

## **Grain Farmers Get Tools to Boost Bottom Line**

### **Issue (Who cares and why?)**

The 2002 Farm Bill's Direct and Counter-Cyclical program could have an impact on the profitability of 6,000 Delaware grain farmers who are eligible to participate. This commodities program involves the amount of payments given to farmers for their crops by the federal government. Because decisions farmers make now will be binding for the next six years, their understanding the responsibilities and the economic benefits of enrolling in this program is critical.

### **What has been done?**

University of Delaware Cooperative Extension partnered with Delaware FSA/USDA to hold educational workshops throughout the state, giving farmers with the analytical skills necessary for them to evaluate options if enrolling in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical program. An Excel spreadsheet called "Farm Bill Calculator" also was created to help Delaware farmers determine their commodities payments based on acreage and yields.

### **Impact**

Programs reached 325 of Delaware's large grain farm owners and operators, making it the best-attended series of meetings conducted by the FSA in the last 20 years. The FSA/USDA has adopted Delaware's "Farm Bill Calculator" for its field employees to use when assisting farm operators. This spreadsheet is said to be saving "valuable time," resulting in more effective decision-making by farmers.

### **Funding**

Extension

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