



Delmarva Land & Litter Challenge:

Win-Win Pathways for Agriculture and the Peninsula's Waterways

Through the new Delmarva Land & Litter Challengeⁱ, a diverse group of organizations representing grain producers, chicken growers, poultry integrators, conservationists, academic partners; along with agribusiness, finance and service providers are joining forces and collaborating in a new way forward for managing poultry related nutrient pollution on the Delmarva Peninsula. Together they have committed to provide catalytic leadership in accomplishing the following outcomes and goals:

Delmarva farmers and their agri-business partners are respected stewards of the land, guardians of natural resources and champions of the rural cultural heritage in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. By 2025:

- ***Delmarva agriculture is regionally neutral in importing and exporting nutrients, and wherever possible, nutrients are recycled locally to support sustainable agricultural operations; and***
- ***Nutrients are utilized in farming operations without negative environmental impacts.***

Despite the substantial progress that has been achieved over the past five years in reducing poultry nutrient pollution, much work remains to be done to accomplish the goals that have been established for the peninsula. In support of these efforts, the ***Delmarva Land & Litter Challenge*** is uniting stakeholders, who have often been at odds over strategies and pathways for achieving water quality and habitat goals, in an epic quest to achieve a new future- a future where healthy and productive bays, rivers and streams across the peninsula are underpinned and supported by a vibrant and sustainable agricultural economy.

This large landscape initiative, covering 5.45 thousand square miles, will require unprecedented, communication, collaboration and cooperation among the project partners. It will also require a new way forward for addressing water quality challenges from animal agriculture operations, as the policies and practices of the past will not meet the needs of tomorrow.

The ***Delmarva Land & Litter Challenge's*** efforts will be focused primarily along two pathways- ***responsible land application of animal manure and litter and alternative uses and markets for manure and poultry litter.*** Initial work areas will include the formation and empowerment of multi-stakeholder action teams and partnerships; efforts to harmonize frameworks for addressing nutrient pollution challenges across multiple jurisdictions; the establishment of financial reward mechanisms for stewardship of ecosystem services; energizing and coordinating research; and transforming and modernizing information networks.

Delmarva Land & Litter Challenge 2015 deliverables include:

1. a detailed plan for creating a **multi-stakeholder, landscape scale, shared leadership platform** where stakeholders addressing nutrient pollution from animal agriculture operations can work across county, state and watershed boundaries and design and deploy better integrated and more uniform policies, programs, practices and projects;
2. an action plan for establishing and funding a **center of excellence** on the Delmarva Peninsula dedicated to animal agriculture nutrient management support; and
3. a detailed roadmap for designing, implementing and financing an **ongoing integrated research program** that uses validated “on the ground” and regularly updated data and proven methodologies **to model nutrients levels at all levels.**

Confirmed Launch Partners:

Chesapeake Bay Commission	Mid Atlantic Farm Credit
Chesapeake Bay Foundation	Mountaire
Chester River Association	Perdue Farms
Delaware Department of Agriculture	State of Maryland (Chesapeake Bay Cabinet)
Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.	Sustainable Chesapeake
Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology	The Nature Conservancy
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts	Tyson Foods, Inc.
Maryland Farm Bureau Federation	WestRhode River Keeper
Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board	Willard Agri-Service
Maryland League of Conservation Voters	

Delmarva Land & Litter Challenge partners believe that significant progress can be achieved in meeting the nutrient reduction goals that have been established for the agricultural sector. Working together they are committed to supporting pathways for land management that will improve the health and productivity of agriculture and the Bay, while strengthening the economy that preserves and protects the region’s rural cultural heritage. All stakeholders who embrace the ***Delmarva Land & Litter Challenge*** goals are invited to join in this grand collaborative to achieve these outcomes.

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The Delmarva Land & Litter Challenge is a self-directed project operating under the wing of Solutions from the Land, a 501 (c) (3) organization focused on land based solutions to global challenges.