



Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund Overview

Established in 2000, the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) offers important financial support to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education efforts. The Fund also provides targeted financial assistance to community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses through enhanced training and technical assistance offerings. Between FY 2001 and 2019, the MAERDAF program awarded more than \$5.4 million in grants to 145 rural-serving organizations. For fiscal year, 2020 the RMC received 177 application requesting approximately \$10,521,692.00 in funding and dispersed a total of \$6,291,030 to eighty-three organizations. Many rural-serving organizations have been able to establish or continue programs and projects that have had a significant and positive impact on Rural Maryland because of the MAERDAF program. Moreover, the Fund has helped many nonprofits develop institutional capacity, improve grant-writing skills, and enhance the internal development of volunteer boards and staff. The Rural Maryland Council administers MAERDAF in partnership with the Maryland Departments of Agriculture, Maryland Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Departments of Business and Economic Development, Maryland Departments of Housing and Community Development, and Maryland Departments of Natural Resources.