

# AGRICULTURE

## 2020

## Truitt family farm in Seaford honored as a Century Farm

By Carol Kinsley

The Truitt family's farm in Seaford was honored in December as a Century Farm, one of 148 farms in Delaware on which a family has farmed the same land for a century or more. The farm in Oak Grove west of Seaford is now known as Lin-Lo Farms Inc., and is owned by Howard Melvin Truitt and his two daughters, Linda Truitt and Lois Passwaters. The name, obviously, combines the names of the girls.

Linda "Lenny" Truitt is the one who did the research required to fill out the Delaware Department of Agriculture forms for the Century Farm recognition.

Truitt recounted what she learned: In 1900, her great-grandfather, Harvey L. Truitt, purchased a farm of 133 acres and 94 perches from Ann J. Williams for \$1,500. A perch, she has since learned, is 16.5 feet or 1/160 of an acre, so 94 perches is more than half an acre.

"Along with the original deed," she said, "we have the original land grant from William Penn and Charles Calvert, who disputed whether the land was part of Maryland or Pennsylvania. We're only a mile from the Maryland border."

"We also learned that Ann Williams had inherited the property from her husband. On the original deed is an addendum on the back which indicates the attorneys took this woman into a separate room to make sure she was selling the property of her own free will. In those days, women didn't own property. If a woman inherited land when her husband died and then she

remarried, the property became her new husband's. Ann had 13 children who also had to sign they were giving up their rights to the property. It's an interesting part of history we don't think about."

Truitt said her great-grandfather was pretty progressive. He had the first gas lights installed in the house they lived in. He was the first in the community to do so.

"He was also first to have a steam tractor. Dad remembers when he was about 7, it was his job to carry buckets of water to the tractor to refill the water compartment. He was really glad when his father got rid of it because he was tired of carrying water. He said he didn't think he'd live to see 10. Prior to that, all the farming was done with horses."

Her great-grandfather grew strawberries, asparagus, sweet potatoes and other vegetable crops, plus watermelons and tomatoes. Later, the farm produced wheat, corn, soybeans, barley and hay.

When her great-grandfather passed away, the farm transferred to his wife, Mary, for life, then to their son Fred, for life, and then to Harvey and Mary's grandson, Howard Truitt. After becoming sole owner in 1982, he transferred the property to Lin-Lo Farms Inc.

Since his retirement, the farm has been rented out to Ben Tull, a farmer who grows corn, wheat and soybeans.

"We grew up there," Truitt said. "My grandparents had the old farm place; we were down the road. That house has since been demolished. I never moved off the

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Posing for a formal photograph at the Century Farm ceremony are H. Melvin Truitt, seated, and from left, Edward Passwaters, Lois Passwaters, Glenn S. Mellin and his wife, Lenny Truitt. At far right is State Representative Daniel B. Short. Photo courtesy Delaware Department of Agriculture

farm until I went to college in Newark. Talk about culture shock! I was not ready for the 'big city.'"

"We spent a lot of time working, but our family had a way of making it fun. When I was in high school, we had to walk the soybean field one mile out and a mile back. We cut gypsum weed with machetes. It was hard work. I remember the soybeans were up to my chest when I was a child. We told stories and jokes and made fun out of a task that needed to be done."

There was time for pure fun also. Truitt said, "My sister and I used to play hide and seek or tag in the cornfield. I remember the smell of the corn as we ran through the cornfield. The smell, like a perfume, brings back memories. When I walk through a cornfield today, it takes me back to being a kid."

Passwaters said, "We never stayed in the house; we played outside. On rainy days, the only place to go was the hay

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Shown is an example of an H2Pad, which is offered by Eastern Shore Poultry.

## Evaporative Cooling System Checklist

Tunnel Ventilation systems along with evaporative pad systems are effective at reducing summer temperatures in swine and poultry buildings. Here are some tips to keep your houses running at peak efficiency.

1) Bleed off water to control mineral content

As water is circulated and evaporated in a pad system the concentration of minerals is increased. This is especially true in areas that have hard water with its higher levels of dissolved minerals. It is suggested that five to 10 percent of the circulated water should be continuously bled out of the system. Alternatively you can also dump and replace the sump tank water weekly. Products such as Scale-Stop or Cool-N-Kleen Cool Cell Descaler can be effective in controlling scale buildup for farms with very hard water when coupled with bleed off.

