

Training workshops for On-Farm Poultry and Rabbit Processing Certification Workshops to be held in Clear Springs, Annapolis and Cambridge in March

ANNAPOLIS, MD (February 9, 2011) – To help farmers meet growing consumer demand for local meats, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) in partnership with the University of Maryland and Washington County Agriculture Marketing Department will conduct a training workshop for on-farm poultry and rabbit slaughter and processing. This workshop is part of a voluntary certification program to assist small poultry and rabbit operations to meet the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's approved source requirements to sell poultry and/or rabbit (off-farm) at farmers' markets or to restaurants and retailers in Maryland.

Workshop participants will learn to recognize diseases of public health concern, take basic biosecurity measures, write and implement basic Standard Sanitary Operating Procedures, develop Good Manufacturing Practices and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point plans, and properly dispose of offal and waste water.

To become certified for off-farm sales, producers must:

- complete the training;
- pass a brief test at the training;
- submit an application for certification along with a \$75 annual fee; and
- be inspected by MDA;
- MDA inspectors will conduct an inspection at least once per year to verify that producers are following food safety requirements.

Trainings will be held from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Registration check-in begins at 8:30 a.m.

- Tuesday, March 1, Clear Spring Town Hall, 146 Cumberland St, Clear Spring MD.
- Saturday, March 12, MDA, 50 Harry S Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD.
- Wednesday, March 16, Eastern Shore Hospital Center, 5262 Woods Rd., Cambridge, MD.

The training fee is \$20 which includes lunch and materials. To download a copy of the registration form, visit: www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/poultryrabbitwkshp.pdf. For questions, call Karen Fedor at 410-841-5773 or email: fedorkm@mda.state.md.us Space is limited, so register early.

To learn more about Maryland's Poultry and Rabbit Program, visit: www.mda.state.md.us/feed-food_safety-grading/food_qual_assur/poultry_rabbit/index.php.

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