COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN UPDATE

PREPARED BY

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The original document was appropriately signed and sealed in accordance with Chapter 41, Title 13 of the State Board of Professional Planners.

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Date: June 7, 2023
The Land Conservancy of New Jersey acknowledges the following individuals and organizations for their help in providing information, guidance, and materials for the Franklin Township Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update. Their contributions have been instrumental in the creation of the Plan.

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David Zaback, Regional Acquisitions Coordinator

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Cover Photo:
Ron Sigler, Jr. Farm
Executive Summary

There are 10,839 acres of farm assessed parcels in Franklin Township. As of March 2023, the Township has 49 farms totaling 3,736 acres preserved. Franklin has spent a total of $897,135, or approximately 5% of the total cost share to preserve these farms. The State of New Jersey, through the State Agriculture Development Committee, has provided $9,307,954, or 49% of the total cost share. The County has spent $7,035,916, or approximately 37% of the total cost share. Other sources like the Federal Farm Bill, provided $1,631,052, or 9% of the total cost share.

Since the completion of the 2008 Farmland Plan, 22 farms have been preserved, for a total of 1571 acres of additional farmland.

Based on the State's Minimum Eligibility Criteria for productive soils and tillable land, 4,668 acres (90 farms) are potentially eligible for farmland preservation in Franklin Township and are located within the Warren County Agriculture Development Area (ADA). Based upon the available funding to purchase and preserve farmland, and the amount of farmland potentially eligible for preservation, the following preservation goals are identified for Franklin Township:

- One-year target: 100 acres, 1 farm
- Five-year target: 500 acres, 6 farms
- Ten-year target: 1,000 acres, 10 farms

Public Meetings

Several public meetings were held on the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update to share the draft Update with residents. The first public meeting was held as part of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee on November 7, 2022 to discuss agricultural policies and the farmland program. The Land Use Board held the second public meeting on June 1, 2023, to review the Plan Update prior to approving the Update as an Element of the Master Plan at that meeting. The Township Committee hosted the final public meeting on June 5. The public meetings were announced on the municipal website.
Chapter 1.

Agricultural Land Base

A. Agricultural Landscape

As of 2018, the Township of Franklin has the most farm assessed land of any town in Warren County, with 10,839 acres of land—two thirds of the town—devoted to agricultural or horticultural use including cropland, pasture, woodland, and equine operations. The town’s landscape is dominated by farmland. (Map 1)

Franklin sits in the Highlands geophysical province of the state and is defined by two sets of ridges running across the town, the Scotts Mountain Ridge in the north and the Pohatcong Mountain Ridge in the center. Between them lies the Pohatcong Valley, and on the southern side of the Township is the Musconetcong Valley. State Highway 57 runs through the Pohatcong Valley, and County Route 632 through the Musconetcong. Both valleys are heavily farmed. (Map 2)

According to 2015 Land Use/Land Cover (LU/LC) data from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), 46% of the Township is dedicated to land in agricultural use, with other major uses including forest, urban lands, and wetlands. Note that the percent of lands in agricultural use is less than the farm-assessed acreage cited above because farm-assessed property may also include forested lands. Franklin’s valleys are dominated by active agriculture, while the ridges host a mix of forest and farms. (Figure 1 and Figure 2)
Figure 1. Land Use Land Cover Map
Compared to Warren County overall, Franklin is more heavily agricultural, with a higher percentage of land in agricultural use. (Table 1)

Of the 10,839 acres assessed as farmland in Franklin Township, the majority is harvested cropland. Other major uses include pastured cropland, permanent pasture, and woodland/wetland. (Figure 3)

### Table 1. 2015 Land Use/Land Cover, Franklin Township and Warren County

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Franklin Township</th>
<th>Warren County</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>6,933</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>53,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barren</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
<td>1,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest</td>
<td>5,225</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>108,686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1,980</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>41,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
<td>5,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetland</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15,051</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>232,061</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NJDEP 2015 Land Use/Land Cover
B. Soils

High-quality farmland soils in Franklin Township help explain the predominance of agriculture. Much of the township's agricultural soil is in active agricultural use, despite slope limitation along the ridges.

Soils are classified by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in series, which share basic characteristics such as bedrock material from which they were formed, chemical composition, and drainage. Within these broader series are specific soil types which are differentiated from one another by slope, stoniness, and frequency of flooding. The NRCS classifies soil types as prime, of statewide importance, or unique based on their potential for agricultural productivity.

Table 2 identifies the major NRCS soil types in Franklin Township, and Map 3 illustrates their location. Table 3 identifies the amount of each soil type in active agricultural use.

Prime farmland soils rest on land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. They have the quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Prime soils flood infrequently and are not excessively erodible or saturated with...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BabB</td>
<td>Bartley loam, 3 to 8 % slopes</td>
<td>1,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HdxpBb</td>
<td>Hazen-Paulins Kill complex, 3 to 8 % slopes, very stony</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BabA</td>
<td>Bartley loam, 0 to 3 % slopes</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HdxpAb</td>
<td>Hazen-Paulins Kill complex, 0 to 3 % slopes, very stony</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnoB</td>
<td>Annandale gravelly loam, 3 to 8 % slopes</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WafB</td>
<td>Washington silt loam, 3 to 8 % slopes</td>
<td>3,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WafA</td>
<td>Washington silt loam, 0 to 3 % slopes</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prime Farmland</td>
<td>6,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PaoC</td>
<td>Parker gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15 % slopes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnoC</td>
<td>Annandale gravelly loam, 8 to 15 % slopes</td>
<td>1,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WafC</td>
<td>Washington silt loam, 8 to 15 % slopes</td>
<td>926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BekB</td>
<td>Berks channery silt loam, 3 to 8 % slopes</td>
<td>562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PduaCb</td>
<td>Paulins Kill-Hazen complex, 8 to 15 % slopes, very stony</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farmland of Statewide Importance</td>
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<tr>
<td>PawE</td>
<td>Parker-Rock outcrop complex, 25 to 45 % slopes</td>
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</tr>
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<td>AnnDb</td>
<td>Annandale loam, 15 to 25 % slopes</td>
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<td>CoadBb</td>
<td>Cokesbury loam, dark surface, 0 to 8 % slopes, very stony</td>
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<tr>
<td>PaoD</td>
<td>Parker gravelly sandy loam, 15 to 25 % slopes</td>
<td>759</td>
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<tr>
<td>PawF</td>
<td>Parker-Rock outcrop complex, 45 to 65 % slopes</td>
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<tr>
<td>GkanCc</td>
<td>Gladstone loam, 8 to 15 % slopes, extremely stony</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHG</td>
<td>Pits, sand and gravel</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BekE</td>
<td>Berks channery silt loam, 25 to 45 % slopes</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UdauB</td>
<td>Udorthents-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 % slopes</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaoBb</td>
<td>Califon loam, somewhat poorly drained, 0 to 8 % slopes, very stony</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RnfD</td>
<td>Rock outcrop-Farmington-Galway complex, 15 to 35 % slopes</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WATER</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaoCb</td>
<td>Califon loam, somewhat poorly drained, 8 to 15 % slopes, very stony</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GkanDc</td>
<td>Gladstone loam, 15 to 25 % slopes, extremely stony</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>QY</td>
<td>Quarries</td>
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<tr>
<td>AnnCb</td>
<td>Annandale loam, 8 to 15 % slopes, very stony</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>GkanBc</td>
<td>Gladstone loam, 3 to 8 % slopes, extremely stony</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>RnfC</td>
<td>Rock outcrop-Farmington-Galway complex, 8 to 15 % slopes</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FrdAb</td>
<td>Fredon-Halsey complex, 0 to 3 % slopes, very stony</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USHBPA</td>
<td>Urban land-Hazen-Paulins Kill complex, 0 to 3 % slopes</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
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</table>
water for a long period of time. There are 6,261 acres of prime farmland soils in Franklin Township, of which 4,318 are in active agricultural use. 60% of all active agriculture in the Township is on prime farmland soil. Accounting for 42% of the total soils in the Township, these soils belong to the Bartley (Bab), Hazen-Paulins Kill (Hdxp), Washington (Waf) and Annandale (Ano) series, which can be used for pasture, hay, corn, silage, grains, vegetables, and fruit.

Farmland soils of statewide importance produce high crop yields when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. However, their yields are rarely as high as those of prime soils. There are 2,988 acres of soils of statewide importance in Franklin Township, of which 1,770 acres are in agricultural use. 25% of all active agriculture in the Township exists on prime farmland soil. Accounting for 20% of Franklin’s soils, most of the soils of statewide importance belong to the Berks (Bek), Annandale (Ano), or Washington (Waf) series and are generally adjacent to the prime farmland soils but on land with more slope. These soils can support pasture, hay, corn, grains, wheat, and vegetables.

Unique soils exhibit specific qualities that may be favorable to the production of specialized crops. There are no identified soils of unique importance in Franklin.

The following major soil series (non-farmland) are also found in Franklin Township:

- Parker-Rock (Paw) – 1,723 acres, 11%
- Califon Loam (Cao) – 930 acres, 6%
- Annandale (Ann) – 809 acres, 5%
- Parker Loam (Pao) – 759 acres, 5%

Much of the township’s active agriculture takes advantage of prime farmland soils. (Table 3) Note that active agriculture includes the following land use types: agricultural wetlands, cropland and pastureland, former agricultural wetland, orchards/vineyards/nurseries, and other agriculture.

Terrain is an obstacle to farming in Franklin. Approximately 25% of Township land (3,736 acres) is located on slopes steeper than 15%. These soils tend to have a high risk of erosion, require management to control runoff and erosion, and have some equipment limitations.

C. Irrigated Land & Water Sources

Irrigation is not a common practice in Franklin due to natural precipitation and the crops generally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FdwB</td>
<td>Farmington-Wassaic-Rock outcrop complex, 0 to 8 % slopes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UdaB</td>
<td>Udorthents, 0 to 8 % slopes, smoothed</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Not Prime Farmland</strong></td>
<td>5,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>15,040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Data (2022)
grown in the region. When used, irrigation is typically sourced from groundwater. Groundwater is generally preferred to surface waters because it contains less sediment and particulates that may clog irrigation pipes and damage crops. Most of the crops that are grown in the Township, such as hay, corn, and soybeans do not require irrigation or are not cost effective to irrigate, even during drought periods, due to the large amount of land they occupy. The Township had 22 acres of vegetables in 2018, with no acres in irrigation. The only substantial irrigation recorded since 2000 has been 62 acres of vegetables irrigated in 2005. Those 62 irrigated acres made up 16% of Warren County’s irrigated land in the same year.

According to the Highlands Council net water availability mapping, Franklin Township has water resources which meet the current demands. Almost all of the municipality is in an area of net water availability, meaning that current withdrawals do not exceed the renewal of groundwater resources. (Figure 4) Only small areas at the north, east, and south corners of the township are in deficit, meaning net water availability is negative because current withdrawals are exceeding groundwater renewal. Of the eight Highlands subwatersheds which reach into the Township, four are calculated to be in deficit. Within any Highlands subwatersheds upstream of a current deficit area, maintenance of stream flows is necessary to avoid further impairing the downstream ecological health. The Township of Franklin also contains 3,941 acres of prime groundwater recharge areas (2,780 acres in the Highlands Planning Area and 1,161 acres in the Highlands Preservation Area.)

### D. Farmland Trends and Statistics

The footprint of agriculture in Franklin Township is experiencing a decline. This may be due to any number of factors such as suburban growth, mounting land values, aging farmers, and the shifting economics of agriculture in the nation. Most categories of agricultural lands have lost acreage at a slower rate in Franklin Township than in Warren County overall, suggesting that other
areas of the county are absorbing some of the development pressures in the region for now.

In Warren County over the three decades from 1987 to 2017, the number of farms increased substantially while the acreage of farmland decreased by 15%—meaning the average farm size decreased from 132 acres to 80. (Figure 5) Average farm size also likely decreased in Franklin.

Franklin Township has 325 farm-assessed parcels as of 2022, with

Figure 4. Highlands Council Net Water Availability, Franklin Township

Figure 5. Warren County Farm Size, 1987-2017
an average farm parcel size of 30 acres and a median parcel size of 14 acres. The largest farm parcel in Franklin is 234 acres. Table 4 shows the breakdown of farm parcel sizes in Franklin based on the 2022 tax assessment data.

