



Michael T. Scuse
Secretary of Agriculture

JFC BUDGET PRESENTATION

FISCAL YEAR 2025



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE



PROMOTING GROWTH, PROTECTING CONSUMERS



AGRICULTURE

DELAWARE'S #1 INDUSTRY

FAMILY FARMS

On 525,000 acres of farmland, Delaware's 2,300 family farms produce a wide variety of agricultural products. These include corn, soybeans, wheat, poultry, fruits, and vegetables.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Food and agriculture industries provide 69,000 jobs (1 in 8 from Delaware's workforce) and \$10.3 billion in economic activity to the state, including \$1.5 billion in direct sales.

In 2023, Delaware's community-run farmers markets set an all-time high sales record of over \$4.14 million.



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE



THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OPERATING BUDGET

- Delaware Department of Agriculture supports farmers and consumers alike, working to sustain and grow our industry, promote fresh and seasonal products, and build consumer trust in Delaware.
- 188 dedicated staff in 13 sections strive to effectively and efficiently protect and enhance the environment, health, and welfare of the general public.

**\$9.912
Million**

**Recommended
Budget**



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Delaware Department of Agriculture Sections		
Aglands Preservation & Planning	Standardbred Breeders' Fund	Plant Industries
Agricultural Compliance	Food Products Inspection	Poultry & Animal Health
Communications & Marketing	Nutrient Management	Thoroughbred Racing Commission
Delaware Forest Service	Pesticides	Weights & Measures
Harness Racing Commission		



SENIOR FORESTER

REQUEST: \$24.9

BACKGROUND

In FY24, we were approved and hired the Senior Forester to oversee Fire Assistance from general funds at 75%. This year we are requesting the additional 25% to fully fund the position.

FUNDS REQUESTED WILL...

Allow the Senior Forester for Fire Assistance to manage grants to our volunteer fire companies, protect our communities from wildfire risk, and increase opportunities for Delaware landowners and our local resources through participation in federal programs.





DELAWARE MARIJUANA CONTROL ACT

REQUEST: \$126.6 ASF

BACKGROUND

Under House Bill 2, the Delaware Marijuana Control Act, the Department is designated two positions: a Pesticides Environmental Scientist III and a Weights and Measures Supervisor. These were funded at 25% (3 months) in FY24. We are requesting spending authority for the remaining 75%.

THESE FUNDS WILL...

Meet the requirements of the Act, cooperate with the Marijuana Commission and DATE to focus on pesticide education, sampling and enforcement and for Weights and Measures inspections including scales, package weights, bar codes, etc.



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF
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TRAINER III

REQUEST: \$65.8



LEADELAWARE
LEADERSHIP AND AGRICULTURE



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

BACKGROUND

Delaware must have a qualified workforce to ensure that agriculture remains a prominent part of our economy.

THESE FUNDS WILL...

Support the education of the next generation and be able to provide agricultural leadership development that will benefit Delawareans who work in agriculture. Through this one position, DDA will support agriculture on multiple levels:

- **LEADelaware Specialist**, engage emerging leaders in agriculture and natural resources in our premier leadership program,
- **Market Development**, work with Delaware producers and agribusinesses - and in-state, regional, and national programs to expand market access for Delaware Grown products, especially for small farms and food businesses, and
- **FFA Executive Secretary**, oversee the Delaware FFA's day-to-day operations from middle school through collegiate levels.



FOREST INITIATIVE FUND & TREE PLANTING PROGRAM UPDATE



The Delaware Forest Service’s **Forest Initiative Fund (FIF)** is helping Delaware landowners plant trees on previously unforested, privately-owned land. We received \$239,000 (split between FY23 and FY24). Over 75,000 native trees were planted in FY23 with similar plans in progress for FY24.

Overall Forest Service Tree Planting:

- In 2023, DFS planted 548,610 trees in sustainable forest plantings (including FIF plantings and reforestation).
- In 2024, DFS will plant more than 303,000 trees through FIF and other initiatives.



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FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE

Round 27

- 60 Farms selected for easements
- 5,300 acres preserved

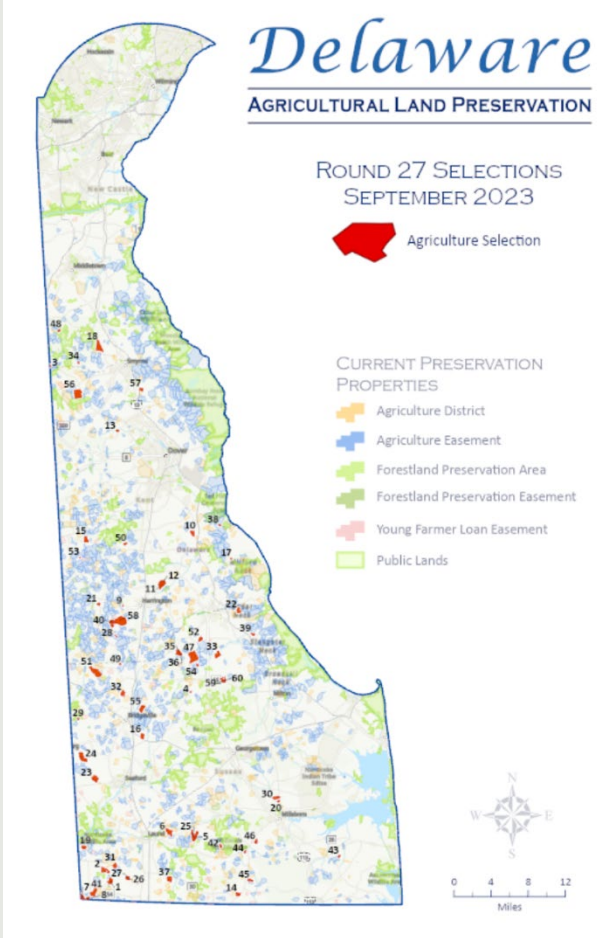
Milestone: More than 151,000 acres of Delaware farmland permanently preserved.

Round 28

- Interest still strong!
- Approximately 300 farms being appraised

Young Farmers Loan Program

- 39 young farmers have received \$9.28 M in loans, with 3,267 acres permanently preserved.



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POULTRY HOUSE DEMO ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PROGRAM UPDATE

Announced in March 2023, DDA provided a cost-share assistance program to remove old poultry houses past their useful life by reallocating funds from the Irrigation Conversion Program that were not being utilized.

Authorized in the January 2023 mini-bond bill. Reimburses 50% of demolition cost with maximum of \$10,000/house.

Results

- 56 poultry houses approved for removal (100% of applicants)
- 14 completed demolition
- 42 are in-progress – to be completed by June





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