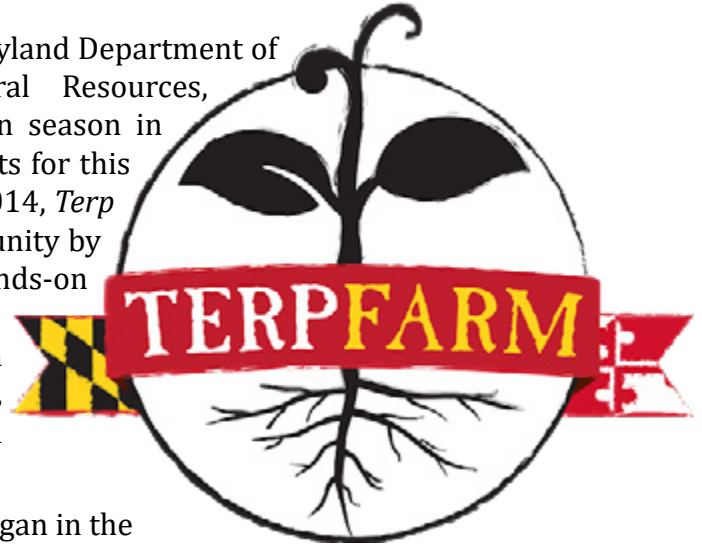


Terp Farm Project Completes Sixth Season, Expands Capacity for Hunger Outreach

Guy H. Kilpatric, Terp Farm Manager, Department of Dining Services

The collaborative project between the University of Maryland Department of Dining Services and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, known as “Terp Farm,” completed its sixth production season in 2019, and we were asked to share some of the highlights for this newsletter. Since the founding of the partnership in 2014, *Terp Farm* has become an integral part of the campus community by providing educational resources for students seeking hands-on farming opportunities, by raising awareness about the food system from production to consumption through our numerous dining outlets and sustainability programs, and by enhancing our capacity to solve hunger related issues on campus and the broader UMD community.



For those who don't already know about Terp Farm, it began in the Spring of 2014 as a pilot initiative of Dining Services to produce vegetables year-round that could be highlighted in the dining halls to provide a truly local food experience to our dining guests. Funding for the project was awarded by the Sustainability Fund, gathered from students fees, in the form of a \$124,000 grant as an initial investment to purchase necessary equipment and develop infrastructure for a four-season produce operation. A high tunnel was also generously donated by greenhouse manufacturer Rimol Greenhouse Systems, Inc., to help kickstart the project. Then by way of a developing partnership between the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Maryland Ag Experiment Station, and the Department of Dining Services, the farm was able to be located on roughly 3 acres at the Upper Marlboro Facility of the Central Maryland Research and Education Center. In April of 2014 the project broke ground for the first time with the construction of the newly donated high tunnel.

During the intervening years the farm has stayed relatively within the same footprint at the Upper Marlboro Facility, but has grown immensely in terms of production output, educational outreach, and as an important touchstone in the development of a network of students, faculty, and staff working to change the food system at UMD. The farm has grossed between six to twelve thousand pounds of produce annually and donates roughly 5% of the harvest to the UMD Campus Pantry and other food banks in the National Capital Region. In 2016 as part of a student driven initiative, we created a specialty cut flower CSA program and set up a retail flower stand at the campus based Farmer's Market at Maryland located on Tawes Plaza. Students are primarily responsible for crop production, sales, and administration of the flower program and are offered a unique hands-on experience in ag entrepreneurship during their tenure at the University. We have also hosted countless visiting groups to the farm from campus and the broader community to tour the farm and try their own hand at some farm work, as well as developed strong partnerships with faculty and staff who bring students to the farm as part of class curriculum and for community and service learning opportunities. In 2019 the Department of Dining Services joined with partners on campus to take action to solve the hunger crisis on the UMD Campus, which affects up to 20% of students attending the University. While recognizing Terp Farm as a crucial resource in the development of programs to solve hunger issues, we created two CCMA AmeriCorps VISTA positions for Terp Farm and the UMD Campus Pantry, to increase our capacity to get fresh food to people who need it. The VISTA member has established a gleaning program by forging a network of student volunteer groups to divert would-be wasted portions of the harvest at *Terp Farm* to our Campus Pantry and other food banks. And we are currently developing a monumental vision

for closing the food system loop on the UMD campus by 2050 by submitting a proposal to the Food System Vision Prize, with the goal being to utilize the UMD campus as a living laboratory for modeling systems that support zero hunger and food waste, and can empower future generations of food-literate leaders.

