



CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION

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Media Alert for Thursday, November 9 beginning at 1 P.M.

New report concerning farming needs to be released at Chesapeake Bay Commission meeting in Harrisburg

Two days of discussions on overwhelming need for additional “technical assistance” for farmers and Pennsylvania’s efforts to reduce pollution from agricultural communities

Harrisburg, Pa. – On Thursday and Friday, November 9-10, beginning at 1 P.M. in Harrisburg, members of the bipartisan Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC), representing legislators from Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, will meet with environmental leaders, farming representatives, and government officials to discuss how to better support farmers in their efforts to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution damaging local waters, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. The Commission will discuss Pennsylvania’s efforts and also release its new report, *“Boots on the Ground,”* focused on improving agricultural technical assistance.

The report demonstrates the overwhelming needs of farmers for increased levels of help – technical assistance – when working to reduce pollution from agricultural operations. This is the first Bay-wide report documenting the escalating need for more technical assistance to guide farmers in planning and installing pollution control practices.

“With the overwhelming amount of reliance on agriculture to help clean up the Bay, there simply aren’t enough ‘boots on the ground’ to provide the help needed to farmers to get the job done,” said Commission Chairman State Representative Garth Everett (R-PA). “Our report is the first of its kind to answer the question of what farmers need and how we can meet that need. As work on national Farm Bill gears up in Washington, its release could not have been better timed.”

Scheduled to begin on Thursday, Nov. 9, at 1 P.M. (inside the Pennsylvania Capitol Complex in Ryan Office Building Room 205), the discussion will begin with a panel of farmers describing

their experiences and needs in working to reduce pollution. Both English and Amish farming challenges will be described. Also on the agenda is a discussion of the challenges to providing farmers with technical assistance, led by professionals in the field, including consideration of funding commitments at the federal, state and local levels. The working part of the meeting will conclude with a discussion of the reauthorization of the U.S. Farm Bill.

Continuing the theme of the prior day, Friday's agenda focuses squarely on Pennsylvania's efforts to improve water quality, both locally and downstream. The session includes Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Patrick McDonnell describing the state's restoration strategy; legislators outlining policy initiatives; Penn State discussing its work with landowners to help meet clean water goals; and an overview of the latest targeted and cost-effective agricultural pollution reduction solutions in Lancaster County – one of the largest producers of agricultural pollution to the Chesapeake Bay.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Advanced copies of the technical assistance report, "Boots on the Ground – Improving Technical Assistance for Farmers" can be found [here](#). Interviews with contributors to the report and experts on technical assistance, as well as farmers participating in restoration efforts can be arranged.