Partnership Adds Air Monitoring Stations to Maryland’s Eastern Shore

*DPI* and The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment are partnering on a first-of-its-kind project to monitor ambient air quality, including levels of ammonia and particulate matter, on Maryland’s Eastern Shore and in central Maryland. Working with the Maryland Department of the Environment, *DPI* and the Campbell Foundation have jointly committed more than $500,000 to this effort. Because of it, residents of Maryland’s Eastern Shore will know more about the quality of the air we all breathe.

Why is *DPI* doing this?

Chicken growers and chicken companies take seriously our responsibility to be responsible stewards of the air, water and land around us. Farm families raising chickens care deeply about air quality on and near their farms; after all, farmers and their neighbors all breathe the same air. Advances in chicken nutrition, the composition of litter in chicken houses, and the increased use of vegetative environmental buffers on family farms where chickens are raised have all made farmers better neighbors when it comes to how their farms affect the air. This monitoring will add to what we know about ambient air quality in the areas of Maryland where chickens are raised.

“We in the chicken community have a shared interest with all Marylanders in better understanding what air quality is truly like on

_Holly Porter, Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.’s executive director, discusses a new partnership between DPI, Maryland and The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment to add ambient air quality monitoring stations, including stations sampling for continuous ammonia, to the Eastern Shore._

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Partnership Adds Air Monitoring Stations to Maryland’s Eastern Shore

Continued from page 1

the Eastern Shore,” said Holly Porter, DPI’s executive director. “Because we will never neglect our commitment to environmental responsibility, we believe gathering more data about air quality here helps everyone.”

“This is a new kind of collaboration between government, industry and philanthropy that I hope ultimately will improve the health of families and our environment in the region,” said Samantha Campbell, president of the Campbell Foundation.

DPI and the Campbell Foundation are providing most of the funding for this new effort. The data measuring continuous ammonia, fine particulate matter and coarse particulate matter from two new ambient air monitoring stations on the Eastern Shore will be collected and tabulated by the Maryland Department of the Environment, not by the chicken industry. In addition to installing and operating two new stations, this partnership will support retrofitting two existing MDE air monitoring stations – one of them in central Maryland – to monitor continuous ammonia, fine particulates and coarse particulates.

The locations of the two new Eastern Shore sites will be determined by MDE, DPI and the Campbell Foundation working in concert to identify representative sites. The goal is not to place monitoring stations directly next to farms, but to use them to get data about ambient air quality on the Eastern Shore more generally.

“We firmly believe the air our farmers and their neighbors breathe is healthy and safe, but we also understand why there’s skepticism about that from beyond the chicken community,” said Holly Porter, DPI’s executive director. “Instead of simply asking for the public’s trust that the chicken community’s best practices are doing what’s right for the environment, we want our families, friends and neighbors to be able to see for themselves what ammonia and particulate matter levels are on the Eastern Shore.”

What They’re Saying

“It is a great start to get data, real monitoring data… This innovative partnership for air quality monitoring will provide useful information to the public.”
-Ben Grumbles, Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment

“It’s a move that the Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. hopes will bring transparency to the public.”
-WMDT-TV

“Maryland is using science-based partnerships to answer questions about air quality.”
-Feedstuffs

“The poultry industry has joined with state environmental regulators to study whether farms are polluting the air.”
-The Baltimore Sun

“The new monitoring stations’ data will be compared to data gathered at existing MDE stations— one further north on the Eastern Shore and one on the western shore— to provide ‘baseline levels’ of ammonia and particles.”
-Chesapeake Bay Magazine
Jennifer Timmons, Dale Cook Leading DPI in 2019

Have you met the leaders of DPI's Board of Directors for the year? Jennifer Timmons is serving as our president for 2019, and Dale Cook is our vice president.

Timmons is an assistant professor at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, where she teaches poultry production and animal nutrition. She also conducts research related to poultry litter management and poultry nutrition. Timmons also owns a broiler farm with her husband, Tim, near Delmar, Delaware.

Cook was a law enforcement officer for six years prior to his career with Tyson Foods, where he was employed for 17 years. In 2018, he joined Mountaire Farms at Millsboro as the Complex Human Resources Manager. In 2016, he received the Chancellors Award from the Eastern Shore Community College for Occupation Specific Instruction and Services. A graduate of the University of Arkansas, Cook is married to Natalie and has two daughters, Allison and Madelyn.