2) Check pH

Desired pH level of the water should be between 6 and 9. The pH levels outside of the this range shorten pad life by leaching out the stiffening agents in the pad. You can alter the pH of the water by adding one of the descaler agents listed above or Grower Select's Kool-Cell Kleen.

3) Eliminate dry spots on the pad

Dry areas on the pads allow uncooled air to enter the building. Simply put, if the pad's not wet it's not cooling. Dry streaked areas on the pad are a clear sign

that you have clogged holes in the distribution system. Remove the cover and unstop the clogged holes in the header system. It is a good practice to clean the distribution system by opening the ball valves and flushing water through at least once a month.

4) It's a pain...but you have to clean the filters

Install a spin down water filter with a clear housing and 60 mesh screen on the system and keep it clean. It will prevent clogged distribution pipes and dirty pads. The poorer the water quality the more often the filters need to be cleaned. Installing a filter with a ball valve will simplify the chore.

5) Prevent algae growth

Although H2PADs are treated with an fungicide and come with ProTech edging to prevent algae from adhering to the pad surface, this does not completely eliminate the problem. Treat the system water with a good preventive product like Bio-Stop or Grower Select's Kool-Cell Kleen to keep algae under control. In addition, the pads should be allowed to dry out once every 24 hours to improve the longevity of the pad. Program your ventilation system to allow the fans to continue to run awhile after the pad system is turned off at night. This will pull air through the system, drying the pads out and killing any algae spores.

## Send us your news

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# Farmers launch coalition committed to environmental, economic sustainability

By Carol Kinsley

In mid-February, 20 farm groups representing millions of U.S. farmers publicly launched “Farmers for a Sustainable Future,” a coalition committed to environmental and economic sustainability. This coalition will serve as a primary resource for policymakers as they consider sustainability and climate policies important to agriculture.

The coalition will share with elected officials, media and the public U.S. agriculture’s commitment to sustainability and the incredible strides already made to reduce agriculture’s environmental footprint. As policy proposals are developed and considered, the goal is for the coalition and its guiding principles to serve as a foundation to ensure the adoption of meaningful and constructive policies and programs affecting agriculture.

Organizers of the farmers’ coalition emphasized that farmers “are committed stewards of the land, leading the way on climate-smart farming by promoting soil health, conserving water, enhancing wildlife, using nutrients efficiently and caring for their animals. For decades, they have

pushed past the boundaries of innovation thanks to investments in agricultural research and the adoption of practices that improve productivity, provide clean and renewable energy, enhance sustainability, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon.”

The group’s guiding principles call for policies that support science-based research, voluntary incentive-based conservation programs, investment in infrastructure, and solutions that ensure vibrant rural communities and a healthy planet.

About the same time as the coalition was launched, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the “Agriculture Innovation Agenda,” a department-wide initiative to align resources, programs and research to position American agriculture to better meet future global demands. Specifically, the USDA will stimulate innovation so that American agriculture can achieve the goal of increasing production by 40 percent while cutting the environmental footprint of U.S. agriculture in half by 2050.

Perdue said, “We know we have a challenge facing us: to meet future food, fiber, fuel and feed demands with finite

# Economists expect a better year for farmers in 2020

By Carol Kinsley

Take heart, farmers, 2020 should be a better year, according to economists.

Dr. Charles Hall, speaking to horticulturists at Chesapeake Green 2020 in Linthicum, Md., last week, but before the stock market headed downward, said, “This year is going to be really good, if Mother Nature cooperates. It may be the best year yet!” He anticipated growers would have to work “like the dickens” but would have a “gangbuster spring.”

Dr. John Anderson told farmers gathered for the American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention in Austin, Texas, that 2019 was a “terrible production year,” but predicted they will be able to recover in 2020.

Anderson, agribusiness economist and department chair of the College of Agriculture at the University of Arkansas, said the new trade deals that were passed right before the convention in January — the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement and phase one of a deal with China —

should improve the demand stream for U.S.-produced farm goods. “I’m hopeful exports will grow dramatically,” he said.

His prediction, however, was made before the coronavirus took off in China.

Anderson noted that agricultural crop production has exceeded demand for the past several years. He said the trade deals will help improve prices for agricultural commodities as well.

