



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Delaware

Conservation Fact Sheet

Poultry Freezers

About NRCS

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Delaware works to protect and conserve natural resources on private lands.

Electricity Cost Scenario:

Note: This example is based off of a typical scenario of Delaware farms; however, these are just for estimates as costs will vary depending on electricity supplier and season.

A poultry grower with 90,000 birds in a 49-day grow out cycle assuming an average mortality rate would need five* freezer units. Under these conditions, the estimated total energy cost per flock is \$102.

*Not all five freezers will be operating the entire grow-out cycle.

FREEZERS

Purpose

Freezers are a new practice in Delaware to be funded under NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Freezers are designed to store and hold dead birds on a farm until they can be transported off-farm and properly disposed.

Freezers provide multiple benefits associated with animal mortality disposal--water quality, labor-savings and more. Freezers benefit water quality because they remove the birds, and their associated nutrients, completely away from the farm to be disposed of in an resource-recovery site. Proper use of freezers provides a nearly odor-free area, provides protection from scavengers and minimizes pathogen survival and contamination.

Features of Freezers

Freezers are usually freestanding, self-contained refrigeration units designed to operate at temperatures between 10° and 20°F and accommodate up to 1,800 pounds of dead birds. Birds are added in a single layer to ensure all of the carcasses freeze properly. Loading and unloading is easily accomplished through a detachable top lid. The freezer unit never leaves the farm.



Single-sided poultry freezer storage unit on Sussex County farm.



Double-sided poultry freezer storage unit on Sussex County farm.



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Freezers: Maintenance and Financial Assistance

Historically Underserved

The 2014 Farm Bill continues to address the unique circumstances and concerns of farmers who are beginning (farming fewer than 10 years), have limited resources, or who are socially disadvantaged because they belong to racial or ethnic groups that have historically been subjected to prejudice. It offers incentives and focuses on equality in accessing USDA programs and services.

Additional benefits include (but are not limited to):

- Increased payments for the costs associated with planning and implementing conservation measures may be available for historically underserved farmers.
- Socially disadvantaged customers may be eligible for an advance payment up to 50 percent of anticipated costs to be incurred to purchase materials or services to implement a practice. The landowner must make a formal request, and if approved, must agree to complete project within 30 days.

Eligibility Criteria for Freezers through EQIP:

Applicant must be an eligible producer who is currently engaged in agricultural production on eligible land. More details are available online at www.de.nrcs.usda.gov.

Participant Responsibilities for Freezer Maintenance

- Participant is responsible for cost of collection and disposal service.
- Participant is responsible for maintenance costs and requirements during life span of the freezer according to the NRCS Operation & Maintenance (O&M) plan.

Financial Assistance

EQIP offers eligible growers a payment based on a typical scenario of labor and equipment/installation for the freezers. NRCS in Delaware offers approximately 75 percent of the cost of the practice through general EQIP and approximately 90 percent of the cost for Historically Underserved farmers. (See column to left for HU definition.) It is important to note that payments are based on the typical average estimated cost for the practice. Payments may not represent an individual's actual percentage of costs as costs vary depending on the selected contractor or other factors.

Your individual costs may be higher or less. Number of freezers required for an operation is based on the number of birds, type of birds and number of days in grow out cycle. Rates are subject to change yearly.



Collection service picks up birds to dispose of properly off-farm. Participant is responsible for the cost of this service.

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Freezers: Questions & Answers

Contact NRCS:

Delaware
USDA Service Centers

Kent County: 302-741-2600

New Castle County: 302-832-3100

Sussex County: 302-856-3990

(Select extension 3 for NRCS)

FREEZERS: Questions & Answers

Q1. Does NRCS offer a one-time or multi-year practice payment for freezers?

A1. One time payment.

Q2. What is the electricity cost? **A2.** Freezer units work off energy efficient circuit boxes with an estimated operating cost of about \$.85 -1.50/per unit per day depending on local electric rates. See 'Electricity Cost Scenario' on page 1 for more details.

Q3. What is the life span? **A3.** EQIP policy requires the practice (freezers) be maintained for 15 years.

Q4. Who is eligible for a freezer? **A4.** New poultry growers, those expanding* and existing growers without a composteer within lifespan. *For those expanding, freezers are only sized for new houses.

Q5. How large are freezers and how many birds do they store? **A5.** Freezers are 40 cubic feet and storage depends on weight of birds; one can typically accommodate up to 1,800 lbs of dead birds.

Q6. Where can you get a freezer? **A6.** Any source providing freezers that meet NRCS standards/specifications.

Q7. Is there a cap of the number of freezers NRCS can offer FA on? **A7.** At this time NRCS in Delaware does not have caps on freezers.

More Information...

Contact your local USDA Service Center to speak to one of our conservation professionals to begin the program application process.

Information and application forms are available on our website at www.de.nrcs.usda.gov.

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