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- Ohio
- Alabama
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- Orange County, California
- Michigan
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- New Jersey
- New York, Metro
- New York, Upstate
- Northern New England
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Texas
- Utah
- Virginia
- Western Central
- Wisconsin
Agricultural Preservation

Brought to you from the

Brandywine Conservancy
Doe Run, Pennsylvania

Tom Daniels
University of Pennsylvania

Julia Freedgood
American Farmland Trust
Agricultural Preservation: Challenges and Opportunities

Professor Tom Daniels
University of Pennsylvania
Distribution of Farms and Land in Farms By Region, 2002

- **West**: 14% Farms, 30% Land
- **North Central**: 37% Farms, 38% Land
- **South**: 43% Farms, 30% Land
- **Northeast**: 6% Farms, 2% Land

USDA, NASS Feb 2003
US Metro Areas, 2000
Concentration of Production

2002

• 144,000 farms = 75% of value of production

2007

• 125,000 farms = 75% of value of production
The Situation

- US is losing more than 1 million acres of farmland each year out of 930 million acres. But most of these acres are in metro counties and are prime farmland.
- Farmers and Ranchers Own Most of the Privately Held Land in America
- Average Age of Farmers and Ranchers is 55
- US Population is 305 million
- Protected Population in 2050 is 420 million
Challenges Farmers Face

• Profitability - Be the low cost producer or find niche market
• Passing the Farm to the Next Generation
• Resisting the Temptation to sell land for development
Goals of Farmland Preservation Programs

- Maintain a critical mass of farms and farmland
- Maintain affordable land prices for farming
- Reliability over time
- Reasonable cost in comparison to benefits
- Sustained public and political support
The Farmland Preservation Package

- Purchase of Development Rights (Public)
- Purchase and donation of conservation easements (Private)
- Comprehensive Plan (legal basis for zoning and identifies land for development and land for preservation)
- Zoning – short to medium term protection
- Capital Improvements Program
- Growth Boundaries
Start with the Comprehensive Plan

- Identify the location, size, and types of farms
- Identify the degree of land fragmentation and proximity of non-farm development
- Identify the value of the agricultural industry
- Figure out where future development should go
- Identify long-term viable farming areas
Agricultural Goals and Objectives

- Goal – Maintain agriculture as an important industry
- Objective: Create an agricultural economic development position (Harford County, MD)
- Goal – Preserve and protect agricultural land from haphazard development
- Objective: Adopt agricultural zoning, urban growth boundaries, purchase and transfer of development rights programs
Implementing the Comp Plan

• Agricultural Zoning
• Urban Growth Boundaries
• Purchase of Development Rights
• Transfer of Development Rights
• Partnering with Land trusts
Agricultural Zoning Options

Agricultural Zones and Permitted Development

- **100 Acre Farm**
- **Residential Lots**
- **Large Lot Agricultural Zoning** (1 lot/25 acres)
- **Area-based Allocation Agricultural Zoning** (1 dwelling/25 acres)
- **Rural Cluster**
  - 1 acre minimum lot size
  - 60% Open Space Preserved
Steps in the Sale or Donation of Development Rights

- Application
- Appraisal
- Offer
- Title search
- Sign and record deed of easement
- Monitoring
Development Rights Sale Example

- 200 acre Farm
  $950,000 Appraised Fair Market Value

$600,000 Appraised Value Restricted to Farming and Open Space

$350,000 Appraised Easement Value and Cash Paid to Farmer
Transferred Development Rights (TDR) Conceptual Overview

Existing Conditions

Conventional Development

TDR Concept

TDR Implementation
TDR- Montgomery County, MD
Benefits to the Community

• Preserved farmland is still ratable
• Better control over the pace and location of development
• Preservation of Open Space (raises non-farm property values)
• Reduction in increase of cost of community services
Growth Management Strategy

- Preserve farmland in large contiguous blocks
- Preserve farmland along parts of growth boundaries
Obstacles to a Successful Farmland Preservation Program

