

ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021

New Jersey
State Agriculture
Development Committee



Cover photo: Sunflowers—Johnson's Locust Hall Farm



New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee

ANNUAL REPORT

FY2020 & 2021

Philip D. Murphy
Governor



Sheila Y. Oliver
Lieutenant Governor

State Agriculture Development Committee

Members during FY2020

Secretary of Agriculture, Chairman SADC

Douglas H. Fisher

Ex-Officio Members

Ralph Seigel represented, Elizabeth Maher Muoio, *State Treasurer*
Cecile Murphy & Renee Jones represented, Catherine R. McCabe, Commissioner,
Department of Environmental Protection
Gina Fischetti represented, Sheila Y. Oliver, Commissioner, *Department of Community Affairs*
Brian Schilling represented, Robert M. Goodman, Executive Dean,
Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences

Farmer Members

Jane Brodhecker (term ended 1.09.20)
Alan A. Danser (term ended 1.09.20)
Martin Bullock
Richard Norz
Peter Johnson
Scott Ellis
Roger Kumpel, Alternate Farmer Member

Public Members

James R. Waltman
Denis C. Germano, Esq.

Executive Director

Susan E. Payne

Philip D. Murphy
Governor



Sheila Y. Oliver
Lieutenant Governor

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Gina Fischetti represented, Sheila Y. Oliver, Commissioner, *Department of Community Affairs*
Brian Schilling represented, Laura Lawson, Interim Executive Dean,
Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences

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Executive Director

Susan E. Payne



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INTRODUCTION

The past two years have brought New Jersey farmers unprecedented challenges as operations adjusted under the weight of the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, New Jersey residents showed an increased demand for local food, rural landscapes, and appreciation for farms in their communities. New Jersey farmers face new and evolving challenges, from highly destabilized market chains to more volatile weather patterns associated with climate change. The task before us is to protect the best of New Jersey's farmland and support farmers in sustaining the viability of their agricultural operations over the long term.

The State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC) quickly adapted to remote work as staff was already well equipped with the technology needed to function efficiently without delay despite restrictions. The SADC conducted monthly public meetings and assisted preservation partners and landowners with remote processing of land preservation, conservation grants applications, and real estate closings. In addition, the SADC held an online training program for municipal officials, coordinated agricultural mediation sessions, and moved to a new office building with little operational disruption.

New Jersey's farmland preservation program was honored with a #1 ranking in the nation by The American Farmland Trust (AFT) in its multi-year study on farmland loss across the United States. The report "Farms Under Threat, The State of the States" recognized New Jersey for effectively implementing policies and programs to stem the loss of farmland.

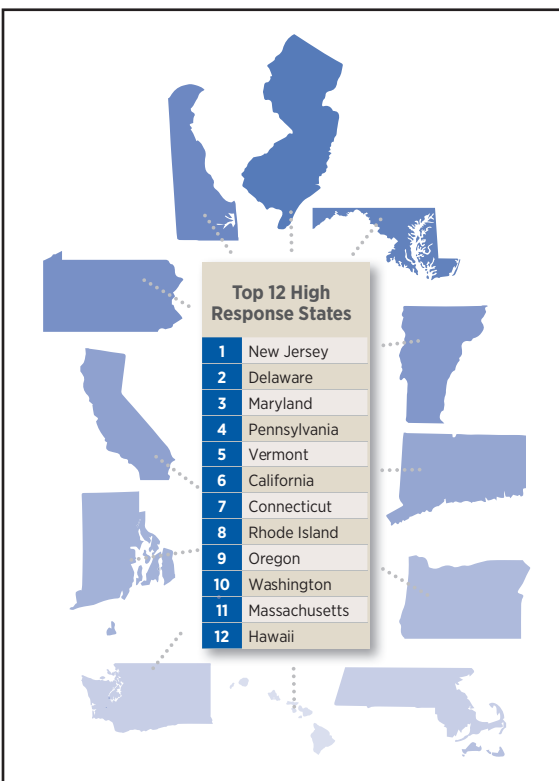
The SADC continues to protect New Jersey's irreplaceable farmland and meet the continually changing needs of the agricultural industry. Together with the invaluable partnerships with County, Municipal, and Nonprofit preservation partners, the SADC is proud to serve and support New Jersey's agricultural community and the residents who rely on access to local farms and food.

NEW JERSEY RANKED BEST IN NATION!

**FARMS UNDER THREAT:
THE STATE OF THE STATES**



Image courtesy of American Farmland Trust



In June 2020, American Farmland Trust (AFT) finalized a multi-year study on farmland loss across the nation titled “Farms Under Threat: The State of the States,” concluding that New Jersey ranks first for implementing policies and programs to stem the loss of farmland. However, New Jersey ranked 3rd among states with the most threatened agricultural land (Texas is #1 and North Carolina #2), evidencing the continued need to maintain and improve the Farmland Preservation Program here in New Jersey.

AFT is the only national nonprofit agency whose focus is exclusively on preserving and protecting America’s farmland resources. According to the report, 11 million acres of America’s agricultural land were developed or converted to uses that threaten farming between 2001 and 2016 – an area equal to all the United State’s farmland devoted to fruit, nut, and vegetable production combined.

The report’s Agricultural Land Protection Scorecard is the first-ever state-by-state analysis of policies that respond to the development threats to farmland and ranchland, showing that

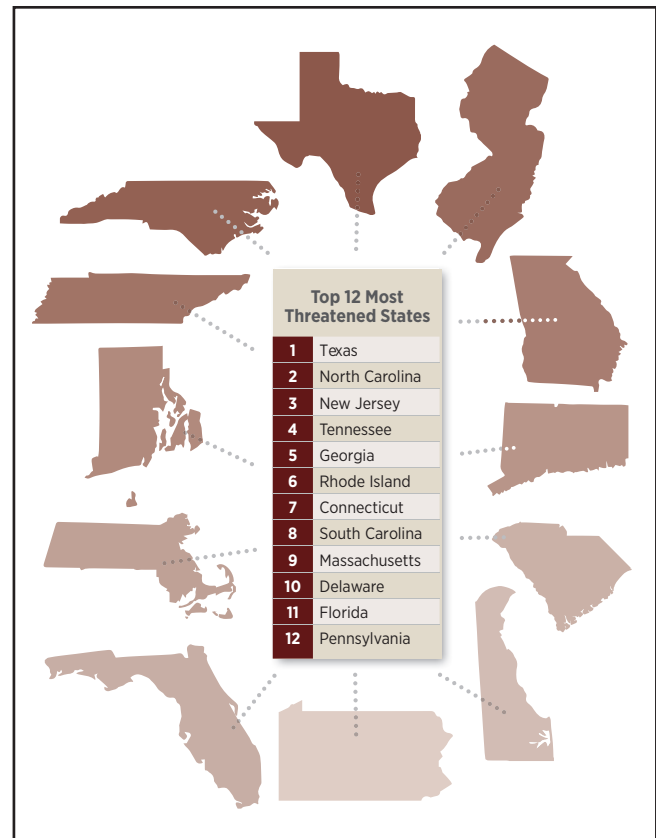
every State can “and must” do more to protect their irreplaceable agricultural resources. The Agricultural Land Protection Scorecard analyzes six programs and policies that are key to securing a sufficient and suitable agricultural land base in each State and highlights states’ efforts to retain agricultural land for future generations.

New Jersey earned the top spot in the ranking due first and foremost to its long and impressive record of preserving farmland under the State’s Farmland Preservation program administered by the SADC. The study found that coordination between state and local governments is essential in creating and implementing successful programs to permanently protect farmland, support agricultural viability, and provide access to farmland now and for future generations to come.

New Jersey earns high scores for policy tools, including:

- Requiring counties and municipalities adopt comprehensive farmland preservation plans to receive state funding
- The creation of Agricultural Development Areas that encourage New Jersey counties to protect and support farms that form large contiguous areas of protected farmland
- New Jersey’s Farmland Assessment law enabling farmland owners to pay property taxes based on a farm’s agricultural value instead of its development value
- New Jersey’s efforts to give farmers access to state-owned farmland through agricultural leases
- New Jersey’s “Land Link” program – a web-based tool that helps farmers looking to find new properties to farm and landowners seeking farmers – to connect and create new farming opportunities

The SADC is proud that AFT recognized New Jersey as a leader in the nation for thinking ahead and working smart to create the best environment to support the preservation of farmland and the agricultural industry. This accomplishment would not have been possible without the strong commitment of everyone involved – from State, county, and municipal governments and our nonprofit partners, to farmers and farmland owners, and of course, ultimately to the voters of New Jersey who have consistently supported farmland preservation.