When Activists Demand Animals

The Animal Agriculture Alliance, in a recent member update, noted a new tactic by the animal activist group Direct Action Everywhere: demanding that animals – or even a single animal – be released to them from farms. "While it may be tempting to try to get the group to leave by allowing them to take an animal, we strongly urge farmers and companies to not do this," the Alliance contended in a bulletin for members. "Giving this group an animal significantly weakens the industry’s attempts to convey why their actions are unacceptable. Negotiating with an organization that wants to see animal liberation and the end of animal agriculture will not be productive."

Preparing ahead of time for unwanted activism on a farm involves having a security plan, locking doors and gates as a matter of routine, and making sure family and farm employees know what to do. If you do see animal activists on or near your farm, contact local law enforcement, your chicken company, and DPI.
**NRCS Grant Can Help Delaware Growers**

By spending around $50 for each bank of fans on your chicken house, you could help reduce neighbor complaints and protect the environment. How? By planting warm-season tall grasses near your tunnel fans. And cost-share may be available to help pay for the grasses.

Working with the National Resources Conservation Service, DPI is putting grant funding to work by promoting and installing vegetative environmental buffers on poultry farms in Delaware. In addition to assisting growers who choose to install vegetative environmental buffers with cost-share funds, the NRCS grant will allow us to translate our Vegetative Environmental Buffers Toolkit, a manual for designing and installing buffers, into Vietnamese, Korean and Urdu.

Tall grasses planted near tunnel fans can trap exhausted feathers and dust before they reach neighboring properties and become a nuisance; cut down odors leaving the farm; absorb particulate matter, which helps air quality; uptake nutrients in the soil and limit erosion; shade the areas near tunnel fans, which helps ventilation efficiency; and reduce the areas on your farm that need regular mowing.

To learn more about this grant and how it might help your farm, contact Jim Passwaters, DPI’s environmental buffers coordinator: 302-236-0470 or passwaters@dpichicken.com

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**Have You Renewed Your Membership for 2019?**

Holly Porter and Maureen Duffy visited with flock advisors for Delmarva’s chicken companies in January to give them the lowdown on how DPI membership can benefit the growers they work with. Our newsletters, educational opportunities, the electric buying group, vegetative environmental buffer assistance, and our government relations work to keep Delmarva’s chicken industry strong – all of it is made possible by our members’ support. Growers, your flock advisors will you know about options for renewing membership, if they have not done so already.

If you’re an allied business member and you haven't renewed membership yet, we make it easy to do so online; just visit dpichicken.org/membership.

Individuals who want to preserve and grow Delmarva’s chicken community are always welcome to support DPI’s mission to be the Delmarva chicken industry’s voice as the premier membership association focusing on advocacy, education and member relations. If you’d like to know more about what benefits DPI offers its members, get in touch with Maureen Duffy, our member relations manager, at duffy@dpichicken.com or 302-856-9037.

And to everyone who has already renewed a DPI membership for the year – thank you!
**DPI College Scholarship Program Now Taking Applications**

Here's the link: dpichicken.org/scholarship

We’ve opened the application period for our 2019 College Scholarship Program. Applications are being accepted for undergraduate and graduate scholarships, available in the amount of $1,500 or more. Since 1985, DPI has awarded more than $120,000 to college and graduate students through scholarships.

Undergraduate applicants must be a Delmarva resident and a student in good standing at any accredited, degree-granting institution in the United States, or in the case of graduating high school seniors, accepted to an accredited, degree-granting institution within the United States. Individuals must have an academic major in a subject area relevant to Delmarva's chicken industry and be planning a career in a segment of this industry. An official transcript must accompany each application. Graduate student applicants must meet the above criteria, with the exception of Delmarva residency. In addition, the individual must be engaged in research that could positively benefit Delmarva's chicken industry.

DPI membership on the part of the applicant or his/her family is not required and has no effect on the selection process.

Applications must be completed and received at the following address on or before 4:30 p.m. on April 5, 2019: DPI College Scholarship Program, 16686 County Seat Highway, Georgetown, DE 19947-4881. To see an application, visit dpichicken.org/scholarship.

The DPI scholarships are funded by DPI's College Scholarship Golf Tournament. If you’d like to support this scholarship for future leaders of the industry, come play golf with us, or claim a sponsorship opportunity, during DPI's Annual College Scholarship Golf Tournament on Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at Green Hill Country Club near Quantico, Maryland. Mark your calendar now, and we'll share registration and sponsorship information as the date draws closer.

