy bounty.

Today, you will experience the beauty of the Reserve and meet some of the farmers who call it home. Enjoy your visit and please come back to see us in the future.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gwen Wright".

Gwen Wright  
Director, Montgomery County Planning Department

## TOUR SCHEDULE - COLORADO AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Time Leaving	Time Arriving	Location	Notes
6:45 am		Group leaves Holiday Inn Capitol Hill	Walking
	7:00 am	Group arrives at L'Enfant Plaza Metrorail station	Boarding Metrorail (group will transfer at Gallery Place to Red Line, Shady Grove)
7:15 am		Bus leaves Planning Department, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring	25 min. + traffic to next stop
	8:00 am	Bus arrives at Rockville Metrorail station, 251 Hungerford Drive, Rockville	Wait for group's arrival
8:10 am	8:45 am	Bus leaves Rockville station Arrive at Seneca Store, 16315 Old River Road, Poolesville	35 min. travel Pick up Caroline Taylor and Jeremy Criss, intros, porta potty location
9:00 am		Leave Seneca Store	10 min. travel
	9:10 am	Arrive at Bounty Farm, 18801 River Road, Poolesville Dolores Milmoie, owner  Tour of Chocolates and Tomatoes, Mark Mills–farmer/ From the Earth Foods, Courtney Buchholtz – farmer	40 min. onsite + 5 min. loading
9:55 am		Leave Bounty Farm	15 min. travel (via Sugarland Road)
	10:10 am	Arrive at Rocklands Farm, 14525 Montevideo Road, Poolesville Greg Glenn – farmer	40 min. onsite + 5 min. loading, porta potty location
10:55		Leave Rocklands Farm	5 min. travel
	11:00 am	Drop off, Seneca Store	5 min. goodbyes to Caroline and Jeremy
11:05		Leave Seneca Store	35 min. travel
	11:40 am	Arrive at Rockville Metrorail station	10 min. unloading, goodbyes to all
11:50		Group boards Metrorail to next location	
11:50		Bus leaves Rockville station	25 min. travel
	12:15 pm	Bus arrives at Planning Dept.	

### SCHEDULE COLOR CODE:

-  CALP travel
-  M-NCPPC bus
-  travel CALP on bus

### LOCATIONS:

-  M-NCPPC MRO  
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring
-  Rockville Metro  
251 Hungerford Drive, Rockville
-  Seneca Store  
16315 Old River Road, Poolesville
-  Bounty Farm  
18801 River Road, Poolesville
-  Rocklands Farm  
14525 Montevideo Road, Poolesville

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## TOUR DESTINATIONS

**Seneca Store**, opened in 1901, is one of only a few general stores remaining in Montgomery County. The store, operated by the Poole family until 2010, is located in the small farming community of Seneca, established in 1732. Both the Seneca Store and adjacent Upton Darby House were acquired in 1976 by the Montgomery County Department of Parks, which is renovating the commercial building to create a working store and a heritage tourism destination.

**Rocklands Farm** in Poolesville is dedicated to environmentally-friendly agriculture and livestock. Owners Greg Sr. and Anna Glenn and their son Greg Jr. started the 34-acre farm in 2010 and operate a market and winery on the property, selling fruit, vegetables, wine and pasture-raised meats. They hope the farm will help enrich the community's understanding, trust and reverence of their food and the land it comes from.

**Bounty Farm** in Poolesville is owned by artist and activist Dolores Milmoie and her family. They grow flowers and organic herbs, and have participated in farmers markets in Rockville and Kentlands, Maryland. Three acres of the 28-acre property are devoted to the Chocolates and Tomatoes Farm run by pastry chef Mark Mills. Since 2013, Mills has rented this farmland to grow table vegetables using sustainable practices that respect and protect the soil.

## TOUR SPEAKERS

**Courtney Buchholtz** runs **From the Earth Foods**, LLC, a three-acre organic vegetable farm near Poolesville, Maryland. Buchholtz established her operation with help from the Land Link program hosted by the Montgomery Countryside Alliance and Montgomery County's New Farmer Project. In 2011, she moved from Minnesota to the Mid-Atlantic region and spent three years working at farms in Accokeek and Middletown, Maryland, before establishing her Poolesville farm. Through this journey, Buchholtz gained experience in running community-supported agricultural programs.

**Jeremy Criss** is the **Agricultural Services Division Manager for Montgomery County** within the Department of Economic Development. He is responsible for coordinating technical and financial assistance to the agricultural community and overseeing the farmland preservation, agricultural marketing and technical assistance programs. Criss has worked with the Maryland agricultural community in addressing the needs of farmers since 1983. Until 1988, he administered Baltimore County's farmland preservation Purchase of Development Rights Program.

**Greg Glenn** is the manager of **Rocklands Farm** in Poolesville, Maryland. Raised in Montgomery County, he started farming in 2010 with a friend from college, even though neither had any background in agriculture. Glenn commercially raises cattle, hogs, sheep, broilers and layers, while building the long-term nutrient-capacity of the land through intensive rotational grazing, mixed-species rotations and layer-mulching in the barn. Rocklands sells meats on the farm, through community-supported agricultural programs and at local farmers markets.

**Mark Mills** worked in the restaurant industry for more than 25 years as a chef and proprietor, including a stint as a pastry chef at Washington's Blue Duck Tavern. In 2013, Mills, with his wife Theresa, started the **Chocolates and Tomatoes** Farm in Poolesville, Maryland on three acres rented from Dolores Milmoie and her family. He and Milmoie connected through the Land Link program. Mills participates in the Montgomery County New Farmer Project and grows vegetables and hops using sustainable practices that respect and protect the soil.

