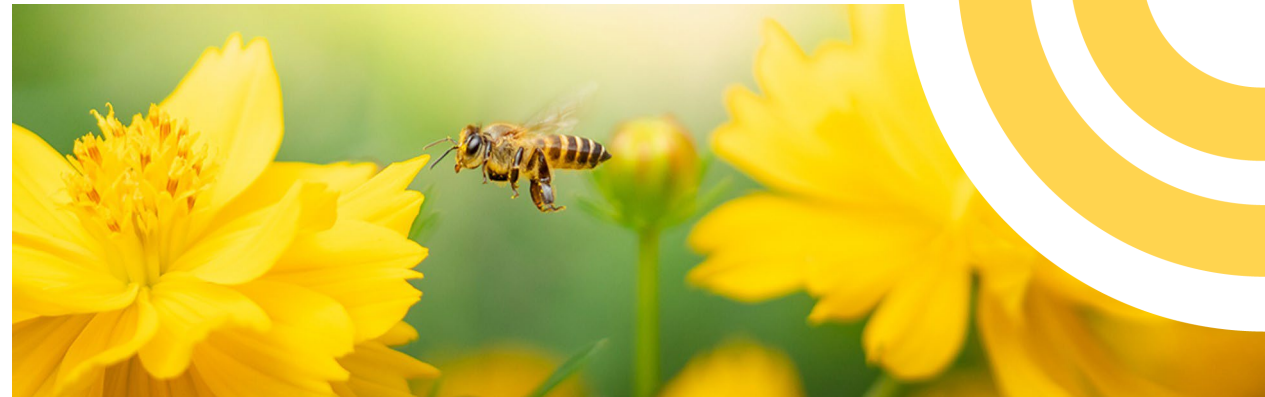




Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Emerging Conservation Issues

MD STAC – September 9, 2026

MARYLAND



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Poultry Operations Expected Resource Concerns



MARYLAND

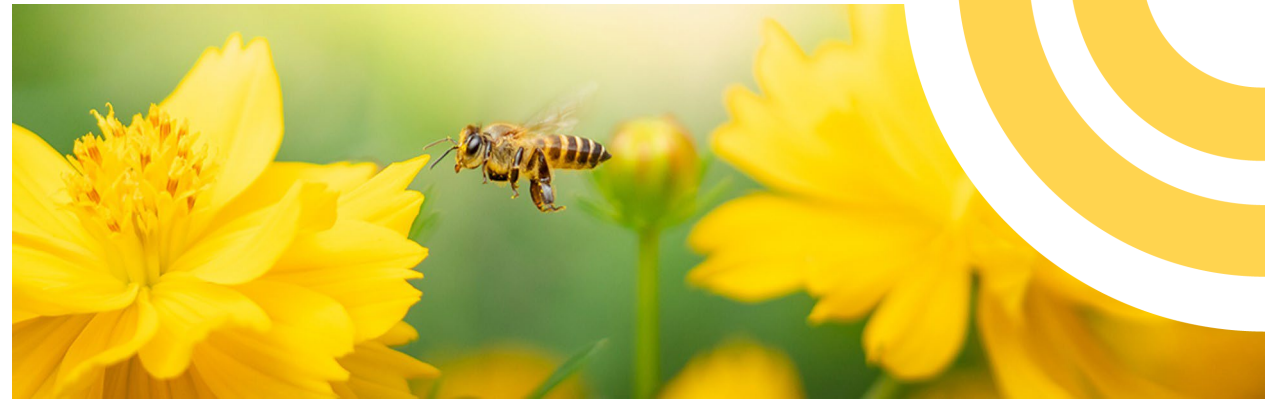
Expected Resource Concerns

- 2018 Farm Bill allowed for NRCS to address expected resource concerns
- What does this mean? Livestock expansion and/or new operations
- For livestock such as beef, dairy, goats, and sheep, Maryland can currently account for up to 25% expansion in sizing structures for waste management
- Poultry operations typically require conservation measures such as ag waste and heavy use pads prior to start of operation
- Should NRCS spend EQIP funds on expansion of poultry operations OR on new operations?



