



# NEWS

---

For Immediate Release: August 11, 2004  
Contact: Lynne Richmond (609) 292-8896

## **Agriculture Secretary Announces Preservation of 400+ Acres in Upper Freehold**

(UPPER FREEHOLD TWP.) -- Agriculture Secretary Charles M. Kuperus today announced that the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) will purchase the development rights to permanently preserve 418 acres of Reed Sod Farms in Upper Freehold Township.

“Preserving farms such as the Reed Sod Farm reflects our ongoing commitment to protecting open space and ensuring New Jersey’s agriculture industry remains vibrant and strong,” said Governor James E. McGreevey. “Farmland preservation is an important investment in our economy, our farming industry and the overall quality of life for all New Jerseyans. By preserving the Reed Sod Farm, we also are helping to maintain an agricultural heritage that makes our state proud.”

McGreevey has made farmland preservation a priority since first taking office in 2002. He has overseen the permanent preservation of 515 farms made up of 40,396 acres. Twenty thousand acres were preserved last year alone.

Reed Sod Farms is owned and operated by Carole and Stuart Reed Jr. and their three children. The farm sells approximately 250 acres of sod annually. The SADC expects to complete purchase of the development rights on the Reed farm later this summer.

“More farmland has been preserved in Upper Freehold Township -- 6,350 acres -- than in any other municipality in the state,” said Secretary Kuperus, who chairs the SADC. “We are pleased to add the Reeds’ 418 acres of farmland to that total, which will help ensure a stronger future for agriculture and protect the rural character of this region.”

Kuperus noted the Reed farmland will be preserved through a partnership effort. Delaware & Raritan Greenway, central New Jersey’s regional land trust, spearheaded efforts to preserve the farm. Monmouth County and Upper Freehold Township also are partnering in the preservation of the farm.

“The preservation transaction announced today is the latest for the Reed family, who have been preserving their farmland since 1995,” according to Linda Mead, executive director of D&R Greenway. “In addition to maintaining the agricultural heritage of Upper Freehold Township, these beautiful open fields also create protective greenbelts around the region’s Revolutionary-era boroughs and villages, helping to maintain their historic character for the enjoyment of future generations.”

“This is a very meaningful cooperative effort by the state, county and municipality to preserve a magnificent resource for all the residents of Monmouth County,” said Deputy Freeholder Director Ted Narozanick. “In 2004, Monmouth County expects to preserve a total of nearly 800 acres of farmland that county residents will be able to appreciate for generations to come.”

(MORE)

“This is a great example of how, with the cooperation of all levels of government, we can achieve our mutual goals,” said Mayor John Mele. “Government needs to be flexible and creative if we wish to continue our efforts to maintain a livable community, and provide the ability for the agricultural industry to prosper. Upper Freehold Township has made a commitment to the industry, and we are proud and excited to include this property in our farmland program.”

The SADC administers the state Farmland Preservation Program. To date, 1,151 farms covering 127,306 acres have been permanently preserved statewide. A total of 79 farms covering 8,774 acres have been preserved in Monmouth County.

###