



**NEW JERSEY
FARMLAND
PRESERVATION
PROGRAM**



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CERES

A newsletter for owners of preserved farmland in New Jersey

Conservation, Economic Resources and Stewardship

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Welcome to CERES!

More than 2,400 farms covering approximately 225,000 acres have been preserved to date under the State Farmland Preservation Program.

Many landowners – particularly those who have inherited or purchased a preserved farm – have stewardship-related questions about how the deed restrictions apply to their specific plans for the land.

Others may need help in dealing with conservation concerns, including finding cost-share funding for certain projects, or in locating other helpful economic resources.



The State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) administers New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program in cooperation with the 18

County Agriculture Development Boards and our other partners.

This newsletter is aimed at providing a direct communication link between owners of preserved farms and the State Farmland Preservation Program.

The newsletter is named after Ceres, the Roman goddess of agriculture who is depicted holding the cornucopia in the N.J. Department of Agriculture seal at left.

Our goal is to keep you apprised of what's happening, address common questions, and assist you and other preserved farm owners.

New Grants Available for Deer Fencing on Preserved Farms

The SADC is offering a new program to provide cost-sharing grants to farmers to assist with installing deer fencing on permanently preserved farms.

The SADC will provide 50 percent matching grants to qualifying established farmers for the cost of fencing materials and installation. The farmer must be an

owner-operator of the farm, or be an immediate family member of the owner-operator of a family farm, in order to qualify.

Maximum grant awards are \$200 per acre of preserved farmland owned or \$20,000 total. The SADC will make at least \$500,000 available for the program.

Applications will be ranked and prioritized for funding based on criteria including deer density per square mile, crop type to be fenced, hunting status on the farm and adjacent properties, and farmer military status.

The ranking system awards additional points to applications from military veteran farmers — those

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**we can
help**

SADC Offers Conservation Assistance

Conservation planning helps landowners conserve soil and water resources that support farm viability.

The deed of easement requires all preserved farms to have a farm conservation plan, which is a customized document that details the management practices that are necessary and practical to protect natural resources and enhance agricultural productivity on your farm.

The SADC recently hired a Resource Conservationist, Dave Clapp, who is working with landowners to plan for conservation and where necessary help them address natural resource concerns — such as erosion or pasture management — on farms that are preserved or are applicants for preservation.

Having worked closely with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Dave is well equipped to help landowners identify and enroll in Farm Bill conservation programs and other financial assistance programs that provide cost-share funding for necessary projects.

For example, Dave has acted as a liaison between landowners and the NRCS in helping to obtain cost-share funding for livestock watering and fencing, the installation of irrigation systems and other needed projects.

Dave works with landowners to find common-sense conservation approaches to meet their needs.



Dave Clapp assists with conservation-related issues on preserved farms.

County Agriculture Development Boards (CADBs) or nonprofits that are working with landowners regarding conservation-related issues on farms that they preserved may also contact Dave for advice and assistance.

Deer Fencing Grants

(Continued from Page One)

who served at any time since September 11, 2001 and were honorably discharged and released — to support veterans who are transitioning to careers in agriculture.

Funding for the program will come from a portion of the SADC's State farmland preservation monies allocated to promoting stewardship activities on preserved farmland.

Funding for the program is subject to appropriation by the Legislature.

An application form and the SADC's deer fencing policy, including more detailed eligibility and ranking criteria, are available on the

SADC's website at www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc. Applications must be received by the SADC by March 23, 2017.



Matching grants will help farmers install deer fencing on preserved farms. (Photo by Tom Pagliaroli)

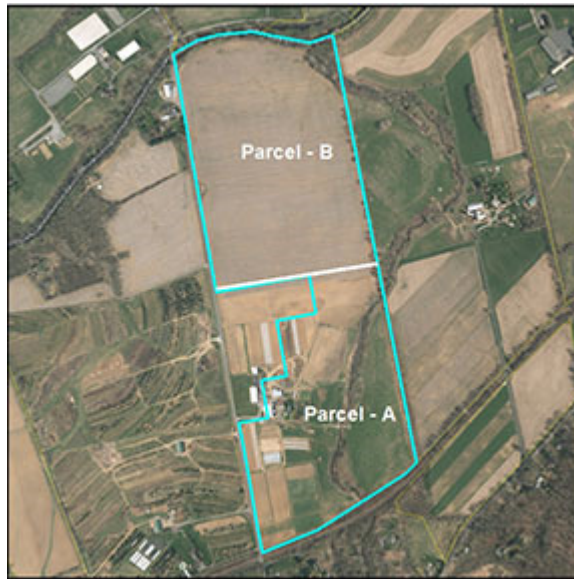
Dividing Preserved Farmland: Important Information

Although your preserved farm may consist of multiple tax lots, the farmland preservation deed of easement treats them as one preserved premises. This includes noncontiguous parcels preserved as one farm.

After the farm has been preserved, the deed of easement prohibits the landowner from dividing, transferring or conveying any portion of the property — even individual parcels — to other owners without first applying for and obtaining written approval of the SADC and the easement holder.

The easement holder is the agency or organization that preserved your farm, which may be a County Agriculture Development Board or a nonprofit in addition to the SADC.

In order to obtain approval to divide the premises, your application will be evaluated to ensure it satisfactorily demonstrates that the



Dividing a preserved farm into separate parcels for sale or other purposes requires prior approval.

division meets two tests. First, the proposed division must be for an agricultural purpose, such as expanding or diversifying the farm operation.

Secondly, each newly created farm must have sufficient agricultural resource value (e.g., soil quality, tillable land, size) to support a variety of agricultural operations into

the future. This is known as the agricultural viability test.

It generally takes an average of 60 days, from the time you file a request that meets these tests, to receive necessary approvals to divide the premises. SADC staff will work with you to make the application process as smooth as possible.

For more information, check out the SADC's Division of the Premises fact sheets at www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/publications/guidance.html

What Other Activities Need Prior Approval?

The following activities also require prior SADC approval:

- * Relocate a house;
- * Construct a new house exercising a Residual Dwelling Site Opportunity (granted to certain farms at time of preservation);

- * Create new agricultural labor housing;
- * Install solar, wind or biomass energy generation equipment on the preserved premises or on an exception area; or
- * Install a cell tower on the farm — whether on the preserved premises or an

exception area (requires a permit).

If you plan to undertake any of these activities or have questions, contact the easement holder.



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www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/

NJ Land Link Locates Land, Opportunities

NJ Land Link is an interactive website that connects farmers who are seeking land or farming opportunities with those who have farmland or business opportunities available.

The website, www.njlandlink.org, was developed by the SADC and the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey (NOFA-NJ) through a U.S. Department of Agriculture Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program grant. Rutgers University designed the website.

Farmers interested in land or partnership/job

opportunities, as well as those wanting to advertise land and opportunities that they have available, can sign up on the website.

Once registered, users can create and independently manage their own listings.

Anyone can respond to a listing as long as they register, and responses are automatically directed to the listing creator.

Farmers seeking farmland can view a wide range of important property-specific details provided by the landowner, including information related to soils, water resources, housing, buildings and equipment

available, and lease or sale terms, as well as photos.

Each listing also includes a map view that enables users to toggle between street map, satellite and hybrid views of a property.

By placing land availability and other important information at farmers' fingertips, NJ Land Link is certain to be a valuable resource for anyone in the business of farming.

Questions about any of the articles in this newsletter or another topic? Contact the SADC at (609) 984-2504 or sadc@ag.state.nj.us.