



# Good Farmers

## Make Good Neighbors

Suburban sprawl is a fact of life in rural Maryland. For farmers, it can bring new neighbors unaccustomed to how things work on farms. Without good communication, misunderstandings and ongoing disputes can evolve into major conflicts. The best solution is to take the lead and address concerns before they escalate. *Here are some suggestions to help you stay on good terms with your neighbors:*

### Be Friendly and Welcoming

- Introduce yourself to your new neighbors.
- Explain how your operation works.
- Describe what goes on each season.
- Answer questions honestly, even if it's not what your neighbors want to hear.
- Offer some surplus produce from your farm.

### When Spreading Manure

- If possible, let your neighbors know when you plan to spread manure.
- Try to spread manure when the wind isn't blowing toward your neighbors.
- Avoid spreading on weekends and holidays, when neighbors are likely to be outdoors.
- Try to spread manure in the morning when the air rises, which can help carry odors away.
- If you till your fields, incorporate manure within 48 hours of application.
- Clean up any messes that you make on roadways.



Here are some additional suggestions to help keep odors, weeds, and flies away from your neighbors:

## Chicken Operations



- Address issues with your neighbors before they get out of control.
- If feasible, let neighbors know when a clean-out is planned.
- Don't build dead bird composting facilities near neighbors or sensitive areas.
- Plant grasses and shrubs near chicken house exhaust fans to trap dust and odors.
- Plant evergreens and butterfly gardens along the perimeter of chicken houses to provide an attractive screen for your neighbors.

## Livestock Operations



- Plant windbreaks to protect cattle from high winds and screen unsightly areas around the farm.
- Set up a rotational grazing system to improve your pastures and reduce erosion.
- Keep fences repaired.
- Keep livestock out of streams.
- Use good sanitation practices to cut down on barnyard flies.

## Horse Farms



- Clean up manure every one to two days to reduce flies and odors.
- Set up a manure composting system away from neighbors.
- Use rotational grazing to improve pasture health.
- Preserve your pastures—avoid pasturing horses during wet periods.
- Mow weeds before they go to seed and overrun your neighbor's property.
- Reseed bare ground.
- Trim the grass under fences to help make your property look neat and attractive.

## Follow the Rules



- Comply with Maryland's Nutrient Management Regulations
- Keep your nutrient management plan up to date and follow its recommendations.
- Don't spread manure in winter (December 16 through the last day of February).
- Establish stream buffers and setbacks to keep manure and nutrients out of local waterways.
- Incorporate or inject manure into tilled fields within 48 hours of application.
- Plant a cover crop if you spread manure or other nutrient sources on fallow fields in fall.
- Use the Phosphorus Management Tool to manage fields with high soil phosphorus levels.
- Install measures to prevent livestock from entering streams.



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## Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation

50 Harry S. Truman Parkway • Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-841-5959 • [mda.maryland.gov/conservation](http://mda.maryland.gov/conservation)