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Wilker Family Farms **Draft Permit to Operate**

Wilker Family Farms is located in Auglaize County, St. Marys Township, at 05087 County Road 33A, St. Marys, Ohio 45885. Owned and operated by Doug and Shelly Wilker, the facility is in the St. Marys River watershed.

This draft Permit to Operate (PTO) is a renewal application for the Permit to Operate that was issued by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) in 2006 and was valid for five years. The Permit to Operate would also be valid for a five-year period, at which time the owners would be required to apply for another renewal.

This existing high-rise chicken house has a design capacity of 210,000 pullets, which will remain the same under the draft Permit to Operate.

A comprehensive Manure Management Plan is included in the draft Permit to Operate, which also outlines inspections and monitoring that must be completed by the facility. The storage pit below the birds has a two-year capacity of nearly 2,400 tons of solid manure. There is also a separate building that has a capacity of about 400 tons of manure, or about six months of storage. Manure is removed from the housing barn between flocks every 16 weeks.

An Insect and Rodent Control plan is also required in the PTO to minimize the presence and negative effects of insects and rodents.

A Mortality Management Plan is required for the disposal of dead livestock. Approved methods of disposal are burying, landfilling, burning, rendering and composting. This facility utilizes on-site mortality composting as their primary method of disposal. The composted material is land applied to nearby crop land to recycle nutrients.

An Emergency Response Plan is also required to ensure that accidents or emergencies are handled quickly and efficiently to maintain the safety of the environment, wildlife and water supplies and resources.

Finally, an Operating Record is contained in the draft PTO that includes all forms and information that must be maintained by the facility to show compliance with ODA's rules and the permit. These records include inspection of the manure storage structures, groundwater monitoring, manure characterization, land application, insect and rodent control, distribution and utilization of manure, and mortality management. These records are inspected by the department a minimum of twice annually.