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**Booster Banquet is April 16**

It will be here before you know it: DPI's Annual Booster Banquet, at the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center in Salisbury, Maryland. This year's banquet takes place April 16. As a reminder: DPI members receive one Booster Banquet for each $150 in membership dues, and you can also buy tickets from DPI as the event gets nearer.

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[Image of the Booster Banquet]
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DPI, Farmers Speak Up At Cecil County CAFO Hearing

DPI’s Holly Porter was one of several speakers at a December 20 chicken CAFO permit hearing in Cecil County, Maryland. The Zion Acres farm had applied for the permit, and after a preliminary approval from the Maryland Department of the Environment was reversed, the farm family re-applied for its permit.

Along with speakers from the Cecil County Farm Bureau and neighboring farmers, Porter urged MDE to approve the CAFO permit application. “The CAFO permit system is working to improve the bay. Let it work for this farm,” Porter said. “This family has been through enough and they’ve had more than their fair share of scrutiny and criticism. It’s time to let this family start their small business.”

In February, MDE issued a notice of final approval for the CAFO permit’s required plan.

Soil Conservation Districts Hold Mental Health First Aid workshops

Here’s the link: mascdmentalhealth.eventbrite.com

Registration is now open for the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts Mental Health Workshops. Funded by the Rural Maryland Council and The Franklin P. and Arthur W. Perdue Foundation, the purpose of these workshops is to bring awareness to Mental Health in rural areas.

While not often talked about in our industry, farmers have one of the highest suicide rates of any job in the U.S. Farmers are also among the highest-risk professions for drug abuse and alcoholism. Through these workshops, people working regularly with farmers will receive training to detect early warning signs and prevention methods for severe mental stress and substance abuse.

The workshops are targeted towards agribusiness professionals, crop consultants, extension agents, farm bureau leaders, nutrient management planners, agricultural lenders and soil conservation district employees. Farmers and farm families are also welcomed and encouraged to attend.

The workshops will be held at four locations around the state, including one at Chesapeake College on March 5. To register for the workshops, visit mascdmentalhealth.eventbrite.com or contact Danielle Bauer, 443-262-8491 or Danielle.mdag@gmail.com.

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Delaware Also Offers Mental Health Training

Do you know what stress, addiction, and/or mental health disorders looks like in friends, family or colleagues? Do you know what to do when you encounter these types of behaviors? In Delaware, our agriculture community is facing many stressors. Those who are in the position to consult and aid them need to know the signs, symptoms and strategies to best serve them. Farm family members also need to know how best to help their loved ones.

Mental health first aid training is a public education program that introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental illnesses, builds understanding of their impact, and overviews common ways to help and find support. This 8-hour course uses interactive educational methods to demonstrate how to offer initial help in a mental health crisis and will help you connect to the appropriate professional, peer, social, and self-help care.

A certified mental health first aid instructor from the Delaware Mental Health Association will conduct the training and provide a list of community healthcare providers and national resources, support groups, and online tools for mental health and addictions treatment and support. All trainees receive a program manual to compliment the course material.

Training is being underwritten through support from the Sustainable Coastal Communities Project, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension and Beebe Hospital. A light lunch and snacks will be provided. There will be a March 8 training session at the Delaware Department of Agriculture in Dover, and an April 8 session in New Castle County. For more information, contact Maria Pippidis, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, at pippidis@udel.edu or 302-831-1239.

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Four Growers Honored For Environmental Efforts

Poultry farmers John and Linda Brown were recognized during Delaware Ag Week for their efforts to improve water quality and reduce nutrient runoff with the 2018 Delaware Environmental Stewardship Award. The Brown’s L&J Farm is located in Harrington, where they raise chickens for Perdue Farm’s Coleman organic division. The Browns harness solar energy to power the farm and utilize an electric car; woods provide a barrier against noise and odors; runoff is treated by a series of stormwater ponds; and all the houses and the manure shed have concrete pads, which are kept very clean.

“Each of the companies nominates a Delaware poultry grower that excels in preserving and enhancing environmental quality on their farms,” Nutrient Management Administrator Chris Brosch said. “These farmers practice excellent manure management, proper composting of mortalities and accurate record keeping. They also use enhanced conservation practices on the farm as a whole.”