- The creation of “Islands” of preservation
- Excessive cost – over $10,000 per acre on average
- Shortage of Funds $$$
- Confusing farmland preservation with open space preservation
- Lack of a strategy
Federal $$

- 2008 Farm Bill $733 million over 5 years
- 2002 Farm Bill: $985 million in grants to states, local governments, and land trusts for purchasing development rights to farmland.
- The federal government will pay up to 50% of the cost of buying the development rights in perpetuity.
THIS FARMLAND IS PRESERVED IN PERPETUITY BY

The Owner &
Marin Agricultural Land Trust

PRIVATE PROPERTY

NO TRESPASSING
Planning for Agriculture

APA Webcast April 3, 2009
Founded in 1980
Nonprofit membership organization
Dedicated to farmland protection, environmental stewardship and agricultural vitality
Planning for Agriculture (P4A) addresses all three
Planning for Agriculture

- Healthy Farms
- Healthy Food
- Healthy Communities
Goes Beyond Preserving Farmland

To sustaining a viable farming sector that supports

- Economic opportunities
- Public health
- Environmental quality
Benefits of Planning for Ag

- Sustain family farms
- Spur economic development
- Improve food security
- Provide fresh local food and other farm products
- Support fiscal balance
- Protect working lands and green infrastructure
- Retain rural character
Different Strokes for Different Folks

- P4A can be part of comprehensive planning process or growth management plan
- P4A can stand alone as a master plan for agriculture – or for food and agriculture
- P4A can take place at municipal, county and state levels
Where to Start?

Know what you have

Know what you want
Planning Process

Know what you have:

- Research trends and conditions of land use and the economics of agriculture
- Get input from ag community: farmers and ranchers, Coop Extension, Farm Bureau, Farm Credit, etc.
- Conduct a policy audit: local, state & federal policies that affect agriculture
Planning Process

Know what you want:

- Establish local steering committee
- Gather input from stakeholders, especially the farming community: interviews, surveys, listening sessions, focus groups, etc.
- Create a vision
- Set goals to achieve that vision
- Identify policy options to achieve those goals
Typical P4A Elements

- Protect farmland and conserve natural resources
- Avoid land use conflicts
- Apply reasonable regulations
- Encourage economic opportunities
Protect Farmland/Conserve Resources

- Land: crop, pasture, range, forest, etc.
- Soils: prime, unique, statewide important
- Adequate and affordable water
- Unique microclimates
- Air quality
- Habitat
Avoid Land Use Conflicts

Create and strengthen local Right-to-Farm and other ordinances to:

- Protect both current and anticipated farming activities
- Educate community about best management practices
- Notify new neighbors that they are moving in next to a farming business
Apply Reasonable Regulations

- Ensure setbacks, signage & farm-based businesses support local agriculture.
- Allow secondary businesses that support agriculture in agricultural zones.
- Make sure public health regulations don’t prevent value-added farming operations and farmers’ markets.
- Ensure adequate stock of affordable housing for farm labor.
Agricultural Economic Development
Farming requires capital, labor & infrastructure; farmland is part of that infrastructure.

The health of the local economy, especially a strong commercial “core,” is essential to the long-term preservation of agricultural land.
“Main Street” Meets Ag Development

Farms and ranches need the same kinds of support as other businesses:

- Retain existing farms and ranches
- Expand and diversify markets
- Invest in agricultural infrastructure and support services
- Recruit new businesses (and the next generation of farmers)
Local Food System Opportunities

- Regional food infrastructure
- Value added enterprises
- Direct Marketing: farm-to-chef, CSAs, farmers’ markets, farm stands, U-pick, etc.
- Farm-to-school/institution
- Local branding
The Next Generation of Farmers

Remove impediments to entering agriculture

- Provide access to land
- Help with financing
- Offer business training
Balance: Lancaster County Growth Management Plan

Rural Strategy
Lancaster’s Rural Strategy

- Integral to the Growth Management Plan
- More than land use or landscape
- Economic viability was key
Broad View of Farmland Protection