Anderson said corn has been “remarkably stable” over the past few years, while soybean production dropped significantly. Futures pricing for corn, soybeans, cotton and wheat all show slight improvement, leading him to feel “cautiously optimistic” about agricultural row crops.

The outlook for livestock and poultry is similar to that for row crops, Anderson said. Meat production has been steadily increasing since 2016, but there needs to be a strong demand.

He added that he expects dairy prices to improve this year, and is “fairly optimistic about beef and poultry prices” as well.

resources. USDA’s Agriculture Innovation Agenda is our opportunity to define American agriculture’s role to feed everyone and do right as a key player in the solution to this challenge,” said Secretary Perdue. “We are continually mindful of the need for America’s agriculture indus-

try to be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable to maintain our position as a leader in the global effort to meet demand. We are committed as ever to the environmental sustainability and continued success of America’s farmers, ranchers, foresters, and producers.”



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# Quillen enjoys keeping bees

By Carol Kinsley

Ron Quillen of Seaford has been keeping bees since the late 1980s. At one time he had 300 hives, but he is down to 30 hives now. That's still half a million bees, he said.

Quillen's bee hives, tucked into a patch of tall pine trees near a farm field west of town, are painted green so they "don't show as bad to outsiders," he said. "When I first came here, these trees were knee-high," he added. This "winter yard" is near his home and easy to access with a truck and trailer. Later in the year he would normally move the hives to fields of watermelon and cucumbers, but he has gotten out of that now, with age. "I just enjoy messing with them."

Quillen retired from DuPont after 31 years, and retired later from a second career as a millwright. He doesn't count on making money from his bees. "I just like 'em. Anything else is a plus," he said.

When his father retired, Quillen got him interested, too. "He took to it like a duck to water. You either love bees or hate them, you don't 'kinda like' 'em."

Quillen might be convinced to set out a couple of hives for a gardener. Otherwise they stay in the pines and, until maple trees, wild cherry and holly trees bloom, they will get nectar and pollen from dandelions and henbit — the purple weed you see in farm fields — and other weeds in ditches and fields. Bees aren't attracted by the corn, soybean or grain crops grown in

the nearby farm field. Those crops don't depend on pollinators, but on the wind. Tulip poplar, which flourishes in low-lying areas, is favored by bees and makes a darker honey, which is very good, Quillen said.

The best honey in the world is sourwood honey which comes from the Appalachian Mountains. Another of the world's best is Manuka honey from New Zealand, which is known for its medicinal properties even more so than its taste. It has a strong flavor. The wax from the bees that make this honey is used to make a salve for bedsores and such. Quillen noted, "There is more New Zealand manuka honey being sold worldwide than the actual amount produced in New Zealand."

Quillen also feeds his bees during the winter. "They need water," he explained, so he gives them sugar water in a mixture that is 1:1 or 2:1 with more sugar than water. In a 55 gallon drum, he adds 250 to 350 pounds of sugar to the water. Any more sugar than that is hard to mix, he said. At this time of year, he uses a 2:1 ratio because he doesn't want his queens to start laying eggs, which would chill at recent temperatures.

Quillen also provides pollen, which provides protein for the bees. Nectar, or sugar water, provides carbohydrates. Ordinarily, bees eat honey mixed with pollen. They make "bee bread" from this mixture to feed their young.

"Once you start feeding them, you must keep it up," he advised.



A strip of hardware cloth fencing serves as a mouse guard, but the bees have no problem getting through the holes. Mice like to gnaw their way into a beehive for warmth and to eat the honey and pollen. Mice can ruin a hive. Photo by Carol Kinsley

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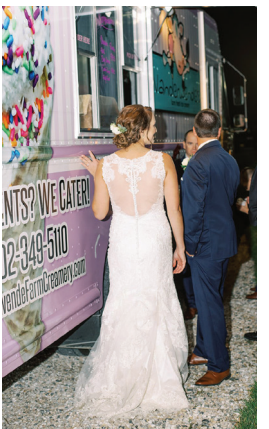
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Rather than sell honey, Quillen sells “nukes” to other beekeepers. He orders “California Golden Italian” queens from California. They are very yellow in color. His bees are a gentle type, he said.

He adds one of these queens with a frame or two of brood (bees ready to emerge) to a colorful hive he has built. This becomes the nucleus of a new operation.

