



## CHESAPEAKE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### DIRECTIVE NO. 04-3

# Building New Partnerships and New Markets for Agricultural Animal Manure and Poultry Litter in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

*A*griculture is a significant source of nutrients entering the Chesapeake Bay, with animal manure and poultry litter contributing about half of the agricultural nutrient load. As animal operations become more concentrated and the acreage of cropland available for manure application is lost to development, the challenge of manure management will only intensify.

In 2004, the Chesapeake Bay Program held an Agricultural Summit to develop sustainable solutions for reducing nutrient pollution from animal manure and poultry litter in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Based on the recommendations developed at the Summit by a wide range of stakeholders, *we commit to the following objectives:*

#### **Reduce the Nutrient Content in Animal Manure and Poultry Litter by Adjusting Animal Diets**

Feed management is the single most promising and cost-effective approach for reducing excess manure nutrients. Feed management has achieved significant strides in reducing manure nutrients in the poultry industry, and reductions are occurring in the swine industry. Limited progress has been made in the dairy and cattle industries. We commit to working with the feed industry, the animal agriculture community, nutritionists, Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to promote feed management in all animal sectors, with a particular emphasis on dairy and cattle operations.

#### **Use Manure and Poultry Litter as a Fertilizer and Soil Amendment**

Creating markets for manure-based products can turn manure into a resource, rather than a waste product that is expensive to handle. We commit to promoting markets for using manure as fertilizers and soil amendments by encouraging its use on state and federal lands such as highway projects, university grounds, military bases, federal complexes, national parks and in the reclamation of abandoned mines. We intend to partner with manure product producers and their customers, including the departments of transportation, universities and other significant state and federal landowners to help build this new market.

#### **Demonstrate the Feasibility of Using Manure as an Energy Source in the Watershed**

We commit to promoting the initiation of bio-energy projects in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to assess the feasibility of using manure as an energy source. We will evaluate the benefits of bio-energy, the economics, and how issues such as potential air pollution problems and competition for manure sources can be addressed.

#### **Coordinate Manure Transport and Relocation Programs across the Watershed**

We will promote the transport of manure for the production or use of manure-based products, taking care not to transfer manure nutrient or animal disease problems to other parts of the watershed.

#### **Apply Latest Scientific Understanding toward Manure Management**

We will ensure that our manure management approaches reflect the latest generally accepted science.

#### **Develop Specific Actions to Achieve these Objectives**

We direct the Principals' Staff Committee to develop a strategy to implement the objectives of this Directive.