



Navigating Regulatory Framework: Value-Added Agriculture

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Overview

“**Value-Added Agriculture**” has been recognized as “altering a raw agricultural product in a way to increase its worth to the consumer...”

- This has included processing, marketing, and experiences (ex. Agritourism)
- 2018 study* revealed “...the value added-agriculture sector is large enough to support close to 74,000 jobs... a total economic impact of \$20.6 billion..”

In 2023, the Maryland General Assembly created a **Value-Added Agricultural Specialist** position within the Maryland Department of Agriculture (HB 389/SB34)

- The VA Specialist position was established within MDA in July 2023.
- “Value-added agriculture” was defined in law to include functions beyond processing



Regulatory Navigation, Resources

“Value-Added Agriculture: Navigating Regulatory Framework”

[Slide Deck and Tutorial Video](#)

Navigating regulation for a new or expanded agricultural business can be tedious and confusing. There are many considerations when starting or expanding a business, but familiarity with regulatory expectations and what agencies may be associated with your proposed value-added product should offer some clarity for important decision-making.

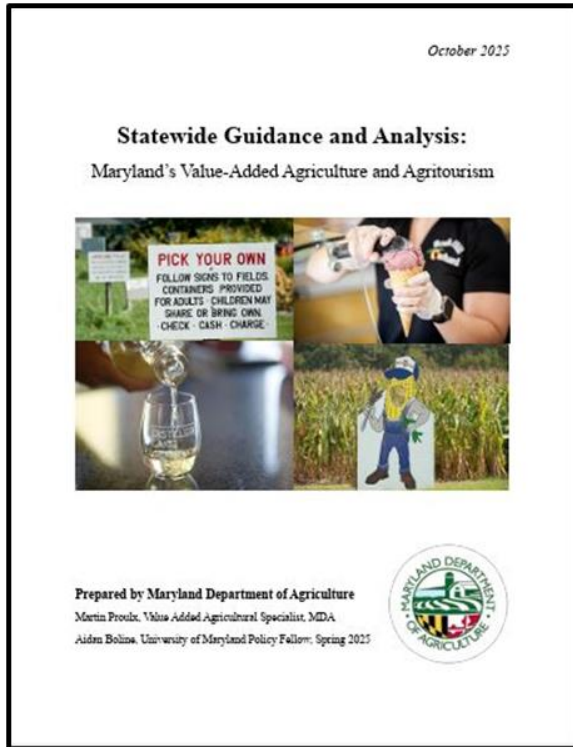
Regulatory Framework

- Local**
 - Zoning and Permitting
 - Health Department
 - Retail Food Service
 - Farmers Markets (Sampling)
- State**
 - Maryland Department of Health (MDH)
 - Food Processing and Warehousing
 - On-Farm Home Processing (+ Meat & Cheese)
 - Dairy Processing & Distribution
- Federal**
 - Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - Acidified and Low Acidified Foods
 - Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Standards
 - Additional Requirements for Certain Processes
 - USDA
 - Meat, Poultry, and Catfish
 - TTB (Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau)
 - Alcohol Manufacturing



VAA Initiatives

Statewide Guidance Document, October 2025



A comprehensive overview of Maryland's value-added agriculture and agritourism industries, addressing regulatory complexities, challenges, and opportunities, with a focus on establishing a baseline understanding for policy and decision-making.

Online Publication



VAA Initiatives

Marketing and Agricultural Development (MAD) Program

- Expanding Maryland’s Best
 - + VAA Specialist
- Adding “Business Support” philosophy
 - 1.) Ag Development
 - 2.) Marketing Initiatives
 - 3.) Food Access





THANK YOU!