

AGNR

FIVE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Improve Human, Animal and Environmental Health



- **Improve animal and human health by reducing disease transmission between animals and humans.**
- **Advance eco-system health in a changing world.**
- **Reduce chronic diseases in animals and humans.**
- **Analyze environmental, agricultural, and health policy and inform decision makers.**
- **Promote and support healthy and livable communities through education.**

BACKGROUND: WHERE WE ARE NOW

Given the inextricable linkages among human, animal, and environmental health, understanding and addressing these complex challenges will require innovative thinking and multidisciplinary approaches. The University of Maryland, with the leadership of AGNR, is well-positioned to become a global leader in several areas related to human, animal, and environmental health. Maryland provides a unique living laboratory for the study of human-animal-environmental interactions, with large urban populations, abundant urban-rural interface, international air- and seaports, diverse animal agriculture, and proximity to the Chesapeake Bay.

OUR AREAS OF FOCUS

Based on existing strengths across the college and importance of the problem to the citizens of Maryland, the U.S. and beyond, the team has devised an implementation plan that focuses on three areas:

- Disease transmission between animals and humans
- Dual purpose, dual benefit animal models of chronic disease
- Healthy ecosystems

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

To encourage the formation and/or strengthening of interdisciplinary teams in ecosystem health, we will fund 3-4 proposals from our Seed Grant Competition launched in 2018. We will continue to foster interactions among scientists, designers, economists, and Extension faculty to translate cutting-edge ecosystem-based research into innovation for healthier ecosystems. We hope to create Extension workshops to educate stakeholders on the indicators and importance of ecosystem health. Workshops will focus on both agricultural and urban ecosystems. We plan to evaluate existing courses to ensure comprehensive coverage of basic ecosystem health concepts as well as contemporary issues, including effects of climate change on ecosystems (e.g., sea level rise, drought, flooding) and systems-level strategies to mitigate these effects.



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TAKING ACTION

In 2018, we hosted a Networking Event with keynote speaker Adele Turzillo, Division Director of Animal Systems, NIFA, USDA. This event, with more than 50 attendees, gave individuals the opportunity to network and form new collaborations focused on HAEH. In addition, we launched a Seed Grant Program to stimulate transdisciplinary research, extension, and teaching to address challenges affecting human, animal, and environmental health.

