



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MARYLAND FIELD OFFICE

50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 2, 2011

Contact: Barbara Rater
(800) 675-0295

NASS VISITS MARYLAND FARMERS FOR CONSERVATION SURVEY *CEAP Survey Focuses on Chesapeake Bay Watershed*

ANNAPOLIS, MD – USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will soon visit selected farmers in Maryland as part of the 2011 National Resources Inventory (NRI) – Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) survey. The survey, conducted between November 2011 and February 2012, will gather information from producers about farming and conservation practices on cultivated cropland.

“Conservation programs help agricultural producers reduce soil erosion, enhance water and air quality, conserve energy, and enhance wildlife habitat,” said Barbara Rater, director of the NASS Maryland Field Office. “These programs are important to farmers and rural communities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed who use them to help maintain productive farmland and restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay. I encourage all farmers contacted to respond to the survey.”

Why respond to the CEAP survey? Your response will help:

- Provide a much needed complete picture of conservation practices in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Illustrate the good work that farmers in the region are already doing to conserve natural resources.
- Improve and strengthen technical and financial programs that help landowners plan and install conservation practices on agricultural land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Maintain the very conservation programs that can help producers’ bottom line – while also protecting the very soil, water and habitat we all depend on.

“Chesapeake Bay area farmers, especially those in Maryland, have continued to install many on-farm best management practices since NASS last conducted the CEAP survey in 2006,” said Rater. “This updated information is needed to document the prevalence of all conservation practices and provide the base from which to strengthen conservation planning, implementation and management.”

“It is essential that Maryland farmers account for all they are already doing to conserve natural resources, especially on-farm best management practices not funded through state and federal programs,” said Maryland Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance. “The upcoming CEAP survey is the

ideal and timely opportunity for farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to showcase the voluntary environmental stewardship practices already in place. I encourage everyone who is contacted to participate in the CEAP survey so we will have the most accurate information as we move forward in developing Phase II of the EPA's Watershed Implementation Plan."

Producers are asked to provide information on farm production practices; chemical, fertilizer and manure applications; integrated pest management; and installed conservation practices. As with all NASS surveys, respondents are guaranteed by law that their individual information is kept confidential. For more information or questions about the CEAP survey, contact the NASS Maryland Field Office at 800.675.0295 or visit www.nass.usda.gov.

###