Looking back at what we've achieved with the *Terp Farm* along with our collaborators reflects greatly on how important this project has been, and signals that there is much more we can achieve when we engage directly with students and our community through the lens of sustainable agriculture. 2019 was a banner year for production, engagement, and program development, so here are some important highlights from the farm this past season.

Crop Production Highlights:

[Terps Vs Pros: Sustainable Food Challenge, Episode #4](#)
Watch it!!



Above: Salad mix is a big part of our production in the Spring and Fall. In 2019 we harvested over 1000 pounds of our tried-and-true Premium Greens Mix, which consists of baby leaf varieties of Pac Choi, Tatsoi, Napa Cabbage, and Spicy Mustard.



Above: Our catering chef requested we grow Tongue of Fire dry bean, an heirloom pinto variety that was first collected in the Tierra del Fuego region of South America.

WUSA9 Story:
[The garbage they produce helps grow the veggies they eat](#)

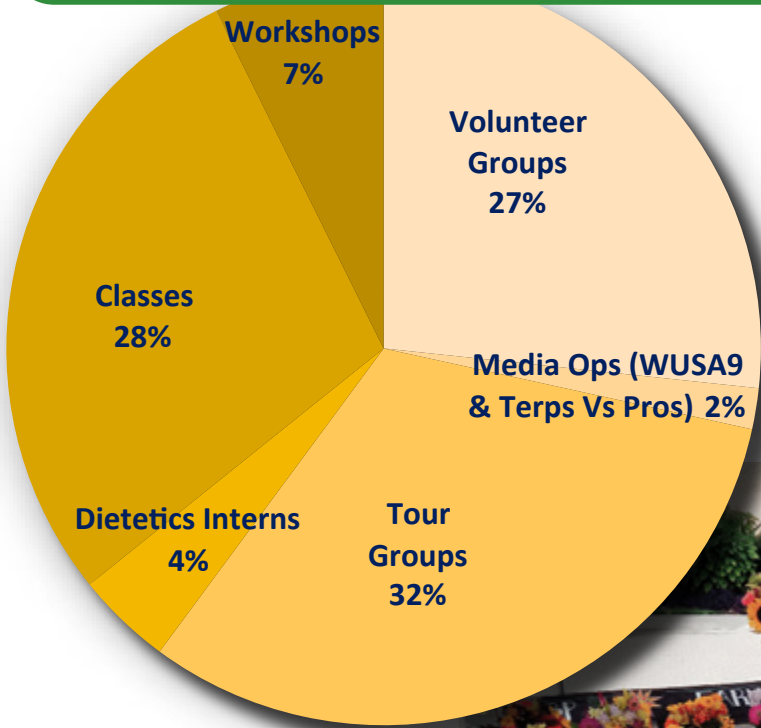


Above: This year Terp Farm produced 1600 pounds of Genovese basil (Prospera variety) that our culinary team converted to over 300 gallons of pesto, enough for an entire year of servings in the dining halls.



Terp Farm Manager, Guy Kilpatrick - Guy has been the Terp Farm Manager since its inception in 2014. Originally from Western Maryland, Guy earned a bachelor's degree in English from St. Mary's College of Maryland before traveling to Santa Cruz, CA to attend the Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture at the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems.

2019 Terp Farm Visitors - 341 Total



The Terp Farm Flowers CSA continues to be successful and greatly appreciated by our customers. This enterprise gives students the opportunity take a leadership role to plan, grow, and sell a farm product directly.