- Protect the Land Base
- Support Ag Economic Development
- Promote Environmental Stewardship
- Maintain Cultural Context
- Ensure Next Generation of Farmers

Vibrant & Sustainable Ag Industry
Goals

Sustain a rural way of life by maintaining

- the integrity of agricultural, natural & historic lands and resources
- the viability of the rural economy
Rural Land Uses Include:

- Agriculture
- Energy generation
- Forestry
- Nature-based tourism
- Outdoor recreation
- Quarrying
- Rural residential
Agriculture is Leading Rural Sector

- 63% of land base
- 11% of economic output
- 20% of jobs

American Farmland Trust
Support a Dynamic Rural Economy

... including the natural resources and support systems needed to maintain the viability of farming, tourism and other resource-based businesses.
County/Township Collaboration

- Support farmland preservation
- Reduce impacts of new development
- Ensure farmers have a voice
- Create an ag development strategy
Support Farmland Preservation

- Increase funding for County PDR program
- Create/fund township PDR programs
- Promote Agricultural Security Areas
- Expand use of TDR
Reduce Scattered Development

- Protect farming in Agricultural Zones
- Guide development to rural centers
- Relieve farmers from nuisance complaints
  - Ensure that ordinances are reasonable and support agriculture
  - Provide property tax relief
Ensure Farmers Have a Voice

- Create township Agricultural Advisory Boards
- Encourage farm family members/retired farmers to be “Agricultural Ambassadors”
- Coordinate with the Blue Ribbon Commission on Lancaster County Agriculture
- Develop a Center for Excellence in Agricultural Innovation
Economic Development Strategy

- Include an Agricultural Economic Development Component in County’s Comprehensive Plan
  - retain traditional livestock agriculture
  - encourage higher-value crops
Economic Development Needs

- Support new agricultural infrastructure
- Brand and market local farm products
- Measure and support the economic impact of the Plain Sect on agriculture and tourism
Value-Added & Agritourism

- Explore biofuels, biomass & other farm-based alternative energies
- Create infrastructure for alternative and value-added agricultural enterprises
- Promote low risk, profitable business models and technology transfer
- Support accessory farm-related uses
Address Accessory On-Farm Businesses

- Permit and encourage on-farm businesses related to agriculture (agritourism, farm stands, methane generation, etc.)
- Strictly control businesses that don’t relate to farming (e.g., furniture manufacturing)
Support the Business of Farming

- Increase farmland preservation funding and freeze protected farm property taxes
- Assist traditional livestock agriculture for processing, packing & distribution infrastructure and develop new markets - Philadelphia, N.Y.C. & D.C.
- Evaluate energy generation on farms, alternative management systems, new products & livestock marketing
Support the Business of Farming

- Farm-friendly ordinances support traditional agriculture AND direct marketing, value-added & agritourism
- Promote procurement of milk and farm products by regional schools and other institutions
Reduce Conflicts Between Ag and Other Land Use

- Use conservation subdivisions to transition from ag to developed areas

- Require minimum setbacks FROM farms in subdivision approvals and deeds

- Require notifying new residents in country code or a right-to-farm ordinance

- Describe agricultural practices in public education materials

- Establish performance standards and guidelines for CAFOs
Increase Conservation Practices

- Support Conservation District’s TA, planning & equipment rental
- Obtain TA and funding for manure digesters, manure products, etc.
- Educate farmers about alternative livestock production
- Adopt stream buffer requirements, etc., to protect water resources
- Educate non-farmers about existing conservation practices
Plan to Sustain Agriculture

Agriculture is more than land use or landscape

- Support farmland protection
- Provide incentives for good land management
- Economic viability is key

“It’s not farmland without farmers”
For more information about American Farmland Trust:
www.farmland.org

For information and technical assistance:
FARMLAND INFORMATION CENTER
www.farmlandinfo.org
(800) 370 - 4879