The loss of farm acreage has not been evenly distributed across towns or categories of farmland. In Franklin, the total amount of farm assessed land in 2018 was 10,839 acres—a 7% decline from 2000. Warren County farm assessed land base decreased 10% in the same period, from 115,545 to 103,535 acres. In Franklin Township in the same period, the decline in acreage was unevenly distributed across farmland uses: (Figure 6)

- Harvested cropland decreased 8%
- Pastured cropland decreased 17%
- Permanent pasture decreased 38%
- Equine use decreased 68%
- Woodland increased 15%

Active agricultural area—including harvested cropland, pastured cropland, and permanent pasture—declined even faster than overall farm assessed acreage, with 14% and 18% decreases for Franklin and Warren County respectively. The County showed its largest losses in cropland pastured, whereas the Township showed larger losses in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th># of Farm Parcels</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 acre</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-10 acres</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-50 acres</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-100 acres</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+ acres</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Franklin Township Tax Database (2022)

Figure 6. Assessed Farmland in Franklin Township, 2000-2018
permanent pasture and equine acreage. (Table 5)

In Franklin Township, the only category of farmland to increase in acreage between 2000 and 2018 was woodland. This increase may come from cropland left abandoned or fallow for extended periods of time, which undergoes ecological succession into forested land. The increasing costs of farming and farmland in the state and the county may compel local farmers to produce less land-intensive products and leave parts of their farms fallow. Rising property taxes and the USDA's forest stewardship incentives have encouraged more landowners of forested properties to obtain farmland tax assessment, thereby increasing the amount of forested farmland in the County for tax purposes without necessarily increasing the actual amount of forest.

| Table 5. Farmland Assessment in Franklin Township and Warren County (2000-2018) (acres) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                 | Cropland Harvested |                 | Cropland Pastured |                 | Permanent Pasture |                 | Total Active Agriculture |
| Franklin Township | Warren County  | Franklin Township | Warren County  | Franklin Township | Warren County  | Franklin Township | Warren County  |
| 2000             | 6,829           | 51,147          | 482             | 5,240           | 1,355           | 12,891          | 8,666          | 69,278          |
| 2005             | 6,552           | 46,756          | 382             | 4,468           | 1,273           | 12,112          | 8,207          | 63,336          |
| 2010             | 5,899           | 44,362          | 596             | 3,900           | 1,191           | 11,133          | 7,686          | 59,395          |
| 2015             | 5,920           | 43,646          | 513             | 3,562           | 1,056           | 10,026          | 7,489          | 57,234          |
| 2018             | 6,251           | 43,404          | 400             | 3,476           | 843             | 9,751           | 7,494          | 56,631          |
| % Change         | -8%             | -15%            | -17%            | -34%            | -38%            | -24%            | -14%           | -18%            |

Source: NJ Farmland Tax Assessments
Chapter 2.

Agricultural Industry

A. Trends in Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold

Agriculture in Franklin Township is oriented toward livestock and conventional field crops.

Livestock sales in Warren County produced $26.1 million in sales in 2017, an 18% decrease from $31.8 million in 2007, but a 22% increase from 2002. Crop sales, including nursery and greenhouse products, rose 54% from $43.6 million in 2007 to $67 million in 2017. In total, agricultural sales gained 23% from $75.4 million in 2007 to $93.2 million in 2017. (Figure 7) As of 2017, Warren County ranked sixth in the state in total agricultural sales. (Table 6) Warren County lost 12.7% in average sales per farm from 2012 to 2017, the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. Total Agricultural Market Value ($1000s) by County, 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burlington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunterdon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passaic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sixth-fastest rate of decline in New Jersey. *(Table 7)* This may be related to the shrinking average size of farms in the County as discussed in *Chapter 1*.

In 2002, Warren County had the second largest concentration of dairy and livestock operations in New Jersey (236 farms). The County now has 182 of these farms, the third largest concentration in the state.

Dairy sales have declined by 64% from over $9.0 million in 1997 to $3.2 million in 2017. This is accompanied by a 74% decrease in the number of dairy farms in Warren County, from 63 in 1997 to 16 in 2017.

As of 2017, cattle and calves (2,346) are the most common livestock in Warren County, with beef cows (1,450 head) more prominent than dairy cows (896

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rank</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<td>Ocean</td>
<td>$64,885</td>
<td>$94,769</td>
<td>46.06%</td>
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<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>$292,216</td>
<td>$379,730</td>
<td>29.95%</td>
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<td>Camden</td>
<td>$91,528</td>
<td>$116,210</td>
<td>26.97%</td>
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<td>Hunterdon</td>
<td>$46,445</td>
<td>$57,510</td>
<td>23.82%</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Middlesex</td>
<td>$147,733</td>
<td>$176,772</td>
<td>19.66%</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Gloucester</td>
<td>$150,154</td>
<td>$176,644</td>
<td>17.64%</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Cape May</td>
<td>$52,810</td>
<td>$59,988</td>
<td>13.59%</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mercer</td>
<td>$72,534</td>
<td>$77,341</td>
<td>6.63%</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>$135,749</td>
<td>$131,040</td>
<td>-3.47%</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Monmouth</td>
<td>$102,565</td>
<td>$96,221</td>
<td>-6.19%</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>$120,390</td>
<td>$107,738</td>
<td>-10.51%</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>$116,333</td>
<td>$101,543</td>
<td>-12.71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>$312,040</td>
<td>$268,163</td>
<td>-14.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>$21,078</td>
<td>$18,081</td>
<td>-14.22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td>$58,016</td>
<td>$44,508</td>
<td>-23.28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Morris</td>
<td>$77,560</td>
<td>$59,389</td>
<td>-23.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Passaic</td>
<td>$44,045</td>
<td>$32,168</td>
<td>-26.97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture 2012, 2017*
head). Sheep (1,691 head) represent the second highest livestock animal, with meat chickens as third highest (842 count).

Crops in Warren County sold for a total of $66.3 million in 2017, a 22% increase from 2012. (Table 8)

One crop subsector, nursery and greenhouse operations, continues to exceed other crop types in Warren County. (Figure 8) In 2017, Warren County had 26,364 acres of nursery stock crops, under glass or other protection. Annual sales comprised about 41% of total agricultural revenue in 2007 ($22.0 million) but increased to 61% of revenue by 2017 ($40.7 million). Vegetables were the third highest-grossing crop in 2017, generating more than $6.3 million in sales. Since 2002, vegetable sales have risen 44%.

Grains, which include corn and soybeans, have grown in revenue by 36% since 2007. Grains will most likely remain one of the top-grossing field crops, ranking second to vegetables in 2017.

A small but significant portion of Warren County’s agricultural sales come from other crops, including hay. Sales revenues for this category increased by 138% between 2002 and 2017.

Warren County is home to many fruit farms. Farm sales began growing rapidly during the mid-2000s, going from $0.91 million in 2002 to $2.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8. Warren County Crop Sales ($1,000s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Crop</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits, tree nuts, berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other crops &amp; hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

millions in 2017. Much of this revenue derives from peach and grape sales. Despite acreage falling by 49%, peach farm sales increased by over 29%.

**B. Agricultural Production Trends**

The general decrease in agricultural acreage from 2000 to 2018 in Franklin Township, as discussed in Chapter 1, fell disproportionately on active agricultural areas while woodland acres under farm assessment increased. The loss of acreage was also distributed unevenly across specific crops, with notable decreases in the acres of field crops and the number of animals associated with large animal husbandry. Production of most crops, as measured by the number of acres associated with their production, declined during the period from 2000 to 2018. (Figure 9 and Figure 10) The largest decrease was in corn

![Diagram of Top Crops by Acreage, Franklin Township, Change 2000-2018](image)

**Figure 9. Top Crops by Acreage, Franklin Township, 2000-2018**

![Diagram of Other Crops Acreage, Franklin Township, Change 2000-2018](image)

**Figure 10. Other Crops Acreage, Franklin Township, 2000-2018**
for grain, which lost 554 acres. The highest percentage decrease was in wheat, which lost 86% of its acreage. Crops which increased in production acres include soybeans, hay other than alfalfa, sorghum, and vegetables. Soybeans alone increased by 592 acres, a greater change than the decrease in corn for grain.

The three top crops by acreage showed some volatility between 2000 and 2018. (Figure 11) While acres of corn for grain have shown a steady and slow decrease, the acreage of total hay and soybeans has fluctuated, with soybeans decreasing by as much as 48% between 2005 and 2010 and subsequently increasing close to 2005 levels by 2015.

The kinds of livestock raised in Franklin also changed substantially between 2000 and 2018. (Figure 12) Major decreases occurred in the number of swine, sheep, and dairy cows—with dairy cows decreasing...
by 67%. Major increases occurred in the number of meat chickens, beef cattle, and goats. Minor decreases occurred in the number of horses and ponies (equine) along with minor increases in the number of ducks. The number of egg chickens in 2000 was 1,200,251 due to a concentrated animal feeding operation. In 2018 farmland assessment records, 343 egg chickens were recorded.

The number of animals in the top three livestock categories has also fluctuated. (*Figure 13*) The number of swine and beef cattle shows some continuity through time. The number of meat chickens, however, dropped to almost none for 2005 and 2010 before rebounding above 2000 levels by 2018. The number of egg chickens is shown on the right axis of *Figure 13* to have dropped by more than one million between 2010 and 2015 and has not since rebounded. Given the continued presence of an industrial-scale chicken operation in Franklin, this may be a statistical change which does not reflect the real-world number of chickens in the Township.

In Warren County, livestock production, including beef cattle and meat chickens, has either had slight growth or remained stable since 2002. Chicken production grew by 2% from 2002 to 2007 but dipped 9% by 2017. Beef cattle rose by 8% in 2007, then rose again by 20% by 2017, for a total growth of 31% from 2002 to 2017. (*Figure 14*)

*Figure 13. Top 3 Livestock in 2018, Franklin Township, Trend 2000-2018*

*Figure 14. Production Trends, Warren County, 2002-2017*
C. Agricultural Support Services and Related Industries

Agricultural support services in Warren County and Franklin Township include tractor sales and supply stores, feed vendors, and hardware/equipment retailers. Retailers include Frank Rymon and Sons, Tractor Supply Company, and Growmark in Bloomsbury. Major feed vendors include Ace Hardware. In Hackettsstown, the Livestock Auction operates as an independently funded co-operative. As the last remaining auction in the state, it gives farmers and farm suppliers the opportunity to trade and sell products.

Butcher and meat processing services near Franklin Township are available to cattle and livestock farmers. For commercial processing, farmers can use the USDA-licensed Arctic Foods on Route 57 in Washington Township. Butchering services for individual and small orders can be processed at various shops in Lebanon Borough and Readington Township. There is not a local a USDA-inspected slaughterhouse; if this type of facility was established within the area, it would help livestock farmers in Franklin. Reliance upon out-of-state suppliers and processing facilities imposes transportation costs that cut deeply into the profitability of their operations.

Local supporting businesses may be insufficient to meet all the needs of the Township’s agricultural community. Often, local farmers minimize repair services by fixing a variety of mechanical problems themselves. If needed, Smith Tractor, on Route 31 in Washington Borough offers retail sales of farm equipment, replacement parts for farm equipment, and will perform many equipment repairs.

Despite the loss of support businesses from the region, local farms take advantage of retailers, large animal veterinarians, and feed supplies located outside of the county and in eastern Pennsylvania. A comprehensive list of farm related businesses, organizations, and services in New Jersey is available through the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County Green Pages. (Appendix B)
Chapter 3.

Land Use Planning Context

A. State Development and Redevelopment Plan

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan outlines general policy objectives concerning land use and future development in New Jersey. The combination of Planning Areas and Designated Centers establishes a comprehensive framework for pursuing land use and development regulation. Land in Franklin Township is included within the Rural Planning Area (PA4), the Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B), the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA5), and the State Park Planning Areas (PA8). Some of the Township is not included in any planning area due to its inclusion in the Highlands Preservation Area. (Figure 15)

- Rural Planning Areas (PA4): This area comprises only a small portion of the Township near the I-78 weigh station just outside of the Township.
- Rural-Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B): This area dominates the Township south of Route 57, comprising almost all of the land in the Pohatcong and Musconetcong Valleys. It also makes up some of the Pohatcong Mountain Ridge.
- Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (PA5): This area makes up much of the Pohatcong Mountain Ridge.
• State Park Planning Areas (PA8): This area occurs in three small instances along the Musconetcong River on the Township's southeastern border.

B. Special Resource Area: Highlands Region

The New Jersey State Legislature enacted the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (Highlands Act) on August 10, 2004. The Highlands Act imposes strict land use controls over large parts of the 88-municipality region, where lands are subject to heightened restrictions to protect water quality and environmentally sensitive lands. Franklin Township is located within the Highlands Region. 25% of the Township (3,792 acres) falls within the Highlands Preservation Area, consisting of all lands north of Route 57 and a small area along the Musconetcong River near Washington Township. The Preservation Area contains 1,799 acres of farmland, or 49% of the Preservation Area's total. 75% of the Township (11,284 acres) falls within the Planning Area. (Figure 16) Conformance with the Highland Regional Master Plan is required in the Preservation Area only.

The Highlands Council – the regional planning body charged with implementing the Highlands Act – has established the preservation of farmland and the industry of
farming as one of its principal objectives. To this end, the Highlands Regional Master Plan identifies an Agricultural Resource Area that will receive the bulk of future funding and institutional support from the Highlands Council. The Agricultural Resource Area encompasses areas that contain contiguous farmbelts and quality agricultural soils. All of Franklin Township falls within the Agricultural Resource Area. (Figure 17)

The Highlands Council also identifies Agricultural Priority Areas – subsets of the larger Agricultural Resource Area that are particularly well suited to agricultural production. Criteria used by the Highlands Council to delineate these areas include soil quality, tillable acreage, buffers, development potential, local commitment, contiguity with other farm parcels and size. Much of Franklin Township, including almost all of the Musconetcong Valley, is designated as High Priority Agricultural Areas. (Figure 18)

C. Municipal Master Plan

Franklin Township’s most recent Master Plan Reexamination, published in 2014, states the Township aims to “Retain the rural and agricultural character of the Township while diversifying the tax base with commercial and industrial expansion.” The Township’s Master Plan and its updates (1991, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2014) includes the following goals pertaining to farmland preservation:
• Preserve prime farmland in the Musconetcong and Pohatcong valleys.

• Explore the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a preservation tool.

• Preserve farmland and the agricultural heritage of the Township.

• Prepare at least one application per year for the Warren County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust.

• Update the Township’s Farmland Planning Incentive Grant (“PIG”) application to the State Agriculture Development Committee for the preservation of farmland clusters in the township, including farmland within the Pohatcong Valley Farmland Belt.

• Working with the local Soil Conservation Service, offer information and resources to local farmland owners regarding soil conservation techniques and alternatives to protect the prime farmland soils located within the Township.

