

THE COLTS NECK

FARMLAND PRESERVATION BULLETIN

WINTER/SPRING – 2008

**PUBLISHED BY THE
COLTS NECK FARMLAND PRESERVATION
AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

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FORWARD:

THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE OF COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP ISSUES A SEMI-ANNUAL BULLETIN TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN COLTS NECK LANDOWNERS AND THE COMMITTEE. IN THE INTEREST OF EFFICIENCY, THE BULLETIN WILL BE KEPT BRIEF BUT WILL COVER TOPICS THAT THE COMMITTEE BELIEVES WILL BE OF INTEREST AND USEFUL TO COLTS NECK LANDOWNERS. IN ADDITION TO KEEPING LANDOWNERS APPRISED OF LOCAL, COUNTY AND STATE ACTIONS, ISSUES AND OPTIONS RELATED TO THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM, THE BULLETIN WILL COVER FARM BUREAU APPLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION ON AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS AND FARMLAND USE IN GENERAL. QUESTIONS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE ABOVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

COLTS NECK FARMLAND PRESERVED TO DATE

QUIET WINTER FARM (THOMPSON)	64.7 A	CEPP
DUCK HOLLOW FARM (DITTMAR)	89.9 A	CEPP

YELLOW BROOK FARM (MUMFORD) (PRESERVED AS SCHANCK FARM – DITTMAR)	104.1 A	CEPP
MCCRANE FARM	109.9 A	CEPP
BLACKBURN FARM	85.6 A	CEPP
TOURELAY FARM (BARNEY)	45.6 A	DE(S)
EASTMONT ORCHARDS (BARCLAY)	97.5 A	DE(S)
COLTS NECK TWP. - FIVE POINT ROAD	27.3 A	DE(S)
VICTORY STABLES (SESSA)	29.8 A	CEPP
MEDLIN FARM	7.0 A	PIGP
COOLEY- FARM	8.0 A	PIGP
COHEN FARM	13.0 A	PIGP
DEGROOT/SINDLINGER (CLOSED DURING AUGUST 2006)	23.4 A	PIGP
SMITH FARM - (CLOSED – FEE SIMPLE) – TOWNSHIP HAS WITHDRAWN APPLICATION TO THE SADC AND WILL PRESERVE THE PROPERTY BY DEED RESTRICTION.	11.0 A	DE(S)
GREEN FIELDS FARM (PURDEY)	110.1 A	DE(S)
HAMMOND’S NURSERY - (CERTIFIED BY THE SADC AND PENDING)	20.0A	PIGP
AMDUR FARM – (CERTIFIED BY THE SADC AND PENDING)	45.0A	PIGP
TOTAL ACREAGE PRESERVED	891.9 A	

CEPP – County Easement Purchase Program, PIGP – Planning Incentive Grant Program, DE(S) – Direct Easement State

WHAT’S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN.....?

PENDING APPLICATIONS UNDER THE PIG PROGRAM

TWO APPLICATIONS UNDER THE PIG PROGRAM, AMDUR AND HAMMOND TOTALING 65 ACRES HAVE BEEN CERTIFIED BY THE STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (SADC) AND ARE EXPECTED TO CLOSE SOON. IN ADDITION TO THESE APPLICATIONS, THE COMMITTEE IS WORKING WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER APPLICANTS WHO DESIRE TO PRESERVE THEIR FARMS AND HAVE SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS.

INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR COLTS NECK LANDOWNERS

THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE PERIODICALLY HOLDS INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS CONSIDERING APPLYING TO THE PRESERVATION PROGRAM. THESE SESSIONS ARE TYPICALLY HELD IN THE EVENING. ON HAND ARE REPRESENTATIVES FROM STATE, COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP TO ANSWER SPECIFIC QUESTIONS. IN ADDITION, TAX AND ESTATE PLANNING EXPERTS ARE INVITED TO EXPLAIN VARIOUS TAX AND FINANCIAL OPTIONS WHICH MAY BE AVAILABLE UNDER CURRENT LAW. AS OF THIS PRINTING, WE ARE TENTATIVELY LOOKING AT AN INFORMATION DINNER IN EARLY MAY. PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS LISTED ON THE FRONT OF THIS BULLETIN FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS.

