

Nestled in the Appalachian Mountains, Garrett County is the westernmost county in Maryland, surrounded by Pennsylvania to the north and West Virginia to the west and south. The county is home to the Eastern Continental Divide, running along portions of Backbone Mountain which boasts Maryland's High Point. The western part of the county, drained by the Youghiogheny River, is the only part of Maryland within the Mississippi River drainage basin. The remaining approximately 40% of the county are in the Chesapeake Bay basin.

Garrett County Climate & Geography:

Garrett County Farmers face many challenges that folks in the rest of the state do not have. The elevation of Garrett County ranges from a high of 3,360 feet to a low of 960 feet. Average snowfall at Keyser's Ridge, since 1940, is 122 inches (10 feet) but has been as high as 262 inches (21 feet) during the winter of 2009-2010. The frost free dates start June 5 and can be as few as 120 days. Annual average rainfall is 49 inches, much higher than the rest of Maryland. The average summer temperature is only 66 degrees Fahrenheit.

Garrett County Farmland:

Despite the climatic and geographic challenges, Garrett County has over 95,000 acres of farmland on 677 farms. The average farm size is 141 acres, but with almost 50% in cropland, almost 30% in woodlands, and 17% in pastures.

Currently 2,269 acres are in the County Agricultural Land Preservation District Program <<link to: <http://www.garrettcountry.org/planning-land-development/land-preservation> >> and 6,535 acres are permanently protected with Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) <<link to: <http://www.malpf.info/index.html> >> easements. In addition, there are 1,391 acres permanently protected in the Bear Creek Rural Legacy Area <<link to: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/land/rurallegacy/index.asp> >>.

Garrett County Farm Products:

The market value of Garrett County agricultural products sold in 2007 was \$25,726,000. The largest contributor was milk and other dairy products, at \$12,807,000. The top crop in terms of acreage is forage. Garrett County ranks 4th in Forage acreage and 4th in inventories of beef cattle and milk cows among Maryland Counties. Garrett County has almost 70% of Maryland's maple syrup farms, producing 2,437 gallons of syrup in 2007.

To find local farms and farm products, visit: www.GarrettFarms.org