

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Caroline County FSA Office
9194 Legion Road, Suite 2
Denton MD 21629
(410) 479-1202**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR FARM LOAN PROGRAM PROJECT**

**Class II Assessment
for Maryland based producer with operations in
Queen Anne's County, Maryland at
Tax Map 0061, Grid 0008, Parcel 0060**

**Notice of Availability
(NOA)**

December 11, 2015

COVER SHEET

Proposed Action

The Farm Service Agency of the United States Department of Agriculture Has received a request to finance a guaranteed loan for the construction of three (3) poultry houses, the associated manure shed, and storm water retention pond in Queen Anne's County, Maryland on a farm tract identified as Tax Map 0061 Grid 0008, Parcel 0060.

Type of Statement

This is a Class II site-specific Environmental Assessment performed in conformation with the scope and limitations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA.)

Lead Agency

Farm Service Agency (FSA) United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Cooperating Agencies

USDA, Farm Service Agency is tasked with completing the environmental analysis concerning this project. Input and assistance is being sought out by USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); Queen Anne's County Soil Conservation District; the Maryland State Clearinghouse for Intergovernmental Assistance who consults with and request input from their cooperating agencies including (but not limited to) the Maryland Historical Trust /State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO,) State Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental which also encompasses those charged with Coastal Zone Management (CZM), and Maryland Department of Transportation; U.S. Army Corp of Engineer; as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Further Information

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(410) 479-1202 ext. 107

Abstract (Summary)

The purpose of the project is to produce integrated poultry in Queen Anne's County, Maryland. Construction of three (3) poultry houses, being 60' x 600', the

associated manure shed and storm water management pond is proposed at the site. The location of the proposed facility is currently wooded and will involve the removal of trees. Upon completion of the proposed construction, the farm is projected to have the capacity to house a maximum of 144,000 birds based on the industry standard density of 0.75 birds per square foot of interior space.

Comments

It is recommended that comments be put in writing. Comments from interested parties concerning the environmental impact of this proposal should be directed thru:

UDSA, Farm Service Agency
Farm Loan Program
Attn: Deanna Dunning
9194 Legion Road, Suite 2
Denton MD 21629

The comment period will conclude fifteen (15) days from the final publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA). No further action will be taken on this proposal until after the conclusion of the comment period and the completion of the review. Said comments will be considered and incorporated.

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Introduction

The applicant is wishing to enter into a contract to be an integrated poultry producer with the operation located at Star Grange Hall Road, Centreville, Maryland, Queen Anne's County. The applicant currently operates a poultry farm on a separate parcel and will continue to produce poultry per a contractual agreement with Mountaire Farms. The proposed operation will have the capacity to house approximately 144,000 birds at the industry standard of .75 birds per square foot.

1.1 Background

The project is designed to construct three (3) broiler house, a manure shed and a storm water management pond on a 30 acre parcel the applicant is seeking to acquire near Centreville, Maryland. The site will have a capacity of 144,000 birds at the industry standard of .75 birds per square foot. The proposal is to build three (3) poultry houses, being 60' x 600', with all houses on the property running east to west. The houses will be built to industry standards and must be compliant with all county and state building laws. An approved storm water management plan, site and sediment/erosion control plan, permit for General Stormwater Discharge, Conservation Plan, Nutrient Management Plan, and a Federal Consistency Determination will be required prior to the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the FSA Farm Loan Program is to establish, improve, expand transition, and strengthen farms.

The proposed facility, upon completion, will allow the applicant to produce integrated poultry in a Mountaire Farms compliant facility in Queen Anne's County, Maryland. The applicant will be providing an agriculture service that is in great demand and this enterprise will allow the producer to generate adequate income from the farming operation to retire debt and provide a standard of living acceptable to the area. This facility will allow the applicant to produce integrated poultry for Mountaire Farms efficiently and in up to date structures.

The integrator, will in turn, provide additional employment for local people in jobs such as field representatives, feed mill operators, processing plant workers, truck drivers, and construction workers. In addition, the increased volume of poultry production will help contribute toward providing a readily available low cost food supply for the American public.

1.3 Regulatory Compliance

Based on a review of the material provided and FSA Handbook 1 EQ, 2 EQ, and FMHA 1940-G this proposal is in compliance with NEPA, CEQ, Potential Relevant Environmental Laws, and Executive Orders.

1.4 Organization of EA

The Environmental Assessment (EA) is organized in format established in FSA Handbook 1 EQ Exhibit 21 and is addressed in the Contents Section of this document.

2 Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1 Proposed Action

The project is designed to construct three (3) poultry houses compliant with Mountaire Farms standards on a 30 acre tract near Centreville, Maryland. Upon completion, the site will have a total capacity of 144,000 birds. The site work will be completed and the houses built by local reputable contractors in accordance with plans and specs required by Mountaire Farms, Queen Anne's County Soil Conservation District and the Queen Anne's County Planning and Zoning office. The proposal includes the construction of a manure storage structure that will provide adequate storage for the litter generated by the houses to be built. A storm water management pond will be installed on the property as well as swales located between the poultry houses to control runoff. The site plan was designed in accordance with the Model Plan for Poultry House Site Development on Maryland's Eastern Shore, developed by MDE, MDA, NRCS and the Conservation Districts.