D. Land Use Trends

According to the NJDEP’s 2015 Land Cover imaging, agricultural areas make up 46% of Franklin Township. Other major land uses include forest (35%) and urban land (13%). Since 1986, 6% of the Township has been converted from agricultural use to urban use, and a small amount of land has reverted from agricultural use to forest. Much of this change occurred before 2002, and land use...
has remained generally stable since then.

E. Public Infrastructure – Sewer and Water

Much of Franklin is served by private septic systems and wells. However, due to aquifer contamination in the Pohatcong River Valley, a public water system has been constructed, extending from Washington Township into Franklin. Mains extend along Route 57 to Whites Road, and along adjacent roads to nearby homes. With a capacity of 1.25 million gallons per day, this system is managed by New Jersey American Water (NJAW). This system will continue to expand if wells show contamination. Most recently, Franklin Township received a $2 million grant to extend the NJAW system to 18 more homes.

F. Municipal Zoning

1. Types, Lot Size, and Distribution in the Municipality

The Township’s most recent land use zoning map, published in 2022, is in Appendix C.

Over 90% of Franklin Township is zoned for Rural Conservation. (Table 9) Reflecting the agricultural priorities of the Township, this
zone allows for only single-family
detached dwellings, agricultural
uses, public utility structures, golf
courses, and civic buildings. The
minimum lot size is 5 acres, of which
7.5% may be covered. An additional
5% of the Township is zoned as
Industrial in three areas—near I-78
in the southwest corner of Franklin,
near the rail line on Edison Road,
and north of Route 57 on the town’s
northeastern border. All zones have
required building setbacks. All zones,
other than the Village Commercial
(C-1), Highway Commercial
(HC), and Office Building (OB),
allow agriculture as a principal
permitted use. However, through
the Township’s Right-to-Farm
ordinance, agriculture is permitted
in all zoning districts. (Chapter 8)
Some of the areas north of Route 57
are under zoning which predates the
area’s designation in the Highlands
Preservation Area, and uses in that
area must conform to the Highlands
Act regardless of the zoning.

2. Adopted Redevelopment Areas

As of this plan’s writing, there
are no adopted redevelopment
areas in Franklin Township. On
December 7, 2020, the Franklin
Township Committee adopted
a resolution declaring Block 58
Lot 1 as a “Non-condemnation
Redevelopment Area.” The parcel
is located on Asbury-Bloomsbury
Road across from Lime Kiln Road
and has historically been farmland.
Its designation as a redevelopment
area would allow for a Payment-in-
Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT) tax abatement
program. However, the Department
of Community Affairs denied the
site’s redevelopment designation,
and it was never formally
recognized as an Area in Need of
Redevelopment. Ongoing litigation
regarding the site’s environmental
suitability for development is
currently preventing the site’s owner
from proceeding with a planned
warehouse facility.

3. Innovative Planning Techniques

There are mandatory and volunteer
options for a municipality to use
to set aside land for farmland and/
or open space. Voluntary options
are ones a town can use when
determining maximum lot sizes and
mandatory set asides for resource
protection. If the municipality turns
to mandatory cluster provisions
or a mandatory transfer of

Table 9. Franklin Township Zoning Districts by Lot Size, Acres, and Share of Land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>% of Township</th>
<th>Min. Lot Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RC: Rural Conservation</td>
<td>12,976</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>5 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: Industrial</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>3 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-75: Village Residential</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>30,000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-1: Village Commercial</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>60,000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OB: Office Building</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>3 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-2: Township Commercial</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>5 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC: Highway Commercial</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>3 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD: Planned Development Option</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14,401</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
development rights (TDR) program, the Agricultural Advisory Committee will work with the Land Use Board to ensure agriculture resources and land are set aside in a manner to ensure viability of the farm in the future.

Cluster zoning allows development to occur on a smaller percentage of a site while retaining the net development density permitted by local zoning. A common cluster zoning provision would allow (or require) 50% of a site to be preserved in its natural or agricultural state and would permit the other half of the site to be developed at twice the allowable zoning density. Some clustering ordinances require that certain sensitive natural areas or prime farmlands on a development site be preserved. Cluster zoning provides both the ability to develop a site to its full extent based on zoning and the preservation of contiguous agricultural lands.

This option is often attractive to builders because there tends to be fewer infrastructure costs associated with roadway construction, power lines, and sewage connections in more compact developments. Clustering is attractive to residents and farmers because it retains some agricultural areas and the rural character they create. Additionally, the undeveloped portions of clustered developments are permanently deed restricted, which helps to ensure the permanence of local farming. Clustering has added effectiveness when open space set-asides on adjacent properties are linked in a coordinated fashion. This requires pre-planning on the part of the municipality. Cluster zoning may be used where there is minimal opportunity for new development in the higher density zones that accommodate residential development. Franklin Township’s zoning regulations permit smaller lot sizes through cluster zoning in the Rural Conservation zone.

Lot size averaging is another planning tool that maintains the net allowable zoning density on a site but does not enforce uniform lot size requirements or setbacks. This allows for some development lots to be very small to accommodate affordable housing units, neighborhood commercial stores, or “village” development densities, while other lots can be very large to encompass active farms or natural areas. Franklin also allows for zoning changes through lot size averaging in the Rural Conservation zone.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a growth management tool that allocates development rights from one location (the preservation or “sending” area) to another (the development or “receiving” area). These development rights are purchased by developer and allow them to build at higher densities within the receiving zone than existing zoning permits. Viewed as an equity protection mechanism, transfer-of-development rights provides for the preservation of important agricultural lands while fully compensating landowners and minimizing public expenditures.

The New Jersey State Transfer of Development Rights Act (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-140) authorizes the transfer of development rights by municipalities and outlines what a town must do to adopt or amend a TDR ordinance. First, the municipality must amend its master plan to include a Development Transfer
Plan Element that outlines a mechanism for assigning development credits to areas in the sending zone and reapplying them to areas in the receiving zone. An updated Utility Service Plan and Capital Improvement Program for the receiving zone should be adopted as well. The municipality must also prepare a Real Estate Market Analysis (REMA) that quantifies the development potential of the sending zone(s) and the capacity of the receiving zone(s) to accommodate additional development. Finally, a town must receive approval from the State Planning Commission to adopt the TDR ordinance. (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-140)

Franklin Township’s 2001 Master Plan stated as a goal to “explore the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a preservation tool,” but no action has been taken despite reaffirmations of that goal in the Township’s 2011 Highlands Preservation Area Master Plan Element and 2014 Master Plan Reexamination.

4. Buffer Requirements

In accordance with state and county regulations, there are multiple mechanisms through which agricultural uses are separated from other uses. At the state level, both the NJDEP and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) offer guidelines. NJDEP’s Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules provide permit and other administrative exemptions for a range of farming activities, which helps to protect inland water resources. Similarly, NJDEP’s Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules, most recently amended in February 2015, now include numerous agricultural permits-by-rule. The following agricultural activities are included:

- Continuing ongoing agricultural activities that result in no fill,
- Commencing new agricultural activities that result in no fill,
- Undertaking soil conservation practices outside a floodway, and
- Constructing an agricultural building of no more than 1,000 square feet outside a floodway.

There are seven general permits which allow the continuation of agriculture activities, including soil erosion control, bank stabilization or bank restoration, channel cleaning,
constructing a roadway across a water body, filling a manmade water body for freshwater wetlands restoration, creating a ford across a water body to manage livestock, constructing a fence across or along a water body to manage livestock, and constructing a pump or water intake for livestock, in otherwise regulated areas. Franklin Township does not have its own agricultural buffer laws.

5. Development Pressure and Land Value

Franklin’s current population, based on U.S. Census Bureau data, was 2,970 individuals in 2019. (Figure 19) This is a 6% decrease from the Township’s 2010 population peak of 3,176 people. This decline from 2010 through 2020 speaks to a larger trend than only the 2008 recession. Franklin’s population stopped its decline between 2020 and 2021, a possible impact of Covid-19 which could either change the town’s course or represent only a temporary change.

Franklin’s population trends are consistent with county-wide trends of individuals leaving or not resettling back into rural sections of northwestern New Jersey (both Sussex and Warren Counties). However, Covid-19 had a definite impact on Warren County overall, with a 4% increase in only one year from 2019 to 2020 and a continued increase through 2021. (Table 10) Based on Franklin’s stable population from 2020 to 2021, it seems that the County’s Covid boom has so far been limited in Franklin.

Many residential construction projects in Franklin Township received building permits from 2000 to 2002, but since 2003 there have been only a few building permits granted per year. Warren County has experienced a similar trend, with permits issued in 2018 numbering only 12% of the permits issued in 2000. (Figure 20) Since 2002, all building permits in Franklin have been for single or double homes except for two units constructed in multi-use buildings. For three years running—2017, 2018, and 2019, no permits were issued. Since then, only a few have been issued per year. The longer-term impacts, if any, of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2.23</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>109,632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>110,731</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Covid-19 real estate boom may not yet be clear, but residential growth does not appear to pose a major threat to the town's farming activity.

**G. Density Transfer Opportunities**

An intra-municipal TDR is one in which sending and receiving areas are located within the same town. Alternatively, inter-municipal TDR programs establish sending areas in one municipality and receiving areas in another. Some form of tax-based revenue sharing may be necessary with inter-municipal TDR programs.

Regional programs are an alternative that may be proposed at the regional or state level, such as the program introduced as part of the Highlands Regional Master Plan. The New Jersey TDR Bank and the Office of Planning Advocacy (Smart Growth) are facilitating TDR activities statewide. They offer Planning Assistance Grants and technical assistance to municipalities looking to establish municipal TDR programs and may provide funds for the purchase of development credits. The State TDR Bank will also provide financial banking on loans secured using development credits as collateral and keep records of all development credit transfers within the State. Franklin Township may benefit from participating in a TDR program, primarily as a municipality with sending areas.

![Residential Building Permits, Franklin Township, 2000-2021](source: NJ Department of Community Affairs)

**Figure 20. Residential Building Permits, Franklin Township, 2000-2021**

- **Annual**
- **Cumulative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>3801</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Non-contiguous cluster zoning is a planning technique that allows one parcel to be preserved while its density is transferred and developed instead on a different, noncontiguous parcel. This technique, first authorized in 1996, allows a municipality to approve “planned developments” consisting of two different parcels, where the “sending area” parcel is preserved, for example, as farmland or open space, and the “receiving area” parcel is developed at a higher than otherwise normally permitted density. Non-contiguous cluster zoning is not currently used in Franklin Township, where there is minimal opportunity for new development in the higher density zones that accommodate residential development.

On the local level in Franklin, density transfer programs may be beyond the capacity of municipal government.
Chapter 4.

Farmland Preservation Program

There are 10,839 acres of farm-assessed land in Franklin Township. Farms in the Township have been preserved using a variety of programs, and the town remains firmly committed to farmland protection.

A. Warren County Agricultural Development Area (ADAs)

1. Statutory and County Criteria

The Warren County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) developed the Warren County Agriculture Development Area (ADA) based upon both statutory and county criteria. The ADA designates land that has the potential for long-term agricultural viability.

This agricultural use would be the preferred, but not the exclusive, use.

- The land must be agriculturally productive or have future production potential. Also, zoning for the land must permit agriculture, or permit it as a nonconforming use.
- Suburban and/or commercial development must be reasonably non-existent in the proposed ADA area.
- The land must comprise of no greater than 90% of the agricultural land mass of the County.
- Any attributes deemed appropriate by the Board must also be incorporated.
Prior to 2008, the entire County had been designated as the Agricultural Development Area (ADA) with the exceptions of Hackettstown, Belvidere, Philipsburg, and Washington Borough. As part of the 2008 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan, the CADB updated their ADA using the following criteria:

- Land is currently in agricultural production or has strong potential for agricultural production or is farm assessed through a woodland management plan.
- Agriculture is the preferred, but not necessarily the exclusive use.
- Agriculture is a use permitted by current municipal zoning ordinance or is allowed as a non-conforming use.

Using the state’s regulatory criteria for designating ADA and existing farmland assessment data, the County designated an ADA on a county-wide basis that does not exceed 90% of the County’s agricultural land base. Beginning in 2011, the Warren County Department of Land Preservation and the CADB amended the ADA to include farmland whose owners had expressed interest in preserving their property, but the land had not been included in the 2008 ADA. This was summarized in the 2017 Farmland Plan Update. There are no changes in the designated ADA in Franklin Township as part of the 2017 Update.

2. Agricultural Development Area – Franklin Township

All of Franklin Township is included in the Warren County ADA except for small portion of land (slightly less than 10 acres) near the Merrill Creek Reservoir and at the edge of Washington Township south of Route 57.

**Map 1** and **Map 2** show the farm assessed lands in the Township, including all preserved farms. A map of the location of the Warren County ADA in Franklin is included within **Map 4**. Franklin Township is located within Warren County’s Southeast Project Area (**Map 5**). **Appendix D, Inventory Table 1** lists unpreserved farms assessed in the municipality. **Appendix D, Inventory Table 2** identifies all farms preserved in the municipality by program type.

### B. Farmland Preserved to Date by Program

As of March 2023, there are 49 farms totaling 3,736 acres preserved in Franklin Township, at an average cost of $5,050 per acre. (**Table 11**)

- The State of New Jersey, through the SADC, has provided $9,307,954, or 49% of the total cost share.
- The County has spent a total of $7,035,916, or approximately 37% of the total cost share.
- Franklin Township has spent a total of $897,136, or approximately 5% of the total cost share.