THE TOWNSHIP WITHDRAWS THE APPLICATION TO THE SADC TO PRESERVE THE SMITH FARM

THE TOWNSHIP WITHDREW ITS APPLICATION TO THE SADC TO PRESERVE THE SMITH FARM BECAUSE OF RECENT POLICY CHANGES BY THE SADC REGARDING FEE SIMPLE PURCHASES BY MUNICIPALITIES. THE SADC HAS REDUCED THE AMOUNT THAT THEY WILL CONTRIBUTE TOWARD THE PRESERVATION WHICH IN TURN DECREASES THE AMOUNT THE COUNTY WILL CONTRIBUTE SO THAT THE TOWNSHIP WOULD RECEIVE APPROXIMATELY \$200,000.00 LESS THAN ANTICIPATED PRIOR TO THE POLICY CHANGE. THIS IS THEN COMPOUNDED BY THE NEW REQUIREMENT BY SADC THAT THEY BE REIMBURSED IN AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO 60% OF ANY PROFIT THAT MAY BE REALIZED WHEN THE TOWNSHIP SELLS THE PRESERVED PROPERTY IN THE FUTURE. THESE POLICY CHANGES MAKE IT UNATTRACTIVE FOR MUNICIPALITIES TO PRESERVE SELECTED PROPERTIES VIA THE FEE SIMPLE ROUTE. INSTEAD, THE TOWNSHIP PLANS TO PRESERVE THE SMITH FARM VIA DEED RESTRICTIONS BEFORE SELLING THE PROPERTY IN THE FUTURE.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS POLICY CHANGE BY THE SADC APPLIES ONLY TO MUNICIPALITIES SEEKING TO PRESERVE LAND VIA THE FEE SIMPLE ROUTE. IT DOES NOT IMPACT INDIVIDUAL LAND OWNERS WHO ARE SEEKING TO PRESERVE THEIR LAND VIA THE STANDARD PROCEDURES.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN ELEMENT OF THE COLTS NECK MASTER PLAN

AS MENTIONED IN THE WINTER/SPRING 2007 ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN, THE TOWNSHIP WAS REQUIRED TO DEVELOP A FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN ELEMENT AS PART OF THEIR MASTER PLAN THAT WILL BE COORDINATED WITH THE MONMOUTH COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (MCADB) AND REVIEWED BY THE SADC AS A PREREQUISITE FOR SADC FUNDING. THIS PLAN HAS BEEN DEVELOPED AND SUBJECTED TO PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AUGUST 14, 2007 AND NOVEMBER 30, 2007 RESPECTIVELY. THE PLAN IS CURRENTLY BEING REVIEWED BY THE COUNTY AND THE SADC AND WILL BE GIVEN FINAL APPROVAL BY THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE AFTER COMMENTS ARE RECEIVED FROM THESE ORGANIZATIONS.

SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE COLTS NECK PLAN

CONSISTENCY WITH THE SADC STRATEGIC TARGETING PROJECT

THE PRIMARY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SADC STRATEGIC TARGETING PROJECT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. TO COORDINATE FARMLAND PRESERVATION/AGRICULTURAL RETENTION EFFORTS WITH PROACTIVE PLANNING INITIATIVES.
2. TO UPDATE/CREATE MAPS USED TO TARGET PRESERVATION EFFORTS; AND
3. TO COORDINATE FARMLAND PRESERVATION EFFORTS WITH OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION INVESTMENTS.

THE SADC'S STRATEGIC TARGETING PROJECT PROVIDES THE FOUNDATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S SMART GROWTH PLAN AND HELPS SECURE THE LAND BASE THAT WILL SUSTAIN THE GARDEN STATE'S AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY INTO THE FUTURE. THE PROJECT'S FIRST GOAL ASSISTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN BY COORDINATING MUNICIPAL, COUNTY AND OTHER REGIONAL PLANS AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS WITH THE STATE PLAN'S CENTERS AND PLANNING AREAS PRIORITIES. FURTHERMORE, THE STRATEGIC TARGETING OF FARMLAND FOR PRESERVATION HELPS AVOID CONFLICTS WITH OTHER TYPES OF INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS, SUCH AS HIGHWAY AND WASTEWATER SYSTEM EXPANSIONS. THE PROJECT PROVIDES FARMERS, LANDOWNERS AND DEVELOPERS WITH MORE PREDICTABLE INFORMATION, ACCOMMODATING LIMITED DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT SACRIFICING THE MOST PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL SOILS. THE STRATEGIC TARGETING PROJECT INCORPORATES THE LATEST GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) TECHNOLOGY AND DATA WHILE SUPPORTING OTHER RELATED STRATEGIES TRANSCENDING POLITICAL BOUNDARIES, SUCH AS GROUND WATER AND WATERSHED PLANNING.

