



NEWS

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Contact: Hope Gruzlovic (609) 984-2504
(609) 306-0322 cell

Christie Administration Announces Approval of \$79.5M for Farmland Preservation Projects Statewide

TRENTON – The Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT) today approved a request for \$79.5 million to help counties, towns and nonprofit organizations preserve farmland across New Jersey and to further State-initiated farmland preservation efforts, Agriculture Secretary Douglas H. Fisher announced.

“Farmland is the foundation for agriculture and for so many of the benefits our farms have to offer us – everything from opportunities to enjoy fresh, local produce and farm experiences, to rural and open landscapes that keep our communities green and growing,” said Secretary Fisher. “This funding will enable New Jersey to continue our partnership efforts to preserve productive farmland and ensure agriculture remains a vital part of the Garden State for all time.”

The State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), which administers New Jersey’s Farmland Preservation Program, made the request that includes the following funding breakdown:

- \$38.5 million in grants to assist counties in preserving farmland under the County Planning Incentive Grant Program. A participating county can be eligible for a base grant of up to \$1 million under this program. A county that spends down its base grant is eligible to compete for additional monies from a \$25 million competitive grant fund while it lasts; the potential maximum county grant under this program is \$6 million.
- \$16.25 million in grants to help 31 municipalities preserve farms under the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program. Three towns participating in the program for the first time are eligible for \$750,000 each, while the remaining municipalities are eligible for \$500,000 each.

- \$20.64 million for the SADC to directly preserve farms statewide under its State Acquisition Program; and
- \$4.1 million in grants to assist four nonprofit organizations in preserving farmland under the Nonprofit Program.

The request will be forwarded to the Legislature for approval of appropriation bills, which must be signed by the Governor. All actions will take effect at the expiration of the statutory period for the Governor's review and consideration of the meeting minutes.

"New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program is critical to supporting our agriculture industry and way of life here in the Garden State," said Tom Gilbert, chairman of NJ Keep It Green. "This funding, made possible by the 2009 bond referendum, will continue the State's strong commitment to preserving family farms to protect our quality of life and provide local, Jersey Fresh food for decades to come."

The SADC administers New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program, directly preserving farmland and providing grants to counties, municipalities and nonprofits to assist them in preserving farmland. To date, more than 2,100 farms covering more than 200,000 acres have been preserved statewide under the program.

For listings of eligible county, municipal and nonprofit grant recipients, visit:
<http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/news/press/2012/>.

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