



# Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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## **Statement of Maryland Farm Bureau President Chuck Fry**

Annapolis, MD (February 23, 2015) – “Maryland Farm Bureau believes that Governor Hogan and his administration have created a practical program for using phosphorus on farmland that is based on scientific risk analysis. Our members appreciate how diligently the Governor has been working with the agriculture community on this strategy to improve Bay water quality while protecting the economic viability of farm businesses. We believe that the new administration is committed to creating a balance between farmers and the environment as the Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) is phased-in.”

“As President of the largest farm organization in Maryland, I am proud of the initiative our farmers have taken to address this issue. We have stepped up to help craft this sensible phase-in for the PMT that will reduce the amount of phosphorus applied to high-risk fields immediately. Over the next seven years, phosphorus use on cropland in the medium and low risk categories will be scaled back as the agronomic and economic impacts continue to be evaluated. We believe this is the best plan for our farmers and our Bay.”

“Critical to the implementation of the new phosphorus program is the development of alternative use or treatment technologies. Grain farmers desire the nitrogen, micro-nutrients and organic matter that has made poultry litter and livestock manures a premium fertilizer choice for decades. Poultry growers need an alternative use option if grain farmers reduce their use of the organic fertilizer under this program. We look forward to working with Governor Hogan and Legislative leaders to bring new technologies for alternative use to fruition in Maryland.”

“We know action must be taken by farmers so that we can continue to be leaders in conservation practices that protect the Bay. Our farmers have been ahead of schedule at every point in the Bay restoration progress evaluation. We have reduced phosphorus use tenfold over the last decade as science has evolved. With the adoption of the Hogan proposal, we will take the next step by targeting new action in the highest risk fields. We are confident that implementation of the phosphorus reduction strategy will allow farmers to use the vital nutrients plants need to grow as we work to feed a growing population.”

**CHUCK FRY**

President, Maryland Farm Bureau