To view the full report - AFT Farms Under Threat Study <https://farmlandinfo.org/publications/farms-under-threat-the-state-of-the-states/>



Farmland Preservation Totals

At Fiscal Year's End:

**2,725
FARMS**

241,490 ACRES

Permanently preserved
since the inception of the
program

FY20-21



Photo by Kelly Doyle

**101 6,244
FARMS ACRES**

Cairone Farm, Franklin Township, Gloucester County

Photo by Stefanie Miller

AGRICULTURAL RETENTION

Summary of Farmland Preserved

(Through 6/30/2021)

Participating County	Number of Farms	Number of Municipalities	Acres	Average Farm Size	Total Cost	Per Acre Total Cost	State Cost	State Cost Share Percent	County Municipality Federal Cost Share
Atlantic	48	8	5,105	106	17,577,982	3,443	13,423,506	76.37%	4,154,476
Bergen	8	5	335	42	19,752,944	58,927	10,866,840	55.01%	8,886,103
Burlington	235	21	28,943	123	158,798,787	5,487	95,939,649	60.42%	62,859,139
Camden	14	3	1,011	72	13,732,709	13,579	6,149,953	44.78%	7,582,756
Cape May	50	6	2,785	56	18,153,977	6,518	11,062,041	60.93%	7,091,936
Cumberland	223	11	21,259	95	63,175,550	2,972	45,829,228	72.54%	17,346,322
Gloucester	219	14	15,971	73	123,500,938	7,733	78,996,842	63.96%	44,504,096
Hunterdon	451	17	34,979	78	295,208,852	8,440	205,778,665	69.71%	89,430,187
Mercer	115	8	8,375	73	102,280,963	12,212	60,170,123	58.83%	42,110,839
Middlesex	55	7	4,880	89	62,554,302	12,818	40,967,538	65.49%	21,586,764
Monmouth	211	11	15,538	74	243,186,860	15,651	150,811,974	62.01%	92,374,886
Morris	116	12	7,344	63	149,099,326	20,303	82,943,523	55.63%	66,155,803
Ocean	48	5	3,249	68	26,641,541	8,200	18,104,071	67.95%	8,537,470
Passaic	2	2	56	28	3,553,345	63,399	1,539,426	43.32%	2,013,919
Salem	374	12	41,029	110	179,622,182	4,378	137,188,895	76.38%	42,433,286
Somerset	110	7	8,210	75	140,128,743	17,068	80,836,466	57.69%	59,292,276
Sussex	152	14	16,169	106	54,819,360	3,390	37,233,169	67.92%	17,586,192
Warren	294	19	26,251	89	134,221,330	5,113	85,794,197	63.92%	48,427,132
All Counties	2,725	182	241,490	89	1,806,009,690	7,479	1,163,636,107	64.43%	642,373,583

Summary of Farmland Preserved in FY2020-2021

(7/01/2019- 6/30/2021)

Participating County	Number of Farms	Number of Municipalities	Acres	Average Farm Size	Total Cost	Per Acre Total Cost	State Cost	State Cost Share Percent	County Municipality Federal Cost Share
Cumberland	9	4	667	74	3,555,338	5,328	2,667,399	75.03%	887,939
Gloucester	9	8	442	49	3,800,120	8,593	2,637,508	69.41%	1,162,612
Hunterdon	21	7	1,340	64	10,668,948	7,963	8,093,342	75.86%	2,575,605
Mercer	2	1	95	47	1,258,382	13,264	696,815	55.37%	561,567
Middlesex	1	1	35	35	945,837	26,993	567,502	60.00%	378,335
Monmouth	6	4	196	33	7,641,422	38,941	4,307,606	56.37%	3,333,816
Morris	1	1	39	39	1,206,923	30,900	628,884	52.11%	578,039
Ocean	1	1	9	9	142,313	16,500	85,388	60.00%	56,925
Salem	28	7	1,869	67	10,563,851	5,652	7,673,204	72.64%	2,890,647
Somerset	4	3	288	72	4,827,993	16,740	2,825,479	58.52%	2,002,514
Sussex	3	1	231	77	986,828	4,278	898,545	91.05%	88,283
Warren	16	9	1,033	65	4,115,547	3,985	2,502,752	60.81%	1,612,795
All Counties	101	47	6,244	62	49,713,500	7,962	33,584,424	67.56%	16,129,076

Farmland Preservation Funding

~\$108 million in funding for the Farmland Preservation Program **FY2020 & FY2021**

**County
Planning Incentive
Grant (PIG)**

FY20 \$21 million
FY21 \$12 million

**Municipal
Planning
Incentive Grant
(PIG)**

FY20 \$5 million
FY21 \$11.5 million

**State
Direct Easement
Program**

FY20 \$25.76 million
FY21 \$23.3 million

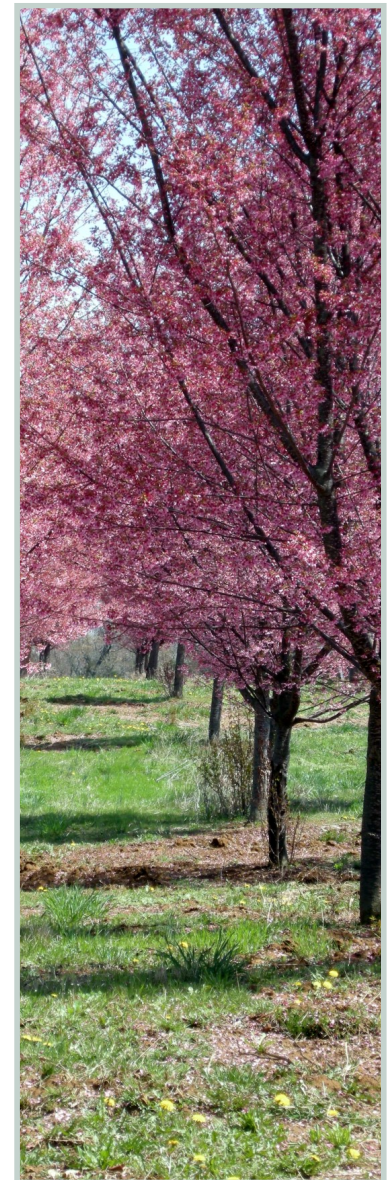
**Nonprofit
Program**

FY20 \$1.35 million
FY21 \$3.76 million

**Stewardship Cost
Sharing Grants**

FY20 \$2.15 million
FY21 \$2.25 million

Soil & Water and Deer Fence



Mifflin Farm, Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County, Photo by Stefanie Miller

Farmland Preservation Planning

The SADC's Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) programs require counties and municipalities to develop and adopt comprehensive farmland preservation plans to receive state funding for farmland preservation. These plans detail farmland preservation goals and other key strategies to help retain agriculture, focusing on land use planning, economic development, natural resource conservation, and overall local support for agriculture.

The SADC coordinates with counties and municipalities in developing their comprehensive farmland preservation plans. During FY20-21 two municipalities, Franklin Township, Somerset County (October 2019) and Raritan Township, Hunterdon County (May 2021), received SADC final approval of their comprehensive farmland preservation plans. There are eighteen counties and forty-four municipalities actively seeking to protect an additional 181,000 acres of New Jersey farmland over the next ten years.

COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN



County & Municipal Planning Incentive Grant ("PIG") Programs

On August 3, 2020, the SADC's proposed PIG program rule amendments became effective, significantly updating both the County and Municipal PIG programs. Initial discussions regarding these changes started in the spring of 2018 when SADC acquisition staff coordinated outreach sessions with the County Agricultural Development Boards (CADB) and Municipal Agriculture Advisory Committees (AAC) to hear their needs and ideas for making the programs more effective. Through this process, it was clear several amendments to the rules could address many program needs.

These included:

- Streamlining the PIG planning process
- Encourage more active municipal agriculture advisory committee participation
- Creating a "competitive" grant fund for the municipal PIG program allowing all participating municipalities access to funding beyond their base grants on a first-come, first-served basis.

The SADC included a substantial block grant for the first-ever Municipal Competitive Fund of \$5M in the fy20 appropriation in anticipation of this rule update. An additional \$5M was appropriated in fy21 with combined eligibility of \$1M for any single township.

