

State Agriculture Development Committee Meeting Summary July 26, 2007

Chairman's Report

Secretary Kuperus noted the Peach Media Day event he attended at Terhune Orchards that week as a good example of efforts to highlight individual agricultural commodities and why consumers, as well as retailers such as restaurants, should buy Jersey Fresh products. While last year 350 restaurants displayed signs that they offered Jersey Fresh products in season, this year that number has grown to 500 restaurants.

The N.J. Department of Agriculture is working very closely with its congressional delegation on the new Farm Bill and is hopeful it recognizes agriculture in the New Jersey region.

Executive Director's Report

Three resolutions of appreciation recognized the service of two previous SADC members, John Coombs and Karen Anderson, as well as Peter Cantu who was the longtime chairman of the Middlesex County Agriculture Board.

The SADC completed 174 closing for fiscal year 2007, which is a substantial increase over the past few years. Susan Craft thanked staff, the counties and the nonprofit organizations for their part in ensuring timely closings.

Appointment of Vice Chairman

Gary Mount was appointed vice chairman of the SADC.

Determination of Average Quality Score Values

The SADC adopted standards for determining eligible farms under the county planning incentive grant program and for determining priority and alternate farms under the State Acquisition Program.

FY2009 Program Funding Allocations

The SADC approved program funding allocations for FY2009, under the assumption that it will receive \$73 million of the \$200 million preservation bond question that is expected to be placed on this November's ballot. If the ballot question is voted down, the funding allocations will have to be re-evaluated based on any alternate funding scenario. The funding breakdown is as follows: \$3.65 million for administrative costs; \$48 million for the county farmland preservation program; \$15 million for the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program and \$6.35 million for the Nonprofit Grant Program.

The SADC also approved a \$2 million base grant for counties participating in the county planning incentive grant program and a competitive grant fund of \$12 million to \$15 million, with any county eligible for a maximum \$5 million combined total.

Nonprofit Program – 2008 Application Deadline

A deadline of December 1, 2007 was approved for the Nonprofit Grant Program.