

Wye Research and Education Center



Brief Overview

The Wye Institute, the Wye Plantation, and the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) have been cooperating, both formally and informally, in agricultural research and related activities for nearly 40 years. Cooperation with the Wye Angus herd, which began in 1954, has been a tremendous resource for MAES scientists. Crop research has been conducted by MAES scientists since 1966 when Wye Institute made available, without charge, 100 acres of Institute land for use by MAES.

In 1973, arrangements were completed which enabled the University of Maryland to purchase, for use by MAES, 123 acres of Wye Institute land. In 1978, the Wye Plantation donated the Wye Angus herd, together with a substantial cash endowment, to the University of Maryland Foundation for use in the research program of MAES. In May, 1979, the University agreed to develop a plan for research and related activities at Wye. The plan provided a blueprint for the future development of the Experiment Station's field unit at Wye and a sound basis to Wye Institute and Wye Plantation for planning the most efficient use of their resources.

In December, 1979, the proposed plan was completed. The plan envisioned Wye to be an innovative multidisciplinary research, extension and education center with the following six major foci: Cattle Breeding and Genetics; Integrated Pest Management; Plant Breeding and Genetics; Energy Development, Usage and Conservation; Quality of Life; and Interaction of Land and Water Agriculture-Aquaculture.

In 1982, the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, now located at Wye Plantation, offered the use of its facilities and 450 acres of land to support the research programs of MAES. Also in 1982, MAES formally established the Wye Research and Education Center (WREC). Two years later, following acceptance of MAES plans for WREC, Wye Institute agreed to donate an additional 325 acres of land for MAES use.

In 1991, MAES marked the official opening of the 16,000 square foot Arthur A. Houghton, Jr. Laboratory. This valuable addition greatly enhanced the scope of scientific inquiry at the Center.

Today, WREC shares nearly 1,000 acres with Wye and Aspen Institutes. The Center's location makes it an ideal site for research focusing on preserving the health and vitality of the Chesapeake Bay, sustaining agricultural productivity, product diversity, and maintaining Maryland's valued quality of life.

The Center currently houses several Regional Extension Specialists and Research Scientists. In addition, faculty from the Departments of Animal Sciences, Agriculture and Resource Economics, Environmental Science and Technology, Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture, and Entomology use the Center. Other agencies collaborating with Center scientists and College faculty include: USDA-ARS-BARC, USGS, USEPA, Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science.

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