

## **State Agriculture Development Committee Meeting Summary December 6, 2007**

### **Chairperson's Report**

At a recent conference in Seattle, the principal planner for the establishment of the Calgary Farmers Markets detailed the process for establishing the market, which has been so successful that it generated \$100 million in its first three years and has become the focal point for the city's redevelopment efforts. Secretary Kuperus suggested that the SADC look to that and other examples across the country as it prepares for its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Farmland Preservation Summit, which will be held in March and focus on agricultural economic viability.

Secretary Kuperus noted passage of the November 6<sup>th</sup> public question that will provide \$73 million for farmland preservation efforts in FY09.

### **Executive Director's Report**

The SADC has held two of three planned workshops for counties and municipalities to clear up survey issues that can hold up farmland preservation closings.

The SADC has approved a new Chief of Legal Affairs to replace Marci Green, who left to accept a position with the Department of Environmental Protection. Brian D. Smith, an attorney from Warren County who has worked in the Office of the Attorney General and in private practice, will join the SADC on January 2.

Under the FY2009 nonprofit grant program, the SADC received applications from nine nonprofits seeking to preserve 49 farms totaling more than 5,000 acres.

### **Planning Incentive Grant Program – Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update Report**

SADC staff has worked very closely with the 18 county partners and more than 50 municipalities that have expressed interest in pursuing the planning incentive grant process. Two comprehensive farmland preservation draft plans have been received, and staff also has reviewed a number of drafts submitted over the past few months. Sussex and Somerset counties have completed their submission process and another 13 county plans are expected by the December 17<sup>th</sup> deadline, as well as 20-40 municipal plans and application packages. Many counties have decided to pursue the SADC's matching grant program that offers up to \$30,000 to offset the costs associated with planning work under the county planning incentive grant program.

### **Soil and Water Conservation Cost Share Grants**

The SADC approved 13 applications for soil and water conservation grants totaling \$292,384.40. This leaves a balance of \$342,644.65 for future soil and water conservation grants.