Runners-up were:
Chad and Joanna Carpenter of East Piney Grove Farm, who have been raising chickens since 2010. The couple grows for Mountaire

Continued on page 11

John and Linda Brown with, at left, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Kenny Bounds.
Four Growers Honored For Environmental Efforts

Continued from page 10

Farms, with a capacity of 300,000 birds. The Carpenters have installed heavy use pads, fenced off the composter to keep vultures and foxes away from the composted mortalities and redesigned the drainage swales to prevent runoff from going into nearby tax ditches. They also have planted a vegetative environmental buffer of trees to help with odors.

Ken and Nicole Wilkins of Felton, who grow for Amick Farms on a newer, picture-perfect farm that they named the “Funny Farm.” In 2015, they built three poultry houses on their homestead, along with a manure shed and channel composter. The stormwater engineering includes a large stormwater pond to treat runoff from the production area. A screen of trees has been planted to assist in containing odors. Fly traps are used throughout the farm and near the composter to reduce these pests.

Carol Johnson of Bridgeville, who grows for Allen Harim, raises 90,000 chickens and tills twenty-five acres on Loockerman Farm. The farm has two manure structures, has heavy use pads installed on the poultry houses, and utilizes solar energy to help power the poultry operation. In addition, cover crops are utilized as a conservation practice on the cropland. Ms. Johnson has been a 4-H leader for more than 25 years.

The Browns will receive $1,000, a plaque and sign for their farm. The runners-up will receive $500, plaques and signs.
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Second University-Industry Summit Set for March 13

Here’s the link: tinyurl.com/PoultrySummit

The Delmarva Poultry University-Industry Partnership Committee is presenting a day-long session of engaged discussion on current poultry industry issues, information exchange, lightning presentations and lots of networking with industry, university, federal and state partners, and stakeholders. The Delmarva Poultry Summit will be held on March 13 at the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center in Salisbury, Maryland.

The goal of the summit is to build on the momentum from a 2017 summit held at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore that resulted in the formation of the Delmarva University-Industry Partnership Committee, and to support collaboration to advance the growth and sustainability of the poultry industry in our region.

Thanks to sponsors, there is no cost to attend, but you must register online by March 1, 2019 by visiting tinyurl.com/PoultrySummit. Complimentary continental breakfast and lunch will be served to all participants.

In addition to DPI, sponsors for the event include the Delaware Department of Agriculture, the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology, Inc., the National Chicken Council, University of Delaware, Delaware State University, University of Maryland College Park, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and Virginia Tech.

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Issues And Bills We’re Tracking In State Legislatures

As legislative sessions for 2019 got underway in Maryland, Delaware and Virginia, DPI’s Government Relations Committee has met weekly to track and discuss bills that could affect our industry.

We support improving the Maryland Department of Agriculture’s ability to track the movement of poultry through live poultry markets in order to protect animal health and control avian influenza, and supports SB 56, which would accomplish that goal. We also support HB 255, which would encourage county school boards to implement agricultural education programs that prepare students for successful careers in agriculture. Additionally, DPI supports SB 133, which would repeal the termination date for some parts of the laws allowing farmers to use farm vehicles on roads near their farms.

As an alternative to legislation requiring costly, taxpayer-funded monitoring of every family farm where chickens are raised, DPI supports the data collection by the Maryland Department of the Environment about air quality on the Eastern Shore made possible by the partnership between DPI, the Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment, and MDE described in our cover story in this issue. The chicken community takes seriously our responsibility to be careful stewards of the land, air and water. Nutrient management practices on our highly regulated farms have contributed to the improved health of the Chesapeake Bay, and we are letting legislators know we are heartened by that progress.

We oppose SB 542, the Community Healthy Air Act, because it is a heavy-handed, expensive approach to monitoring air quality only on farms, not in communities. We’re also informing legislators of our concerns about SB 471, which addresses antibiotics in animal agriculture, and SB 546, which adds restrictions to transfers of chicken litter.

In Virginia, we’ve stated our support for SB 1599, which directs the State Water Control Board to provide incentives for the withdrawal of water from the surficial aquifer, rather than the deep aquifer, in the Eastern Shore Groundwater Management Area – in other words, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. We think it makes sense to provide incentives for the voluntary use of the surficial aquifer to Virginia’s family farmers who raise chickens. We oppose a different bill, HB 2064, that would take a harsher line in regulating aquifer withdrawals that are not directly for human consumption.

