



NEWS

New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee

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Upper Pittsgrove First in the State to Hit 10,000 Acres Under New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program

UPPER PITTS GROVE TWP. – Agriculture Secretary Douglas H. Fisher today announced that Upper Pittsgrove is the first municipality in New Jersey to reach 10,000 acres of farmland preserved under New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program.

“The permanent protection of 10,000 acres of farmland – nearly half of Upper Pittsgrove's agricultural lands – is a remarkable achievement that will ensure the Township will remain one of New Jersey's leading agricultural municipalities and will continue to provide opportunity to the next generation of farmers for years to come,” said Secretary Fisher.

Secretary Fisher made the announcement at William and Diane Brooks' home farm on Garrison Road, which they preserved in 1996. The Brooks family, including son Michael Brooks, farms about 1,400 acres in Salem County – nearly all of it preserved. In March, Michael Brooks preserved a 65-acre farm on Cedar Lane – 58 acres in Upper Pittsgrove and the remainder in Pittsgrove Township – that lifted Upper Pittsgrove over the 10,000-acre threshold.

Upper Pittsgrove ranks first in the state for highest municipal concentration of farmland, with 83 percent of its land farmland-assessed, and second for total land (20,859 acres) devoted to agricultural or horticultural uses, according to 2014 farmland assessment data. The land supports diverse agricultural operations, including grain, forage, fresh market and processed vegetables, nursery, fruit and dairy.

The State Agriculture Development Committee administers New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program and promotes innovative approaches to maintaining the viability of agriculture. More than 2,400 farms covering approximately 226,000 acres have been preserved under the State Farmland Preservation Program.

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