



## FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

### OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE

Department of Agricultural Preservation

Jessica Fitzwater  
County Executive

Katie Stevens, Director  
Shannon O'Neil, Administrator

# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 10, 2025

### County Announces Installment Purchase Program and Forest Resource Ordinance Collaboration, Calls for Applications

September 2, 2025 Deadline Set



FREDERICK, MD – The Frederick County Office of Agriculture and the Division of Planning and Permitting have announced a new collaboration that will help preserve farmland and protect natural resources by offering applicants the opportunity to place a combined Installment Purchase Program and Forest Resource Ordinance easement on their land. The Office of Agriculture is now accepting applications for this program until September 2, 2025.

“We are excited about this new collaboration to protect our farmlands, forests, and natural resources,” said County Executive Jessica Fitzwater. “Offering eligible farmers and landowners the opportunity to combine the two types of easements will help stretch funding further, allowing us to preserve more farms and forests.”

The Installment Purchase Program is the County’s farmland preservation program, which purchases agricultural preservation easements to permanently restrict development on farmland and woodland. The Forest Resource Ordinance is Frederick County’s version of the Forest Conservation Act, which was passed by the Maryland State Legislature in 1991 to protect forests.

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The Installment Purchase Program uses Installment Purchase Agreements to pay the farmer tax-free interest over a 10- to 20-year term, with a balloon lump sum principal payment at the end of the term. Eligible applicants who receive an Installment Purchase Program easement offer may elect to participate in the optional Forest Resource Ordinance easement, which will utilize fee-in-lieu funds to offer an upfront lump sum payment.

Since the Installment Purchase Program began in 2002, it has preserved more than 23,484 acres of farmland in Frederick County on 168 different properties. This program is one of several agricultural preservation programs managed by the Frederick County Office of Agriculture. Together, all the programs have permanently preserved over 76,304 acres of farmland. Through FY24, Frederick County has planted 2,208 acres of new forest and conserved 9,469 acres of existing forest.

Requirements for the program and the application can be found on the Office of Agriculture website at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/IPP](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/IPP). Interested applicants must submit the application by Tuesday, September 2. For assistance, please contact Beth Ahalt by phone at 240-549-2125 or by email at [BAhalt1@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:BAhalt1@FrederickCountyMD.gov).

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