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

822 Implementation for Pastured Pigs – Nonruminant Livestock Outdoor Management of Vegetative Cover



MARYLAND

Background on 822 Practice

Nonruminant Livestock Outdoor Management of Vegetative Cover

- Why was it developed?
 - Support organic livestock production - outdoor access
 - Support increasing popularity of pastured or free range products
 - Conservation needs – a practice to help implement “pasture raised”
 - Prevent or treat RCs caused by destructive natural behaviors
 - Focus on keeping vegetative cover
 - Prevent erosion, nutrient & sediment loss
 - Filter nutrients & sediment
 - Uptake nutrients

What does 822 Cover

- Management of vegetative cover for non-ruminants
 - Chickens/Poultry
 - Swine
 - Horses - when not grazing for nutrition
- Applies when managing for cover NOT feed
 - These animals cannot meet nutritional needs from grazing
 - Chickens – 5 – 20% feed from pasture
 - Swine – usually 30% or less feed from pasture
 - Most other poultry



Issues with 822 Implementation for pastured pigs

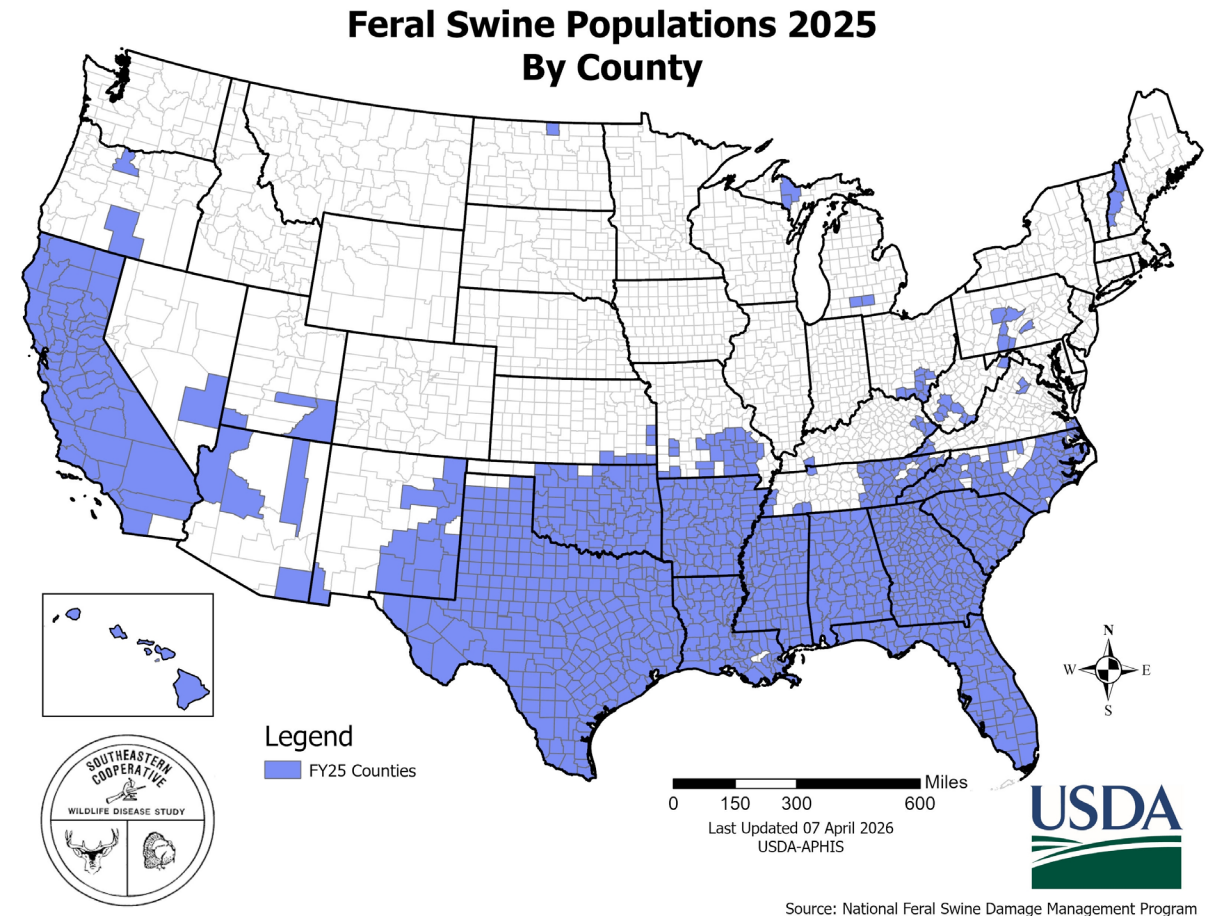
- Managing natural animal behaviors
 - Swine
 - Root
 - Wallow
- Containment on pasture concentrates destructive activities
 - Destroy Vegetative Cover
 - Erosion & compaction
 - Excess nutrients – build up & loss



