

**Memorandum of Understanding
on Collaborative Efforts**

between the

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region III**

and the

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services



*VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE AND
CONSUMER SERVICES*



September 30, 2025

Memorandum of Understanding on Collaborative Efforts between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region III and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to formalize and foster strong relationships and collaboration between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS).

The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment. The mission of VDACS is to promote the economic growth and development of Virginia agriculture, provide consumer protection and encourage environmental stewardship. We share the goal of well-managed, sustainable farms that produce food for our communities and a clean environment for everyone to enjoy and we recognize the important role that farmers play in achieving this.

This MOU formalizes our partnership and expands our collaborative activities related to communication, education, outreach, training, regulatory program coordination, and funding of agricultural practices that benefit the environment. We amplify our commitment to carry out these activities and to engage the broader agricultural community in the pursuit of solutions for environmental protection and productive agriculture that move us forward towards achieving our shared goals.

II. Activities - EPA Region III and VDACS intend to work together to foster a strong relationship and collaborate in the following activities:

Enhance Communication and Coordination

- Convene annual meetings with EPA Region III and VDACS to communicate priorities and activities, share effective approaches, and identify opportunities to collaborate on issues pertaining to agriculture and the environment.
- Share updates throughout the year on relevant environmental and agricultural programs, policies, and activities to ensure communication and coordination on areas of common interest.
- VDACS intends to continue to support the Chesapeake Bay Program Agricultural Advisory Committee and provide resources as needed to Virginia representatives to the committee to allow them to best represent Virginia's agriculture industry.

Promote Educational Opportunities

- Host agriculture roundtables and educational farm tours to foster a dialogue between EPA Region III and the agricultural community on the successes, challenges, and

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opportunities to work together to achieve well-managed, productive farms and a clean environment.

- Participate in agricultural events such as State fairs, farm shows, and technical field days to expand open discussion between EPA Region III and the agricultural community.

Highlight Actions and Recognize Agricultural Environmental Stewardship

- Recognize environmental stewardship efforts that contribute to efficient farms, healthy soils, and clean air, land and water. Highlight these achievements to the broader agricultural community.
- Work cooperatively to develop approaches to measure and account for farmers' conservation efforts and the resulting environmental benefits.
- Ensure best management practices accurately capture environmental benefits in tools like the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model.
- Promote sustainable agriculture and environmental protection.
- Encourage and promote proper use of pesticides to protect workers and natural resources.

Amplify Funding Opportunities

- Increase awareness to funding that supports conservation efforts and environmental stewardship and promote practices that enhance resilience against environmental challenges.
- Showcase activities to support agricultural conservation practices and innovative approaches that will advance environmental protection.
- Promote sustainable agriculture and environmental public health protection.

Coordinate Regulatory Program Implementation

- Host joint trainings for the agricultural community to ensure effective implementation of Federal and State agricultural regulatory programs.
- VDACS intends to participate in program assessments that will identify best practices and opportunities for enhancing programs to protect and restore water quality.
- VDACS intends to work with EPA to identify tools and activities to further program compliance and participation and improve communication and support to the agricultural community.
- Advance Water Quality in Agricultural Watersheds focusing on improving water quality, particularly in critical areas like the Chesapeake Bay.

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III. Program Planning and Evaluation

EPA Region III and VDACS intend to collaborate on an annual accomplishment report to highlight collective achievements realized under this MOU and plans for the coming year.

IV. Authorities

EPA Region III's participation in this MOU is authorized by Section 102(J) of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. 4332(J); Section 23 of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. 136u; Sections 104(a) and (b) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1254(a) and (b); and Sections 103(a) and (g) of the Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7403(a) and (g).

V. Limitations

This MOU is a voluntary agreement that expresses the good-faith intentions of the EPA Region III and VDACS. It is not intended to be legally binding, does not create any contractual obligations, and is not enforceable by any signatory agency. Any commitments by EPA Region III and VDACS in this MOU are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Nothing in this MOU obligates EPA to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract, assistance agreement, interagency agreement, or incur other financial obligations that would be inconsistent with Agency budget priorities. Except as provided in an EPA assistance agreement, interagency agreement, or other separate agreement between the parties, VDACS agrees not to submit a claim for compensation for services rendered to EPA in connection with any activities it carries out in furtherance of this MOU. This MOU does not exempt VDACS from EPA policies governing competition for assistance agreements. Any transaction involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties to this MOU will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures under separate written agreements.

Nothing in this MOU constitutes an endorsement by any party of the activities, products or services of any party to this agreement, or any other party. The EPA seal, displayed on the cover page of this MOU, may only be used for official EPA purposes, including identifying EPA as a party to this MOU.

This MOU does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity, by persons who are not party to this agreement, against EPA or VDACS, their officers or employees, or any other person. This MOU does not apply to any person outside of EPA or VDACS. Should any provision of this agreement violate federal or state law, regulation, or agency policy, that provision shall be deemed null and void.

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VI. Commencement/Duration/Modification/Termination

This MOU will remain in effect for five years from the signing date. It may be extended or modified through the mutual written consent of the signatories. Either agency may terminate its participation in this MOU by providing written notice to the other agency 30 days in advance of the desired termination date.

VII. Approval

Representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services sign below on September 30, 2025 in recognition of our commitment to move forward with these collaborative efforts.

Signed:

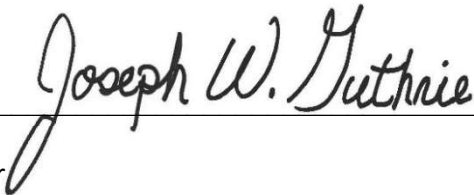
AMY VAN

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Digitally signed by AMY VAN
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Date: 2025.09.30 12:10:16 -04'00'

Regional Administrator

Environmental Protection Agency, Region III



Commissioner

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services