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News Release

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Regional Foundations Support Warwick Farmers' Water Quality Improvement Efforts

Warwick, Pa. (January 22, 2007) – A coalition of foundations today announced a \$225,000 commitment to Warwick Township farmers for putting in place best management practices that will help improve the water quality of Lancaster County's streams.

The grant, provided over the next three years to the Lancaster County Conservation District by the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, will help Warwick Township's agricultural community develop and implement conservation plans for all of the farmers in the township. When implemented, the plans will reduce the amount of nutrients and sediments flowing into the local streams and the Susquehanna River.

"Warwick Township is taking a leadership role among the region's local governments by making environmental partnerships with its agricultural community a priority," said Keith Campbell, President of the Annapolis-based Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment. "This is the kind of innovative work needed to sustain a vibrant agricultural community, while improving the health of our local environment at the same time."

"For generations, Warwick farmers have a long tradition of being stewards of Lancaster County's lands," said Warwick Township Manager Daniel Zimmerman. "With this infusion of funds from the foundation community, we are promoting and assisting them to become greater stewards of our local water resources as well."

Funding will be used to help farmers update and implement conservation plans that will improve water quality, ultimately providing economic benefits to farmers.

"Innovative programs such as this one are critical to elevating farmer participation to a large enough level where they can have an impact on the state's waters," said Lancaster County Conservation District Administrator Don McNutt.

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Chesapeake Bay Funders Network Agriculture Work Group

Agua Fund, Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment, The Chesapeake Bay Trust, Edith and Curtis Munson Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Town Creek Foundation, Wallace Genetic Foundation and the Western PA Watershed Protection Program

The Warwick Township pilot project is one of three agricultural community-based partnerships launched in 2006 by the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network. The partnerships promote the effective use of conservation practices to reduce excess nutrients in surface and ground water, in a regional effort to improve the health of local waters and the Chesapeake Bay.

The Lancaster-area collaboration is supported by the Township of Warwick, the Lancaster County Conservation District, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pennsylvania Cooperative Extension, private consultants and the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network.

The Chesapeake Bay Funders Network's Agriculture Initiative brings together grantmakers to leverage philanthropic funding with existing resources to promote healthy local waters and sustainable agricultural communities. The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and Center for Agricultural Partnerships coordinate the CBFN agricultural initiative.

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