

MONMOUTH COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



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2014 Farmland Preservation Program Accomplishments and Year-end Summary

The Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Program is staffed by the Monmouth County Division of Planning and administered by the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board (MCADB) on behalf of the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

- The Farmland Preservation Program and its partners preserved 2 farms through the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program:

Owner	Farm Name	Municipality	Acreage
Cicalese		Colts Neck	15.133
Smith	Baymar Farm	Marlboro	26.996

- In partnership with the MCADB and the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), Monmouth Conservation Foundation acquired 1 easement through the Grants to Nonprofits Program.

Owner	Farm Name	Municipality	Acreage
Conover		Wall	32.733

- The additional 75 acres brought the county's total preserved farmland acreage to 14,836.
- The MCADB passed a final approval resolution to preserve the Kaut property in Millstone Township and expects to receive municipal, Freeholder, and SADC approval in early 2015.
- Staff submitted an application to preserve the Wright farm in Upper Freehold and is awaiting Green Light Approval from SADC.
- The county received Green Light Approval and is currently in the appraisal process to preserve the Thompson farm in Howell Township.
- Staff coordinated with NWS Earle, the Monmouth County Park System and other partners on a potential grant application to the federal Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program for land preservation projects within the vicinity of the military base.

EIGHT YEAR PROGRAM

- Submitted the Kohl 8-year re-enrollment package to the SADC. On hold until metes and bounds descriptions are corrected.



EASEMENT MONITORING

- Farmland Preservation Program staff monitored 164 farms for easement compliance.
- Staff resolved a submission problem with the SADC's electronic monitoring forms.

STEWARDSHIP AND POST-CLOSING MATTERS

- The MCADB and SADC approved a house replacement request for the former Smith farm in Upper Freehold (owned by Freiburger Farms).
- The MCADB adopted a deed of easement interpretation resolution for a proposed brewery at Bullock Farms.
- The MCADB and SADC approved a division of premises request for Killdee farm.
- The MCADB and SADC approved a new division of premises request for the Rue farm.
- Staff obtained \$3,915.50 ancillary cost share reimbursement from the SADC related to The Sycamores LLC deal.
- Staff obtained \$4,794.30 ancillary cost share reimbursement from the SADC related to the Cicalese easement acquisition.
- Monmouth County was named in a lawsuit related to a tax lien on the Jovich (VJ) farm. The judge granted County Counsel's motion to dismiss. The matter was closed and the tax lien redeemed.
- Staff was required to testify at the federal trial of the owner of Diamond Developers at Burke Farm LLC. Expect easement to remain in place.
- Staff continues to coordinate with Department of Engineering, consultant, and the SADC regarding the Sharon Station Road improvement project and its potential impact to the Campanella easement and Upper Freehold's Agricultural Development Area.
- FNA Jersey Lien Services filed a lis pendens on Merrick Farm stemming from a tax lien. Also NJ American Water Co. used the farm as a staging area for a pipe replacement project in violation of our deed. The utility is handling the site restoration.
- The SADC acknowledged that billboards on Killdee Farms LLC are a pre-existing nonagricultural use.
- Upper Freehold Township verified that a municipal road right-of-way does not impact Birch Creek Farm's agricultural easement area.
- The MCADB and the SADC are taking steps to implement pilot program for special events at wineries on preserved farms.
- The MCADB is tracking the SADC's proposed new rules regarding soil disturbance on preserved farms.

RIGHT TO FARM

- Two complaints were filed and went before the MCADB:
 - 1) Lisa Bowers filed a complaint against Angus McDougald. The Board formally dismissed the matter due to the operation's ineligibility as a commercial farm.
 - 2) James Lynott filed a complaint against 148 Main Street LLC, and the board passed resolutions approving the operation as a commercial farm and granting RTF protection for the agricultural activities.
- Three SSAMPs were requested and came before the board in 2014:
 - 1) Monica LaRue re-applied for an SSAMP with the board. The application requested relief for numerous activities, which resulted in the board passing 10 resolutions that approved the

operation as a commercial farm and gave determinations as to the agricultural management practice requests in the application.

- 2) Stephen Deady filed a request for an SSAMP with the board which was brought to a hearing, but no formal resolution was adopted. The matter was tabled until the property owner has established farmland assessment taxation treatment with the Township of Freehold.
 - 3) CLC Farms LLC filed a request for an SSAMP. After numerous hearings, the board determined that the operation is a commercial farm and that the board has jurisdiction to proceed further with the AMP review. This matter will proceed in 2015.
- In 2013, Seven Bridges Winery filed a request for an SSAMP and the board made rulings; however, a jurisdictional issue raised by opposing counsels made it necessary to revisit the application in February 2014. The board passed a resolution confirming MCADB jurisdiction in the matter and formally memorialized the 2013 AMP resolutions at the same meeting.
 - The LaRue and Seven Bridges Winery decisions have been appealed to the SADC and OAL.
 - Staff received approximately 13 inquiries and conducted initial research before determining that the operation or activity was not eligible for protection and could not proceed further.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN AND MASTER PLAN

- Staff prepared and submitted to the SADC the annual update to the *Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan*. Updated documents included the county's target farms list, project areas map, project area forms, and general County Planning Incentive Grant application.
- Staff, with help from a summer intern, created an inventory of community gardens in Monmouth County.
- Staff obtained updated state lands data from NJ DEP.
- Staff and board members participated in the county's master plan update working groups including Agriculture and Economic Development as well as Farmland Preservation and Open Space.

MONMOUTH COUNTY GREENTABLE

- Staff helped organize a June 17th forum on Utilizing Natural Systems to Create Coastal Resiliency.

OUTREACH

- The county issued a press release for the Cicalese closing, highlighted preservation of more than 200 farms in Monmouth County.
- Spoke at the June 30th panel at Monmouth County Library on the Horses in New Jersey.
- Staffed the Sept 20th Open Space Pace event at Freehold Raceway.
- Presented to the Little Silver Garden Club regarding Right to Farm and the work of the MCADB.