TARGETED FARMS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE TOWNSHIP'S FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM ARE ALL FARMS WITHIN THE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS (ADAs) THAT MEET THE SADC MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (NJAC 2:76-6.20).

COLTS NECK AGRICULTURAL BASE

THE TABLE BELOW SHOWS THE AMOUNT OF COLTS NECK'S AGRICULTURAL LAND FROM 1960 THROUGH 2007. THE TOWNSHIP HAS LOST 8,485 ACRES OF FARMLAND OR 41% OF THE TOWNSHIP LAND AREA, DURING THIS 47 YEAR PERIOD. TODAY, ONLY 5,316 ACRES OR 26% OF THE TOTAL TOWNSHIP LAND ARE DEVOTED TO AGRICULTURAL USES. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT APPROXIMATELY 5,000 ACRES OR 24% OF THE TOWNSHIP CONSISTS OF US NAVAL AMMUNITIONS STATION EARLE. WHEN EARL IS EXCLUDED FROM THE CALCULATIONS, THE PERCENTAGE OF TOWNSHIP LAND DEVOTED TO AGRICULTURE INCREASES TO APPROXIMATELY 34% IN 2007. HOWEVER, THE MESSAGE THAT THIS TABLE CONVEYS IS THAT FARMLAND PRESERVATION IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IN COLTS NECK IF WE ARE TO SLOW AND EVENTUALLY HALT THIS DISTURBING SHRINKAGE OF OUR AGRICULTURAL BASE — AND RURAL CHARACTER.

COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP FARMLAND

YEAR	ACREAGE	PERCENT
1960	13,801	67
1969	9,281	45
1977	8,374	40
1983	8,100	39
1989	7,498	36
2002	6,082	29
2007	5,316	26

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

INCLUDED IN THE PLAN IS THE DEFINITION OF THE MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM. WHILE THESE HAVE BEEN COVERED IN PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE BULLETIN, IT IS BELIEVED TO BE SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT TO BE INCLUDED AGAIN IN THIS ISSUE. LANDOWNERS NEED TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THESE CRITERIA BECAUSE THE SADC HAS LIMITED FUNDS AND WILL NOT SUPPORT ANY APPLICATION WHICH DOES NOT MEET OR EXCEED THESE CRITERIA. FURTHERMORE, APPLICATIONS WHICH MEET THESE MINIMUM CRITERIA WILL BE RANKED WITH OTHER APPLICATIONS AND THE LARGER FARMS WITH HIGH PERCENTAGES OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS WILL GENERALLY RECEIVE A HIGHER RANKING THAN SMALLER FARMS WITH LESS DESIRABLE SOILS.

FOR FARMS TEN ACRES OR LESS IN SIZE, THE FARM MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

1. PRODUCE AGRICULTURAL OR HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS OF AT LEAST \$2500.00 ANNUALLY;
2. AT LEAST 75% OF THE LAND IS TILLABLE OR A MINIMUM OF FIVE ACRES WHICHEVER IS LESS;
3. AT LEAST 75% OF THE LAND OR A MINIMUM OF FIVE ACRES, WHICHEVER IS LESS, CONSISTS OF SOILS THAT ARE CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL OR HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTION; AND,
4. THE LAND MUST EXHIBIT DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL.

FOR FARMS GREATER THAN TEN ACRES, IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM, THE FARM MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. AT LEAST 50% OF THE LAND OR A MINIMUM OF 25 ACRES, WHICHEVER IS LESS, IS TILLABLE;
2. AT LEAST 50% OF THE LAND OR A MINIMUM OF 25 ACRES, WHICHEVER IS LESS, CONSISTS OF SOILS CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL OR HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTION; AND,
3. THE LAND MUST EXHIBIT DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL.

