



Calvert County News

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Calvert County Economic Development Hosts Farm Tour for Local, State and Federal Officials

PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – Sept. 25, 2023 – The Calvert County Department of Economic Development hosted a Farm Tour Wednesday, Sept. 20, for local, state and federal officials to explore Calvert County’s agricultural landscape by delving into its rich farming history and promising future. The tour highlighted agriculture’s crucial role in the economy, emphasizing the stories of the region’s farming legacy and shining a spotlight on the county’s agricultural past, present and future. Participants were provided the opportunity to experience the direct link between local farms and community nourishment through a farm-to-table style luncheon.

Participants included Commissioner President Earl “Buddy” Hance; Commissioner Catherine Grasso; County Administrator Mark Willis; USDA Farm Service Agency Executive Director John Sullivan; Maryland Assistant Secretary of Marketing, Animal Industries and Consumer Services Cassie Shirk; Maryland Agriculture Director of Government Relations Rachel Jones; USDA Farm Service Agency County Executive Director Patrick Goode; Regional Director for U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen Kenneth Simons; staff for Senator Michael Jackson; SBDC Consultant Bill Hitte; TEDCO Rural Business Mentor Justin Ferguson; Calvert County Farm Bureau President Cathy Cosgrove; and Calvert County Farmers Market Association Representative Debbie Jones. Several local, state and federal agricultural resource partners also attended.

“The Farm Tour is a powerful way to experience first-hand the importance of agriculture to our economy, our quality of life and preserving our rural heritage,” said Julie Oberg, director

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of Economic Development. “According to the latest USDA Census of Agriculture, Calvert County is home to 280 family farms on 25,152 acres with market sales totaling more than \$6.3 million.”

Tour hosts included the following farms and agricultural businesses:

[Jake’s Produce and Linda’s Greenhouses](#) in Port Republic is owned and operated by the Sunderland family and has persevered for over four decades by growing crops in their fields and greenhouses. Throughout their history, they have grown fruits, vegetables, tobacco, livestock and bedding plants. At the produce stand, they sell locally grown and preserved food and seasonal products including pumpkins, Christmas trees and flowers. Jake Sunderland is the current owner of the farming operation, produce stand and a new fall agritourism operation.

[Briscoe Farms and Ben’s Creek Produce](#) in St. Leonard is a family-owned and operated farm on the banks of the Patuxent River. Tommy Briscoe of Briscoe Farms started growing tobacco with his family and now grows corn, wheat and soybeans and sells seeds for these crops under the Pioneer label. As the sixth generation on the farm, Jeannae Pinno of Ben’s Creek Produce grows lettuce in hydroponic systems to maintain their high quality and consistency. Their hydroponic system uses minimal water and nutrients, as well as no harmful chemicals, pesticides or sprays.

[Taney Place Farm](#) in Prince Frederick was founded as a tobacco farm in the early 1800s and has been passed down through nine generations. The Wells family, led by Walt, Susie, Charlie and Katie, owns and operates the farm along the Patuxent River. Taney Place Farm grows corn, wheat, soybeans, hay and straw and produces Angus beef, pork, chicken and eggs under the Battle Creek Beef label. The farm raises Angus cattle and produces high quality, all natural, pasture-raised and grain-finished beef.

[Mully’s Brewery](#) in Prince Frederick was established in 2012 by Cindy and Jason Mullikin and is a family-owned and operated brewing facility. The Mullikins focus on traditional styles of beers as well as interesting and unique beers. Each 50-gallon batch is brewed by hand, designed and crafted in house, and sold at their tasting room and throughout Maryland.

For more information about Calvert County agriculture, visit www.CalvertAg.com.

Find information on Calvert County Government services online at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov. Stay up to date with Calvert County Government on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CalvertCountyMd and YouTube at www.youtube.com/CalvertCountyGov.



Local, state and federal officials attended a Farm Tour of Calvert County farms and agricultural businesses on Wednesday, Sept. 20. The tour, hosted by the Calvert County Department of Economic Development, enabled participants to witness first-hand agriculture's crucial role in the economy, emphasizing stories of the region's farming legacy and shining a spotlight on the county's agricultural past, present and future.