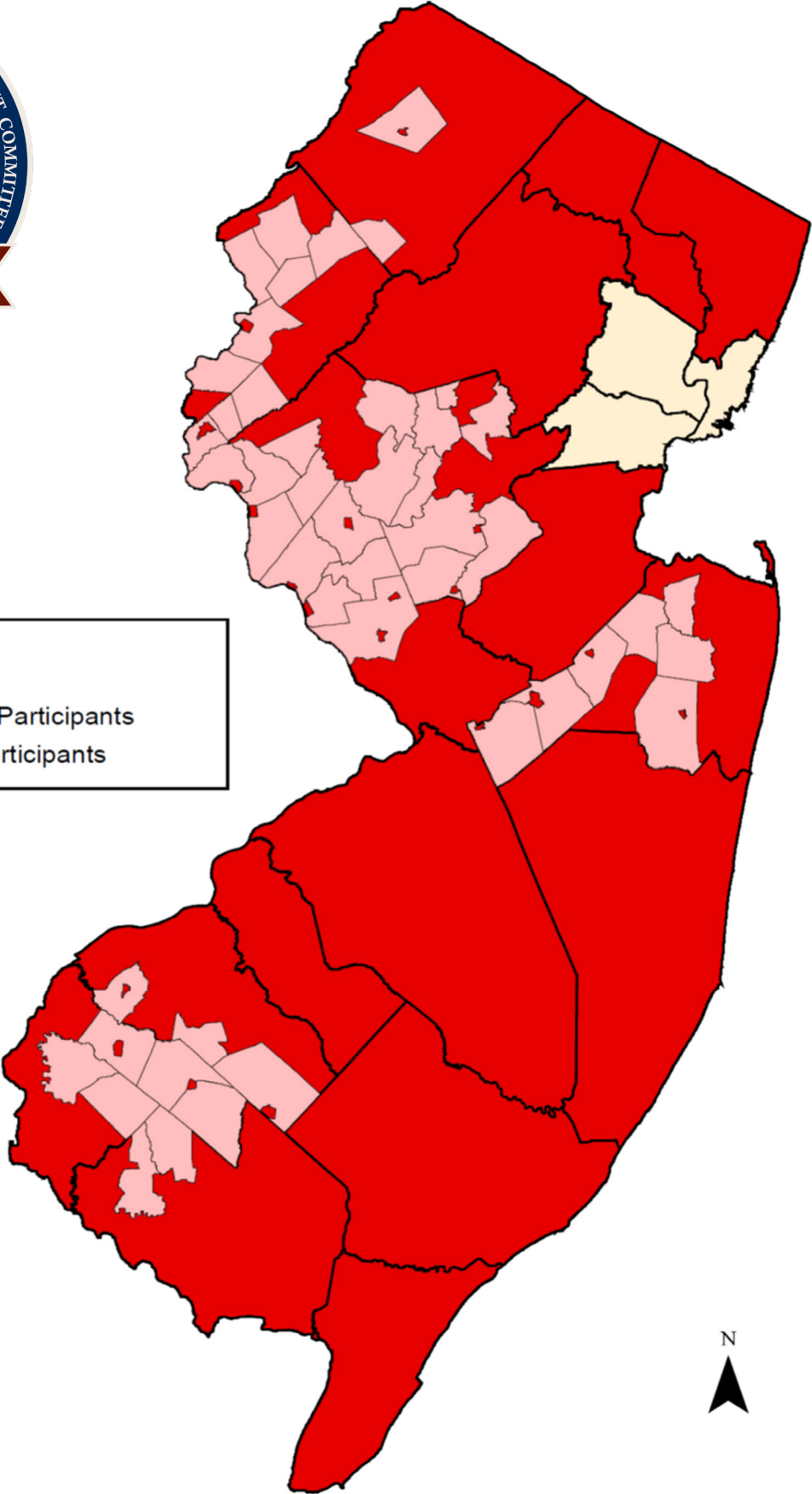


AGRICULTURAL RETENTION



Legend

- Municipal PIG Participants
- County PIG Participants



AGRICULTURAL RETENTION

FY20-21



Photo by Kelly Doyle

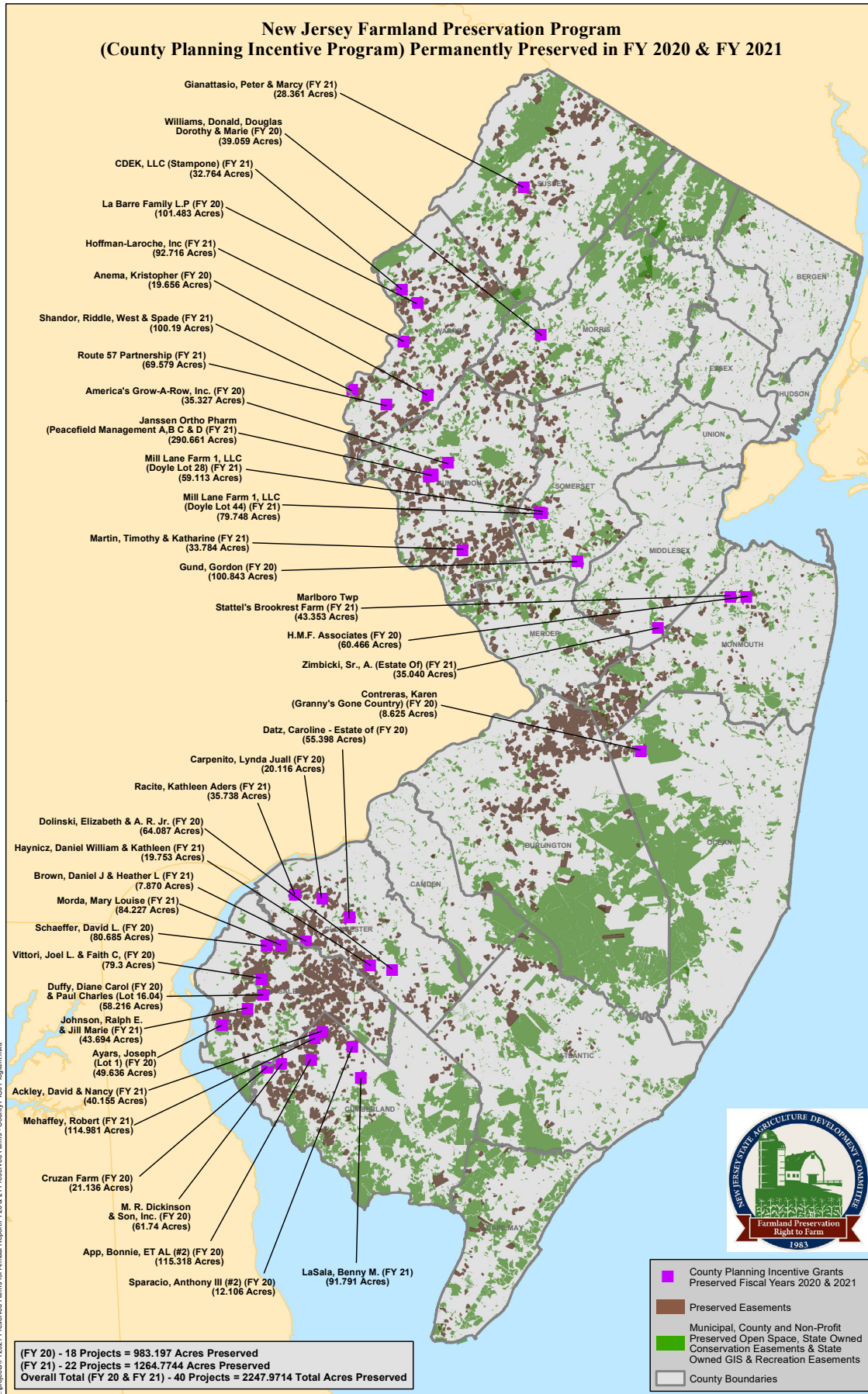
40 2,287
FARMS ACRES

County Planning Incentive Grant Program

Farms Preserved in
FY2020 & 2021 (7/1/19—6/30/21)

County	Municipality	Original Landowner	Easement Acres
Cumberland	Deerfield Twp.	La Sala, Benny M.	91.7910
Cumberland	Deerfield Twp.	Sparacio, Anthony III & Anthony, Jr. (Lot 40)	12.1060
Cumberland	Hopewell Twp.	Bonnie App et al.	115.3180
Cumberland	Stow Creek Twp.	Cruzan, Dale F. Sr, et al	21.1360
Cumberland	Stow Creek Twp.	M. R. Dickinson & Son, Inc.	61.7400
Cumberland	Upper Deerfield Twp.	Ackley, David B. & Nancy J. (Lot 4.01)	40.1550
Cumberland	Upper Deerfield Twp.	Mehaffey, Robert	114.9810
Gloucester	East Greenwich Twp.	Carpenito, Lynda Juall	20.1160
Gloucester	Elk Twp.	Haynicz, Daniel William & Kathleen	19.7530
Gloucester	Franklin Twp.	Dolinski, Elizabeth A.	64.0870
Gloucester	Logan Twp.	Racite, Kathleen Aders	35.7380
Gloucester	Mantua Twp. Harrison Twp.	Datz, Charles H.	55.3980
Gloucester	South Harrison Twp.	Brown, Daniel J. & Heather L.S.	7.8700
Hunterdon	Alexandria Twp.	Janssen Ortho Pharm (Peacefield Mgmt - A)	71.5300
Hunterdon	Alexandria Twp.	Janssen Ortho Pharm (Peacefield Mgmt - B)	71.8890
Hunterdon	Alexandria Twp.	Janssen Ortho Pharm (Peacefield Mgmt - C)	70.5220
Hunterdon	Alexandria Twp.	Janssen Ortho Pharm (Peacefield Mgmt - D)	76.8360
Hunterdon	Delaware Twp. East Amwell Twp.	Martin, Timothy & Katharine	33.7840
Hunterdon	Franklin Twp.	America's Grow-a-Row, Inc.	35.3270
Middlesex	Monroe Twp.	Zimbicki, Sr., Anthony - Estate of	35.0400
Monmouth	Holmdel Twp. Marlboro Twp.	H.M.F. Associates	60.4660
Monmouth	Marlboro Twp.	Marlboro Township (Stattel's Brookrest Farm)	43.3530
Morris	Mount Olive Twp.	Williams, Donald, Douglas, Dorothy & Marie	39.0590
Ocean	Plumsted Twp.	Contreras, Karen (Granny's Gone Country)	8.6250
Salem	Elsinboro Twp.	Ayars, Joseph P. (Lot 1)	49.6360
Salem	Mannington Twp.	Duffy, Diane Carol & Paul Charles (Lot 16.04)	58.2160
Salem	Mannington Twp. Quinton Twp.	Johnson, Ralph E. & Jill Marie	43.6940
Salem	Mannington Twp.	Vittori, Joel L. & Faith C.	79.3000
Salem	Pilesgrove Twp.	Morda, Mary Louise	84.2270
Salem	Pilesgrove Twp.	Schaeffer, David L.	80.6850
Somerset	Franklin Twp.	Gund, Gordon	100.8430
Somerset	Hillsborough Twp.	Mill Lane Farm I, LLC (Doyle Lot 28)	59.1130
Somerset	Hillsborough Twp.	Mill Lane Farm I, LLC (Doyle Lot 44)	79.7480
Sussex	Frankford Twp.	Gianattasio, Peter & Marcy	28.3610
Warren	Franklin Twp.	Route 57 Partnership	69.5790
Warren	Harmony Twp.	Shandor, Dorothy L., Judy Riddle, Joyce West and Jennifer Spade	100.1900
Warren	Knowlton Twp.	CDEK LLC & Stampone, Edward	32.7640
Warren	Knowlton Twp. Hope Twp.	LaBarre Family L.P	101.4830
Warren	Washington Twp.	Anema, Kristopher	19.6560
Warren	White Twp.	Hoffmann-La Roche Inc.	92.7160

