

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
AIR AND RADIATION ADMINISTRATION**

**NOTICE OF TENTATIVE DETERMINATION, OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST
A PUBLIC HEARING, AND OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS**

FIRST NOTICE

The Department of the Environment, Air and Radiation Administration (ARA) has completed its review of an application for a Permit to Construct submitted by Mountaire Farms of Delaware, Inc. on May 1, 2024 for the Preston Grain Facility located at 3695 Choptank Road, Preston, MD 21655 in Caroline County.

Pursuant to Section 1-604, of the Environment Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, the Department has made a tentative determination that the Permit to Construct can be issued and is now ready to receive public comment on the application. Copies of the Department's tentative determination, the application, the draft permit to construct with conditions, and other supporting documents are available for public inspection on the Department's website. Look for Docket #05-24 at the following link:

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Permits/AirManagementPermits/Pages/index.aspx>

In accordance with HB 1200/Ch. 588 of 2022, the applicant provided an environmental justice (EJ) Score for the census tract in which the project is located using the MDE EJ Screening Tool. The EJ Score, expressed as a statewide percentile, was shown to be 35, which the Department has verified. This score considers three demographic indicators, minority population above 50%, poverty rate above 25% and limited English proficiency above 15%, to identify underserved communities, and multiple environmental health indicators to identify overburdened communities. The Department's review of the environmental and socioeconomic indicators contributing to that EJ score is included in the tentative determination that is available for public inspection.

Interested persons may request a public hearing and/or submit written comments on the tentative determination. Requests for a public hearing must be submitted in writing and must be received by the Department no later than 20 days from the date of this notice. A requested public hearing will be held virtually using teleconference or internet-based conferencing technology unless a specific request for an in-person public hearing is received. Written comments must be received by the Department no later than 30 days from the date of this notice.

Interested persons may request an extension to the public comment period. The extension request must be submitted in writing and must be received by the Department no later than 30 days from the date of this notice or within 5 days after the hearing (if a hearing is requested), whichever is later. The public comment period may only be extended one time for a 60-day period.

All requests for a public hearing, requests for an extension to the public comment period, and all written comments should be directed to the attention of Ms. Shannon Heafey, Air Quality Permits Program by email to shannon.heafey@maryland.gov or by mail to the Air and Radiation Administration, 1800 Washington Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21230.

Further information may be obtained by calling Ms. Shannon Heafey at 410-537-4433.

Christopher R. Hoagland, Director
Air and Radiation Administration