

1000  
FRIENDS  
of  
MARYLAND



# Eliminate the Unfair ESTATE TAX for Working Family Farms

## Background:

Maryland's working farm families are faced with a tremendous estate tax burden. Eliminating the Maryland estate tax for working farm families will continue to allow them to **live and invest in the communities where they work**. Farmers are the backbone of Maryland's agricultural economy.

## Facts:

- Farms with conservation easements sell for up to \$15,000 - \$17,000 an acre.
- The average size farm in Maryland is 170 acres.
- The current estate tax rate of 16% would result in a tax of \$248,000 for a 170-acre farm.
- **The average net farm income per operator in 2009 was \$38,191.**
- The tax would equal the entire income for six and a half years.
- The average age of a Maryland farmer is almost 60.
- When these farms transfer they are typically converted out of agriculture.

## Solution:

Please help us keep farmers farming in Maryland by contacting your elected officials in support of legislation that would ease the estate tax burden on farmers. There are several bills that tackle this critical issue, ranging from relief of the estate tax burden for all farmers who chose to keep the land in farming (**SB592/HB221**), to bills that would apply only to **working family farms** permanently preserved (**SB155/HB160** and **SB790**). Let your legislators know that you want to **keep farmers farming** and urge them to support these bills!

## Why:

Eliminating the estate tax will enable the next generation to continue to produce safe, local produce for all Marylanders.

**Once you lose a working farm it is gone forever.**

Visit [www.friendsofmd.org](http://www.friendsofmd.org) for more information.

