Farmland Rental Survey Insights
Maryland & Pennsylvania

Key Insights

**Landowners**

- **73% (MD)** 76% (PA) said that maintaining the family legacy is the primary reason they own land, whereas owning land for a second home was least important in both states (6%)

- **34%-38% (MD)** 36%-44% (PA) said that owning land was very important as a long-term real estate investment and income generator

**Farmers**

- **71% (MD)** 74% (PA) said that the primary barrier to implementing conservation is that they have no assurance of continued access to the land

- **83% (MD)** 90% (PA) said they did not partner with a landowner on conservation programs last year
Landowner Insights

- **81% (MD) 74% (PA)**
  - Most landowners rent land to only one farmer.

- **57% (MD) 51% (PA)**
  - More than half of landowner respondents* rent between 100 and 250 acres to farmers — the remaining respondents were split between <100 and >250 acres.

- **39% (MD) 66% (PA)**
  - Landowners in Pennsylvania are more likely to have more than 75% of their rental acres under a written lease than landowners in Maryland.

- **77% (MD) 70% (PA)**
  - The majority of landowners rely on farmers to make most management decisions about farm practices.

*Only landowners that rent more than 75 acres were surveyed.

- **52% (MD) 51% (PA)**
  - More than half of landowners were not familiar with advanced nutrient management practices, and about half (49% MD and 48% PA) of landowners didn’t know if they were being used on their land.

- **58% (MD) 65% (PA)**
  - Many landowners are interested in educational materials related to conservation planning and management.

- **61% (MD) 62% (PA)**
  - Many landowners said that they would be interested in tax incentives provided for including conservation requirements in the lease terms for their rented acres.
83% (MD)  87% (PA)  farmers have a more than 7-year relationship with their landowners, however, of the respondents that had a written lease, many were only for one year (37% MD and 47% PA)

66% (MD)  63% (PA)  when asked if they planned to implement additional conservation practices on their rented acres, many said they don’t see the need to do so

86% (MD)  88% (PA)  most farmers said that none of their landowners require annual soil sample on rented acres

86% (MD)  93% (PA)  most farmers said that none of their landowners require single-species cover crops on rented acres

48% (MD)  70% (PA)  many farmers rent from more than six landowners, including 11% in Maryland and 15% in Pennsylvania who rent from more than 16 landowners
The Way Forward: Written Leases

“I have never requested a written lease.”
was the most common response by landowners
when asked why they don’t have a written lease

“The other party has never requested a written lease.”
was the most common response by farmers
when asked why they don’t have a written lease

Farmers claim their landowners don’t want written leases;
But landowner responses don’t exactly prove this.

13% (MD) 12% (PA)
some farmers say their landowner(s) do not want written leases
2% (MD) 2% (PA)
...but few landowners say they do not want written leases with farmers they lease land to

Across both sides of the relationship, many have never requested or even considered a written lease.

30% (MD) 31% (PA)
farmers who have never requested a written lease from their landowner
8% (MD) 11% (PA)
farmers who have never considered a written lease with their landowner
38% (MD) 41% (PA)
landowners who have never requested a written lease from their farmer
17% (MD) 16% (PA)
landowners who have never considered a written lease with their farmer

Bottom Line:
There is potential to strengthen farmer-landowner relationships through written leases.

Surveyed landowners that leased the majority of their farm acreage in MD (53) and PA (269) – representing over 80,000 acres of farmland. Surveyed farmers that lease land in 2020 in MD (116) and PA (337) representing over 350,000 acres of farmland. This report represents preliminary findings, data collection and analysis are ongoing, as such these figures are subject to change.