As of March 2023, there are five farms totaling 374 acres pending preservation through various programs in Franklin Township. There are also four farms with at least 82 acres in Franklin Township seeking Highlands Council Cost Share for preservation due to unavailability of state funding in connection with the Pohatcong Valley Aquifer contamination.
The town, county and state have been active participants in the farmland preservation program in Franklin Township. Table 11 identifies the different programs used to protect farmland in the municipality.

1. **County Easement Purchase**

County Easement Purchases (EP) involve the sale of farmland development rights to the county by the landowner. To be eligible for the County Easement Purchase program, the land must be in the ADA and be eligible for farmland assessment. Two-thirds of the farmland protected in Franklin Township have been preserved through the County EP program (29 farms, 2,379 acres).

2. **County Planning Incentive Grants**

The goal of County Planning Incentive Grants (PIGs) is to protect and preserve large pieces of contiguous farmland through the purchase of development easements. Warren County completed their 2017 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update to maintain eligibility for the County Planning Incentive Grant program. Warren County has preserved 5 farms through the PIG program in Franklin Township (336 acres).

3. **Municipal Planning Incentive Grants**

Municipal Planning Incentive Grants (PIGs) are very similar to the County PIGs in their goals, requirements, and implementation. Like the County PIGs, Municipal PIGs require a local financial commitment for preserving farmland. To qualify for this program, the municipality must have an agricultural advisory board and a source of funding for farmland preservation. The municipal code must include a Right to Farm ordinance. Municipal PIGs also must establish and maintain a dedicated source of funding for farmland preservation pursuant to P.L.1997, c.24 (C.40:12-15.1 et seq.), or any alternative means of funding for farmland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Number of Farms</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Percent of Preserved Farm Acres in Franklin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>County EP</td>
<td>County Easement Purchase</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2,379</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County PIG</td>
<td>County Planning Incentive Grant</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MUNI PIG</td>
<td>Municipal Planning Incentive Grant</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>NP EP</td>
<td>Non-Profit Easement Purchase</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NP PIG FEE</td>
<td>Non-Profit Planning Incentive Grant (Fee)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC EP</td>
<td>State Easement Purchase</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3%</td>
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</table>
preservation that demonstrates a continued commitment to farmland preservation. It can be funding such as an open space tax that has money dedicated to farm preservation, repeated annual appropriations, or repeated issuance of bonded indebtedness that demonstrates commitment on the part of the municipality. There is no minimum qualifying amount for the dedicated source of funding; The funding just needs to cover a cost share for any applications. Farms to be preserved through a municipal PIG need to be approved by the CADB. For municipal PIG preservation, the SADC funds 60% of the development easement purchase while the County and the municipality split the remaining cost. Franklin Township is currently enrolled in the Municipal PIG program and will maintain eligibility through this Farm Plan Update. The town has preserved 8 farms through the PIG program (593 acres).

4. SADC Direct Easement Purchase

The SADC Direct Easement Purchase is a program that allows a landowner to apply directly to the SADC for the sale of development rights. In most cases, the State will pay up to 100% of the certified appraised easement value in the direct easement purchase program. Two farms in Franklin Township (128 acres) have been preserved through this program.

5. SADC Fee Simple

An SADC fee simple acquisition involves an entire property being purchased directly by the state. The SADC pays the survey and title costs, the landowner is exempt from paying rollback taxes for farmland assessment, and the transaction can be completed in a matter of months. The property is then resold at auction, and the SADC does not retain ownership. To participate in this program, the farmland must be within an ADA, and be eligible for Farmland Assessment.

6. Non-profit Grant Program

Grants from the SADC to non-profit organizations fund up to 50% of the fee simple or development easement values on farms. In order to qualify for state and county cost share, farms preserved through the non-profit program must fall within the ADA and county Project Area and meet the other minimum eligibility criteria set forth by the SADC and CADB. Three farms (299 acres) have been preserved through by non-profit organizations.

7. Transfer of Development Rights

TDR is a growth management tool that transfers development rights from one location, a sending or preservation area, to another, an identified growth or receiving area. To date, this program has not been used by Franklin Township to preserve farmland.

8. Other Programs and Partnerships

Municipal Farmland Preservation Program. Through the Municipal Farmland Preservation Program, farms can be preserved directly by a municipality either using SADC grant funding or with the intention of later receiving cost share participation from the SADC. To date, no farms in Franklin Township have been preserved using this program.
Highlands Development Credit Bank. The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act charged the Highlands Council with developing a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program for the Highlands Region. The Highlands Council adopted the TDR Program as part of the Highlands Regional Master Plan and established the Highlands Development Credit Bank (HDC Bank) in June 2008 in support of the TDR Program. This program serves as one mechanism to address some of the equity concerns of property owners in the Preservation Area that have been affected by implementation of the Highlands Act.

The Highlands TDR Program allocates TDR credits called Highlands Development Credits (HDCs) to sending zone property owners. HDCs may be sold to developers for use in appropriate voluntary receiving zones. Use of HDCs by developers in established receiving zones will permit developers to increase the density or intensity of proposed projects in those zones. Under the Highlands Act, participation as a receiving zone is voluntary.

In some cases, the HDC Bank holds a farm’s HDCs rather than selling them to developers. One property in Franklin Township currently has its credits held by the HDC bank. Block 15, Lot 11.03 (HDC Certificate Number 2012-0002, recorded February 12, 2012) restricting 9.69 acres.

C. Term Farmland Preservation Programs

The Term Farmland Preservation Programs are cost sharing programs for soil and water conservation projects, in which the farmer receives up to 50% of the costs for these projects, as well as protection against nuisance complaints, emergency fuel and water rationing, zoning changes and eminent domain actions. In return, the farmer signs an agreement that restricts the land to agricultural use for either eight years or sixteen years. For entrance into these programs and to qualify for benefits, a farm must be located within the county ADA. Technical assistance for the soil and water practices comes through the Natural Resource Conservation Service. In Franklin Township, no farms currently participate in these programs.

D. Coordination with Open Space Preservation Initiatives

Farmland preservation and the identification of targeted farms should be coordinated with open space planning efforts. Trail easements and adjacency to proposed and existing active recreational facilities are potential areas of concern for farmers. Franklin has a Municipal Open Space Trust Fund, which is used to preserve farmland and open space. The Township updated its Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2020 and identified the preservation of farmland as a priority for the municipality.

E. Farmland Preservation Program Funding Expended to Date by Source

The Franklin Open Space Trust Fund was approved in 1998 by voter referendum. Monies for the
fund come from a municipal tax, originally authorized at two cents ($0.02) per one hundred dollars ($100) of assessed property value. The tax was reauthorized at one cent ($0.01) in 2019 and was not collected in the period 2020 - 2022. For fiscal year 2023, the tax was reinstated at one quarter cent ($0.0025) per one hundred dollars of assessed property value. Franklin Township is committed to contributing local funds using its OSTF to preserve farms in accordance with the goals of this Plan Update.

As of December 2022, the Township has collected $3,335,627 and expended $2,925,234 in funds from their Open Space Trust Fund. Its current balance is $410,393.

**F. Monitoring the Easements**

Warren County monitors the property to verify that compliance with the deed restrictions on the preserved property is taking place. The Upper Delaware Conservation District performs annual inspections of the preserved farmland property for the Warren CADB. The inspectors take note of the following:

- Change in ownership since the previous inspection
- Evidence of non-agricultural development (approved or otherwise)
- Use of the premises for agricultural activities
- Presence of expansion of non-agricultural activity since the previous inspection
- If the non-agricultural practice has been abandoned
- Evidence of mining or removing of materials such as sand, gravel, rock, etc.
- Evidence of dumping
- Whether or not the farm has an approved conservation plan
- Any improvements to farm buildings and residences
- Any new agricultural buildings erected

**G. Coordination with Transfer of Development Rights Programs**

TDR may be used in conjunction with the traditional Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program; these two programs are not mutually exclusive. As previously discussed, Franklin Township is not currently enrolled in or developing a TDR program.
A. Preservation Goals

Franklin Township is 23.5 square miles (15,046 acres) in size. Of this, 10,839 acres (72%) are under farmland assessment, which includes croplands, woodlands, farm structures and wetlands/waterways that occur on an agricultural property. Since 1991, Franklin Township has preserved 49 farms (3,736 acres) of farmland. (Inventory Table 3 in Appendix D)

Based upon the State’s Minimum Eligibility Criteria for productive soils and tillable land, 90 farms totaling 4,668 acres are potentially eligible for farmland preservation in Franklin Township and are located within the ADA.

In Franklin, these are the “targeted” farms though the municipal Planning Incentive Grant program. This analysis was done on a farm unit (where a farm consists of a collection of individual lots) and a farm parcel (one lot) basis.

Based upon the available funding to purchase and preserve farmland, and the amount of farmland potentially eligible for preservation, the following preservation goals are identified for Franklin Township:

- One-year target: 100 acres, 1 farm
- Five-year target: 500 acres, 6 farms
- Ten-year target: 1,000 acres, 10 farms
B. Description of Project Areas

All of Franklin Township is included in the Warren County ADA except for small portion of land (slightly less than 10 acres) near the Merrill Creek Reservoir and at the edge of Washington Township, south of Route 57. Within the County’s ADA in Franklin Township, 7,180 acres are in active agriculture. In the 2017 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan, the Warren CADB identified seven project areas within the County’s ADA for farmland preservation. Franklin Township falls within the Southeast Project Area (which includes Franklin and Washington). (Map 5)

C. Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Minimum Eligibility Criteria are based upon the SADC’s rules for farmland preservation and project eligibility (Adopted by the SADC May 21, 2007 and July 25, 2019). In order to be eligible for preservation the site must be developable, have soils capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production, and meet minimum tillable land standards (N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.20).

To determine farms that are potentially eligible for preservation, a series of queries were made using ArcGIS digital mapping software for soils and table land. The minimum eligible analysis involved a parcel-based screen of tax lot characteristics. Farmland preservation applications often include multiple lots; combining these lots may increase the acreage eligible for SADC cost share funding in Franklin Township. Appendix E describes the state’s requirements and the methodology for mapping these on the ArcGIS.

For a farm application to qualify for SADC cost share, the farm must have at least one parcel listed on the targeted farm list; comprise an assemblage of substandard parcels which together meet SADC minimum standards; or have sufficient justification by the municipality and the Warren CADB that the parcels were not identified as targeted due to a specific mapping issue or other error.

The town may proceed without state funding on projects that do not meet these minimum eligibility standards, but as a rule, the CADB will not cost share on applications that do not meet SADC minimum standards. In all cases, the Franklin Township AAC will work closely with the Warren CADB to review and process applications from landowners for farmland preservation. The Franklin AAC will follow all county and state procedures to ensure consistency in application review and processing.

Farms which meet the minimum eligibility criteria for tillable land in Franklin are shown on Map A and those which meet the minimum criteria for soils are shown on Map B. “Target farms” or farms which are potentially eligible for preservation and meet the minimum eligibility criteria are shown on Map C and listed in Appendix D, Inventory Table 3. This analysis was run on both an individual farm parcel basis and for units of farms (which include a collection of parcels):

Overall, there are 90 farms, or 4,668 acres of farm assessed land which meet the minimum eligibility criteria for the state’s farmland preservation...
program and are located within the ADA. Of this:

- Farm Units totaling 2,501 acres (27 farm units) are potentially eligible for preservation
- Farm Parcels totaling 2,166 acres (63 lots) are potentially eligible for preservation

D. County and Municipal Ranking Criteria

The Warren CADB uses the SADC’s ranking criteria as the basis for qualifying farms for preservation. The County would consider cost sharing with the Township on applications that do not meet the SADC minimum standards on applications that have compelling factors including (but not limited to) adjacency to other preserved farms or fit into the plan for the County for farmland preservation. In these special cases the CADB may use its own ranking sheet to determine each of the following for individual applicant farms:

- the quality of the local soils
- total tillable acres available
- local buffers and boundaries
- zoning
- County growth and existing infrastructure
- municipal commitment to agriculture
- other financial commitment to agriculture

Points are received in each category relevant to the suitability of the local conditions for agriculture. The higher the score received, the higher the ranking. For the municipal PIG program, the Warren CADB uses the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria as the basis for participating with the local municipality.

Franklin AAC and Township Committee are committed to preserving as much of the Township’s agricultural land base as possible and supports innovative funding mechanisms and preservation tools. The AAC follows the County and State criteria when prioritizing farms for preservation in the Township as part of the Municipal PIG program.

E. Municipal and County Policies Related to Farmland Preservation Applications

Franklin Township follows the policies established by Warren County regarding housing opportunities, division of premises, and exception areas. These policies are documented in the 2017 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update. The Warren CADB follows the SADC’s policies regarding these issues.

1. Approval of Housing Opportunities

Agricultural labor housing: Agricultural labor housing is not currently protected under the Right to Farm Act in the State of New Jersey and the SADC has not, to date, adopted an official policy for agricultural labor housing. However, the SADC recognizes the need for this type of housing and does have guidelines that a landowner must refer to construct labor housing on preserved farms for work on the preserved farm.
The guidelines are:

- Agricultural labor housing must be permitted with approval of easement holder and the SADC.
- Must verify need for production aspects of farm.
- Must be full time employed on the premises (seasonal labor is permitted).
- Structure must be sized appropriately based on labor needs.
- Cannot be used for owner or any lineal descendant of owner.

House replacement: The policy of the SADC on house replacement is that requests for replacement of a residence on permanently preserved land must be reviewed and approved on an individual basis by the CADB and the SADC, to minimize the impact on the agricultural operation. This is supported by the CADB and AAC for Franklin Township.

