

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD OVERVIEW & ELIGIBILITY

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DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Overview

The Delaware Environmental Stewardship Award represents a collaborative initiative involving the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission (DNMC), grain producers, poultry companies, turf management professionals, and various agribusiness organizations. This program recognizes farmers, nutrient handlers, and industry leaders who positively impact the environment and prioritize environmental stewardship as a core principle.

Eligibility

To qualify for the Environmental Stewardship Award program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Own and maintain an operation under the Nutrient Management Law.
- Certified with the Nutrient Management Program and in good standing.
- Operate under a certified Animal Waste Management Plan (AWMP) or Nutrient Management Plan (NMP).
- Must have NO current or pending enforcement actions against their operation.
- Have NOT been selected as a Delaware Environmental Stewardship Award recipient in the past.

Categories

Award categories may vary each year, as determined by the DNMC. Categories include:

- Poultry
- Grain Crops
- Vegetable Crops
- Livestock Operations
- Equine Operations
- Golf Course and Commercial Turf

Nominations

Applications for a specific award category will be announced in October of each year. Individuals that fall within the category for the year are encouraged to apply, but nominations may also be solicited through industry groups and professionals. For example, Delaware Farm Bureau, independent agronomists, or the Delmarva Poultry Industry (DPI).

Selection

- Following the application deadline, selection for four Semi-finalists will be conducted through an internal review process based on completed application questions. Decisions will be focused on environmental stewardship elements, including:
- Implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP's)

- Excellence in water quality stewardship
- Erosion control measures and structures
- Enhanced and/or innovative environmental quality practices
- Animal mortality management
- Community involvement

Site Visit

Once the 4 semi-finalists are selected, a field day to visit each of the four sites will be scheduled. During the field day a group of professionals, including the judging panel, will visit each operation. The applicant will give the group an overview of their operation, best management practices, and a tour of the facilities. The judges will determine a winner based on the field day visit and application questions.

Judging Panel

A judges panel of 5 industry professionals will be selected for the field day each year. Other field day attendees will include up to 3 Nutrient Management or Delaware Department of Agriculture staff members and a representative from the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission.

Awards

Each of the four semi-finalists will receive:

- \$500 cash award
- Plaque
- Environmental Stewardship Award lane sign

The winner will receive the above, plus, an additional \$500 cash award.

Budget

The total annual budget for the program is \$3,000.

Process and Timeline Overview

1. DNMC Planning - October
2. Open application period - October 15
3. Application deadline - November 15
4. Field visit (one day) - December 1st – 14th
5. Order awards - December 15
6. Awards recognition - Delaware Ag Week