AGRICULTURAL RETENTION



AGRICULTURAL RETENTION

FY20-21



Photo by Kelly Doyle

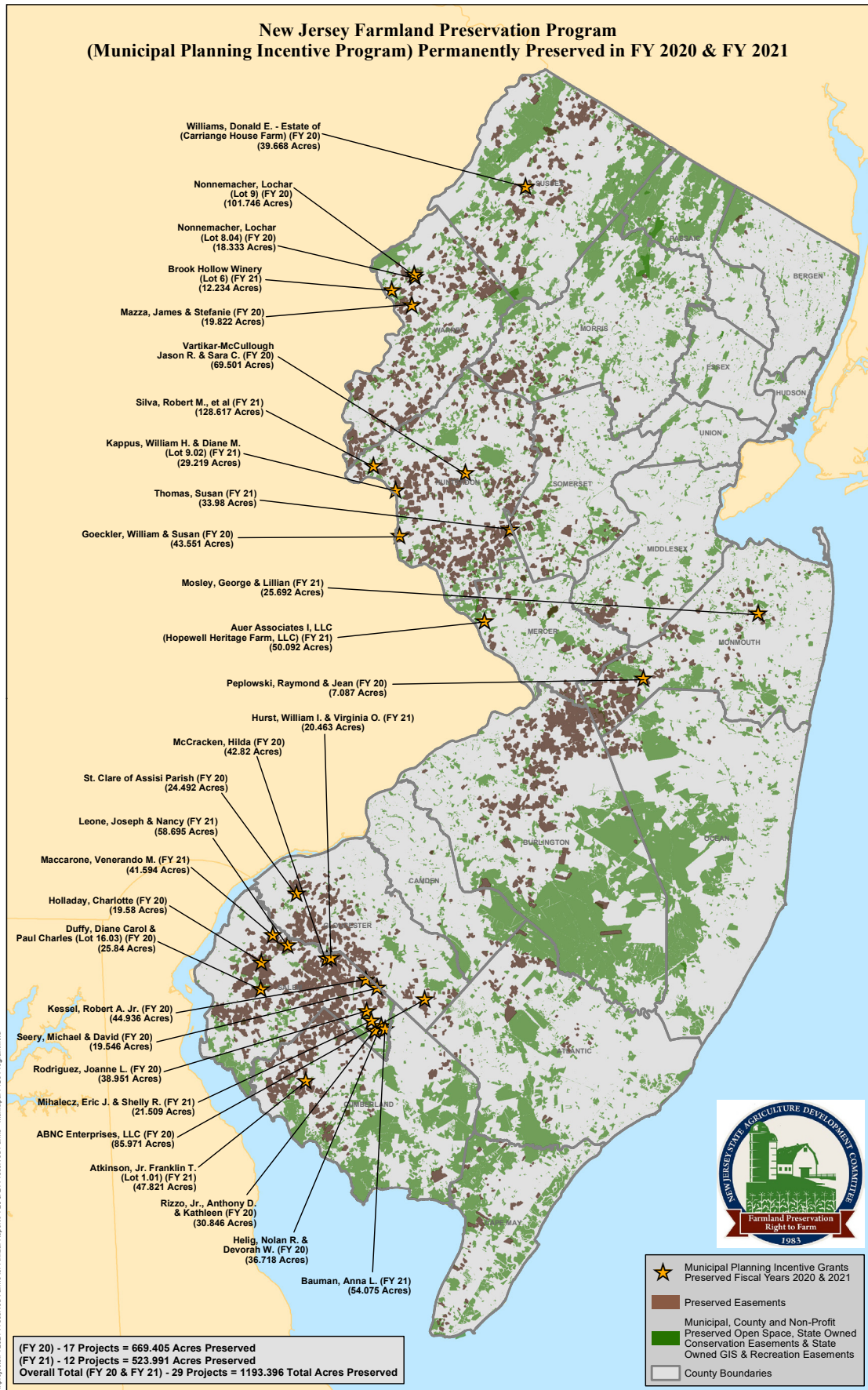
29 **1,193**
FARMS ACRES

Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program

Farms Preserved in FY2020 & 2021
(7/1/19—6/30/21)

County	Municipality	Original Landowner	Easement Acres
Cumberland	Hopewell Twp.	Atkinson, Jr., Franklin T. (Lot 1.01)	47.8210
Gloucester	Franklin Twp.	ABNC Enterprises, LLC	85.9710
Gloucester	Woolwich Twp.	St. Clare of Assisi Parish	24.4920
Hunterdon	Alexandria Twp.	Kappus, William H. & Diane M. (Lot 9.02)	29.2190
Hunterdon	East Amwell Twp.	Thomas, Susan	33.9800
Hunterdon	Franklin Twp.	Vartikar-McCullough, Jason R. & Sarah C.	69.5010
Hunterdon	Holland Twp.	Silva, Robert M., et als	128.6170
Hunterdon	Kingwood Twp.	Goeckeler, William & Susan	43.5510
Mercer	Hopewell Twp.	Auer Associates I, LLC (Hopewell Heritage Farm, LLC)	50.0920
Monmouth	Colts Neck Twp.	Mosley, George & Lillian	25.6920
Monmouth	Millstone Twp.	Peplowski, Raymond & Jean	7.0870
Salem	Mannington Twp.	Duffy, Diane Carol & Paul Charles (Lot 16.03)	25.8400
Salem	Mannington Twp.	Holladay, Charlotte	19.5800
Salem	Pilesgrove Twp.	Leone, Joseph & Nancy	58.6950
Salem	Pilesgrove Twp.	Maccarone, Venerando M.	41.5940
Salem	Pittsgrove Twp.	Bauman, Anna L.	54.0750
Salem	Pittsgrove Twp.	Helig, Nolan R. & Devorah W.	36.7180
Salem	Pittsgrove Twp.	Mihalecz, Eric J. & Shelly R.	21.5090
Salem	Pittsgrove Twp.	Rizzo, Jr., Anthony D. & Kathleen	30.8460
Salem	Pittsgrove Twp.	Rodriguez, Joanne L.	38.9510
Salem	Upper Pittsgrove Twp.	Hurst, William I. & Virginia O.	20.4630
Salem	Upper Pittsgrove Twp.	Kessel, Robert A. Jr.	44.9360
Salem	Upper Pittsgrove Twp.	McCracken, Hilda	42.8200
Salem	Upper Pittsgrove Twp.	Seery, Michael & David	19.5460
Sussex	Frankford Twp.	Williams, Donald E. - Estate of (Carriage House Farm)	39.6680
Warren	Blairstown Twp.	Nonnenmacher, Lothar J. (Lot 8.04)	18.3300
Warren	Blairstown Twp.	Nonnenmacher, Lothar J. (Lot 9)	101.7460
Warren	Knowlton Twp.	Brook Hollow Winery LLC (Lot 6)	12.2340
Warren	Knowlton Twp.	Mazza, James & Stefanie	19.8220

AGRICULTURAL RETENTION



AGRICULTURAL RETENTION

State Direct Easement Program

Farms Preserved in FY2020 & 2021 (7/1/19—6/30/21)

