

April 26, 2007 SADC Meeting Highlights

Secretary's Report

Secretary Kuperus pointed to recent media attention regarding the environmental importance of reducing our "carbon footprint," noting how that applies to buying locally grown produce and reducing the miles that food needs to travel to consumers.

Executive Director's Report

The SADC's 2006 annual report has been distributed and posted on its website at www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/annualreport2006.pdf.

The total 138 closings of preserved farms so far this fiscal year has already surpassed last year's 136 closings. The efforts of SADC staff, the counties, planning incentive grant municipalities and nonprofits in accomplishing this were recognized.

Brian Schilling, Associate Director of the Food Policy Institute at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences at Rutgers, was welcomed as the newest SADC member. He replaces Dr. Daniel Rossi as the representative for Executive Dean Robert M. Goodman.

Equine Rules

The SADC approved proposing three rules that would extend right-to-farm protection to equine service activities, such as boarding, keeping, rehabilitation and training of horses; establish an agricultural management practice for equine activities that sets the standards with which equine farms would need to comply to be eligible for right-to-farm protection; and specify the equine activities permitted on preserved farms and the conditions under which those activities will be permissible. The proposals will be submitted to the New Jersey Register for publication and public comment.

Federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program Grant 2007 Request

The SADC approved submitting a grant proposal to obtain funding under the 2007 Federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program to help preserve 13 farms totaling 1,696 acres under the nonprofit program and potentially additional projects under the State Acquisition Program. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has allocated a total of \$4.61 million to New Jersey for federal fiscal year 2007.

Annual Review of Planning Incentive Grant Applications

The SADC approved the annual review of planning incentive grant project area applications and a \$15.375 million appropriation recommendation for FY2008. Highly performing municipalities and counties were recommended for supplemental funding only in cases where farms were preacquired or are under contract, with certified values or final approvals, or where imminent closings are anticipated. Staff made an effort to avoid reallocation of funding from new projects areas in the 2007 round and limited reallocation of funding from 2006 round project areas unless there was no substantial application activity.

2008 SADC Appropriation Request

The SADC approved an approximately \$97 million farmland-preservation appropriation request for FY2008. The request includes \$68.7 million in Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT) funding, \$26.3 million in reprogrammed funds from unsuccessful projects and other unexpended funds, and \$2 million in revenues from resales of fee simple projects. This request represents the

SADC's final major GSPT appropriations request and will deplete all remaining acquisition funding. The request is scheduled to be considered by the GSPT at its May 9th meeting.

2007 SADC Appraisal Handbook

The SADC reviewed proposed changes to its 2007 Appraisal Handbook, including amendments to the appraisal order checklist, clarification regarding the use of update letters in place of appraisals and addition of the federal definition of market value. The proposed changes will be circulated to county agriculture development boards and approved appraisers for comment, and the Appraisal Handbook is expected to return to the SADC for consideration for adoption in May.

2008 Nonprofit Grant Round

The SADC received 27 applications from four nonprofit organizations under this application round. The SADC approved the appropriation of \$6 million for the round, with a maximum of \$1.5 million to each of the nonprofit organizations. Each nonprofit will be required to pursue its highest-ranked applications until its \$1.5 million grant has been expended.

Support for Federal 2007 Farm Bill

The SADC approved a resolution urging New Jersey's Congressional delegation to ensure that the 2007 Farm Bill reflects principles embodied in resolutions passed at the State Agricultural Convention in February, and recognizes the DeLauro-Gilchrest bill as the legislation that best addresses New Jersey's concerns on the Farm Bill.

Gloucester County

The SADC amended its certification of a municipally approved eight-year program for the Boarts farm in Harrison and Mantua to include an inadvertently omitted block and lot.

The SADC approved amending Woolwich Township's planning incentive grant for the Southeast Project Area (2006A round) to add one farm that had been omitted from the original list of farms because it was under contract with a developer at the time.

The SADC granted final approval to the Shiveler Farm in Logan Township under the direct easement purchase program.

Hunterdon County

The SADC approved amendments to Delaware Township's two planning incentive grant project areas to add four farms within the existing Sandbrook-Headquarters District (2000A round) project area and 9 farms to the Covered Bridge/Dilts Corner District (2001A round) project area.

The SADC granted final approval to the Emmett III farm in Tewksbury Township under the 2003A planning incentive grant round.

Morris County

The SADC granted final approval to the Turnquist Farm in Washington Township under the 2002A planning incentive grant round.

Passaic County

The SADC approved allocating \$1.2 million from a 2004 emergency appropriation for the Kuehm farms toward preservation of a 15-acre parcel of the farm now owned by Passaic County under the county easement purchase program and requesting reappropriation of the remaining \$3.525 million from the prior emergency appropriation to the State Acquisition Program to be earmarked

for preservation of the 27-acre parcel of the remaining Kuehm farm, subject to a number of conditions.

Somerset County

The SADC approved a request to construct an agricultural labor housing unit on the Osterman farm in Hillsborough Township.

Warren County

The SADC granted final approvals to the Hamlen Farm, Greenwich Township, under the 2000A planning incentive grant round and the Bromm/Meris Farm in Knowlton Township under the 2004A planning incentive grant round.

The SADC granted preliminary approval to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation-Sigler farm in the 2007 nonprofit grant round.

The SADC granted amended final approval to the Sams Farm in Mansfield Township under the 2006 county easement purchase round to reflect the removal of two 6-acre severable exceptions from their application and the addition of 12 acres.