Residual dwelling site opportunity allocation: Residual Dwelling Site Opportunities (RDSOs) are lingering potential housing prospects located within a deed-restricted farm. By designating an area as an RDSO, the landowner is implying that the land will be used for a residential unit or other structure as referred to in N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17. The maximum RDSO density is one residence per 100 acres. The purpose of the building in question must be for single-family residential housing and its appurtenant uses. To qualify as an RDSO, the SADC requires that the use of the residential unit be for agricultural purposes and at least one person residing in the residential unit shall be regularly engaged in common farm site practices. This is supported by the Township AAC and Warren CADB. RDSO units must be requested at the time of application and approved by the WCADB and SADC prior to closing according to SADC Policy P-31.

2. Division of the Premises

The goal of the SADC, supported by the Warren CADB and Franklin Township AAC, is to preserve large tracts of farmland. The division of the premises by way of subdivision may significantly alter the potential use of the preserved land. Therefore, a division of the premises is not an encouraged practice; however, when division occurs it must be for agricultural purposes and must result in agriculturally viable land parcels. A landowner wishing to divide permanently preserved farmland must submit a written request. The application must be approved, in writing, by both the State Agriculture Development Committee and the CADB.

3. Approval of Exception

Exceptions are defined by the SADC as areas which are not subject to the terms of the deed of easement. When an exception is made, the landowner does not receive any compensation in the excepted area. The SADC discourages the preservation of farms that do not have at least one exception, and it is important to take the number, size, location, and purpose of the exception into consideration. Exceptions may be granted in some circumstances, especially in the case of non-severable exceptions, or where the exception might be justified (e.g., to allow for the expansion of pre-existing non-agricultural uses, for trail easements, etc.). It is critical to make
decisions about exceptions at the time of application, as exceptions cannot be granted, expanded, or moved once the farm has been preserved. There are two types of exceptions that can occur: severable and non-severable.

Severable: A severable exception is defined by the SADC as an area that is part of an existing lot owned by the applicant which will be excluded from the restrictions of the Deed of Easement and may be sold as a separate lot in the future. Typically, there is no requirement to subdivide a severable exception prior to or after the deed of easement is executed.

Non-severable: Non-severable exceptions are defined by the SADC as area that is part of an existing lot owned by the applicant, which will not be subject to the restrictions of the Deed of Easement but cannot be sold separately from the remaining premises.

Exceptions made to farmland have the potential to impact the value of the property. When an appraisal occurs, both severable and non-severable exceptions are considered in the determination of the restricted/after value of the property. The Warren CADB and Franklin Township AAC follow the exception policies as identified by the SADC. The AAC will work with applicants to the municipal PIG program to minimize the impacts of exception requests on the agricultural operation to the greatest extent possible.

F. Funding Plan

The Preserve New Jersey Act 2014 established that a portion of the Corporate Business Tax was to be dedicated to preservation efforts. Of this revenue, 60% is allotted to Green Acres, 4% goes to Blue Acres (administered by Green Acres), 31% is set aside for farmland preservation (SADC), and the remaining 5% goes to Historic Preservation (New Jersey Historic Trust).

1. Municipal and County Funding Sources

The Warren County Land Preservation Department is responsible for administering Warren County’s Farmland, Historic, and Open Space Preservation Programs. In 1993, Warren County voters approved a non-binding public referendum by a margin of 2-1 which allowed for the collection of an additional tax of up to 2 cents per $100 of assessed valuation. In November 1999 and again in November 2002, county voters approved non-binding open space referendums by large margins, each time recommending an increase in the open space tax of another 2 cents per $100 of assessed property value.

The County Open Space Trust Fund, which currently collects two cents ($0.02) per $100 of assessed property value, has enabled Warren County to preserve over 20,000 acres of farmland, 1,700 acres of county parkland, and participate in numerous historical and open space preservation efforts with local non-profits and municipalities throughout the county. The funds are allocated as follows:

- 55% to the CADB for farmland preservation.
- 25% to the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee (MCCT) for
Franklin Township is supportive of donation/bargain sales and would consider installment purchases, if requested by the landowner. These tools serve to leverage limited funding resources.

Donation and Bargain Sale: This mechanism for preserving a farm involves donation by the landowner. If the landowner donates a portion of the value of the development rights when an easement is sold, this is called a bargain sale. A bargain sale can result in substantial tax savings for the landowner and can stretch farmland preservation funds. The landowner donation is a reduction in the amount of gain that is subject to the capital gains tax, and the landowner can take a tax deduction for the amount donated against his or her federal and state income taxes.

Installment Purchase: Through an installment purchase agreement, development rights may be acquired by the Warren CADB through a payment plan that provides payments to the landowner over time. Receiving the income from the sale in installments may provide the landowner with financial management and/or tax advantages.

3. Cost Projections and Funding Plan Associated with Preservation Goals

As of December 2022, the Township had collected $3,335,627 and expended $2,925,234 in funds from their Open Space Trust Fund. The balance in the fund is $410,393. The average cost per acre to purchase a development easement in Franklin Township is $5,000. However, the cost of land has risen since the earliest acquisitions were made,
affecting the cost per acre for future acquisitions. The Township looks to leverage the municipal funds with county and state cost-share grants on farmland projects. It is anticipated that the municipal cost share will average 15% (at a minimum).

Cost projections to preserve farmland in Franklin Township include the following assumptions:

- The Trust Fund is currently collecting 1/4 cent per $100 of assessed value and will be increased to meet SADC minimum eligibility requirements for the Muni PIG program when a farm becomes available for preservation.
- Average price per acre is $5,000.
- The average price per acre will increase 5% over the next five to ten years.
- The town is purchasing land in partnership with the county and state (no direct purchase by the municipality).
- The municipal cost share is on average 15%.

Utilizing the SADC sliding scale for cost-sharing, and the estimated per acre value of the purchase of a farmland easement in Franklin Township, it is likely that the state will contribute approximately 60% of the funding on a municipal PIG project with the County and Township contributing the remaining 40% (split equally, 20% and 20%).

Completing this Farmland Plan Update is the first step in the municipality’s effort to reinstate the municipal trust fund, identify farms for preservation, qualify for matching grants, and to contribute to and preserve farms.

G. Administrative Resources

1. Staff/Consultant Resources

The AAC meets as needed to discuss farmland projects and issues. The Land Conservancy of New Jersey assists Franklin Township with their farmland program.

2. Legal Support

Legal support for Franklin Township’s farmland preservation program is provided by the municipal attorney, up to the point of contract signature, after which the county attorney is used.

3. Database Development

The AAC maintains the database of farmland in the municipality and works with the Warren County Department of Land Preservation on projects and data issues, as needed.

4. Geographic Information System (GIS) Capacity

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey has provided Geographic Information System mapping services for Franklin Township for the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan.

H. Factors Limiting Farmland Preservation Implementation

Landowner interest in the farmland preservation program is a challenge for the AAC in attracting new projects. Past public water supply challenges, competition from solar leases and pending warehouse development applications have been disincentives for farmland preservation in Franklin Township.
To uphold the farming heritage of Franklin Township, the AAC may consider hosting a public meeting with interested farmers to gain a better understanding of farming challenges within the industry. Specific strategies and effective solutions might be discussed with participating farmers to ensure that farming is a sustainable career in the Township.
Chapter 6.

Economic Development

A. Economic Development Plans and Initiatives

The farmland preservation program is a critical component of the farming industry, and the success of the farmland preservation program in Franklin Township is measured not just by acres preserved but also by the programs put in place to support the farmers and their businesses. To be a full partner in a successful farmland preservation program, agriculture as an industry must be vibrant, self-sustaining, and innovative.

The future of agriculture in Franklin Township is shaped by market forces and social trends that are occurring throughout New Jersey. The combination of traditional agricultural markets declining and land costs increasing will likely promote innovation in the ways farmers supplement their incomes. As traditional farming practices become less economically feasible, exploring opportunities for niche farming will be increasingly important for Franklin Township farmers.

Land prices in Warren County have remained relatively stable for the past 5 to 10 years, though there has been recent development pressure from warehouse and solar projects. Development continues for commercial and light industrial purposes and can take land out
of agricultural production. The combination of declining traditional agricultural markets and increasing land pressure will likely promote innovation in the ways farmers supplement their incomes. Farmers in Warren County are meeting these challenges by producing goods with higher rates of return.

New Jersey offers Franklin Township farmers several support agencies and programs ranging from technical advice to farm loans. The NJDA Smart Growth Tool Kit provides information to support municipal and county government, businesses, non-profit groups, and local citizens in their efforts to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the NJDA Agricultural Smart Growth Plan for New Jersey, 2006. The Tool Kit embraces the five linked components that have been identified by NJDA as critical for the future of farming: Farmland Preservation, Innovative Conservation Planning, Economic Development, Agriculture Industry Sustainability, and Natural Resource Conservation. Additionally, the NJDA released a 2011 Economic Development Strategies report to expand and strengthen various sectors of the agriculture industry in New Jersey, including strategies for produce, horticulture, dairy, livestock and poultry, field crops, organic, equine, and agritourism.

As part of this emphasis on the business of agriculture, the 2011 Economic Development Strategies identifies and proposes methods to expand and enhance various subsets of the agriculture industry in New Jersey, including produce, horticulture, aquaculture and seafood, dairy, field and forage crops, livestock and poultry, organic, wine, and agritourism. The NJDA observes that “local access to large affluent markets has long been an advantage for the marketing of [those] products. While our markets are still there, competition has become tougher. New Jersey...must continually work to rediscover its competitive advantages, improving access to nearby markets and strengthening consumer loyalty.”

The Warren CADB and its Department of Land Preservation are directly and administratively involved with the preservation and enhancement of farming in the County. This includes acquisition, monitoring, assisting with Right to Farm disputes, working with municipalities to create farm-friendly atmospheres where possible, and coordinating with the state, County, and other organizations to maximize the agricultural potential of the County, including an awareness of the need to support agriculture from an economic development perspective.

In 2017, 86 of Warren County’s 918 farms, or 9% of all farms, had sales of more than $100,000, accounting for 92% of the total revenue. This leaves 91% of farms accounting for 8% of the remaining total sales, indicating a wide disparity in revenue between a large majority of smaller farms and a small minority of larger farms. From a profitability standpoint Warren County farms had a net cash farm income of $21,227 in 2017. The average farm market value of $101,543 was lower than the statewide average of $111,095. (Table 12)

Using the Census of Agriculture, crop sales climbed from $8.3 million in 1987 to $18.4 million in 2002, before
jumping to $43.6 million in 2007 and continuing to climb to $54.7 million in 2012 and to $67.1 million in 2017. Within the crop sector, nursery/greenhouse was the largest sub-sector in 2017 with 61% of the market share, more than the 46% market share in 2012. The grains sub-sector came in second, with 21%, and vegetables, fruits, hay, and Christmas trees all lagged with 10%, 4%, 4%, and 1%, respectively. Over this same 30-year period (1987-2017), livestock sales went from $27 million in sales in 1987 before improving to $31.9 million in 2007 then declining to $26 million in 2017.

As part of this emphasis on the business of agriculture, the NJDA issued the 2011 Economic Development Strategies, which identify and propose methods to expand and enhance various subsets of the agriculture industry in New Jersey, including produce, horticulture, aquaculture and seafood, dairy, field and forage crops, livestock and poultry, organic, wine, and agritourism. The NJDA observes that “local access to large affluent markets has long been an advantage for the marketing of [those] products. While our markets are still there, competition has become tougher.

Table 12. Warren County Agricultural Economic Overview

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<td>Market Value/Products Sold ($1,000)</td>
<td>$75,477</td>
<td>$93,217</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average/Farm ($)</td>
<td>$80,897</td>
<td>$101,543</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Expenses ($1,000)</td>
<td>$59,355</td>
<td>$77,551</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average/Farm ($)</td>
<td>$63,617</td>
<td>$84,478</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Income ($1,000)</td>
<td>$20,843</td>
<td>$21,227</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average/Farm ($)</td>
<td>$22,340</td>
<td>$26,650</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms w/Net Gains</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average/Farms ($)</td>
<td>76,983</td>
<td>101,820</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of All of Farms</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms w/Net Losses</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average/Farm ($)</td>
<td>11,682</td>
<td>16,807</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of All of Farms</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Acres</td>
<td>74,975</td>
<td>73,874</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Farms</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>918</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Acres/Farm</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Agriculture
New Jersey...must continually work to rediscover its competitive advantages, improving access to nearby markets and strengthening consumer loyalty.”

Using recommendations outlined in the 2011 Economic Development Strategies report, Warren County municipalities, including Franklin Township, can investigate ways to expand and/or diversify into more profitable sectors to ensure sustainable agriculture practices and profitability. For each of the sectors, the 2011 report encourages farmers to continually seek new local, state, and interstate markets to strengthen market share. Franklin Township had 211 approved Farmland Assessment forms for 2022.

**Produce**

Major efforts by the NJDA are directed at increasing the demand for New Jersey grown produce through branding, agritourism, farm direct sales programs, and farm markets. The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies include all these activities. NJDA is committed to promoting agritourism through the Jersey Fresh website, the distribution of printed materials, and other forms of advertisement and promotion including collaborating with Rutgers University through the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, and promotion of the work of other organizations such as the New Jersey Farmers Direct Marketing Association. Franklin farms with appropriate activities benefit from such promotion.