ALL COLTS NECK FARMS LOCATED IN THE COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AREA (ADA) FOR THE TOWNSHIP AND MEETING THESE MINIMUM SADC CRITERIA ARE INVITED TO CONSIDER APPLYING FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPAL PIG, OR IF GREATER THAN 25 ACRES, THE COUNTY PIG DISCUSSED IN THE NEXT SECTION BELOW.

FOR FARMS CONSIDERING THE SADC DIRECT PURCHASE PROGRAM, THE FARMS MUST MEET THE MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THE STATE FOR THIS PROGRAM.

MONMOUTH COUNTY ISSUES

FARM CLOSINGS DURING 2007

DURING THE YEAR 2007, MONMOUTH COUNTY CLOSED ON A TOTAL OF 30 FARMS INVOLVING A TOTAL OF 1011 ACRES. THIS BRINGS THE TOTAL ACRES PRESERVED TO DATE FOR THE COUNTY TO 11,058 ACRES.

THE 2007 CLOSINGS FOR THE COUNTY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

No.	TOWNSHIP	No. FARMS	TOTAL ACRES
1	UPPER FREEHOLD	10	367.934
2	MANALAPAN	6	241.611
3	HOWELL	6	139.339
4	MILLSTONE	5	137.438
5	FREEHOLD	2	65.229
6	HOLMDEL	1	59.440
	TOTAL	30	1010.99

AS CAN BE SEEN, COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP HAD NO CLOSINGS DURING 2007. WE HAD EXPECTED THAT AMDUR AND HAMMOND WOULD HAVE CLOSED IN 2007, BUT ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES HAVE CAUSED THEM TO BE DELAYED UNTIL EARLY 2008.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE SHOWS HOW THE COSTS OF THE 2007 FARMLAND PRESERVATION CLOSINGS IN MONMOUTH COUNTY WERE SHARED BY THE STATE, THE COUNTY AND THE INVOLVED MUNICIPALITIES.

TOWNSHIP	STATE	COUNTY	MUNICIPAL	TOTAL
UPPER FREEHOLD	\$5,954,065	\$2,437,305	\$1,624,900	\$10,016,270
MANALAPAN	\$2,659,910	\$1,063,964	\$1,223,294	\$4,947,168
HOWELL	\$2,926,358	\$1,170,543	\$771,968	\$4,868,869
MILLSTONE	\$2,094,658	\$837,863	\$558,575	\$3,491,096
FREEHOLD			\$61,347	\$61,347
HOLMDEL	\$1,651,493	\$660,597	\$440,398	\$2,752,488
TOTALS	\$15,286,484	\$6,170,272	\$4,680,482	\$26,137,238
% OF TOTAL	58.5	23.6	17.9	

MONMOUTH COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN EXCERPTS – PRELIMINARY DRAFT

ACCORDING TO THE UNITED STATES CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE, MONMOUTH COUNTY HAD 139,465 ACRE OF FARMLAND IN 1954. BY 2002, THIS TOTAL HAD DECLINED 66% TO 47,198 ACRES, A LOSS OF 92,267 ACRES OF FARMLAND. DESPITE LOSING A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF FARMLAND ACREAGE, THE MONMOUTH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY REMAINS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE COUNTY'S ECONOMY AND A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE STATE'S AND THE COUNTRY'S FARMING INDUSTRY.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MONMOUTH COUNTY'S FARMING INDUSTRY CAN BE SEEN NOT ONLY AT THE STATE LEVEL BUT ALSO AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL AS MONMOUTH IS A TOP 100 COUNTY IN SEVERAL CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE CATEGORIES. IN 2002, THE COUNTY WAS 5TH IN THE UNITED STATES FOR ACRES OF CHINESE CABBAGE, 19TH FOR ACRES OF EGG PLANT, 25TH FOR SOD HARVESTED, AND 34TH FOR ACRES OF BELL PEPPERS. MONMOUTH WAS 47TH IN THE COUNTRY FOR VALUE OF NURSERY, GREENHOUSE, FLORICULTURAL AND SOD PRODUCTION. IT WAS 49TH IN THE US FOR HORSE AND PONY INVENTORY, 90TH FOR BLUEBERRIES HARVESTED FOR SALE, AND 94TH FOR TOMATOES. IT WAS ALSO 81ST IN THE VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD DIRECTLY TO INDIVIDUALS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

