

Delaware

The First State



Flag:

Adopted on July 24, 1913, the Delaware state flag has a background of colonial blue surrounding a diamond of buff color in which the coat of arms of the state is placed. Below the diamond are the words

"December 7, 1787," indicating the day on which Delaware was the first state to ratify the United States constitution. Because of this action, Delaware became the first state in the Union, and is, therefore, accorded the first position in such national events as presidential inaugurations. According to members of the original commission established to design the flag, the shades of buff and colonial blue represent those of the uniform of General George Washington. Inside the diamond, the flag recognizes the importance of commerce {the ship} and agriculture {wheat, corn, the ox and the farmer} to the state. Tribute is also paid to the revolutionary war soldiers. The words in the ribbon banner read Liberty and Independence.



Delaware (The First State - 23 May 2002)

Nobody quite knows where the modern-day Delaware's Blue Hen

State comes from. It was first recorded in the early 1800s, and may be an allusion to a "blue hen chicken", a term meaning a "quick-tempered and fiery person", possibly deriving from the fact that Delaware soldiers took "Blue Hen Cocks" with them as entertainment in the form of cock fights. In the 16th century, the Spanish introduced peaches into the state, and a hundred years later the state was almost overrun with them, leading to the nickname **The Peach State** (which in turn led the state to adopt the Peach Blossom as the state flower in 1895). It also once had the nickname **New Sweden**, after the name of the original Swedish settlement of "Nye Sverige", founded in 1638. And its small size gave it the nickname of **Uncle Sam's Pocket Handkerchief**, or more recently, **Small Wonder**. The state also had two other common nicknames - **The Diamond State** (because of its small size) and the semi-official name (as it appears on licence plates), **The First State** (being the

first to be admitted to the Union in 1787). In 2002, the state formally adopted ***The First State*** as its official nickname after a group of elementary school children approached the majority leader of the House and asked for help in getting the unofficial nickname made official.

Economy:

Agriculture: Poultry, nursery stock, soybeans, dairy products, corn.

Industry: Chemical products, food processing, paper products, rubber and plastic products, scientific instruments, printing and publishing.