

Press Release

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Division of Agriculture



PUBLIC SAFETY

"Ensuring a Safe Harford"

EDUCATION

"Preparing Now, Building for the Future"

EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT

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ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

"Growing and Sustaining Harford's Prosperity"

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

"Protecting Our Environment"

QUALITY LIVING

"Safeguarding What is Important to Harford County Citizens"

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Harford Farmers to be Honored at Annual Ag Banquet

(Bel Air, MD – March 18, 2009) - - Harford's farming community will gather to honor successes in innovative agribusiness and agricultural land preservation at the annual Harford County Ag Banquet on Saturday, March 21 at 6:30pm at Level Volunteer Fire Hall. Awards will be given for Agricultural Excellence and to the Land Preservationists of the Year.

The featured speaker for the banquet will be United States Representative Frank Kratovil of Maryland's First Congressional District. Rep. Kratovil, who represents a portion of Harford County, is the first Marylander in decades to serve on the House Agriculture Committee.

Andrew Bachman of Tower Hill Farm in Fallston will be honored with the Agricultural Excellence of the Year award. Bachman has owned and operated Andy's Eggs since 2004, which in five short years has become one of the areas largest and most successful farm-based egg businesses. Last year Andy's Eggs expanded to offer broiler chickens at farmers' markets, and Bachman has plans for further expansion in the next year.

The Martin Family of Blue Valley Farms in Pylesville will be awarded as the Land Preservationists of the Year. Lilace Martin and sons Tom, Sam, and Steve were some of the earliest participants in the Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation program, placing the first of many easements on their farms in 1994. They have won numerous state and national crop yield competitions, and they continue to prove that that conservation and stewardship are compatible with modern production techniques.

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Also at the banquet, the Harford County Agricultural Marketing Cooperative will be announcing its grant recipients for the 2009 cycle. The Co-op will distribute grant funds totaling nearly \$62,000 to 16 Harford County farm operations, which will be used to assist in the marketing and development of both new and existing agricultural products and services.

“Our annual Ag Banquet is a chance for us to honor farmers who have demonstrated successes in agriculture, as well as to hear about some new and innovative farming practices that are being tried around the county,” stated County Executive David R. Craig. “It’s as much about looking toward the future as it is about honoring the past.”

The annual Ag Banquet is hosted jointly by the Harford County Economic Development Agricultural Advisory Board and the Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board. Henry Holloway of Holloway Brothers Farm in Darlington will serve as emcee.

For more information on agriculture in Harford County, log on to www.harfordfarms.com.