

CAPE MAY COUNTY

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

WHAT IS FARMLAND PRESERVATION?

Farms or development easements that are acquired through the Farmland

Preservation Program will forever be protected for agricultural use. Landowners who have sold their development rights still can sell their land at

any time. Deed restrictions prohibiting non-agricultural development run with the land, so future owners of preserved farms also would be required to comply with the deed restrictions.

The sale of development rights does not make farmland public property. The public has no right to access or use a deed-restricted farm without the landowner's consent.

For farm landowners, participation in the Farmland

Preservation Program means a stronger land base to support New Jersey's

agricultural industry, the satisfaction of knowing their land will forever be preserved as farmland, and access to the resources that can help them achieve their personal and financial goals.

For all of us, farmland preservation is an important part of keeping New Jersey green and prosperous. Preserved farmland limits urban sprawl, protects our water and soils, provides us with an abundance of locally grown farm products and maintains our connection to the land and the longstanding agricultural traditions that earned our reputation as the Garden State.



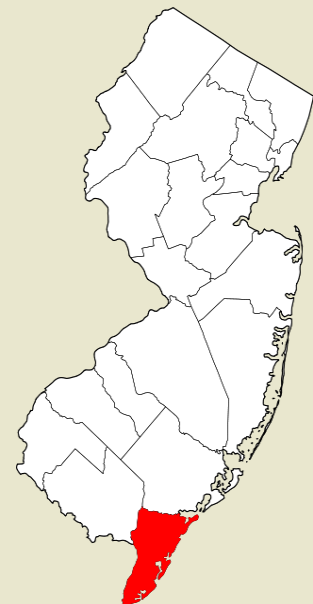
CAPE MAY COUNTY FARMLAND OVERVIEW:

TO DATE CAPE MAY COUNTY HAS PURCHASED

59 FARM LAND DEVELOPMENT EASEMENTS

A TOTAL 3,150 ACRES OF FARMLAND

AT A COST OF APPROXIMATELY 34 MILLION DOLLARS



APPLICATION PROCESS

(12-24 month process)

- Landowner files application with the Cape May County Agriculture Development Board
- County staff reviews application, conducts a site visit and if the application meet eligibility, it is presented to the CADB for consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting. Applicants are encouraged to attend to answer questions and present any further information.
- If the Board gives preliminary approval, an application will be made for funding from the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) to offset County farmland preservation funds. The SADC provides counties with grants to fund 60-80 percent of the costs of purchasing developments rights on approved farms.
- Once state approval is obtained, the CADB has two independent appraisals conducted and the value is certified by the SADC.
- An offer is made to the landowner by the County, based on the SADC's certified value.
- The landowner either accepts or denies the offer. If accepted, an "Agreement of Sale /letter of commitment" is signed by the landowner.
- Final Approval is obtained from the SADC and county preservation funds are set aside for the project.
- County conducts title work, property survey and a formal "Deed of Easement" is prepared.
- A closing date is scheduled where documents are signed and landowner receives payment.

What is a "Development Easement"?

Landowners who want to continue farming their land can sell their development rights, also known as Development Easements. When landowners sell development easements, they still own their land but sell the rights to develop it for anything other than agriculture. They agree to permanent deed restrictions that allow only agricultural use.

Those deed restrictions remain in force for any future owners.

<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/farmpreserve/>

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