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies for produce focused on the Jersey Fresh program and food safety. NJDA's Jersey Fresh labels program is promoted throughout the state, to strengthen the appeal of the Jersey Fresh brand to supermarket chains and other retailers. This has been largely successful, with major retailers such as Wegmans, ShopRite, Trader Joe’s, Target, ACME, and Foodtown (among others) carrying and promoting produce from the Jersey Fresh program.

Produce, which includes vegetables and fruits, is a leading agricultural commodity in New Jersey. In 2017, Warren County vegetable growers on 94 farms harvested 1,671 acres, with resulting sales of $6,388,000. Fruit, tree nut, and berry combined sales totaled $2,601,000 in 2017, an increase of 16% from 2012. Total produce sales increased after 2002, from $5,324,000 in 2002 to $8,989,000 in 2017, a 69% increase.

Franklin Township had a total of 30 acres which were harvested for fruits and vegetables in 2018, a decrease from the 35 acres in 2000. The most prominent crop in 2018 was corn for grain (2,820 acres). Some of these crops do not require as much land as field and forage crops such as soybeans and hay, making them a positive match with the trend towards smaller farms over the years, especially those that follow organic or sustainable practices.

Farmers with roadside stands or markets should have their own websites, and utilize other websites and regional events, to gain visibility. Opportunities for promoting produce (and, in many cases, numerous other agricultural products) include:

- Jersey Fresh offers community-supported agriculture (CSA),
where residents can pledge to support a farm in advance of the growing season, where they receive shares of the total harvest in return. At Last Farm in Asbury is a community supported farm offering vegetables, fruits, flowers, and herbs.

- Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension (NJAES-RCE) created an educational website dedicated to agritourism for the public, planning and policy professionals, farmers, and educators.
- A training website was also developed by the Rutgers Agritourism Team for farmers and can be found at [http://agritourism.rutgers.edu/training/](http://agritourism.rutgers.edu/training/).
- New Jersey Skylands promotes agritourism throughout Warren County, offering descriptions of the Warren County Farmers Fair, wineries, farmers markets, and other attractions. The website offers a comprehensive list of different types of produce available and the best time to attend pick-your-own operations for each produce category.
- Natural Jersey is a site promoting local natural health products and sustainable living. They highlight producers, such as farms, farm stands, and farmers markets throughout New Jersey which align with their mission.
- Tour de Farm New Jersey holds an annual cycling event in both Sussex and Warren Counties, with the goal of supporting local farmers. Farmers provide samples, as well as goods for sale along the route.
- Warren County Farmers Fair is a weeklong festival in Harmony featuring many local farms offering products for sale, as well as hot air balloons, artwork, and other attractions.
- Greenmarket is a network of New York City farmers markets designed to promote small family farms within the region. Over 50 Greenmarket locations are found within all five boroughs, where Warren County farms offer products for sale.


Specific recommendations include:

- Utilize consistent, inclusive, and up to date accurate information from the state, county, and regional/association websites.
- Establish or reestablish community farmers markets with help from the CADB, the NJAES-RCE, and the Warren County Economic Development Advisory Council.
- Explore expansion/diversification into value-added produce products, like jams and jellies, in workshops and communications from the CADB in concert with the NJDA and Rutgers.
- Explore “Contract Growing,” that is, growing goods for specific customers on a contract basis (such as regional pharmaceutical or biotech companies).
- Explore diversifying into ultra-niche crops and produce crops
that serve the needs of growing ethnic populations in the region, through NJAES-RCE workshops, videos, and resources: https://njaes.rutgers.edu/ultra-niche-crops/, https://sustainable-farming.rutgers.edu/alternative-world-crops/.

- Utilize state promotional campaigns, free signage, and other signage opportunities.
- Offer Community Supported Agriculture and other retail options to capture consumer dollars to garner increase from profitability, as well as raise community awareness of local agriculture.

**Nursery, Greenhouses, Floriculture, and Sod**

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies focused on ensuring plant health, including inspections and research; increasing consumer awareness of the Jersey Grown brand; and working with government agencies to use New Jersey-produced products wherever possible. This was the highest ranking category of agricultural commodities in Warren County in both 2012 and 2017, bringing in $25,248,000 and $40,793,000, respectively. It accounted for 28% of total agricultural sales in 2012, and 44% in 2017, versus 40% and 45% statewide. This sub-sector exhibited steady growth from $1 million in countywide in 1987, to $7.6 million in 2002, before jumping to $25.2 million in 2012, and jumping again to $40.8 million in 2017. The county experienced a 232% revenue increase from nursery/greenhouse products from 2002 to 2012, and a 62% increase from 2012 to 2017. The sales increase is attributed in part to businesses taking advantages of market niches and new technologies, supplying specialty products to customers throughout the region.

Franklin Township had a total of 52 acres dedicated to nursery (including cultivated sod and floriculture) in 2018, down from 82 acres in 2000. There are 9 garden centers and nurseries certified to market the Jersey Grown branding in Warren County, as listed on NJDA’s Jersey Grown website.

In addition to those strategies listed above where nursery, greenhouse, floriculture and sod products may be applicable, other strategies to follow may include:

- Increase consumer awareness of the Jersey Grown brand; utilize the resources of the NJDA for advertisement and marketing purposes.
- Seek and/or expand contracts with large box store operations such as Home Depot, Lowe's, and Walmart.
- Promote “drive up” operations where consumers can buy directly from the nursery or greenhouse.

**Field and Forage Crops**

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies for field and forage crops provide strategies to improve production, yield per acre, and management practices; and support organic crop production plans for a green energy initiative involving biofuel production that could provide a new local market for New Jersey agricultural products. The three prominent crops in Franklin are corn, hay, and soybeans.
In 2017, the County reported total sales of grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas to be $13.9 million, a -28% change since 2012 ($19.2 million) with hay and other crops totaling $2.7 million, a 47% change since 2012 ($1.8 million), together representing approximately 23% of total agricultural sales in Warren County.

**Corn**

In 2017, Warren County ranked second in the State for corn, with a total of 18,431 harvested acres (17,701 acres of corn for grain, and 730 acres of corn for silage), which brought in a total of $9.9 million in sales. In 2012, Warren County harvested 20,883 acres of corn (19,575 acres of corn for grain, and 1,308 acres of corn for silage), resulting in sales of $15.4 million. Though the total monetary amount for corn sales is not released on a municipal level, in 2018, Franklin farmers harvested a total of 3,086 acres of corn (2,820 acres of corn for grain, and 266 acres of corn for silage), a decrease from 2000 when 3,812 acres of corn was harvested (3,374 acres of corn for grain, and 438 acres of corn for silage).

**Hay**

Franklin harvested 1,135 acres of hay, including alfalfa hay in 2018, a decrease from 1,416 acres harvested in 2000. Warren County on a whole harvested 10,340 acres of hay (including alfalfa hay, excluding haylage) in 2017, bringing in a total of 24,669 tons, and increase from 10,155 acres harvesting 18,836 tons in 2012.

**Soybeans**

Warren County ranked fifth in the State for soybeans in 2017, with 63 farms harvesting 8,285 acres of soybeans, bringing in a total of $3.7 million in sales. The 2017 numbers show a strong increase from 5,661 acres harvested in 2012 totaling $3.4 million in sales, and the 5,382 acres harvested in 2007 bringing in a total of only $1.7 million. While the acres of soybeans harvested and the total yield both increased from 2007-2017 by 54% and 56% respectively, the increase in total sales grew by an incredible 118%. Franklin farmers harvested a total of 1,560 acres of soybeans in 2018, a decrease from 968 acres in 2000.

Field and forage crop strategies to consider include:

- Utilize improved management practices and ways to boost yield per acre.
- Capitalize on any available workshops on cropland and pasture management from the county or state.
- Diversify to row crops that meet newly emerging markets or markets with increasing demand (such as spelt as a dietary substitute for wheat or switchgrass for pelletized energy) and pursue to value-added marketing opportunities (such as sorghum for homemade jams and jellies that can be marketed from roadside stands, at community markets, and over the Internet).
- According to NJAES-RCE there are a number of profitable alternative world crops that can be grown in New Jersey to satisfy the demand for fresh produce
by immigrant populations. These crops are suited to diversified small to mid-size farms where high returns per acre is required. World Crops, of which NJAES-RCE is a sponsor, can point farmers to crops that meet the needs of ethnic populations in the area.

• Transition to certified organic or naturally grown bean and grain crops to increase their value.
• Investigate and possibly invest in crop insurance to mitigate market risk.
• Utilize county assistance to investigate alternative crops for local production and new markets (such as hops, specialty small fruits, small-scale animal products).

Dairy

Dairy has historically been one of the dominant agricultural sectors throughout Warren County but is now almost completely gone. In 2017, Warren County had 22 farms with milk cows, and 16 farms that sold milk from cows, bringing in a total of $3.3 million. As of 2018, Franklin had 269 head of cattle, compared to 817 head in 2000. This decrease in dairy production reflects the larger trend seen throughout Warren County.

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies for dairy included establishing a premium price for New Jersey-produced milk and ensuring stable pricing; increasing the demand for milk through sale and promotion of Jersey Fresh milk and milk products at community and retail markets; promoting FIN-PAK and risk-management software programs to producers; implementing dairy-quality benchmarks; and establishing a health and safety standard for sale of raw milk directly to consumers. Strategies for reviving the Franklin dairy industry include:

• If applicable, license under the Jersey Fresh Quality Grading Program, which allows raw milk to be used in goods bearing the logo Made With Jersey Fresh Milk.
• Take advantage of the services offered by the Garden State Dairy Alliance, including disease control, milk quality, marketing and promotion, and technical assistance.
• Explore various additional products, such as cheeses and markets for dairy, including local restaurants and grocery markets.
• Aggressively market value-added dairy products, especially those that can carry the Made With Jersey Fresh Milk logo.
• Consider and encourage the NJDA’s campaign to establish a process to allow sales of raw milk direct from the farmer to the producer and the positive effects it might have for dairy farmers in Warren County.
• Encourage passage of proposed raw milk legislation that would permit sale of raw milk under certain conditions and establishes a raw milk permit program (A585, re-introduced in the 2020-2021 State Legislative session).

Livestock and Poultry

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies for livestock focused on animal health, ensuring safe and legal sales of poultry and eggs at community farmers markets; and supporting youth programs involving livestock. Operations in
Franklin Township include beef and dairy cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, bees, fur, and poultry, and eggs. (Table 13)

Between the years 2000 and 2018, the total cattle stock reduced by 25%, reflecting significant reduction in dairy cattle, despite beef cattle stock growing by 90%. Other livestock that shows downward trends in Franklin Township are sheep and swine, following national and state cultural shifts. The largest growing animal industry is goats, with a 364% growth between 2000 and 2018. Other substantially growing animal herds are ducks (27% growth) and meat chickens (+29%).

Despite sheep flock numbers decreased 68% over this eighteen-year period, sheep might still be a niche sector for farmers to explore to provide specialty meat and value-added products to nearby markets. The national price for wool in 2019 was $1.89 per pound and the average yield per fleece was 7.2 pounds. Goat and sheep herds bring the opportunity for value-added products such as cheeses made from sheep’s milk. However, Goats are easier to manage and less costly to raise than many livestock, with a variety of end products: milk, cheeses, mohair or meat, depending on the type of goat. Growing populations of ethnic groups that favor goat meat spur demand, and goat milk can be used to make artisan goat cheeses, soaps, and other value-added products.

To strengthen and expand its place in the Franklin’s agricultural economy, some livestock and poultry strategies may include:

- Ensure animal health.
- Encourage USDA inspections in area farms to permit more direct sales of cuts of beef to consumers.
- Explore various additional markets, including local hospitals and assisted-living operations, restaurants and grocery markets, and increased outlets for meat sales at regional community markets (such as the Hackettstown Livestock Auction) and special events (such as the Warren County Farm Fair).
- Seek opportunities for production contracts with poultry and livestock processors.
- Investigate outlets for dairy products for goats and sheep and educate farmers about the benefits of diversifying into these value-added opportunities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Beef and Dairy Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Swine</th>
<th>Goats</th>
<th>Ducks</th>
<th>Meat Chickens</th>
<th>Egg Chickens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,119</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>1,882</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>1,200,251</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1,204</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>145</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>527</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1,356</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change (2005-2017)</td>
<td>-25%</td>
<td>-68%</td>
<td>-28%</td>
<td>364%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>-100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Farmland Assessment Data (SADC)
• Explore increased marketing opportunities for goat meat to meet the preferences of growing ethnic populations in the state.
• Encourage passage of proposed raw milk legislation that would permit sale of raw milk under certain conditions and establishes a raw milk permit program.
• Assist farmers with farming techniques, including continued and additional cooperation with the NJAES-RCE, NJDA, and NRCS.
• Promote the agritourism potential of livestock and livestock products in concentrated agricultural areas including exotic animals and poultry, such as “looking” or “petting” zoos, on-farm sales of value-added products such as wool and cheeses, and educational school tours.

Organic Farming

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies for organic farming included promoting federal cost-sharing funds for certification reimbursement; integrating marketing of Jersey Organic brand alongside Jersey Fresh; and working with NOFA-NJ towards research and technical assistance for organic growers.

Organic crops and animals have the potential to be an important market for the Township of Franklin and Warren County. With an increasing population, potential markets in Pennsylvania and New York State (including Philadelphia and New York City), and increased consumer awareness regarding food production, organic products and the markets that support them should continue to gain a stronghold and become more mainstream as people demand high quality, readily accessible and affordable organic products. Certification of organic farms is regulated by the USDA via the Organic Food Production Act of 1990 (OFPA) through a National Organic Program (NOP), and can be somewhat costly and time consuming as compared to non-organic farming. This may dissuade some farmers otherwise amenable to this type of farming.