A commercial beekeeper can handle 1,000 hives or so, Quillen said. Oliver Collins of Bees on the Move in Vienna, Md., had 1,500 at one time. Out in California, there’s a cooperative of four families that have 20,000 hives. Their bees pollinate the almond trees, which bloom about March 15. “The bees have to be there a month earlier,” Quillen said.

Honey bees are important for pollination of many fruit and vegetable crops. In recent years problems such as varroa mites have decimated many hives, but there are treatments available.

Quillen wore no protective equipment during a recent visit to his hives. Only a few of them are “active” this time of year, and while he has been stung many times, he is not afraid of them.

Anyone interested in getting into beekeeping can buy protective suits and veils for about \$100. Quillen orders from Mann Lake Ltd. or Dadant.

Quillen invites potential beekeepers to join him at meetings of the Sussex County Beekeepers on the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. They meet at the old University of Delaware Research & Education Center located at 16684 County Seat Highway, Georgetown, Del. (across the street from Sussex Tech and the Carvel



**Ron Quillen keeps his bee hives on trailers in a patch of pine trees. Only a few are active now, but soon he will order queens from California to repopulate the other hives. He says people either love bees or hate them. There’s no “kinda liking” bees! Photo by Carol Kinsley**

Center). For more information, contact Carla Lewis at [CLewis4863@gmail.com](mailto:CLewis4863@gmail.com) or (302) 236-4115.

Quillen may have a few extra nukes to sell this spring. Contact him at (302) 841-1316.

# Truitt

Continued from page 1B

loft. We would braid pieces of broken bale twine — we saved all of it. We would swing from the rafters with them. The hay loft was the place to go in bad weather. The neighborhood kids would come; we all needed a place to play.”

“I learned to drive at young age. I drove tractors as soon as I was big enough to see over the steering wheel, maybe 8 years old. Dad was on there with me. I helped him in the fields. I drove tractors, pickups, grain trucks... The pickup he taught to drive when I was about 11 had a three-speed shifter on column. It was not automatic.”

When Passwaters was in first grade, her mother invited the whole class to come out to the farm. “Our teacher got permission for the field trip. We rode ponies and petted the animals. Somewhere I have pictures of my classmates on the farm the day they came.”

One of Passwaters’ biggest memories is of all the animals raised on the farm. “Our job was to feed the animals and fix the stables,” she recalled. “You name it, we had it, every animal imaginable. There were steers, milker calves, hogs, piglets... we made pets of them. Plus there were pets — goats and rabbits. The hogs were bigger than we were. The little ones were cute.”

Truitt remembers the hogs, too. “My job was to feed them after school. If it had

rained, it was a sloppy mess. I wore boots. The trick was to get into the pen and dump the feed before the hogs knew I was there. They’d be fighting over the trough and I was trying to get out of their way and keep my boots from being sucked off by the mud.”

Truitt said the family raised 150,000 broilers, so she spent a lot of time in the chicken house. “I took over those duties when I had young children so I could be home to take care of them. When they went to school, I retired from raising poultry!”

“I didn’t enjoy the work, but it allowed me to stay with the kids, which was really important. It was a trade off, just as a lot of families had to do.”

The animals are gone now, Passwaters said. “That to me was a big part of the farm. My son did not get see a lot of that. The chicken house and steers and smaller animals are long gone. The goats were pets. When we found out they would jump on the car then get on the roof of the house, they not stay around long. My boys had a little sheep — here on the farm you can have anything you want, just throw up a little fence somewhere. They got a lamb for Easter. He was spoiled rotten.”

Passwaters continued, “I still live here at the farm, across the road from Dad. I raised my kids here. Lenny and I both have two boys. They had the same freedom of the farm that we did. Now my granddaughters go on bike rides and walks. They’re the sixth generation on the farm. Having it in the family that long is an amazing thing. I’m so glad Lenny was

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# Seaford farmer Tull receives first place award from NCGA

Seaford farmer Brian Tull earned a first-place state award in the 2019 National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) National Corn Yield Contest. Tull is honored as one of the highest corn yield producers in the nation with DEKALB® DKC65-95RIB Brand Blend corn, yielding an outstanding 312.93 bushels per acre in the I: Conventional Irrigated category.

"It's truly an honor Brian chooses to partner with the DEKALB brand in the quest for high yields," said Pete Uitenbroek, DEKALB Asgrow® Deltapine® Brand Marketing Lead. "It was a tough year, but farmers can choose to have the best foundation possible by planting products with exclusive genetics and consistent performance."