Students and Staff who engage directly in the operation:



Left to right: Edwin, Kai, Claudia, Addie, and Terp Farm Manager, Guy

- Edwin Sanchez - This was Edwin's third season with Terp Farm. Originally from Honduras but hailing from Germantown, Edwin is a Junior Agronomy Major and Institute of Applied Agriculture graduate earning a certificate in Sustainable Agriculture.
- Kai Huang - Kai returned to Terp Farm this year for a second season. Originally from Rockville, Kai recently graduated with an AREC degree and was hired by St. Mary's College of Maryland as an adjunct faculty to teach sustainable agriculture in the Environmental Studies department. Kai was also cast as a student competitor in last year's Terps vs. Pros video series.
- Addie McCaul - This was also Addie's first season at Terp Farm. She is originally from the Four Corners neighborhood of Silver Spring and is currently an Environmental Horticulture major. Last year she graduated from the IAA with a certificate in Sustainable Agriculture. Together with Claudia, Addie will return for the 2020 season to manage the Terp Farm specialty cut flower program.
- Claudia Torrieri - This was Claudia's first season working at Terp Farm. Originally from Reisterstown, and a current IAA Sustainable Agriculture student, Claudia's interest in farming is inspired by her familial connections to Italy where she visits frequently.
- Picture Right: CCMA AmeriCorps VISTA Member, Nicole Ziesing was appointed as our first CCMA AmeriCorps VISTA service member in 2019 with the primary purpose of increasing the capacity of Terp Farm to find hunger solutions.



Farmer's Market/Campus Pantry Manger, Larry Tumlin - Larry joined the Green Dining team in 2015 after serving for 20+ years as a Dining Services production manager. He leads programming related to the Farmer's Market at Maryland and the UMD Campus Pantry. You can catch him at the Farmer's Market doing cooking demonstrations with products from the Terp Farm and other vendors selling at the market.



Dining Services Assistant Director of New Initiatives, Allison Tjaden - Allison has been creating transformation on the College Park campus since she was a student in the School of Public Health earning her Master's degree. Among the many initiatives Allison helped establish are the Community Learning Garden, Terp Farm, The Farmer's Market at Maryland, and the UMD Campus Pantry.

Hands-on Learning for IAA Students

Meredith B. Epstein
Senior Lecturer and Advisor, Sustainable Agriculture
Institute of Applied Agriculture

Terp Farm & the Upper Marlboro Facility Offer Real-World Experiences

“Honestly, no one wants to sit in a classroom and listen to a lecture all day,” says freshman Destiny Daley. “For me, growing up in New York City, I was never exposed to agriculture first-hand. It was all tall buildings. Being able to pick spicy peppers and bring them home to my family was meaningful.” Daley, who is majoring in Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Maryland’s Institute of Applied Agriculture (IAA), was among thirty students who visited the CMREC-Upper Marlboro facility this past September on a class field trip. Her experience is one of several examples of IAA classes making the trip from campus to the 202-acre site for hands-on learning.

The Institute of Applied Agriculture is a unique department within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) at UMD. It is a 60-credit, two-year academic certificate program that provides students with the entrepreneurial, technical, and leadership skills needed to manage profitable agricultural businesses. The name says it all – everything taught at the IAA is applied to the real world, a theme across AGNR. “Students in other colleges are often surprised and shocked to hear that in the course of one week, I visited a vegetable farm, stuck my hand inside a cow and flipped a sheep!” Daley continues.



Destiny Daley (second from right) and classmates picking habanada peppers at Terp Farm.



Above: Upper Marlboro Facility Manager Donald Murphy explains to a class how a combine functions.

On Right: Avery, one of the IAA’s second career students harvests Terp Farm salad mix in the Crop Production Practices course.

Labs, field trips, and other hands-on exercises are a central focus of IAA courses, and having resources like the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station and Terp Farm is essential. In one calendar year alone, the Upper Marlboro site hosted six IAA courses, including *Crop Production Practices*, *Tractor Operations and Safety*, and *Pesticide Use and Safety*.

Daley visited the farm on a field trip for the course *People, Planet, and Profit: Digging Into Sustainable Agriculture*. The trip began with a lesson on no-till grain production from facility manager Donald Murphy, including a soybean harvest demonstration with the combine. Many of the students, Daley included, had never seen such large machinery in operation. Later, Terp Farm manager Guy Kilpatrick gave a tour of the vegetable production, focusing on crop rotation. Students had the opportunity to help pick several varieties of hot peppers. One in particular, called ‘Habanada,’ had the students atwitter about how a habanero could be bred to be sweet instead of spicy.

Whether harvesting, changing the oil on a tractor, or building a high tunnel, AGNR’s research farms and the Terp Farm project provide essential academic experiences for IAA students. Many aspire to be farmers or researchers, while others gain a greater understanding and appreciation of agriculture and food systems that will help them excel in other related professions.

