

## CAN I AFFORD A VEB?

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A vegetative buffer is a long-term investment that might seem costly at first glance. However, the benefits more than justify the expense, if your buffer is properly installed and managed. Funding opportunities such as EQIP or state and conservation district programs may be available to help off-set costs.

If you are still unsure about installing a buffer, consider this: can you afford not to? Neighbor complaints, future environmental regulation, and less than optimal biosecurity may be very costly consequences of not installing a VEB.

## RESOURCES

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Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. is committed to helping poultry growers across Delmarva install vegetative buffers. Available resources include:

- Education on VEB practices
- Design consultation
- Advice on plant selection and care
- Facilitating VEB installations
- Identification of funding options

Additional help can be found in the *VEB TOOL-KIT*. This one-stop resource provides greater detail on installing and maintaining a buffer, along with a listing of suitable plants and helpful resources.

Please contact DPI for more information.

For more than 50 years, the Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. (DPI) has worked for the benefit of the broiler industry on the Delmarva Peninsula. As a non-profit trade association, DPI continues to serve all sectors of the local poultry industry through industry promotion, disease prevention and control programs, education, legislative representation, and innovative outreach activities such as the VEB program. If you are not already among the 3,000 members of DPI, please consider joining. Together we can make a difference!

*For additional information  
please contact:*

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## VEGETATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL BUFFERS

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*An Introduction  
for Poultry Growers*



Whether called vegetative buffers or poultry windbreaks, the planting of trees and shrubs around poultry houses is gaining acceptance as a best management practice for broiler farms.

Have you considered planting a vegetative buffer on your farm, but still have questions? Well, read on...

# WHAT IS A VEGETATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL BUFFER?

A Vegetative Environmental Buffer (VEB) is the technical name for a buffer planting designed to minimize environmental impact, to support biosecurity, and to improve the appearance of a poultry farm. To achieve these objectives, the buffer should be a multiple-row planting that is properly installed and maintained.

Planning and selecting suitable plants are critical. Much of the buffer's effectiveness and longevity will depend on these factors.

Obviously, the best time to consider a buffer is before poultry houses are built. This allows the VEB to be an integrated part of the farm. However, buffers can be designed for existing farms as well. Any buffer is better than no buffer at all.



## WHY PLANT A VEB?

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A vegetative buffer is a cost-effective strategy to help address some of the major challenges facing poultry growers today:

- **Neighbor Relations.** As population grows in agricultural areas, the potential for neighbor complaints increases. Although there is no single solution to preventing neighbor problems, planting a VEB is a proactive step in the right direction. Healthy trees and shrubs function as filters, mitigating “nuisance” dust and “offensive” odors, while providing an effective visual screen.

- **Environmental Impact.** Air and water quality are of increasing concern to the poultry industry. A VEB improves environmental quality by reducing nutrient run-off, absorbing atmospheric ammonia, and capturing air-borne particulates.

- **Biosecurity.** Trees and shrubs planted around the perimeter of a poultry farm can help support the overall biosecurity of the operation. Buffer plantings may divert or block disease-causing agents carried by the wind and can also serve as a “living fence,” limiting unauthorized access.

Planting a buffer also can provide many other benefits, such as energy savings, improved production efficiency, and higher property value.

## PLANNING FOR A VEB

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To be effective, a vegetative buffer must be more than an afterthought. The best results come from careful planning.

Since every farm will present unique needs and limitations, a “one-plan-fits-all” approach is not possible. You are strongly encouraged to seek guidance in designing your buffer plan and selecting the best plants for your buffer.



## INSTALLATION & CARE

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You may install a VEB yourself, but it is important that you have the proper knowledge and time to complete the job in a satisfactory manner. For most growers, professional installation is the best option.

Irrigation and weed control will be the two most important care requirements for your buffer. Using driplines and emitters for irrigation and black plastic or landscape fabric for weed control is strongly recommended.