The NCGA contest, currently in its 55th year, challenges farmers to achieve record-

setting yields as part of its search for management practices that can help farmers everywhere. It's NCGA's most popular program with this year's event producing 7,454 entries.

Tull was among DEKALB winners recently recognized at the 2020 Commodity Classic in San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 27-29 with an awards banquet and private concert featuring Drake White.

In the 2019 NCGA yield contest, DEKALB farmers captured eight of the 27 national awards and 182 first through third place awards at the state level, 31 of which yielded 300 bushels per acre or higher.

To learn more about maximizing yield performance and see a full list of DEKALB winners, visit [DEKALB.com/YieldWinner](http://DEKALB.com/YieldWinner) or contact your local DEKALB Asgrow dealer.



DEKALB Asgrow® Deltapine® Brand Marketing Lead Pete Uitenbroek, left, is shown presenting the NCGA award to Brian Tull.

## Farm

Continued from page 6B

able get the information she needed to get the Century Farm designation. Some of that information was not easy find after all those years!"

Truitt said she was happy to be able to

do this while their father was alive. "Some of the stories had never come up in conversation over the years. I learned a lot about our family. I tracked back, because I knew we had added acreage. We added property one piece at a time in 1939, '54, '57, '58, '80 and '82. We just continued to buy up parcels that were connected to our land. One piece we bought back. We had sold a portion off to one of Dad's step-siblings. When he died, Dad brought the land back."

The total farm is now more than 400 acres, 370 of which are tillable. The rest is woodland or tax ditches.

Neither sister went into farming when grown. Truitt was for several years secretary or office manager for several local businesses and now works (although she calls it play) at a quilting shop, which is her passion, in Dagsboro.

Passwaters worked as a cafeteria lunch lady in Seaford School District for 30 years. "I wanted a schedule that would allow me to be home when my kids were home," she said. "That was what I liked best about it. Once they were teenagers, I didn't have to be home all the time, but I wanted to be."



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# Farming runs in the blood for Breeding family

By Carol Kinsley

Steve Breeding has been a farmer all his life. “It’s all I ever wanted to do,” he said. He even switched high schools from Seaford to Woodbridge in Greenwood so he could be in FFA. Seaford didn’t have an FFA program at the time. His sister-in-law, Karen Breeding, teaches in the ag program at Woodbridge now. His brother, Chris, is in equipment sales at Brinkley and Hurst and works on the farm when he can. “Chris and Karen live in Greenwood on our grandparents’ farm which is a Century farm. It is their own operation but we help each other when busy season comes around such as harvest, planting or baling hay,” Breeding said.

Breeding also worked in the farm equipment industry for many years, doing farm work after dark most nights. Only recently did he have the opportunity to go farming full time.

Breeding’s great-grandparents and grandparents had a dairy farm which they converted to beef cattle. His father, Ron Breeding, was a part-time farmer, while working for the city. “He helped my brother and me grow our cattle herd,” Breeding said. “My dad and Poppop gave my brother an Angus heifer and me a Hereford heifer. That started our show career more than 30 years ago,” Breeding said.

His mother works with Breeding on the farm every day. “She out works me most days,” he said. “She does everything from

feeding to moving cattle. The only thing she won’t do is drive the loader. Without her, things wouldn’t roll.”

Breeding has downsized the cattle operation on the 50-acre farm west of Seaford. “We have a dozen registered black Angus cows,” he said.

Meanwhile, he has increased the sheep operation. The Breedings raise lambs for 4-Hers to show at the Delaware State fair. They hold an open house in April when 4-Hers can purchase and take home their lambs. There are about 40 club lamb ewes for fair lambs and the number of feeder lambs varies depending on time of year.

“Our big family thing is the fair. If we’re not at the fair, we talk about it at least once a day. I’ve shown cattle — never sheep — at the fair for 30 years or more.”

Breeding is getting into a new venture with a farmer in western Maryland. “Our goal is to raise 150 to 200 lambs per year for him. He lambs four times a year. Once they are weaned, the lambs will come here and we will keep them 45 to 60 days, until they are about 6 months old.” Then they will be sold to a packer in Pennsylvania.