FY20-21



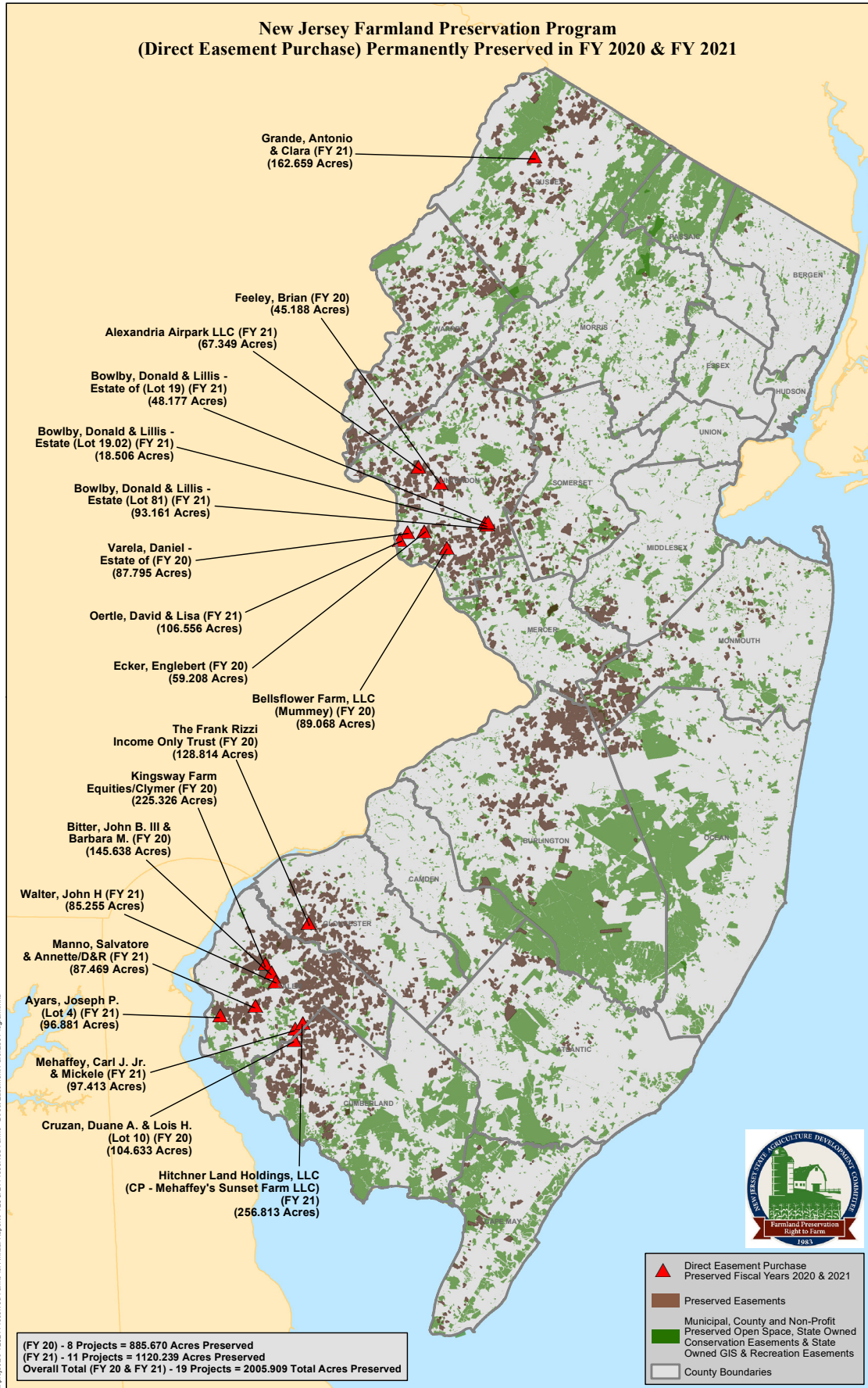
Photo by Kelly Doyle

19 2,006
FARMS ACRES

The SADC purchases development easements directly from landowners to preserve farmland through its State Acquisition/Direct Easement Purchase Program. Nineteen farms were preserved through this program in FY2020 and FY2021.

County	Municipality	Original Landowner	Easement Acres
Cumberland	Stow Creek Twp.	Cruzan, Duane A. & Lois H. (Lot 10)	104.6330
Gloucester	South Harrison Twp.	The Frank Rizzi Income Only Trust	128.8140
Hunterdon	Alexandria Twp.	Alexandria Airpark LLC	67.3490
Hunterdon	Delaware Twp.	Bellsflower Farm, LLC (Mummey)	89.0680
Hunterdon	Franklin Twp.	Feeley, Brian	45.1880
Hunterdon	Kingwood Twp.	Ecker, Englebert - Estate of	59.2080
Hunterdon	Kingwood Twp.	Oertle, David & Lisa	106.5560
Hunterdon	Kingwood Twp.	Varela, Daniel - Estate of	87.7950
Hunterdon	Raritan Twp.	Bowlby, Donald & Lillis - Estate of (Lot 19)	48.1770
Hunterdon	Raritan Twp.	Bowlby, Donald & Lillis - Estate of (Lot 19.02)	18.5060
Hunterdon	Raritan Twp.	Bowlby, Donald & Lillis - Estate of (Lot 81)	93.1610
Salem	Alloway Twp. Hopewell Twp., Cumberland Co.	Hitchner Land Holdings, LLC (CP-Mehaffey's Sunset Farm LLC)	256.8130
Salem	Alloway Twp.	Mehaffey, Carl J. Jr. & Mickle	97.4130
Salem	Elsinboro Twp.	Ayars, Joseph P (Lot 4)	96.8810
Salem	Mannington Twp.	Bitter, John B. III & Barbara M.	145.6380
Salem	Mannington Twp.	Kingsway Farm Equities LLC	225.3260
Salem	Mannington Twp. Alloway Twp.	Walter, John H.	85.2550
Salem	Quinton Twp.	Manno, Salvatore & Anette	87.4690
Sussex	Frankford Twp.	Grande, Antonio and Clara	162.6590

AGRICULTURAL RETENTION



AGRICULTURAL RETENTION

Nonprofit Program

Farms Preserved in FY2020 & 2021 (7/1/19—6/30/21)

FY20-21



Photo by Kelly Doyle

13 758
FARMS ACRES

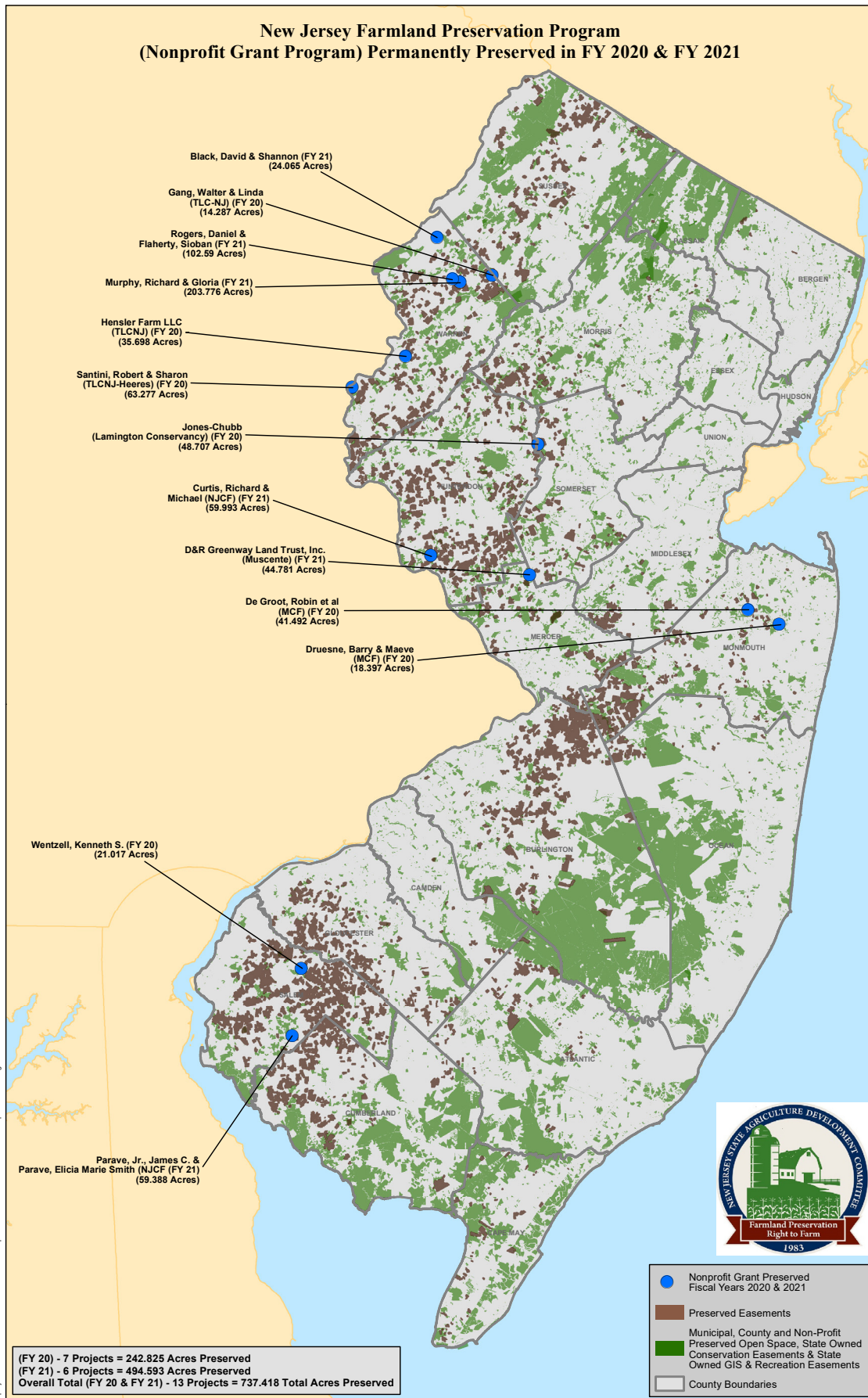
The SADC provides cost-sharing grants to nonprofits to assist them in purchasing development easements to preserve farmland. Thirteen farms were preserved through the Nonprofit program in FY2020 & FY2021 for an additional 758 acres.

