

# foreword



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Director

After a series of drought years and two years that were wetter than normal, the 2004 production year can best be characterized by ideal weather conditions and record farm receipts. Some farmers sought additional storage capacity as corn growers experienced a near record grain yield and soybean producers realized a yield that tied the record set in 2000. Broiler producers once again represented the largest agricultural sector in Maryland, in terms of cash receipts, followed by greenhouse and nursery, dairy, corn, and soybean growers. This edition of “*Agriculture in Maryland*” documents all details related to the past production year and provides comparisons to the previous four seasons. This publication is made possible through funds provided by the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Our agency’s mission is to “*provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to Maryland agriculture.*” The statistics represented in this publication are used to administer and support USDA farm programs that benefit

our Maryland farmers, to determine the feasibility of new ventures affecting our state’s farmers and their products, and to direct program research and development. Data presented in this publication are a direct result of, and only made possible by, the voluntary cooperation of Maryland farmers that have taken time over the past year to respond to our surveys. We personally express our gratitude to the continued support provided by these farmers.

In addition, our efforts would not be possible without the contributions of our county extension educators, Farm Service Agency offices, Natural Resource Conservation Service offices, and employees of the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Appreciation is also expressed to the office staff of our Maryland Field Office for their dedication in compiling all statistics included herein and to our “front-line” enumerators for their perseverance and skill in collecting data throughout the year. Our staff is dedicated to serving the Maryland farm community and to providing the highest quality service possible for our data users.

Data included in this publication can also be accessed through the Maryland Agricultural Statistics Service homepage on the Internet at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/md>. If you require additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us by e-mail, telephone, or personally visit anytime! We also welcome your comments regarding our programs or publications.



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