

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF



PLANNING

2017

Report on
the Program for
Certification of Local
Agricultural Land
Preservation Programs
(Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017)

Report on the Program for Certification of Local Agricultural Land Preservation Programs for FY 2016 and FY 2017

January 2018

The program for Certification of Local Agricultural Land Preservation Programs (“Certification Program”) was created by the Maryland General Assembly in 1990 and is jointly administered by the Maryland Department of Planning and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF).¹

The goals of the Certification Program are to:

- preserve the important role agriculture plays in maintaining the State’s high environmental quality;
- encourage development of county agricultural preservation programs which complement MALPF’s preservation efforts; and
- employ agricultural land preservation as a tool to manage growth.

Counties able to demonstrate that they have an effective program to preserve productive farmland and forests are eligible to participate in the Certification Program. Local preservation programs consist of a combination of preservation tools such as low-density agricultural zoning, purchase or transfer of development rights programs, right-to-farm policies, support for agricultural businesses, and the designation of agriculture as the best use of certain lands, among others.

To qualify for and retain certified status, counties are required to designate a Priority Preservation Area (“PPA”). Counties concentrate their preservation efforts and program funding into their PPAs to preserve large contiguous blocks of agricultural and forested land.

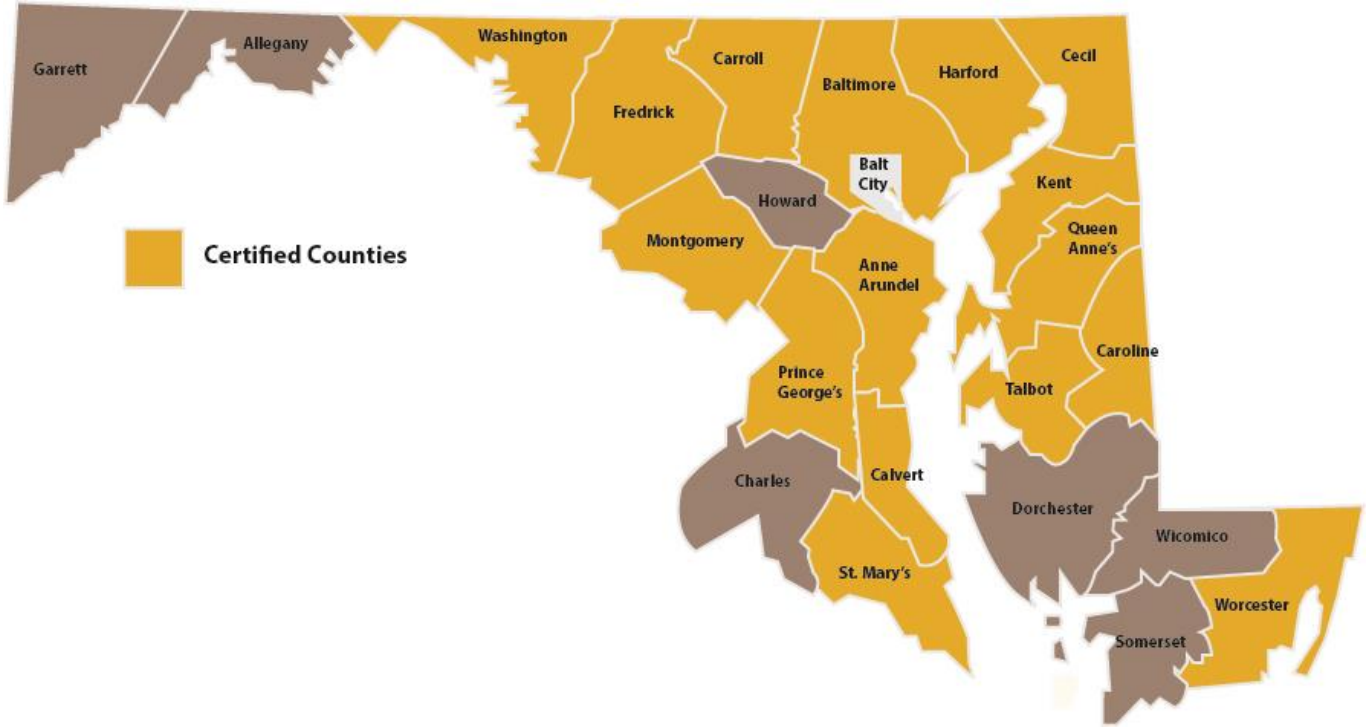
Participation in the Certification Program by interested counties is voluntary. Certified counties enjoy the benefit of retaining 75% of their locally generated agricultural transfer tax revenue, while non-certified counties retain 33%. All retained revenue must be spent or encumbered for qualifying land preservation expenditures within three years of collection, or those collected funds revert to MALPF. The increase in participating counties’ share of the agricultural land transfer tax helps to support and enhance their preservation programs in ways that best meet local goals and needs.



¹ The statute appears in State Finance and Procurement Article, Division I. State Finance, Title 5. State Planning, Subtitle 4. Governmental Coordination, Cooperation, and Assistance in Planning, § 5-408. Certification of County Agricultural Land Preservation Programs.

The regulations for the Certification Program appear in MDP’s section of COMAR: Title 34 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, Subtitle 03 LAND USE, Chapter 03 Certification of County Agricultural Land Preservation Programs Authority: Agriculture Article, §§2-103(b) and 2-518; State Finance and Procurement Article, §§5-203(b)(2) and 5-408; Tax-Property Article, §3-306; Annotated Code of Maryland

As of January 2018, sixteen counties are certified including Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Harford, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, and Worcester.



County	Acreage
Anne Arundel	19,194
Baltimore County	62,599
Calvert	31,608
Caroline	49,339
Carroll	70,313
Cecil	34,324
Frederick	62,067
Harford	52,072
Kent	41,399
Montgomery	75,665
Prince George's	25,504
Queen Anne's	68,763
St. Mary's	25,512
Talbot	29,234
Washington	31,688
Worcester	31,418

This table identifies cumulative acreage preserved by the certified counties through various programs including:

- MALPF
- Rural Legacy
- The Maryland Environmental Trust
- GreenPrint
- Local purchase of development rights programs
- Local transfer of development rights programs
- Dedicated open space
- Cluster remainders
- Forest conservation easements
- Federal easements

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