“Natural” farming is a type of farming that seeks to emulate organic farming, but is not overseen by laws or regulations, as is organic farming. Natural farming is somewhat less costly and time consuming than “organic,” and therefore may be a viable option for some farmers and their potential customers. Another alternative, for farmers transitioning to organic production, is the ability to market their products under the NJDA’s newly introduced “Transitional Sustainable” label, eliminating the need to wait 36-months to profit from this niche market. With its strong produce sector, Warren County is in an excellent position to facilitate the market growth of organic and natural agriculture products. Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) is a non-profit organization that offers certification “tailored for small-scale, direct-market farmers and beekeepers using natural methods.” Its standards are based on the NOP standards, but CNG uses a peer-review process, as it is more affordable for small operations than certifying through the state program.

Small organic operations (growers or processors), those with gross sales of less than $5,000 per year of unprocessed organic product and/or less than $5,000 of processed...
organic products (such as jam), can be exempted from the NOP certification process. They can market their products as organic if they follow the national organic standards for production, labeling and recordkeeping, but they cannot use the USDA Organic seal, which can only be used on certified products. They can also sell their products to the retail market, which can sell them as organic if the retailer does not re-package or process the product.

In 2017, the Census reported two Warren County farms with the USDA NOP certification, one farm making the transition to NOP certification, and one farm which was listed as exempt from certification. On the state level in 2017, 102 farms reported $13 million in sales of NOP certified or exempt organically produced commodities. There is an opportunity for other farms to invest in this practice to satisfy the continually growing trend. Warren County and Franklin Township can:

- Improve marketing of organic and natural produce.
- Explore various additional markets, including local restaurants and grocery markets.
- Promote agritourism for organic and natural farms stands.
- Educate growers about organic and natural regulatory and certification requirements.
- Explore ways to support organic food growing and processing.

**Equine**

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies for the equine industry focused on horse health and promotion of the industry through the Jersey Bred brand, hosted events, the equine website, and including youth programs. The 2017 Census of Agriculture indicates that New Jersey produced over $28 million in equine sales. Sales and farm sizes have varied since the category was created in 2002, where 39 farms averaged $9,380 in sales. 2007 saw a much higher average sales figure, in part to a low of 35 farms, but largely due to a huge spike in total equine revenues, resulting in a $22,770 sales average per farm. 2012 saw the lowest average sales, dropping to $5,188 per farm.

Many equine farms in Warren County consist of pasture and stable horses. Part of the value of this small but viable sector comes from services offered, which are not included in total sales figures. Farms which have breeding services can make use of the Jersey Bred logo when marketing their animals.

On the state level, equine rules adopted August 4, 2008, established Agricultural Management Practices (AMP) for Equine Activities on Commercial Farms (N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.10) and expanded the list of equine activities eligible for Right to Farm protections (N.J.A.C. 2:76-2B.3). While breeding, raising, pasture, and hay production had always been eligible, the following were newly added: boarding, keeping, training, rehabilitation of horses and complementary activities including but not limited to clinics, open houses, demonstrations, educational camps, farm events, competitions, and rodeos, as long as these activities are related to the marketing of horses that are raised, bred, kept, boarded, trained, or rehabilitated on the farm, and are in compliance.
with municipal requirements. This state level support is important to the sustainability and viability of the equine sector in Warren County. To retain and grow its market share in the state and regional equine industry, Franklin can:

- Ensure the health of equine animals.
- Educate farmers about the benefits of equine rules and seek guidance from Warren County about the rights of equine farmers.
- Promote the industry at shows and festivals, such as the Warren County Farm Fair.
- Promote the industry through enhanced listings of Warren County and Franklin equine events in state, regional, and County website and print listings.
- Promote the agritourism aspect of the equine industry through farm tours, horse and pony rides, and boarding and riding lessons.

Wine

According to the 2011 Economic Development Strategies, the state’s grape production has not kept pace with its wine production. Strategies focused on expanding the locally grown content of New Jersey wine; supporting licenses to distill fruit-based spirits; expanding the number of eligible retail outlets supporting the ability to sell wines at farmers markets; and promoting New Jersey’s wine trails.

In January 2012, Governor Christie signed into law a bill permitting direct shipping by New Jersey wineries, and on July 2, 2014, the Governor signed into law another bill that established a pilot program through March 1, 2018, allowing wineries on preserved farms to conduct special occasion events under certain conditions as defined by the appropriate CADB. In February of 2020, A2773 was introduced, which to allow preserved farms to hold 14 special events per year, establishing the pilot program in law.

New Jersey Senate Bill 757, signed into law on February 3, 2023, established permanent rules for special occasion events on preserved farmland. Up to 26 events per year may be held on preserved farms whose operation produces products worth more than $10,000 annually. 6 events per year may involve 250 attendees or more. This legislation allows preserved farms access to another major source of revenue.

A portion of western Warren County, along the Delaware and Musconetcong Rivers and their tributaries, has also been designated by the federal government as a wine grape-growing region. In 2000, Franklin had no acres dedicated to growing grapes, but as of 2018 has dedicated one acre. Warren County had a total of 142 acres growing grapes in 2017, an increase of 118% from the 65 acres in 2005. Franklin may consider:

- Exploring the feasibility for additional Warren County and Franklin farmers to diversify into grape production (or other fruits suitable for wine making).
- Coordinating with wineries from other New Jersey counties, and New York and Pennsylvania, to grow a regional wine industry.
- Market through state tourism and marketing apparatuses,
including the Jersey Fresh site (https://findjerseyfresh.com/explore/#findfresh), and the Official Tourism Website of New Jersey, visitnj.org.

- Encouraging promotion of Warren County and future Franklin wineries and wines, as they develop, through publicity, expanding a County-wide wine trail or wine tour to multiple vineyards, and encouraging expanded distribution of local wines to local outlets such as retail outlets and restaurants, and at other special events.

**Aquaculture**

The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies list New Jersey as one of the country’s largest and most culturally diverse consumer seafood markets. Warren County aquaculture operations rank third in the state in 2017 and include catfish, trout, baitfish, sport or game fish, and other food fish. To support a growing aquaculture and seafood economy, Warren County and Franklin may consider:

- Working with the State Division of Animal Health to identify revenue streams to develop testing and certification for finfish species to allow transportation and sale of live farm-raised fish to markets in other states.
- Assist in crafting a supportive policy and regulatory path to allow aquaculture to grow in New Jersey, including revising the aquaculture rule providing for the Aquatic Farmer License Program, developing land-use permitting specifically for aquaculture, and assisting the industry and NJDEP in utilizing Aquaculture Development Zones.

**Agritourism**

Agritourism is one potential link in the long-term sustainability of the agriculture industry in Franklin Township and Warren County. A highly successful example of agritourism is the seven-day Warren County Farmers Fair held annually in Harmony. The Farmers Fair, which highlights the past and present agriculture heritage of Warren County, has been operating since 1937, and is extremely popular, drawing thousands of visitors each year.

One advantage for Franklin farmers is the proximity to New York City and Pennsylvania’s metropolitan areas, providing millions of potential customers to target. The NJDA 2011 Economic Development Strategies for agritourism focused on expanding roadside programs, including signage and eligibility for signage, consumer promotion through an agritourism brochure, press releases and promotion of agricultural fairs, along with continued development of njfarms.org.

The strategy to expand roadside promotion included expanding participation of agritourism operations in the Tourist Oriented Destination Signage (TODS) program through the NJDOT, gaining a discounted agritourism rate and increasing the maximum distance (set at three miles) an operation can be from a state road to be eligible for the signage promotion. At least two of these goals have been achieved: in 2014, the maximum distance for an agritourism operation is 10 miles, and the annual cost per sign is $400 versus $800 for other businesses. To be eligible, businesses must be open.
at least six hours a day, five days a week during its growing or operating season.

Visitnjfarms.org, mentioned in the 2011 Strategies, is a website sponsored by Rutgers, the New Jersey Farmers Direct Marketing Association, and the New Jersey Farm Bureau (NJFB). Its focus is on agritourism activities provided on commercial farms in New Jersey, and farmers must self-register. It includes a “find farms” option, event listings and a chart showing what is in season, and a map of various agritourism destinations. In 2011, the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment State (NJAES) reported that “...census data shows our state ranks first nationally in the percentage of farm revenue earned from agritourism” and that 1 in 5 New Jersey farms offer agritourism activities.

In April 2014, the state gave further support to agritourism as a recognized sector of the agricultural industry by adopting an Agricultural Management Practices (AMP) for On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities and Events into the New Jersey Register (N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.13). The AMP “establishes performance-based standards for commercial farms seeking to qualify for right-to-farm protection for on-farm direct marketing facilities, activities and events that are used to facilitate and provide for direct farmer-to-consumer sales, such as farm stands, farm stores, community-supported agriculture and pick-your-own operations, and associated activities and events that fit within the scope of the Right to Farm Act. The intent of the AMP is to provide statewide standards on which farmers, municipalities, CADBs and the public can rely, while also providing flexibility to commercial farm owners and operators.”

The 2017 Census reports that Warren County had $4.4 million in direct sales, representing 5% of total agricultural sales for the County. This is an increase of 245% over 1997, even while the total number of farms increased by only 4%. (Table 14)

The wine sector has introduced not only tasting rooms and tours, but innovative programs such as music nights and weekend runs through the vineyards in neighboring towns. With continued support from the state, as well as county and local municipal efforts, this sector can benefit local agriculture both for farming as an industry and for the individual farmer as additional income. Agritourism helps change the perspective of the non-farming community and increases visibility, understanding, and appreciation of farming by County residents and visitors. Agritourism can be an important contributor toward the long-term sustainability of Franklin's agricultural industry. Visibility is given to agritourism opportunities through the many websites and publications available. (Table 15) For every dollar in agritourism sales, $0.58 of additional sales are generated in other businesses (e.g., restaurants, construction companies, insurance providers). Among the series of recommendations included in this report are:

Marketing and promotion – centralized promotion system; agritourism marketing website; better inclusion and integration of agritourism on the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism marketing materials; stronger links
between farmers and Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Senior, and school lunch nutritional programs; and assisting counties with funding for agritourism promotion.

Liability protection and insurance – support the development of a New Jersey Agritourism Limited Liability act modeled after laws in Virginia and North Carolina and explore ways to reduce costs of liability insurance; encourage farmers and operations to protect their livelihoods with insurance.

Regulatory guidance for operators – includes proactive communication about relevant regulations, and education about requirements and protections under the Right to Farm Act; address impediments to signage.

Training and information workshops for farmers – include hospitality training, marketing strategies, and other issue-specific workshops such as liability, grants, traffic, signage; offer a forum for farmers getting into agritourism to interact with those who already are involved.

Role of CADB – examine preservation policies to identify and address any restraints to agritourism development; provide outreach to operators and municipal officials; develop model long-term leases for farmers renting preserved farmland; host open houses and tours at agritourism operations; encourage municipal adoption of model Right to Farm ordinance.

Resources – innovation fund providing grants or low interest loans; technical assistance for farmers in identifying and obtaining grant funding.

Strategies may include:

• Establishing additional permanent, three season community markets, which may assist local farmers in selling farm and value-added products, strengthening the business of agriculture within the County.

• Establishing event-specific cooperative farm stands at community events in the County, which would promote and benefit the Franklin farming industry and offer additional opportunities for product sales.

• Creating a regional harvest festival in the fall, a horticultural festival in the spring, or a farm itinerary tour of participating farms that could be listed on the Warren County Tourism page.

• Establishing a working farm devoted to public education, similar to The Farm Institute on Martha’s Vineyard, a working farm on preserved land that offers innovative programs that involve children, families and others, such as local chefs who come in to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Farms</th>
<th>Sales ($1,000)</th>
<th>% Change '97- '17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>$1,277</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>$1,545</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>$1,952</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>$2,150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>$4,403</td>
<td>245%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Agriculture
demonstrate recipes that can be prepared using local produce.

- Working with schools and farmers to develop and promote an expanded curriculum of opportunities for school tours to farms and for farmer visits to schools, maintaining a list of available farmers, and acting as a clearinghouse or coordinating link between schools and farmers.

- Expanding participation in WIC & Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program as Certified Farmer Vendors. Four $5 vouchers are available for each eligible WIC/Senior participant to use June through November to redeem for fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs grown by local farmers.

- Implementing a permanent signage program on a municipal or county level to supplement

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| NJDA Jersey Fresh Website | Roadside markets  
On-farm activities  
Winery |
| NJAES-RCE | Agritourism education |
| NJDA Jersey Equine Website | Equine events  
Equine facilities |
| Visit New Jersey Farms Website | Farms, farm products, activities and events  
Ability for website visitor to build itinerary of farms to visit |
| Visitnj.org (Office Tourism Website of New Jersey) | Farms & orchards  
Winery |
| New Jersey Skylands Website | Calendar of events  
Farms, Gardens, Wineries section  
Family Attractions section, where several regional farms and wineries are listed |
| Warren County Website | Tourism page includes links to countrywide and regional attractions |
| Explore Warren | Farm markets, and pick-your-own |
| NJ Farmers Direct Marketing Association, Inc. | Farms and farm markets |
| New Jersey Christmas Tree Growers’ Association | Christmas Tree farms |
the NJDOT Tourist Oriented Destination Signage (TODS) program that alerts and directs tourists and local residents to agritourism destinations to help increase business and income for these farming establishments, informing farmers of the availability of these programs and encouraging participation.

