

Ridge Administration Announces 35 More Farms To Be Preserved

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Agriculture Secretary Samuel E. Hayes Jr. announced the approval of 35 farms — totaling nearly 4,000-acres — for preservation.

The announcement brings the total number of farms preserved since January to 253 — the most preserved during any year since Pennsylvania's farmland-preservation program began in 1989.

"In Pennsylvania, we're serious about protecting agriculture land, and preserving the proud and productive heritage of Pennsylvania's 60,000 farm families," Hayes said. "Thanks to the leadership of Gov. Ridge's extraordinary 'Growing Greener' initiative, and the hard work of the state and county farmland-preservation boards, Pennsylvania is preserving farmland at a pace greater than any other state in the nation."

"Gov. Ridge set the tone during January's Farm Show, when he challenged state and county farmland-preservation boards to protect 100 farms in the '100 days of Growing Greener' — from Farm Show to Earth Day.

"Pennsylvania's agriculture community eagerly answered the call — preserving 101 farms, totaling 12,400-acres.

"During the fall, the preservation board set a goal to preserve 100 more. We did, and then some. In fact, we've protected more farms in Pennsylvania this year than during any year since the program began. And you can bet more will be preserved in De-

ember.

"Already, Pennsylvania has preserved more farms than any state in the nation."

Created in 1989, the Pennsylvania Agricultural Land Preservation Board oversees the state Farmland Preservation Program, which allows the state and counties to purchase development rights, referred to as easements, to guarantee that farms will remain as agricultural land.

Including the nine county-owned easements in Lancaster, Perry, Westmoreland, and York counties, the Farmland Preservation Program has protected 1,446 farms — totaling 177,803-acres — since 1989.

In addition, the state Agriculture Land Preservation Board also approved Allegheny County as the 51st county to enter the state's Farmland Preservation Program.

Ridge signed the "Growing Greener" initiative into law on Dec. 15, 1999, investing nearly \$650 million in Pennsylvania's environment — including \$100 million for farmland preservation — over five years.

To celebrate the largest environmental investment in Pennsylvania history — and to begin to get these dollars into our communities as quickly as possible — Ridge launched the "100 Days of Growing Greener" at the Pennsylvania Farm Show in January.

In May, the General Assembly passed Gov. Ridge's 2000-2001 budget, which includes \$135 million to fund the second year of the five-year "Growing

Greener" initiative. The funds come from \$100 million in new money from the General Fund and \$35 million redirected from existing funding sources.

For a list of farms preserved in 2000, or for more information on Pennsylvania's Farmland Preservation Program, contact the state Agriculture Department's Press Office, or visit the department's homepage through the Pennsylvania PowerPort at www.state.pa.us or directly at www.pda.state.pa.us.

Berks County

- Mervin and Rhoda Brubaker, Marion Township, 163.5-acres, \$327,000.

- Henry and Kathryn Eyrich, Oley Township, 194.3-acres, \$388,600.

- Henry and Kathryn Eyrich, Oley Township, 94.7-acres, \$189,400.

- Henry and Kathryn Eyrich, Oley Township, 46.2-acres, \$92,400.

- Ricky and Miriam Manwiller, Heidelberg Township, 84-acres, \$168,000.

- Starr and Donna Miller, Marion and Tulpehocken townships, 79.1-\$158,200.

Bucks County

- Dorothy Trauger, Lee Ann and Walter Kressman Jr., Durham Township, 53-acres, \$302,400.

Butler County

- David, Frank, Michael and John Ragan Farm, Connoquenessing Township, 364.3-acres, \$878,592.

Centre County

- William and Norma Beck,

Walker Township, 101-acres, \$151,000.

- Claude and Linda Homan Farm, Potter Township, 147.9-acres, \$341,000.

Columbia County

- H. Dale Crawford, Mount Pleasant Township, 109-acres, \$109,139.

Dauphin County

- Emily and Dwight Hoffman, Washington Township, 105.8-acres, \$158,970.

- Robert and Jean Rodichok, Gratz Township, 93.5-acres, \$131,382.

- Gerald and Linda Wiest, Lykens Township, 168.6-acres, \$246,302.85.

Franklin County

- Robert and Betty Kershner, Antrim Township, 136.9-acres, \$232,747.

Lancaster County

- Thomas and Martha Ann Henry, Drumore Township, 124.8-acres, \$183,361.

- Lester and Joan Zimmerman, West Cocalico Township, 82.2-acres, \$258,645.

Lebanon County

- Ken and Irene Mase, South Annville and West Cornwall townships, 121.5-acres, \$182,220.

Lehigh County

- John and Linda Folck, Lynn Township, 120.2-acres, \$204,399.

- Harold Handwerk, Lynn Township, 60.8-acres, \$97,240.

Perry County

- John and Sarah Hall, Tuscarora Township, 325.8-acres, \$241,665.

Schuylkill County

- Felix and Lucille Carpenter, Eldred Township, 64.2-acres, \$64,230.

- Donald, Madeline and Kenneth Ruch, West Penn Township, 137.1-acres, \$137,100.

Susquehanna County

- Louis and Natalie Hawley Farm, Bridgewater Township, 397.9-acres, \$320,293.

Westmoreland County

- Stanley Auen, Bell Township, 62.3-acres, \$124,514.

- Joel and Reta Suter, East Huntingdon Township, 50.8-acres, \$101,553.



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