County	Municipality	Original Landowner	Easement Acres
Hunterdon	Delaware Twp.	Curtis, Richard & Michael F. (NJCF FY21)	59.9930
Mercer	Hopewell Twp.	D & R Greenway Land Trust, Inc. (Muscente)	44.7810
Monmouth	Colts Neck Twp.	De Groot, Robin et als (MCF)	41.4920
Monmouth	Colts Neck Twp.	Druesne, Barry & Maeve (MCF)	18.3970
Salem	Alloway Twp.	Parave., Jr., James C. & Parave, Elicia Marie Smith (NJCF)	59.3880
Salem	Pilesgrove Twp.	Wentzell, Kenneth S.	21.0170
Somerset	Bedminster Twp.	Jones-Chubb (Lamington Conservancy)	48.7070
Warren	Frelinghuysen Twp.	Gang, Walter & Linda (TLC-NJ)	14.2870
Warren	Frelinghuysen Twp.	Murphy, Richard (TLCNJ\Murlan)	224.4290
Warren	Frelinghuysen Twp.	Rogers, Daniel & Flaherty, Sioban (Hidden Woods)	102.5900
Warren	Hardwick Twp.	Black, David & Shannon	24.0650
Warren	Harmony Twp.	Santini, Robert & Sharon (TLCNJ-Heeres)	63.2770
Warren	White Twp.	Hensler Farm LLC (TLCNJ)	35.6980



Frey Farm, Warren County, Photo by Stefanie Miller

AGRICULTURAL RETENTION



AGRICULTURAL RETENTION

FY20-21



Photo by Kelly Doyle

42 **2567**
FARMS **ACRES**

Term Farmland Preservation Program

Landowners may choose to preserve their land for agricultural purposes for an eight-year or sixteen-year term, rather than permanently. While landowners are not paid to enter a term preservation program, enrolling their land makes landowners eligible for certain benefits, including the opportunity to apply for soil and water conservation grants. At the close of FY2021, there were 44 farms totaling approximately 2,643 acres enrolled in a Term Farmland Preservation Program agreement.

County	# of Farms	Acres	Eligible Grant Funds
Atlantic	18	615.52	\$ 278,276.00
Burlington	5	1415.77	\$ 147,534.00
Gloucester	10	390.37	\$ 198,962.00
Monmouth	2	16.28	\$ 9,768.00
Morris	5	91.83	\$ 54,366.00
Ocean	1	7.3	\$ 4,378.80
Salem	1	34	\$ 20,400.00



“Rollers”, Coleman Farm, Alloway Township, Salem County, Photo by Kelly Doyle

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New Jersey Pinelands

Two farms in the Pinelands region of Ocean and Gloucester Counties were preserved in FY20 & 21 for an additional 95 acres. Farm owners in the agricultural production, special agricultural production and preservation areas continue to benefit from the “Pinelands Formula” as an alternative to a traditional easement purchase appraisal. The formula takes into account not only Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) values and current development potential, but also the presence of important agricultural and environmental features.

Pinelands Region

Summary of Preserved Farmland (through 6/30/2021)

Participating County	Number of Farms	Number of Municipalities	Acres	Average Farm Size	Total Cost	Per Acre Total Cost	State Cost	State Cost Share Percent	County Municipality Federal Cost Share
Atlantic	43	6	4,801	112	16,528,769	3,443	12,374,293	74.87%	4,154,476
Burlington	51	8	7,745	152	28,162,999	3,636	19,488,419	69.20%	8,674,581
Camden	12	2	910	76	3,628,094	3,987	2,633,714	72.59%	994,380
Cape May	9	4	644	72	1,808,663	2,807	1,148,505	63.50%	660,158
Gloucester	13	2	1,354	104	3,084,166	2,278	2,418,945	78.43%	665,221
Ocean	8	3	235	29	4,209,353	17,948	2,587,531	61.47%	1,621,822
All Counties	136	25	15,688	115	57,422,045	3,660	40,651,406	70.79%	16,770,638



Mick Farm, Washington Township, Burlington County, photo by Stefanie Miller

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New Jersey Highlands

Eighteen farms received SADC cost share grants in the Highlands region in FY20 & 21 adding fifteen farms and 1,235 acres in the Highlands Planning area and three farms in the Highlands Preservation area for an additional 144 acres.

Qualified farm owners in the Highlands continued to benefit from the “Dual-Appraisal Valuation Provision” which requires an appraisal valuation based on “pre-highlands” zoning and environmental regulations that were in place on January 1, 2004. The Highlands Act was amended in 2019 to extend this provision another five years, until June 30, 2024.

Highlands Preservation Area

Participating County	Number of Farms	Number of Municipalities	Acres	Average Farm Size	Total Cost	Per Acre Total Cost	State Cost	State Cost Share Percent	County Municipality Federal Cost Share
Bergen	3	1	244	81	5,263,844	21,609	3,568,386	67.79%	1,695,458
Hunterdon	50	7	4,047	81	48,537,604	11,994	39,094,483	80.54%	9,443,121
Morris	87	5	5,942	68	95,911,033	16,140	54,345,512	56.66%	41,565,521
Passaic	1	1	41	41	986,695	24,000	592,017	60.00%	394,678
Somerset	2	2	327	164	4,389,817	13,418	2,480,304	56.50%	1,909,514
Sussex	7	2	1,028	147	3,544,144	3,446	2,673,026	75.42%	871,119
Warren	85	13	7,098	84	37,865,206	5,335	25,587,879	67.58%	12,277,327
All Counties	235	31	18,728	80	196,498,344	10,492	128,341,606	65.31%	68,156,738

Highlands Planning Area

Summary of Preserved Farmland (through 6/30/2021)

Participating County	Number of Farms	Number of Municipalities	Acres	Average Farm Size	Total Cost	Per Acre Total Cost	State Cost	State Cost Share Percent	County Municipality Federal Cost Share
Bergen	1	1	47	47	3,864,906	82,000	2,227,034	57.62%	1,637,872
Hunterdon	107	8	8,000	75	56,720,061	7,090	38,953,165	68.68%	17,766,896
Morris	28	10	1,659	59	52,515,987	31,657	27,861,715	53.05%	24,654,273
Somerset	28	2	1,956	70	45,934,476	23,490	27,119,818	59.04%	18,814,658
Sussex	16	6	1,371	86	6,923,295	5,050	4,458,171	64.39%	2,465,124
Warren	157	16	15,373	98	79,438,679	5,167	50,002,540	62.94%	29,436,139
All Counties	337	43	28,406	84	245,397,405	8,639	150,622,443	61.38%	94,774,962

AGRICULTURAL RETENTION

Highlands Preservation & Planning Areas

Summary of Preserved Farmland (through 6/30/2021)

Participating County	Number of Farms	Number of Municipalities	Acres	Average Farm Size	Total Cost	Per Acre Total Cost	State Cost	State Cost Share Percent	County Municipality Federal Cost Share
Bergen	4	1	291	73	9,128,750	31,400	5,795,420	63.49%	3,333,330
Hunterdon	156	10	11,972	77	104,359,609	8,717	77,149,593	73.93%	27,210,017
Morris	113	11	7,156	63	142,226,534	19,876	78,637,913	55.29%	63,588,621
Passaic	1	1	41	41	986,695	24,000	592,017	60.00%	394,678
Somerset	30	3	2,283	76	50,324,293	22,046	29,600,121	58.82%	20,724,172
Sussex	22	6	2,327	106	9,751,105	4,191	6,701,396	68.72%	3,049,709
Warren	237	17	21,686	92	114,093,598	5,261	73,102,414	64.07%	40,991,184
All Counties	563	49	45,756	81	430,870,586	9,417	271,578,874	63.03%	159,291,712