DESPITE NATIONAL PROMINENCE IN NUMEROUS AGRICULTURAL CATEGORIES, SEVERAL SECTORS OF MONMOUTH'S FARMING INDUSTRY HAS SHOWN A MARKED DECLINE IN THE LAST FEW DECADES. IN 1959, MONMOUTH COUNTY HAD 510 POULTRY FARMS AND 58 DAIRY FARMS COMPARED TO 21 POULTRY FARMS AND 1 DAIRY IN 1997 AND 8 POULTRY FARMS AND NO DAIRIES IN

2002. COMPETITION FROM OTHER AREAS, LOW COMMODITY PRICES, AND HIGH PRODUCTION COSTS HAVE ALL CONTRIBUTED TO THE DECLINE.

WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO PROJECT THE FUTURE WITH THE MANY VARIABLES IMPACTING THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM – LANDOWNER WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE, REAL ESTATE VALUES, STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL FUNDING, AND, PUBLIC SUPPORT, THE COUNTY HAS DEVELOPED A ONE –YEAR, FIVE-YEAR AND TEN-YEAR SET OF GOALS BY MUNICIPALITY FOR THE COUNTY. THESE GOALS, WHICH BUILD UPON LAND ALREADY PRESERVED, ARE SUMMARIZED IN THE TABLE BELOW:

MUNICIPALITY	TOTAL MUNI ACRES	AG ACRES (2006 TAX DATA)	PERM. PRES. AG ACRES AS OF 12/31/06	1 YEAR GOAL (ACRES)	5 YEAR GOAL (ACRES)	10 YEAR GOAL (ACRES)
ABERDEEN	3,488	139	0	0	0	0
COLTS NECK	20,288	5,179	813	824	1,100	1,400
FARMINGDALE	339	15	0	0	0	0
FREEHOLD TWP.	23,680	2,907	14	35	235	335
HAZLET	3,584	20	0	0	0	0
HOLMDEL	11,456	1,475	190	249	340	340
HOWELL	39,744	6,043	280	569	950	1,450
MANALAPAN	19,744	4,111	606	723	1,000	1,300
MARLBORO	19,398	2,425	167	212	500	600
MIDDLETOWN	26,291	1,839	0	75	150	175
MILLSTONE	23,923	9,242	560	1,137	2,100	2,750
NEPTUNE TWP.	5,120	30	0	0	0	0
OCEAN	7,168	50	0	0	0	0
ROOSEVELT	1,235	417	257	257	290	290
RUMSON	3,328	27	0	0	0	0
SHREWSBURY BOROUGH	1,472	14	0	0	0	0
TINTON FALLS	9,696	417	0	0	0	0
UPPER FREEHOLD	30,368	18,988	7,091	7,712	9,000	10,000
WALL	19,846	1,984	0	0	100	200
WEST LONG BRANCH	1,811	14	0	0	0	0
COUNTY TOTAL		55,400*	9,978	11,793	15,765	18,840

- FARMLAND ASSESSED ACREAGE OF LISTED TOWNS DOESN'T ADD UP TO COUNTY TOTAL SINCE A FEW ASSESSED PARCELS ARE INCLUDED FROM NONLISTED MUNICIPALITIES.

OF THE NINE MUNICIPALITIES WITH SIGNIFICANT PRESERVATION PROGRAMS, COLTS NECK RANKS 5TH (27%) IN TERMS OF THE PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE FARMLAND PLANNED TO BE PRESERVED IN 10 YEARS. UPPER FREEHOLD LEADS THE MUNICIPALITIES WITH A PLANNED 10 YEAR GOAL OF 52.7%.

SADC ISSUES

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A “TARGETED FARM” AND AN “ELIGIBLE FARM”, AND HOW DO THEY RELATE TO THE SADC NEW MINIMUM QUALITY STANDARDS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY?