In Delaware, we are in opposition to legislation that would allow Delaware Technical Community College to impose a property tax.
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Maryland Healthy Soils Grant Deadline Extended to March 15

Farmers in Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot counties who are interested in obtaining financial and technical support to establish healthy soil practices on their farms now have until March 15 to apply for assistance through their local soil conservation district offices. The original deadline was extended to allow more farmers to take advantage of this unique opportunity to test the latest practices and technologies for building healthy soils on their farms.

This funding opportunity is made possible by a federal grant secured by the Maryland Department of Agriculture to support the installation of healthy soil practices that allow farmers to gain experience using the latest technological advances. The department was awarded a five-year, $1 million grant by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Farmers in participating counties should contact their soil conservation districts by March 15 to apply for this program. For more information about Maryland’s healthy soil initiatives, please contact the department’s Office of Resource Conservation at 410-841-5865.

Mountaire Unit Marks 25 Years Accident-Free

Mountaire Farms celebrated a key safety milestone – 25 years without a lost time accident for its Grow Out Team on Delmarva. “To have worked 25 years without an incident is an incredible achievement,” said Dr. Carl Heeder, Mountaire’s Vice President of Live Operations. “Our team has worked hard to instill that safety is our number one priority and we reinforce that message every chance we get.”

The company held a luncheon to thank the team for its safety record, and every team member received an embroidered jacket as a gift. Four team members were recognized for serving since the safety streak began: Janet Bowden, Steve Windsor, Woody Jackson and Karen Bailey.

Perdue Names Zucker as E-Commerce Leader

Perdue Foods has announced the appointment of David Zucker as Senior Vice President of E-Commerce and New Ventures, a new position for the company. Zucker will oversee all aspects of Perdue’s e-commerce strategy.

“E-commerce is an increasingly important part of the Perdue Foods growth plan, and we’re pleased that David Zucker is onboard to lead our efforts,” said Mark McKay, President of Perdue Premium Poultry. “We have to meet consumers where they are today, which is more and more online, and expanding our presence is vital to drive new growth for our business and brands.”

Zucker has more than 25 years of e-commerce, marketing, merchandising, product development, analytics and call center management experience. He was most recently General Manager and Chief Marketing Officer of Omaha Steaks International, a multi-channel retailer of premium single and multi-ingredient food.
CHICKENS ON DELMARVA

Joanne Guilfoil

For an upcoming coffee-table book about Delmarva's chicken community, Joanne Guilfoil, a DPI member, welcomes growers to tell her stories and share with her photos from their farms. Guilfoil is the author of "Flying over Delmarva: Spray Planes, Banner Planes and Bi-Planes." Contact her by March 1, 2019.
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Dale Phillips Elected
To Lead Sussex County Farm Bureau

A third-generation chicken grower, Dale Phillips, has been elected president of the Sussex County Farm Bureau, the Delaware Farm Bureau announced. Phillips was honored by DPI as an outstanding grower in 2017; his wife, Kathy, works at the University of Delaware Lasher Laboratory. Other newly elected leaders at Delaware Farm Bureau are Jacob Urian, president of Kent County Farm Bureau, and Stewart Ramsey, president of New Castle County Farm Bureau.

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Contact us today for more information, and grow with us!
DELMARVA POULTRY INDUSTRY, INC.
16686 County Seat Highway
Georgetown, DE 19947-4881
Address Services Requested

DPI’s MISSION
To be the Delmarva chicken industry’s voice as the premier membership association focusing on advocacy, education and member relations.

DPI’s VISION
To be the most-respected chicken organization in the United States.

(302) 856-9037
dpi@dpichicken.com
www.dpichicken.org

Upcoming DPI Events

March 26
Grower Committee meeting
Location to be determined

April 16
Booster Banquet
Wicomico Youth & Civic Center, Salisbury, Maryland

May 28
Grower Committee meeting
Location to be determined

June 5
College Scholarship Golf Tournament
Green Hill Country Club, Quantico, Maryland

September 24
Grower Committee meeting
Location to be determined

October 7-9
National Meeting on Poultry Health, Processing, and Live Production
Ocean City, Maryland

November 26
Grower Committee meeting
Location to be determined