

# PRODUCERS FOR RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY (PREPS)

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*Poultry producers face many challenges in an increasingly competitive farming environment. A major challenge is protecting water quality and the environment while promoting economically viable farming.*

To address these challenges, the Extension Service, Farm Bureau, and other agencies are partnering on a new program for poultry producers. The program will provide the latest information about recommended environmental practices and encourage stewardship among the state's poultry growers.

The underlying principle of the program, known as PREPS (Producers for Responsible Environmental Preservation and Sustainability), is that responsible stewardship of the land encourages successful farming.

As part of PREPS, a model farm will be identified to demonstrate best management practices to reduce potential environmental impacts of poultry operations. From this demonstration, other producers should see the practical benefits of adopting these best management practices in their operations.

A key component of the concept is a voluntary self-evaluation specifically developed for poultry producers. Producers may use the evaluation to compare their level of environmental stewardship to a certain standard.

Elements of the self-evaluation include litter management, carcass disposal, pasture management, pesticide use, and other management practices typical of poultry operations. The voluntary self-evaluation also can help producers identify any follow-up practices needed.

The program benefits farmers and the poultry industry in many ways. It allows producers to protect land and water resources, document positive environmental practices, enhance wildlife habitats, and improve relations among farmers, agricultural support groups, and the poultry industry.

As participants in PREPS, poultry producers will help bring public attention to their positive contributions to the environment while encouraging agricultural sustainability.

Producers also will have direct access to follow-up assistance in several production areas, including management of soils, nutrients, manure, pastures, integrated pest management, water resource management, and environmental education assistance.

The program is patterned after the Delta FARM (Farmers Advocating Resource Management) program, also developed with input from Extension and several other agencies. More than 300,000 acres are currently enrolled in the Delta FARM environmental stewardship program.

*For more information on this program, contact:*

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