Herr Farm, Clinton Township, Hunterdon County, Photo by Stefanie Miller

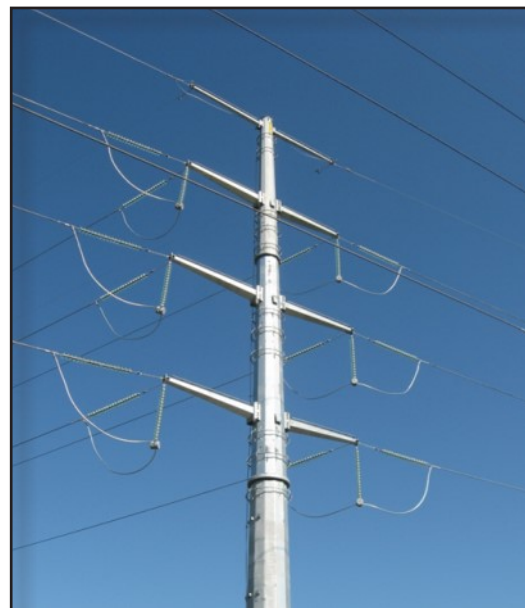
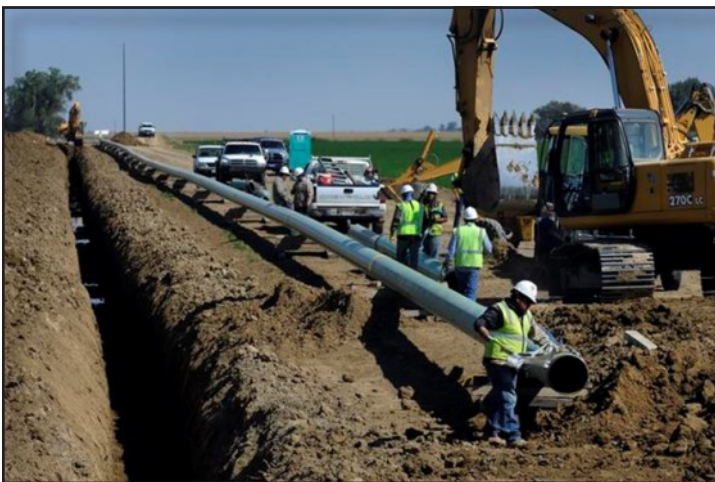
Non-Agricultural Project Reviews

The SADC is active in reviewing non-agricultural development projects involving preserved farmland and land in Agriculture Development Areas (ADAs) to determine the effect of these projects upon the preservation and enhancement of agriculture in the ADA and overall State agriculture and development policies. In FY20, projects included a municipal sewer line, an electric transmission line, and several bridge improvements.

The SADC continued to monitor developments in the ongoing litigation surrounding the proposed PennEast pipeline, an interstate project that would cross through Hunterdon and Mercer counties. The SADC coordinated with PennEast, landowners, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), County Agriculture Development Boards, and other interested parties to evaluate agricultural and preserved farm impacts.

The SADC reviewed an electric transmission improvement project proposed by Public Service Energy and Gas (PSE&G). This 22-mile segment of the “Metuchen-Trenton-Burlington Transmission Project” was checked for potential impacts on twenty-four ADA parcels and eight preserved farms in Burlington County.

In addition, the SADC coordinated with affected farmland owners and the appropriate local government agencies overseeing three ongoing bridge repair projects in Bergen, Burlington, and Somerset counties.



PLANNING

Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping

The SADC's GIS section provides mapping and database support for the Committee's planning, acquisition, and stewardship activities. The SADC announced the creation of its Public Web Map service which provides access to interactive online farmland preservation mapping. Users can locate preserved farmland and related information, including associated spatial features. In addition, the SADC now also hosts several of its spatial data layers as online services, allowing the public and our preservation partners easy access for their own mapping needs. The SADC Web Map can be accessed through the SADC home page—<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/>



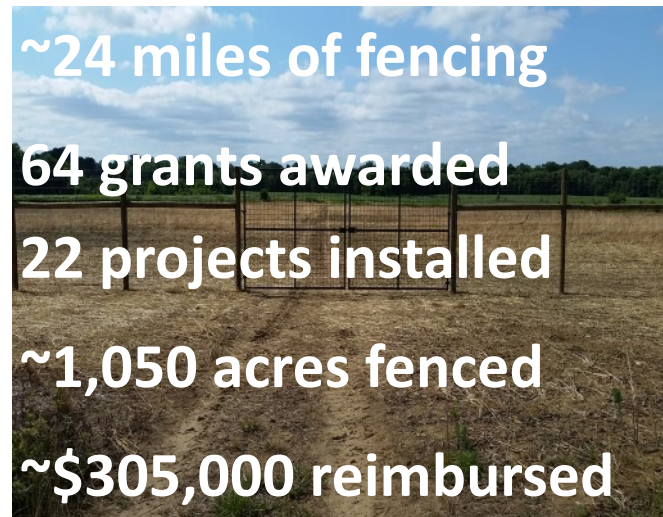
New Jersey Conservation Blueprint Project

The SADC continues to support the development of the N.J. Conservation Blueprint project, a powerful and easy-to-use computer mapping site created by Rowan University's Geospatial Lab. The Blueprint project allows users to access high-resolution, site-specific information about land in New Jersey, including various agricultural and environmental characteristics. SADC staff use this tool extensively to quickly identify farmland attributes to have better informed discussions with preservation partners and landowners. www.njmap2.com/blueprint.

AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

The SADC works to ensure proper stewardship of preserved farmland and promote efforts to keep New Jersey's farms viable. In addition to coordinating the Right to Farm, Agricultural Mediation, and Farm Link Programs, the SADC administers grant programs for deer fencing and soil and water conservation projects; administers other post-preservation requests including for rural microenterprises and renewable energy; supports next generation farmers through beginning farmer initiatives; and administers the winery special occasion events pilot program.

Photo of the Grossman Farm Deer Fence installation



Eligible farmers can apply to the SADC for a cost-share grant to help cover the cost of installing deer fencing on permanently preserved farms. The grants may cover up to 50 percent of the materials and installation costs, and may not exceed \$200/acre or a total grant of \$20,000.

Following successful first and second rounds of Deer Fencing Grants in FY2017 and FY 2019, the SADC in FY 2020 updated its program policy to allow farmers to apply on a rolling, ongoing basis.

In total, the SADC has approved 64 deer fencing grant applications and obligated \$858,986.32 in cost-share grant funding through the end of FY2021. From FY 2017 to the close of FY2021, farmers had completed

22 deer fencing projects, and the SADC had issued \$304,505.99 in deer fencing grant reimbursements.

Preserved farmland owners and operators have responded positively and expressed intention to add new crops they would have avoided before having the added protection of deer fencing. Of the eleven projects completed during FY 2020 and FY 2021, farmers said they planned to grow vegetables in all of the newly fenced areas. Six of the of the eleven farmers also intend to plant fruit crops; three of the eleven planned to develop new field crops; and one farmer planned to add flower production to their operation.

Soil & Water Grants

FY20-21



FY2020 & FY2021

projects funded

72 Projects, \$1,647,190.96 obligated

projects completed

26 Projects, \$311,265.28 Paid

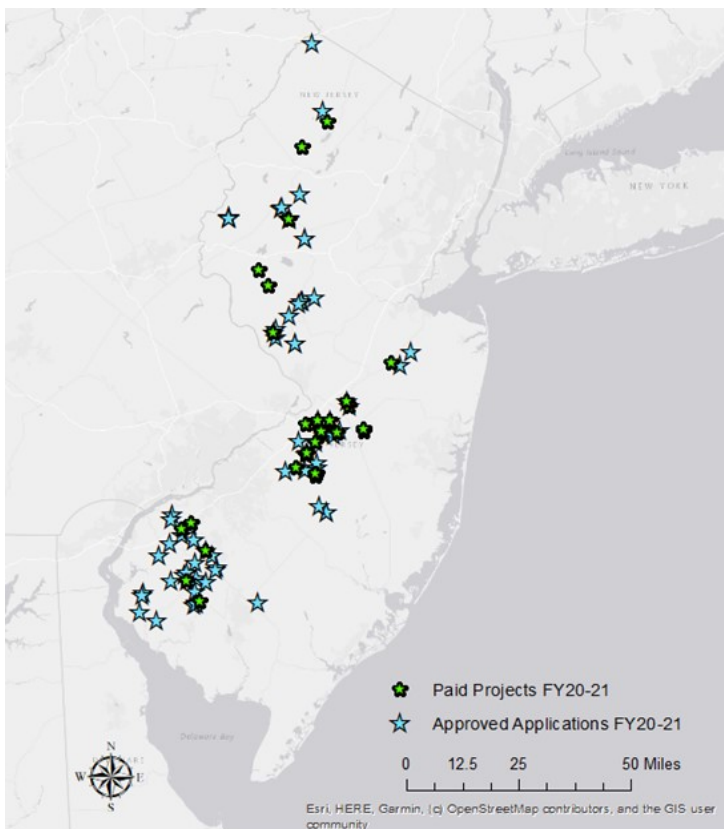
Farms that are permanently preserved or enrolled in the term farmland preservation program (for an 8 or 16-year term) can apply for soil and water conservation grants.

Grant amounts are based on farm size and can fund up to 50 percent of the cost of approved projects.

Eligible projects include those designed to control and prevent soil erosion and sediment damage; control pollution on farmland; impound, store and manage water for agricultural purposes; or improve management of land and soils to achieve maximum agricultural productivity. The State Soil Conservation Committee has approved twenty project types as eligible for cost-sharing through the SADC Soil and Water Grants Program (see the bulleted list of project types).

