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OWINGS MILLS

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For immediate release

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Note: Series Producer Joe Ligo is available for interviews. In addition, Feb. 8 episode photos and the series logo are available at <https://bit.ly/3uniFXx>.

MPT series *Maryland Farm & Harvest* visits Anne Arundel, Carroll, and Calvert counties during February 8 episode

OWINGS MILLS, MD – Maryland Public Television’s (MPT) popular original series [Maryland Farm & Harvest](#), in its ninth season, will feature farms and locations in Anne Arundel, Carroll, and Calvert counties as part of an “unusual crops grown by Maryland farmers” themed episode at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, February 8. Viewers can watch on MPT-HD and online at mpt.org/livestream.

The weekly series takes viewers on a journey across the Free State, telling interesting stories about the farms, people, and technology required to sustain and grow agriculture in Maryland, the number one commercial industry in the state.

Joanne Clendining, who has earned two Emmy® awards from the National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for her work on *Maryland Farm & Harvest*, returns as host.



With introductions filmed at the **MD-Delight Dairy in Westminster**, the February 8 episode features the following segments:

- **The Love of Persimmons (Calvert County).** Bill Preston was a man who loved persimmons. His passion for this unusual, bright orange fruit led him to devote years to researching and growing them. Using what he learned, Bill planted a two-acre grove of trees in **Owings, Maryland** that became the northern-most, single-variety persimmon orchard in the country. While persimmons typically don't thrive in cooler climates, Bill's process of grafting the shoots of Asian persimmon trees to the roots of American persimmon trees led to an orchard able to withstand Maryland winters. After Bill died in 2019, his friends Sophie Kasimow and Seth Shames bought the farm and renamed it [Preston's Orchard](#) in his honor. The couple shows viewers around the orchard during harvest time and takes a load of their fruit to a distributor, [Number 1 Sons](#) in Washington, D.C.

- **Harvesting Sorghum (Carroll County).** It's harvest time at [Dell Brothers Farm in Westminster](#), and while the farm grows plenty of different crops, during this segment the harvest is something a bit unusual – sorghum. During a ride in the combine with Greg Dell, he explains why this grain is a good fit for the Carroll County farm. While not as popular as corn, wheat, or soybeans, sorghum has some natural advantages. It suffers less crop damage from deer and it seems to do well even during dry years when other crops struggle. After the crop is harvested, viewers see Greg's father Gary Dell manage the truckloads of sorghum being delivered to a grain elevator, where it will be stored before being taken to Pennsylvania to be added to bird seed mixes.
- ***The Way it Works: The Nightshade Family.*** Many families have unusual family members, but as Joe Ligo shows, plant families can really be strange. On this installment of *The Way it Works*, Joe gives a walkthrough of the "Solanaceae" family, often known as "Nightshades." Potatoes, tomatoes, bell peppers, and eggplants are among this family of foods and spices. But beware, also among Nightshades are hazardous and toxic plants, such as hot peppers and tobacco.
- ***The Local Buy: Turmeric (Anne Arundel County).*** J.J. Minetola traded the hard work of being a professional chef for the hard work of being a farmer. At [Mise En Place Farm in Davidsonville](#), he grows a host of interesting vegetables. *The Local Buy's* Al Spoler gets his hands dirty helping J.J. dig up an unusual spice – turmeric. These knobby, bright orange roots are related to ginger and are known for their health benefits, and customers at the farmer's market can't get enough of them. While typically found in tropical climates, J.J. has found a way to successfully grow turmeric in a greenhouse. After harvesting and cleaning the crop, J.J. shares his turmeric-seasoned rice with Al. This and other recipes can be found at [mpt.org/farm](#).

Encore broadcasts are available on MPT-HD Thursdays at 11 p.m. and Sundays at 6 a.m. Each episode also airs on MPT2/Create® on Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

More than 13 million viewers have tuned in to *Maryland Farm & Harvest* since its fall 2013 debut. The series has traveled to nearly 400 farms, fisheries, and other agriculture-related locations during its first eight seasons, covering every Maryland county, as well as Baltimore City, Washington, D.C., and nearby Delaware.

Past episodes can be viewed at video.mpt.tv/show/maryland-farm-harvest/, while episode segments are available on the series' YouTube channel at youtube.com/c/MarylandFarmHarvest/featured. Engage with the show on social media [@MarylandFarmHarvest on Facebook](#) and [@mdfarmtv on Twitter](#).

The Maryland Department of Agriculture is MPT's co-production partner for *Maryland Farm & Harvest*. Major funding is provided by the Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board.

Additional funding is provided by Maryland's Best, Rural Maryland Council, Maryland Agricultural Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (Marbidco), a grant from the Maryland Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Program, MidAtlantic Farm Credit, the Cornell Douglas Foundation, Maryland Soybean Board, Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Wegmans Food Markets, Maryland Nursery, Landscape & Greenhouse Association, The Maryland Seafood Marketing Fund, Maryland Farm Bureau, and The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment.

Other support comes from Mar-Del Watermelon Association and Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation.

About Maryland Public Television

Maryland Public Television (MPT) is a statewide, public-supported TV network and Public Broadcasting Service member offering entertaining, educational, and inspiring content delivered by traditional broadcasting and streaming on TVs, computers, and mobile devices. A state agency, it operates under the auspices of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission. MPT creates local, regional, and national content and is a frequent winner of regional Emmy® awards. MPT's commitment to educators, parents, caregivers, and learners of all ages is delivered through instructional events and Thinkport.org. MPT's year-round community engagement activities connect viewers with resources on a wide range of topics. For more information visit mpt.org.