



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

*Office of the Secretary*

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Agriculture | Maryland's Leading  
Industry

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## Maryland Department of Agriculture

### Legislative Comment

**DATE:** February 5, 2025

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 264/HB 244

**SHORT TITLE:** Plant Disease Control - Nurseries - Inspection, Certification, and  
Licensing Fees

**MDA POSITION:** SUPPORT

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This legislation grants the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) the authority to alter the fees charged for inspecting nursery stock. It will alter certain fees for the certification of nurseries and the licensing of brokers and dealers and give us the ability to more efficiently regulate the nursery industry, increasing the Special Fund budget of the Plant Protection and Weed Management (PPWM) section. The nursery and landscaping industry has grown exponentially in recent years, requiring an increase in statewide inspections.

Maryland law requires anyone who advertises, sells, installs, or produces nursery stock to be licensed with MDA. **The last time these fees were increased was in 2004.** In order for the PPWM unit to continue operating efficiently, they must have the ability to charge fees in keeping with inflation. As a specially funded program, the salaries and operating costs are funded by the fees collected.

An inspection fee based on the number of acres in production would increase as follows:

- 1 acre or less, [\$10] **\$20**
- More than 1 acre to 5 acres, [\$20] **\$30**
- More than 5 acres to 10 acres, [\$30] **\$40**
- More than 10 acres, [\$3] **\$5** for each acre, or part of any acre, up to a maximum of [\$1,000] **\$1,500.**

The annual nursery certification fee increases to [\$100] **\$150**. Additionally, each broker or dealer license fee will increase to [\$100] **\$150**.

The MDA thanks the Committee for your consideration and respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 244.

If you have additional questions, please contact Rachel Jones, Director of Government Relations, at [rachel.jones2@maryland.gov](mailto:rachel.jones2@maryland.gov) or 410-841-5886.