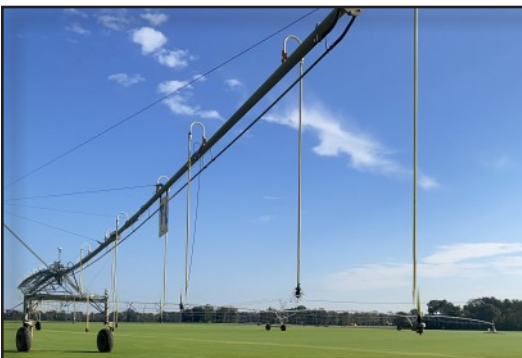
For more information on specific projects, see the State Soil Conservation Committee’s rules, N.J.A.C. 2:90.

The SADC hired a part-time conservation planner certified by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide assistant and develop conservation plans and program contracts. The conservation planner has been integral in reducing backlogs across the state and facilitating projects that otherwise would still be waiting to complete NRCS compliant plans.



AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

Grants Available For :



- Terrace Systems
- Diversions
- Contour Farming
- Strip-cropping Systems
- Sod Waterways
- Windbreak Restoration or Establishment
- Stream Protection
- Permanent Vegetative Cover
- Precision Land Shaping & Grading
- Water Impoundment Reservoirs
- Irrigation Systems
- Sediment Retention, Erosion, or Water Control Structures
- Permanent Open Drainage Systems
- Underground Drainage Systems
- Developing Facilities for Livestock Water
- Forest Tree Stand Improvement
- Forest Tree Plantations
- Site Preparation for Natural Regeneration

AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

Renewable Energy

In FY2020 - 21 the SADC approved proposed solar energy generation projects on four preserved farms pursuant to P.L. 2009, c. 213, which established certain limits and criteria for solar, wind and biomass energy generation on preserved farms. Since the inception of the law, a total of 46 solar energy projects have been approved on 41 preserved farms.

County	Township	Ag Operation	System Type	Rated Capacity	Mount Type	Structure	Occupied Area	Demand Use
FY2020								
Monmouth	Millstone	Hay/Grain	Solar	23,183 kWh	Rooftop	Existing barns	1,900 sq ft	Residence/Farm
Morris	Washington	Hay/Equine	Solar	16,120 kWh	Rooftop	Existing barn	876.6 sq ft	Residence/Farm
Salem	Upper Pittsgrove	Hay	Solar	41,577 kWh	Ground	N/A	4,800 sq ft	Residence
FY2021								
Mercer	Hopewell	Hay	Solar	46,686 kWh	Ground	N/A	7,485 sq ft	Residence

Farm Link



The Farm Link Program is a resource for farmers and landowners to connect. Beginning and established farmers seeking to access land and farming opportunities can see farmland available after the landowner posts it. Landowners with farmland and business opportunities may use the interactive linking service — to connect - NJ Land Link, www.njlandlink.org

The SADC also has a resource page with valuable information about starting a farm, leasing farmland, developing farm transfer, and succession planning. <https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/farmlink/resources>

During FY2020 and FY 2021, NJ Land Link had more than 1,500 registered users and more than 240 active listings for farmland available or potential farmers seeking access to land. The NJ Land Link website, www.njlandlink.org, was visited by more than 13,000 people in FY2020 and FY 2021.

Rural Microenterprises

The SADC approved three Rural Microenterprise permits during FY2020-21.

- Stone Circle Farm in Middle Township, Cape May County, plans to renovate an old barn to hold farm-to-table dinners with ingredients produced on their farm and other local farms.
- Birch Creek Farm in Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County, converted an underutilized barn into a shop for a mobile farm equipment repair service.
- Pleasant Hill Farm in Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County, is developing an equine clinic and surgery facility.



Old barn at Stone Circle Farm, Cape May

Under the Rural Microenterprise Law (P.L. 2015, c. 275) and the related rules that became effective June 2018, a farmer who owns a qualifying preserved farm can apply for a special permit to conduct a rural microenterprise on the farm. Rural microenterprise or “RME” is defined as a small-scale business or activity that is fully compatible with the agricultural use and production on the premises; does not, at any time, detract from, diminish, or interfere with the agricultural use of the premises; and is incidental to the agricultural use of the premises. The program’s rules also promote and incentivize the preservation of historic and culturally significant agricultural structures on preserved farms.



Kevin Brown— Mobile Farm Equipment Mechanic

Agricultural Leasing Pilot Program

In May 2018 the SADC entered into a long-term lease on an 87-acre preserved farm it owns in West Amwell, Hunterdon County. The SADC acquired the farm in fee simple in 2007 and offered it for lease with terms that provide for extensions – up to a total lease term of 12 years – for a tenant farmer who

successfully applies for and implements needed U.S. Farm Bill conservation practices on the farm. The tenant farmer’s cost-share for the practices will be deducted from lease payments. The pilot project is in response to requests from the agricultural community for long-term leases to promote viability.

Winery Special Occasion Events Pilot Program

In March 2020 the SADC issued a Final Report to the Legislature and Governor on the Pilot Program for Winery Special Occasion Events, in accordance with legislation signed on March 1, 2018 that extended the pilot program for two years until May 30, 2020. The report summarizes the information the SADC has collected under the pilot program, the agency’s final review of the program, and provides a full set of final recommendations to the legislature. Seven wineries were subject to the pilot program since its inception in 2014.



Photo by Hannah Busing on Unsplash

Right To Farm Program

The SADC administers the Right to Farm Program (RTF) in partnership with New Jersey's 18 County Agriculture Development Boards to protect responsible commercial farms from public and private nuisance actions and unduly restrictive local regulations. To receive formal Right to Farm Act protection, farms must be operated according to generally accepted practices and other eligibility criteria. Formal Right to Farm determinations are made by CADBs and the SADC on a case-by-case basis and must consider each party's interests, including relevant local ordinances.

In September 2019 the SADC issued a Final Decision in *Glassboro v. Gloucester County Agriculture Development Board and Summit City Farms*. The decision determined that the Right to Farm Act's potential preemption of "any" municipal ordinance applied not only to local zoning ordinances but also to a parking

ordinance that allegedly restricted Summit City's farming operations. The matter was remanded to the OAL, where it is still pending.

On June 25, 2020 P.L.2020 c.154 amended the Right to Farm Act (RTFA) by extending RTF eligibility to year-round, full-time agricultural, equine laborers. This new legislation extended RTF protection eligibility to the housing of "full-time, year-round equine-related farm employees in the same building or facility as horses." The law explicitly excludes eligibility for the housing of migrant or seasonal employees/workers. This bill is significant because, for the first time, the housing of "agricultural laborers" will be eligible for RTF protection. The law directed the SADC to adopt implementing regulations. The SADC has added the development of a corresponding Agricultural Management Practice (AMP) to its legislative work calendar.

The SADC continues its outreach efforts to increase the awareness and understanding of Right to Farm and make educational presentations on RTF to farmers, the public, local officials, county agriculture development boards (CADBs), agricultural advisory committees, and administrative law judges upon request.

*Peck Farm, Lafayette Township, Sussex County
Photo by Kelly Doyle*



Agricultural Mediation Program

Issues That Can Be Mediated Using the Agricultural Mediation Program:

- Right to Farm/Farmer-Neighbor Issues
- USDA Program Issues
- Agricultural Credit Disputes
- Lease Issues (land, equipment, livestock, buildings)
- Farm Transition Issues
- Organic Compliance Issues

The Agricultural Mediation Program received mediation requests in 24 cases in FY2020 and FY2021. Eighteen cases involved Right to Farm/Farmer-Neighbor issues, 4 cases involved USDA program issues, 1 case involved a farmland lease, and 1 case involved a loan with a commercial bank. In about half the cases, the farmers and other parties were able to reach an agreement.

The range of Right to Farm/Farmer-Neighbor issues for which mediation was requested included water runoff/flooding, equipment noise, on-farm direct marketing activities and events, zoning/land use issues with municipalities, and livestock fencing.

Each mediation session is facilitated by a trained and impartial mediator who helps the parties examine their

mutual issues, identify and consider options, and determine if they can agree on a solution.

Mediation is voluntary, confidential, free, and typically only takes a meeting or two to complete.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the program continued to serve farmers and others using remote communication technology.



Outreach, Training & Guidance

The SADC and Rutgers University Center for Government Services, Division of Continuing Studies co-hosted a two-part, four-hour, interactive seminar via Zoom on Tuesday, December 1, and Tuesday, December 8, 2020. The SADC tailored this educational program for Municipal Officials, including Zoning officials and Land Use Board staff and members. One hundred and nine attendees participated, including Rutgers and SADC staff and representatives from seventy-six municipalities.

Attendees received a basic overview of New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program, including how land is preserved and monitored after preservation, and New Jersey's Right To Farm Act, and how it is implemented. The group discussed how to assist preserved farmland owners operating within their municipalities, what to consider before granting or denying approvals and permits and who to contact when there are questions.

Participants were eligible for continuing education credits, including technical contact hours for Planning/Zoning Board Secretaries, Zoning Officials and Land Use Administrators, and contact hours for New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Certifications.



Keeping the Garden in the Garden State

Understanding Farmland Preservation, Agricultural Development
& Stewardship of Preserved Farmland in Your Municipality and the
Relationship between Municipal Zoning and the Right to Farm Act

