


2007 Delmarva Poultry Conference
Programs for VEB Implementation

J.D. Scott
 Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.
 12 September 2007



Not Another Buffer Talk




"Are you going to say the same thing again?"

Buffers for every farm?

- Implementation is an important component of a successful VEB initiative
- Three critical challenges:
 - *Funding*
 - *Fundamentals*
 - *Follow-up*




Challenge: Funding




- Money does not grow on trees!
- The "bottom line" can be an obvious limiting factor for the poultry grower
 - *Significant cost potential*
 - *Less obvious return on investment*
 - *Just one more expense*

Challenge: Fundamentals



- Effective buffers require more than simply "sticking trees in the ground" and watching them grow
- Two important fundamentals:
 - *Proper planning*
 - *Proper installation*

Challenge: Follow-up



- Basic care is essential for long-term success
 - *Irrigation*
 - *Weed control*
 - *Pest management*
- Expectations should be obvious, but it is risky to assume they are!

Finding Solutions

- How can we best address these challenges?
- What resources and programs are available to help?

Proactive Solutions Are Best



Responding after the fact is not the best option!

Communication Is Critical



Success depends on understanding at every level!

Solutions for Funding

- Government cost-share forms the basis for current VEB funding
 - EQIP
 - WHIP
 - CREP
 - State/Soil District Programs
- Self-financing is sometimes a possibility

Funding: EQIP

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program
 - Set payment schedule
 - Contract according to NRCS standards
 - Penalty for not meeting obligations under the contract
 - Priority of buffers vs. other practices may be an issue



Funding: Other Sources

- Availability of other options depends on specific criteria
 - WHIP – Primary goal is wildlife concern
 - CREP – Primary criteria is farmland connection
 - Soil District – Local policy may dictate priority
 - Other State Funds – Subject to agency rules



Funding: Potential Sources

- Direct loans
- Conservation grants
- Tree bank arrangements
- Agroforestry opportunities
 - Biomass for energy
 - Marketable derivatives



Solutions for Fundamentals

- Pre-planning is a pivotal aspect
 - *It is strongly recommended that a VEB plan be completed for every new poultry house **before** construction begins*
- Education & outreach must continue throughout the process

Fundamentals: VEB Tool-Kit



- The *VEB Tool-Kit* provides accessible information for growers
- Further DPI resources include brochures and related outreach material

Fundamentals: “Tree Guy”



- Boring, but effective!
- Here is how the VEB Coordinator can help:
 - Design consultation
 - Plan writing
 - Training and outreach
 - Individual follow-up
 - Services coordination
 - Problem-solving

Fundamentals: Other Help



- Networking with local Cooperative Extension can be a valuable source of information and insight
- Many other sources of help exist

Solutions for Follow-up

- Proper design and installation will go a long way in minimizing follow-up problems
- Planning should take into account the necessary particulars of buffer maintenance and care

Follow-up: Education

- Growers must appreciate the value of maintaining a buffer as a long-term investment
- Individual grower responsibility must be clearly articulated



Follow-up: Visual Evaluation

- Most problems can be identified by simple observation
- Nothing formal, just look for obvious signs of trouble
 - *Dieback, dust-loading, insect damage, etc.*



Follow-up: Problem Referral

- Identified problems need to be corrected or referred for proper handling
- Referral options include:
 - *VEB Coordinator*
 - *NRCS/Soil District*
 - *Cooperative Extension*
 - *Tree Care Professional*



The Vital Link

- A critical program for VEB implementation is **your involvement**
 - *Company contact with growers and the ability to encourage adoption of buffers can greatly influence the success of this endeavor*
- Here are some points to remember...

Be Resourceful



- **Use what is available to you!**
- Take advantage of every resource to help growers adopt buffers as a BMP on their farm

Support the Cause

- **Get the word out!**
- Your growers need to be reminded that vegetative buffers are still the most cost-effective solution to many issues our industry faces



Consider the Obvious



- **Never assume anything!**
- Your growers may not know what you think they know
 - *May not understand the importance of a buffer*
 - *May not know there is help available to install a buffer*
 - *May not recognize the need for maintaining a buffer*

Remain Flexible

- **Go with the flow!**
- VEB projects can be an adventure
 - *Sometimes programs take a while to get moving*
 - *The process of a installation can be slow*
 - *As buffers are installed the more we learn*



Actions Speak Loudest



- We can talk about buffers, but, if we are not all doing our part, what difference does it make?
 - *It is too late once a neighbor complaint or regulatory agency forces action*

Working Together

- Cooperation between DPI and poultry personnel is the decisive link
- Teamwork requires...
 - *Communicating freely*
 - *Identifying needs*
 - *Making referrals*
 - *Responding mutually*



A Fresh Focus

- The VEB Coordinator position will be changing to better meet current needs
 - *Understanding of program needs has evolved*
 - *The planning and resource phase is complete*
 - *Plant materials experience has emerged as a critical need*
- The result is a transition to a new “tree guy” who can focus on getting trees in the ground

THE END!



For more information...

Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.
16686 County Seat Highway
Georgetown, Delaware 19947
(302) 856-9037