Breeding met the farmer at a meeting of the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association. He is also active in the Maryland Sheep Producers Association and is on the Delaware Beef Producers Advisory Board. In addition, he is an alum of LEADelaware class 5.

Breeding is also involved in the Dela-



Steve Breeding has been shearing sheep up and down the Eastern Shore and the East Coast since he graduated from high school.

ware Farm Bureau. Now Sussex County Farm Bureau president, he has been a member of the Young Farmers and Ranchers and was a county representative on the board of directors for 10 years.

When not at a Farm Bureau or other

organization meeting, Breeding does a lot of shearing of sheep in the spring, all up and down the Eastern Shore and the East Coast. “I’ve been doing that since right out of high school — for 15 to 20 years,” he said.



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Steven Breeding bottle feeds one of the lambs born this spring on his farm.

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# Delmarva’s chicken industry grows more slowly than rest of U.S.

Delmarva’s chicken industry grew at slower pace in 2019 than the chicken industry did elsewhere in the U.S., new data released by Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. show. Through efficient, conservation-minded farming and processing, the Delmarva chicken community did increase the amount of chicken it produced, even as active chicken house capacity on Delmarva fell by three percent. But the 0.6 percent year-to-year increase in chickens processed on Delmarva from 2018 to 2019 was lower than the U.S. chicken industry’s overall production growth, which stood at two percent.

“In the face of challenging economic and regulatory conditions, Delmarva’s chicken industry did grow a bit in 2019,” said Holly Porter, DPI’s executive director. “Our data make it clear that the region’s chicken industry is posting slower growth than what producers and chicken companies in other states are enjoying.”

Overall, Delmarva farmers raised 608 million chickens in 2019, compared to the 605 million chickens they raised in 2018. The chickens were raised in 5,114 chicken houses across Delmarva, and altogether, those houses could hold a total of 145 million chickens at a time – three percent less capacity than in 2018. In the past 20 years, the number of chicken houses in operation on Delmarva has fallen 12 percent – there were more than 5,800 chicken houses in use in 1999 – while the average chicken house has grown in size.

Modern chicken houses, larger than those built in the past, are more energy-efficient and have climate, feed and water technology that improves bird health. The average Delmarva chicken farm today has about four chicken houses in operation, with about 110,000 chickens per flock, on average. “Critics stuck in the rut of criticizing what they deride as ‘industrial poultry operations’ just aren’t up to speed on how efficient and resourceful the family farmers on Delmarva who raise chicken really are,” Porter said.

For the first time since 2016, the ranks of family farms raising chicken grew a bit last year. Delmarva ended the year with 1,325 chicken growers, or 23 more farmers than were recorded in 2018. In total, those growers earned \$280 million in contract payments from Delmarva’s five chicken companies (Allen Harim Foods, Amick Farms, Mountaire Farms, Perdue Farms and Tyson Foods). The total value of the chicken raised and processed on Delmarva in 2019 was \$3.5 billion.

Delmarva’s chicken community is an important part of the regional economy. According to an economic impact study by

John Dunham & Associates, the chicken industry created or supported 10,980 jobs in Delaware; 6,870 jobs in Maryland; and 5,000 jobs on Virginia’s Eastern Shore. More data about how chicken helps Delmarva’s economy, including numbers by state legislative district, can be found at [chickenfeedsamerica.org](http://chickenfeedsamerica.org).

Other highlights from DPI’s 2019 report on Delmarva’s chicken industry:

- Chicken growers and companies planted more than 17,000 trees and tall grasses as part of DPI’s vegetative environmental buffers program.
- Delmarva’s chicken companies invested \$159 million in capital improvements, including investments in wastewater treatment, trucks, trailers, and processing plants.
- To make chicken feed, chicken

companies purchased 89 million bushels of corn, 38 million bushels of soybeans, and 427,004 bushels of wheat. Total feed ingredient costs came to \$1 billion.

- Chicken companies purchased \$262 million in packaging and processing supplies.
- Since 1957, DPI has collected and compiled data from the poultry companies operating on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia and in Delaware to gauge the scope and growth of Delmarva’s chicken economy.

Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. is the Delmarva chicken industry’s voice as the premier membership association focusing on advocacy, education and member relations. For more information, visit [dpi-chicken.org](http://dpi-chicken.org); like DPI on Facebook; and follow us on Twitter and YouTube.