THE SADC NEW MINIMUM QUALITY STANDARDS MUST BE MET TO QUALIFY FOR STATE COST-SHARE FUNDING. THE NEW REGULATIONS ALSO MANDATE THAT FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW COUNTY PIG PROGRAM, EACH COUNTY MUST SUBMIT WITH ITS ANNUAL APPLICATION FOR

FUNDING A LIST OF “TARGETED FARMS”. A “TARGETED FARM” IS A SPECIFIC PROPERTY CONTAINED WITHIN AN APPROVED PROJECT AREA THAT A COUNTY MAY SEEK TO SOLICIT FOR PRESERVATION THROUGH THE COUNTY PIG PROGRAM. FOR TARGETED FARMS TO RECEIVE SADC COST-SHARE FUNDING, THE NEW REGULATIONS MANDATE THAT, IN ADDITION TO MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS, THEY MUST ALSO QUALIFY AS “ELIGIBLE FARMS” (N.J.A.C. 2:76-17.2). AN “ELIGIBLE FARM” IS A TARGETED FARM THAT HAS AN INDIVIDUAL RANK SCORE (PURSUANT TO N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.16) THAT IS EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN 70 PERCENT OF THE COUNTY’S AVERAGE QUALITY SCORE OF ALL FARMS GRANTED PRELIMINARY APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE THROUGH THE COUNTY EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM AND/OR THE COUNTY PIG PROGRAM WITHIN THE PREVIOUS THREE FISCAL YEARS. THE COUNTY’S AVERAGE QUALITY SCORE WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE SADC ANNUALLY.

WHAT IF THROUGH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS A COUNTY HAS INCLUDED FARMS ON THE “TARGETED FARMS” LIST THAT DO NOT MEET SADC MINIMUM QUALITY STANDARDS?

IN SOME RARE CASES, BECAUSE OF SPECIAL LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS, SOME SMALL FARMS MAY BE IDENTIFIED AS IMPORTANT FOR PRESERVATION. IN THESE CASES, WHILE THE FARMS MAY BE INCLUDED ON THE COUNTY’S “TARGETED FARMS” LIST, BECAUSE THEY DO NOT MEET THE MINIMUM QUALITY STANDARDS, THE SADC WILL NOT COST-SHARE AND THE COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITY WILL ALONE BE REQUIRED TO BEAR THE COST OF PRESERVATION.

2008 FARMLAND PRESERVATION FUNDING REQUEST TO THE GARDEN STATE PRESERVATION TRUST (GSPT)

THE 2008 COUNTY EASEMENT PURCHASE GRANT LIST INCLUDES ALL ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS IN THE FY2008 COUNTY EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM IN PRIORITY ORDER OF RANKING. FARMS WILL BE FUNDED IN RANK ORDER UNTIL AVAILABLE FUNDING (\$45.15 MILLION) IS EXHAUSTED. CURRENT PROJECTIONS ESTIMATE THE REQUESTED APPROPRIATION WILL FUND THE PRESERVATION OF THE TOP-RANKED 57 FARMS. THE FINAL LIST OF FARMS TO BE PRESERVED, HOWEVER, IS DEPENDENT ON COUNTY APPROVAL OF FUNDING FOR EACH FARM AND SADC FINAL APPROVALS IN JUNE, AND THEREFORE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

THE 2008 PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM LISTS MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES THAT HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR ADDITIONAL PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT FUNDING (\$15.375 MILLION) TO CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE PRESERVATION OF LARGE BLOCKS OF FARMLAND IN PROJECT AREAS THEY HAVE IDENTIFIED.

IN ADDITION, THE STATE HAS BUDGETED \$30.6 MILLION FOR 2008 STATE ACQUISITIONS FOR THE SADC TO DIRECTLY ACQUIRE FARMLAND OR THE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TO FARMS.

USEFUL INTERNET LINKS

THE FOLLOWING ARE SELECTED INTERNET LINKS THAT ARE PROVIDED HERE TO ASSIST COLTS NECK LANDOWNERS DESIRING ACCESS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELATING TO FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL ISSUES:

STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (SADC) – <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/sadc.htm>

NJ FARM BUREAU – <http://www.njfb.org/>

THE AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST’S WEB SITE (www.farmlandinfo.org), AND

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY’S WEB SITE (www.nature.org)