Issues with 822 Implementation

- Concerns with feral hog potential
 - Feral swine can:
 - Destroy crops
 - Degrade natural ecosystems
 - Stunt forestry operations
 - Spread disease

- Currently no known breeding feral hogs in Maryland – exist in surrounding states



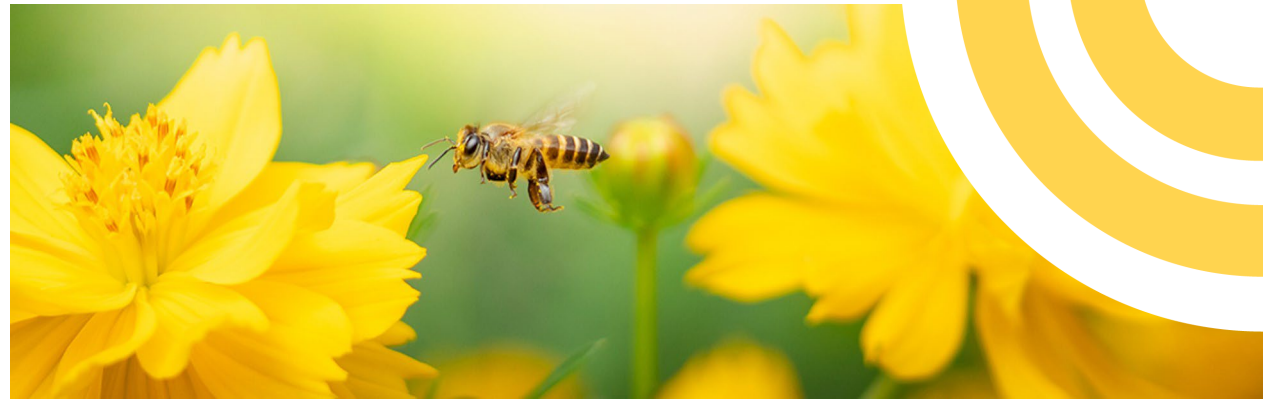
Options

- Do not work with pastured pig producers (No financial or technical Assistance)
 - Risk of feral hogs
 - Potential to cause resource concern too high
- Only offer technical assistance to pastured pig producers NOT financial assistance
- Only work with pastured pig producers that have a building that can hold pigs if pastures become too degraded
- Work with any pastured pig producers but require 75% cover to be maintained and ensure they have enough ground to ensure adequate cover
 - Ensure that pigs have appropriate fencing to keep them contained



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Saltwater Intrusion



MARYLAND

Saltwater Intrusion Affecting Croplands

- Many crop fields adjacent to tidal areas are experiencing salt affects
 - What can NRCS do to support these producers?
 - Wetland restoration - EQIP & CREP
 - Herbaceous plantings
 - Wetland restoration and easement – ACEP-WRE
 - *Cropland - \$6,071 per acre
 - *Woodland - \$3,426 per acre
- * FY2026 rates, subject to change



Saltwater Intrusion – NRCS Moving Forward

- Salt-tolerant plant germination studies
- Salt-tolerance studies for established plants
- Critical area planting evaluations
- Managing forests experiencing tree loss to reduce phragmites pressure and promote native marsh grasses

Other ideas?





Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Questions?



MARYLAND