## Delaware Agriculture Facts

Delaware has 2,302 farms  
Of \$1.8 billion in farm sales, 70 percent is from the poultry industry  
Delmarva produces 125 million chickens a year  
Delmarva produced 9.6 percent of U.S. poultry  
Delaware sold 303.5 million chickens or 1.851 billion pounds  
Delaware is 2nd in nation behind California in per farm sales  
Delaware is #1 in lima bean acreage  
Delaware has \$14 million in direct to consumer sales in farm markets  
96 percent of Delaware’s farms are operated by farm families  
There is 275,473 acres of farm land in Sussex County, Delaware

Source: slides shown at STEM program, therefore gathered by University of Delaware

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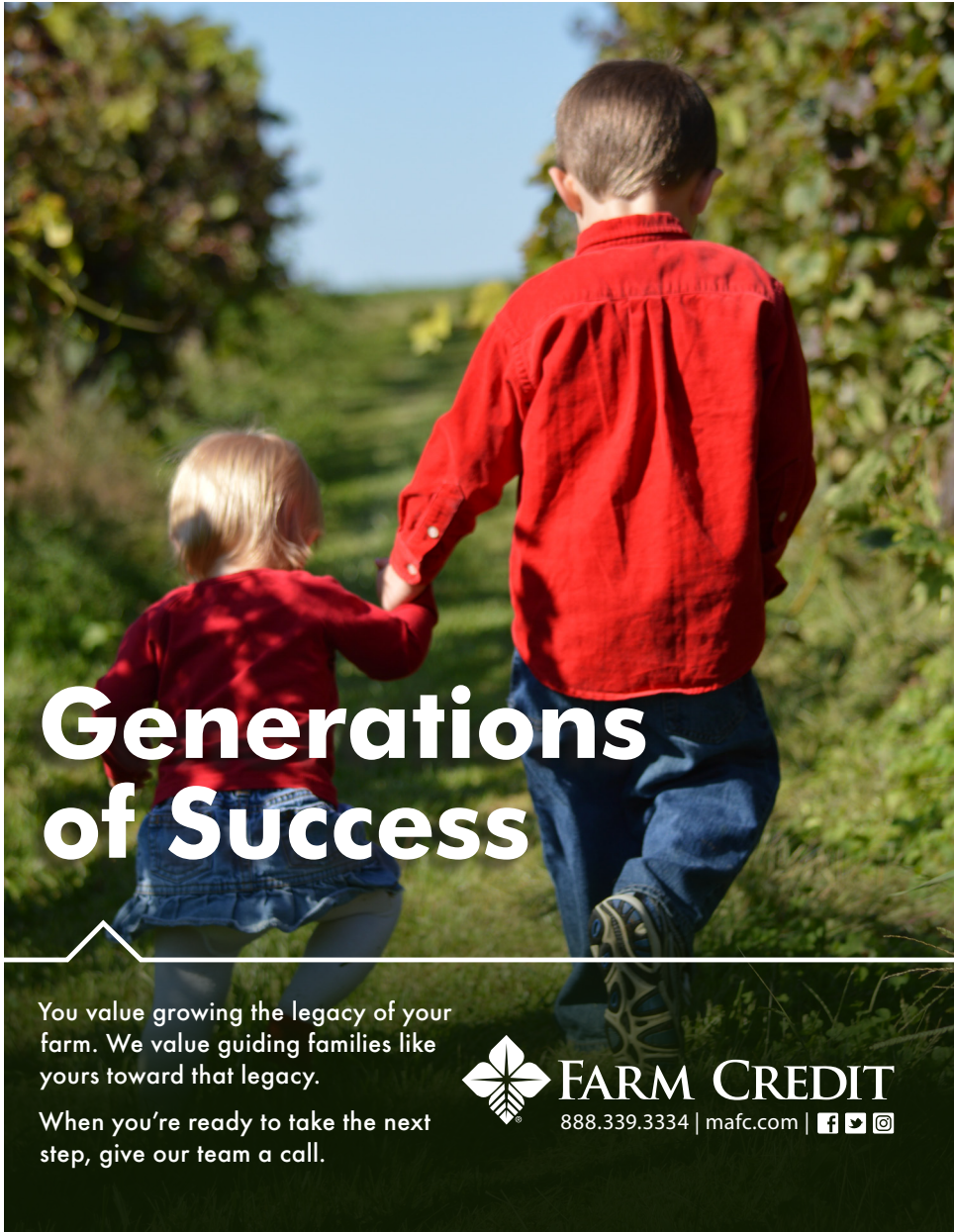
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# Mental Health First Aid Training is available

By Carol Kinsley

If your son called to say a friend's girl friend was so distraught about their break-up that she is threatening suicide, would you know how to advise him? With all the uncertainties that a farmer faces, would one more stressor push a friend or family member over the edge? Would you recognize the signs and symptoms and know what to do?

