



MDA Agriculture and Seafood Marketing ***Rural Summit***

Mark Powell
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Marketing mission



- The goal of the Maryland Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Marketing Program is to develop markets for Maryland agricultural products and to connect farmers, watermen, and food producers to those markets.
- Through this economic development and promotion activity, the department helps create a profitable, sustainable and viable future for Maryland's rural economy.

Key strategies



- Promote agriculture and seafood
- Promote local food
- Maintain website listing farmers and seafood operations, **www.marylandsbest.net**
- Develop and distribute lists of farmers to wholesale and retail buyers
- Develop advertising and promotional events targeting consumers and wholesale buyers
- Work with Communications office for press releases, social media
- Develop and maintain working relationships with buyers and producers to act as ombudsman for marketing issues

Maryland's Best



Maryland's Best is 20 years old!

- Advertising reaches 4 million annually through billboards, radio, print, social media. Spend is approximately \$80,000-\$100,000
- Content for promos ... videos, photos, recipes
- Support MPT's Farm&Harvest. MDA is co-producer. Farm&Harvest is MPT's top program.
- Signage for farm stands, farmers markets

Maryland's Best



- In the last 7 years, Seafood Marketing program now is Maryland's Best. Also, Homegrown by Heroes is now a Maryland's Best program.
- Maryland's Best started in 2021. New state ag logo, replacing Maryland With Pride.

Ice Cream Trail



Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail, more than 70 people completed the trail in 2019. 33 completed in 2021.

'The gift that keeps giving'

Maryland's Best website

Web site reached 146,000 in 2021. 182,000 during 2020 'COVID effect'



Buyer Grower Expo



Maryland's Best Expo brings hundreds of farmers, seafood companies, niche food producers to meet with buyers. Jan. 19, 2022. Will be our 18th Expo.

Other Marketing programs

- Farmers Market Nutrition Program ... More than \$530,000 in food benefits to WIC recipients and seniors with limited income.
- International Marketing ... Sales of \$42 million from Maryland ag companies in 2019.
- Specialty crop block grant program, \$400,000 in grants
- Wine and Grape Promotion Fund, \$160,000 checkoff dollars to support industry
- Farms and Families Fund, \$100,000 for matching dollars programs at farmers markets
- Ag tourism signing program
- Food donation tax credit program
- Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program
- Ag Mediation
- Farm to School program
- Spay and Neuter program
- NEW .. Urban Agriculture Grant Program





MDA Marketing 2004

Contact us at ...



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