**Dolores Milmoie** and her family own **Bounty Farm** in Poolesville, Maryland. For 12 years, Milmoie served as the Maryland Conservation Advocate for the Audubon Naturalist Society, organizing grassroots efforts to oppose ill-conceived developments. In 2002, she was honored with the Outstanding Activist Award from the Montgomery County Civic Federation and, in 2009, was invited to serve on President Barack Obama's Environmental Task Force. Milmoie currently serves on the Executive Board of the Montgomery Countryside Alliance, which she co-founded.

**Joshua Penn** is a Planner Coordinator with the **Montgomery County Planning Department**, which is part of Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). Josh has worked on environmental and agricultural issues for most of his professional career. Before joining M-NCPPC in 2005, he worked for private firms in the Washington, DC area, preparing plans for local environmental regulations. Penn currently reviews regulatory and forest conservation plans, and develops agricultural land use policies in Montgomery County.

**Caroline Taylor** is the Executive Director of the **Montgomery Countryside Alliance** (MCA) and has worked on environmental and agricultural issues for most of her professional career. After gaining experience in environmental litigation at the Washington, DC law firm of Covington and Burling, she worked at the National Wildlife Federation before joining the MCA in 2009. Under her leadership, the nonprofit Alliance has garnered accolades for its successful efforts in assisting farmers and connecting the various stakeholders of the region's food system.



## PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

### **Montgomery County Planning Department**

The Montgomery County Planning Department, part of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, aims to improve the quality of life by conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment for current and future generations. The Planning Department creates great communities by developing master plans, reviewing applications for development and analyzing various types of information to help public officials plan for Montgomery County's future. The Department comprises 147 staff members and provides recommendations, information, analysis and services to the Montgomery County Planning Board, County Council, County Executive, other government agencies and the public. Visit [www.montgomeryplanning.org](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org).

### **Montgomery County Department of Economic Development**

Montgomery County, located next to Washington, DC, is a knowledge-based business and research hub, and the epicenter for biotechnology in the Mid-Atlantic region. The County is also home to the Agricultural Reserve, which provides the backdrop for a thriving agricultural economy. More than 93,000 acres of the County's 316,000 acres are still devoted to agriculture. The County's Department of Economic Development offers agricultural services, including seven land preservation programs for landowners. Each of these programs places an easement on the property to prevent future commercial, residential or industrial development of the land. Visit: <http://www.choosemontgomerymd.com/programs-incentives/agricultural-preservation/>

### **Montgomery Countryside Alliance**

This nonprofit organization originated as "Solutions Not Sprawl," a successful grassroots effort to stop the building of a Potomac River bridge and highway that would bisect Montgomery County's acclaimed Agricultural Reserve. In 2005, the group launched a campaign to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Agricultural Reserve and changed the organization's name to the Montgomery Countryside Alliance (MCA). MCA advocates for land use and transportation policies that enhance agriculture and land preservation, and educates the public about the environmental, economic and recreational benefits of local farms and open space.

The organization has since expanded its work of supporting and increasing agricultural enterprises in the Reserve. It launched Land Link Montgomery, partnered with Montgomery County on the New Farmer Project and worked with the Montgomery County Farm Bureau to advance agricultural education in public schools. As part of this outreach, MCA produced the award-winning "Growing Legacy," a 2014 film about the Agricultural Reserve - its history, challenges and successes. Visit <http://mocoalliance.org>.

### **Land Link**

Farmers in Montgomery County face many challenges, including high land prices, decreasing farm subsidies and not having access to farmland. Montgomery County Land Link, introduced in 2011, overcomes these obstacles by connecting beginner and experienced farmers to available land and farms through a database of properties and landowners. A land seeker or land owner pays a one-time fee of \$30 to join the Land Link program, which is administered year round by the Montgomery Countryside Alliance. The applications help to assess the kind of land available, housing, acreage, vision and goals for the property. Land seekers and land owners locate farms and farmers of interest based on matching criteria and shared goals, and then start a conversation. The goal is to build connections between farmers and produce a strong local food system in Montgomery County. More than 400 acres have been linked to date. Visit <http://mocoalliance.org/resource/land-link>.

### **New Farmer Project**

Montgomery County's New Farmer Project, launched in 2012, matches new farmers to unused farmland in the Agricultural Reserve. By locating small plots that can be leased and supplying training mentors, the program helps novices overcome the biggest hurdles to start-up farming: the cost of land and agricultural expertise. Interested farmers and landowners sign up for the program during a limited time period. Their applications are reviewed by a committee of stakeholders who recommend match-ups among the top-ranked applicants. The program allows new farmers to focus on growing their businesses instead of finding real estate. The beginners negotiate for farmland with a land owner, are matched with an experienced mentor and have access to business planning and shared equipment that can often be cost-prohibitive for a new enterprise. They can farm the land for as long as allowed by the lease, which typically extends from three to five years. Visit <http://www.choosemontgomerymd.com/programs-incentives/agricultural-preservation/new-farmer-pilot-project/>

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY AGRICULTURAL RESERVE



**For more information on the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, go to:**  
[http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/ag\\_reserve.shtm](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/ag_reserve.shtm)



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Online: montgomeryplanning.org