All of us face 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. Family members also need to know how best to help their loved ones.

Mental Health First Aid training is being offered several times and in several locations this spring that may help prepare you.

The Mental Health First Aid training is an eight-hour, evidence-based 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. Using interactive educational methods, you'll learn how to offer initial help in a mental health crisis and how to connect with the appropriate level of care. You will also receive a list of community healthcare providers and national resources, support groups, and online tools

for mental health and addictions treatment and support.

Two types of Mental Health First Aid Training are offered. One is for adults working with adults. This training focuses on signs, symptoms and support strategies for adults experiencing mental health disorders. This training is being taught by instructors from the Delaware Mental Health Association. Sessions are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. as follows:

- March 19, Carvel Research and Education Center, Georgetown;
- April 23, Milford Library, Milford;
- May 28, Paradee Center, Dover;
- June 18, Farm Services Agency, Dover.

There are also sessions for adults working with youth. This training focuses on signs, symptoms and support strategies for youth experiencing mental health disorders. The training is taught by a Certified Mental Health First Aid instructor from the National Alliance on Mental Illness in Delaware (NAMI Delaware). The schedule is as follows:

- May 11 and 18, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Paradee Center, Dover;
- June 9 and 11, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Carvel REC, Georgetown.

The \$10 per person fee covers course materials and, depending on the date of training, a light lunch and/or refreshments.

## Local farmer directs America's Farmers Grow

## Communities donation to Delmarva Teen Challenge

Kent County farmers Jonathan and Davette Thompson, directed \$2,500 to Delmarva Teen Challenge Inc. for the Home of Hope Women's Campus through America's Farmers Grow Communities, sponsored by the Bayer Fund.

Celebrating its 10th year, America's Farmers Grow Communities partners with farmers to support nonprofit organizations strengthening rural communities. The program offers farmers the chance to direct a \$2,500 donation to a nonprofit of their choice. It has awarded more than \$33 million to over 8,000 nonprofits across rural America.

"A better life is Bayer's goal. Farmers are invested in their communities, they root for their neighbors, and they know when and where there is a need," said Al Mitchell, Vice President Corporate Engagement, Bayer. "Farmers are one of America's best resources, which is why Grow Communities partners with them to direct donations to the organizations they are passionate about and that make a positive impact and a better life in communities."

To learn more about the America's Farmers Grow Communities program, visit [www.AmericasFarmers.com](http://www.AmericasFarmers.com) or follow on Facebook at [facebook.com/AmericasFarmers](https://facebook.com/AmericasFarmers).

## Free screening of 'SILO' to take place

Delawareans are welcome as Maryland Farm Bureau and Nationwide sponsor a free screening of the film "SILO," a feature film about a grain entrapment. Inspired by true events, SILO follows a harrowing day in an American farm town. Disaster strikes when a teenager is entrapped in a 50-foot-tall grain bin. When the corn inside turns to quicksand and starts to engulf him, family, neighbors and first responders must put aside their differences to rescue him.

The SILO Community Screening Campaign works with agricultural companies, nonprofits and local community organizers to host screenings of the film all around North America. Along with these partners, the film aims to reflect and fortify agricultural communities rarely represented on the big screen.

The 70-minute movie screening is on March 26, from 6 to 9 p.m. at North Carolina High School, 10990 River Road, Ridgely, Md. To RSVP, visit <https://www.mdfarmbureau.com/silo-film-screening/>.

In addition, this training is underwritten by the Sustainable Coastal Communities Project, Delaware Farm Bureau and University of Delaware Cooperative Extension.

For more information and to register go

to: [www.udel.edu/extension/mhfa](http://www.udel.edu/extension/mhfa). Scholarships and support for special needs can be provided. For more info, contact Maria Pippidis, Extension Educator, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, [pippidis@udel.edu](mailto:pippidis@udel.edu) or 302-831-1239.

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