

**MERCER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT BOARD RECOMMENDATION
FOR A SITE SPECIFIC AGRICULTURAL
MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**

DIPAOLA TURKEY'S INC.

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Right To Farm Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-1 et seq. and State Agricultural Development Committee (hereinafter "SADC") regulations, N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.3, a commercial farm owner or operator may make a request to the County Agricultural Development Board (hereinafter "Board") to determine if his or her operation constitutes a generally accepted agricultural management practice; and,

WHEREAS, on November 17, 2003, Mr. Arthur DiPaola, owner and operator of DiPaola Turkeys, Inc. located at _____ (Block _____, Lot _____ on the Township of Hamilton tax maps) certified in writing to his commercial farm status and requested from the Board the development of a site-specific agriculture management practice (hereinafter, "AMP") to determine if the raising of turkeys from day-old poults up to, but not including, processing of full grown turkeys into saleable product, on his farm, constitutes a generally accepted operation or practice.

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.3(c), the Board advised, in writing, the SADC and Township of Hamilton of Mr. DiPaola's request; and,

WHEREAS, at its regular meeting of December 1, 2003, the Board unanimously agreed to develop an AMP for DiPaola Turkey farm after making the following findings of fact:

1. Arthur DiPaola is the owner of a 5-acre farm located in Hamilton Township;
2. The property is a commercial farm, as defined by N.J.S.A. 4:1C-3 and N.J.S.A. 2:76-2.1, which produces agricultural product worth \$50,000.00 or more annually and otherwise satisfies the eligibility criteria for differential property tax assessment pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964; and,
3. The land has been in farm operation since at least 1997, is municipally zoned for farms and horticultural use (Sec. 160-74 and 160-136 Township of Hamilton Land Development Code), and is consistent with the municipal master plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Board is aware that Mr. DiPaola, and his father before him, have operated this farm at this location since 1948; and,

WHEREAS, the Board, recognizing that the turkey raising operation occurs over approximately five months of the year from early summer to mid-fall, made three visits to the farm this year (before the poults arrived on the farm, shortly after the poults arrived, and shortly before processing of the full grown turkeys began) with participation by the Township of Hamilton during the last visit; and,

WHEREAS, the Board sought the advice of and conducted each site inspection with the assistance of Robert Mickel of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service (RCE) to determine the appropriateness of the operation and practices; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Mickel prepared and submitted a report dated October 13, 2004; and,

WHEREAS, at its regular meeting of December 6, 2004, the Board reached the following conclusions based on information from Mr. Mickel's Report and statements made by Mr. DiPaola and by Board members and Board staff who visited the farm:

1. Mr. DiPaola is following accepted best practices for turkey husbandry;
2. The four rearing barns are properly designed and managed for the proper comfort and production of the turkeys;
3. Nutrient waste management through the use of "bedding pack" within the barns is an acceptable best practice for turkey raising;
4. The bedding pack is removed in the winter by a composting company, after it has had time to dry thoroughly and odors caused by removal become less offensive due to winter temperatures;
5. The automatically activated feed and watering system utilized on the farm is an effective means of controlling potential pest and manure-related odor problems;
6. The cleanliness of the growing facility and of the animals themselves (observed during the last two visits) exemplifies a high degree of concern for the operation;
7. The farm does not pose a threat to public health or safety; and,
8. The farm appears to be in compliance with all applicable State and Federal requirements.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby determines that the operating procedures utilized by DiPaula Turkeys Inc., a commercial farm, to raise turkeys constitutes a generally accepted agriculture management practice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board supports the suggested recommendations made by Mr. Mickel in his report and encourages Mr. DiPaola to implement them.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board shall forward a copy of this Resolution and supporting documents to Mr. DiPaola, the SADC, the Township of Hamilton and any other individuals or organizations deemed appropriate by the Board within 30 days.

I certify that the above Resolution was unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Mercer County Agricultural Development Board on December 6, 2004.

Daniel Pace, Secretary