• Exploring growth in other sections of agritourism such as hunting, fishing, and trapping. Often farmers do not charge for these privileges, if they offer them, perhaps, in part because of liability issues. Liability has also become an issue for petting zoos, causing some farmers in other areas to repurpose to “looking zoos” to avoid the safety and health issues that can ensue from interaction between farm animals and visitors. If the Limited Liability protection mentioned above were enacted, farmers might feel freer to generate income from these activities.

Potential challenges to successful expansion of agritourism in Franklin and Warren County include:

• Impediments to farmers making long-term investments in crop diversification (such as the unavailability of long-term leases for farmers who rent rather than own the land).

• Market saturation (too many farmers engaged in any given type of agritourism could cause profitability for individual farmers to fall, even as it contributed more dollars to the overall agricultural sector).

• Lack of recognition for agriculture in regulations and master plans, including municipal, federal, or state regulations that make it difficult or expensive for farmers to participate, such as requiring food products to be processed in federally licensed kitchens or slaughterhouses.

• Farmers with direct sales or agritourism activities can post their listings in the following online resources: localharvest.org (CSAs), NOFA-NJ (organic and sustainable), visitnjfarms.org, NJDA websites (Jersey Fresh, Jersey Grown, Made with Jersey Fresh), and Warren County’s tourism page. Farmers who want to learn more about running an agritourism operation can start with the resources available from the Rutgers Sustainable Farming on the Urban Fringe website. Agritourism resources include information on selecting a venture, writing business, marketing and risk management plans, and information on the Right to Farm Act and Agricultural Management Practices. Additionally, the NJAES-RCE has publications available on its website on specific agritourism topics, such as how to budget for a corn maze.

General Strategies

“Many different agencies, councils, and organizations, working through a variety of programs, have the common goal of assisting New Jersey’s agricultural community,” according to the 2011 Economic Development Strategies. Two areas of focus were called out: Farmland Assessment and Crop Insurance and Technical Assistance; and Export Development.

Farmland Assessment – Updating documentation, supporting
farmers in filling out applications, and supporting tax assessors in determining farmer eligibility.

Crop Insurance – Implementing an education initiative in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency and Rutgers Cooperative Extension to increase knowledge and skills among farmers and improve their financial health.

Technical Assistance – Offering assistance concerning the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code as it relates to farm buildings and the Real Property Appraisal Manual, Farm Building Section.

Recycling and Food – Increasing participation in agricultural plastics recycling programs and assisting food processing industry in finding markets for soon-to expire and expired foods.

Motor Vehicle Requirements – Providing information about regulations, license plates for farm vehicles, and other vehicle related provisions through a user-friendly website.

Financing – Providing information on federal, state, and commercial lending institutions financing for agricultural loans.

**Grown In Warren (2019)**

Franklin farmers continue to look for ways to explore new markets, promote their products, and increase the profitability of their agricultural operations. In 2019, Warren County released a report titled, Grown in Warren, A Strategic Growth & Planning Report, which outlines strategies for both Warren County and local farmers to “promote the sustainable growth of farming and related business.” The report includes an analysis of the opportunities, challenges, trends, and recommendations for the agricultural community in Warren County. As this report mentions, Warren County is “ideally located within a two-hour drive of over 20 million potential customers in the New York-New Jersey-Philadelphia region...who are interested in the locally grown, locally sourced agricultural products that Warren County farmers can provide.”

Strategies include increasing direct marketing operations and promoting visibility through attendance at farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), on-farm sales and agritourism, promoting organically grown produce, sustainably and humane meat and animal products, value-added products, specialty crops, and ethnic products. The report also stresses the importance of internet promotion and direct customer engagement, as well as the promotion of regional initiatives such as “Grown in Warren” and regional bike tours.

The branding and execution of “Grown in Warren” is essential to the marketing and promotion of high-quality produce grown locally for a market invested in sourcing from and supporting local farmers. The four parts to this integral strategy are: 1.) establish the brand, 2.) increase the market share for Warren County’s agricultural producers, 3.) bringing added value to products that are associated with the “Grown in Warren” brand, and 4.) gaining acceptance and use of the “Grown in Warren” brand among the county’s agricultural community,
with re-sellers of those products and with consumers. Specific recommendations for farmers to take include:

- Bring Warren County’s agricultural products to the consumer through direct sales.
- Utilize the brand identity of “Grown in Warren” to market products as fresh and locally grown.
- Bring consumers to Warren County with on-farm activities and other agritourism practices.
- Participate in high volume urban farmers markets.
- Establish a CSA operation.
- Adopt practices that will result in multiple complimentary income opportunities.
- Process crops into high margin value-added products such as soups, jams & jellies, personal care products, and other consumer items.
- Create an internet presence to connect with potential customers, bring visitors to the farm, and to sell products direct to consumers.
- Forge relationships with restaurant owners, chefs, brewers, and other institutional consumers looking to source ingredients locally.
- Grow specialty and ethnic produce that includes fruits, vegetables, meats, and poultry.
- Plan for generational succession and transition to the next generation of Warren County farmers.
- Engage in cooperative regional marketing of Warren County’s agricultural products.

The report conducted an in-depth analysis on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to the Warren County agricultural community. (Table 16)

There is a strong link between outdoor recreation activities (hiking trails, roads conductive to bicyclist), farming and farm stand locations, and economic prosperity.

Specific recommendations on increasing agritourism and ecotourism in Warren County include:

- Extend marketing efforts to surrounding areas.
- Create and promote themed driving and biking tours.
- Support visitor transportation and accommodation options.
- Encourage multipurpose extended visitation.
- Actively market Warren County as a destination.

B. Agricultural Industry
Retention, Expansion, and Recruitment Strategies

1. Institutional

There are many techniques to support the economic expansion, development, and solidification of Franklin's agricultural industry. Diversity of agricultural commodities to broaden the agricultural base now dominated by hay, corn, and soybeans would help to ameliorate any economic downswing in either the general economy or a specific sector of the county’s agriculture industry. The AAC and the Township stand behind the local agricultural industry.
Minimum wage impacts on farm businesses - Effective January 1, 2023, New Jersey’s statewide minimum wage is $14.13 for most employees. A law signed in 2019 gradually raises the minimum wage to $15 an hour by 2024 for most employees, increasing it by $1 per hour each year. This minimum wage applies to farm workers. Generally, the production of vegetables and fruits requires the highest amount of farm labor, mainly at harvest time, to pick and process the vegetables and fruits. Other products that are prevalent in Franklin such as hay and corn require little or no hired farm labor (most labor is done by farm families). As such, farm labor costs are not as large a problem for Franklin farmers as they are for farmers in parts of the County or State that have major produce agriculture industries.

Farmer Support—Farmers at all levels can benefit from support. A variety of resources exist at the state level, published on the SADC website. These include:

- Agriculture credit and finance.
- Business development for agriculture, food manufacturing, and related industries.
- Farm building construction.
- Motor vehicle regulations for agriculture.
- Real property appraisal manual, farm building section.
- Recycling for agriculture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths include:</th>
<th>Weaknesses include:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large productive land base</td>
<td>Aging population of farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced population of farmers</td>
<td>Very high cost of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to markets</td>
<td>Difficult for new farmers to access land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to high-income/high-profit activities</td>
<td>Difficult access to capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent soils</td>
<td>No established distribution networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive local communities</td>
<td>Lack of facilities for overnight visitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful natural environment</td>
<td>Limited public transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities include:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Threats include:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing New types of crops</td>
<td>Volatile commodity prices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling to new markets / agrotourism</td>
<td>High cost of business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking advantage of consumer preferences</td>
<td>Complex &amp; restrictive regulatory environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing regional branding</td>
<td>Encroaching development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand for ethnic products</td>
<td>Uncertain impacts of climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand for organic produce</td>
<td>Changing labor market</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grown in Warren Report
• Risk management and crop insurance.
• Sales and use tax on farmer's purchases.
• Trespass, vandalism, and liability on farms.

One program, Farm Link, serves as a resource and referral center for new farmers, farmers seeking access to land and farming opportunities, landowners seeking farmers, and farmers working on estate and farm transfer plans. In 2015, the SADC launched NJ Land Link, an interactive website connecting farmers seeking land or farming opportunities with those who have existing farmland or farming opportunities. Farmers interested in land or partnership/job opportunities, as well as those wanting to advertise available land and opportunities, sign up and create and manage their own listings. In FY2018, NJ land Link had more than 845 registered users and more than 200 active listings.

Resources specific to estate planning and retirement planning are available through the Farm Link Program’s Farm Transfer, Succession, and Retirement Planning section. Resources include workshops, Farm Succession Guidebook, plans and planning information, workbooks and worksheets, and informational documents. Farm Link can also be used to facilitate succession when there is no next generation to take over the farm. Information is also available for the incoming generation of farmers through this Farm Link Program.

Two resources available to farmers through the SADC are the New Jersey Farmland Leasing Guidebook, created as part of a Beginning Farmer grant project, and a New Jersey Agricultural Mediation Program Handbook, subtitled “A Guide for Farmers, Neighbors and Municipalities.” In addition, the state, NJAES-RCE and supply companies, such as fertilizer and pesticide merchandisers, provide other often-seasonal workshops for farmers, keeping them up-to-date on various issues related to the agricultural community.

Another opportunity is the New Jersey Agricultural Society’s New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program (NJALDP), administered by Burlington County College. NJALDP is “a two-year professional development opportunity, which is designed specifically for individuals in farming and agribusiness to become informed, articulate leaders.” Through a series of seminars and domestic learning experiences, NJALDP participants explore various agricultural topics, debate key issues, sharpen communications skills, particularly through public speaking, and establish and cultivate an extensive agricultural network throughout the state.

One program which could be expanded to Warren County is the School Gardens initiative, funded by Team Nutrition Training mini-grants provided by the USDA, the NJDA of Agriculture, and Grow Healthy – a program of the NJAES-RCE. This is a hands-on way to educate children about the importance of farming. Expanding this program to schools in Franklin would be a great way to increase the awareness of both students and their parents about the benefits and value of the agricultural industry in the Township.
According to the NJAES-RCE, the Grow Healthy program is a way to:

- Help children eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Offer nutrition education, physical activity, gardening, and agriculture programs.
- Connect with local farms.
- Serve more local foods.
- Offer farm-to-school and nutrition trainings for foodservice staff.

**Marketing, Advertising, Public Relations Support**

Marketing and advertising are critical to profitability. Some farmers do opt to use paid advertising in local newspapers, but many, particularly those with smaller farms, hesitate to consider advertising, believing that the costs outweigh the benefits. They prefer to take advantage of free or less costly opportunities to market their products, such as state, regional, and County public and promotional websites that will “advertise” the products. Several embrace the opportunities of direct marketing, from roadside stands and from their own websites.

The CADB, the NJAES-RCE, and the state are great resources for farmers to learn about the availability of various free promotional channels such as the Jersey Fresh, Jersey Bred, Jersey Crown and Jersey Equine websites, Visit NJ Farms website, and the Warren County “Tourism” web page. For those farmers who want to consider paid advertising or garner free media coverage, web resources can help with the planning. For example, the New Jersey State Horticultural Society website publishes ad rates for its quarterly newsletter, Horticultural News.

Another website for Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA), a non-profit organization in Western Massachusetts, offers a Basic Marketing Practices manual.

**Signage**

Signage promotes visibility and awareness of agriculture in general, as well as benefitting the individual farmers. Municipal considerations of farming needs when drafting their sign ordinances can be helpful in supporting farmer’ efforts to promote their products. Farm stands are often seasonal businesses that need to capture potential sales at harvest time. Signs that give directions to the farm stand and let customers know what is available are important. Having farm-friendly ordinances in place can make it easier for farmers to promote their products and can minimize right-to-farm complaints in cases where farmers run up against opposition to their signage, whether from neighboring residents or municipal officials. Farm signage can also benefit the municipality by drawing more visitors and dollars to the area, benefitting other businesses in the community as well as the farmer. Signs should conform to local, county, or state right-of-way and sight standards.

For farmers who qualify for the Jersey series of marketing programs, signage is available. This ranges from free price cards to banners and stickers, hats, and T-shirts. Jersey Fresh point-of-sale signs and other materials, both free and fee-based, can be ordered using the point-of-purchase application on the NJDA’s Marketing and Development Jersey Fresh page. Information on how
to participate in the Jersey Fresh program is also included.

**Farmers Markets**

In 2023, four community farmers’ markets were operating in Warren County:

- **Blairstown Farmers’ Market** located at 5 Stillwater Road in Blairstown from June to October.
- **Hope’s One Acre Farmers’ Market** located at 438 Hope Blairstown Road in Hope from June to August.
- **Warren County Farmers’ Market** located at 565 County Route 519 at White Township School in Belvidere from June to September.
- **Washington Borough Farmers’ Market** located at 44 East Washington Avenue in Washington from June to October.

**Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**

Economic support of the Franklin agricultural community also comes from local grass roots groups. This support is embodied in CSA, which consists of:

- A community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation so that the farmland becomes the community’s farm. In such an arrangement, the growers and consumers provide mutual support, and share the risks and benefits of agriculture.
- Members or “share-holders” of the farm pledge in advance to cover the anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer’s salary.
- Members receive shares in the farm’s products throughout the growing season.
- Members also receive the satisfaction gained from reconnecting to the land and participating directly in food production.
- Members also share in the risks of farming, including poor harvests due to unfavorable weather or pests.
- Generally, growers receive better prices for their crops, gain some financial security, and are relieved of much of the burden of marketing.

There are four CSA farms located near Franklin Township, including At Last Farm in Asbury, Godlewsky Farm in Great Meadows, Hensler Farms in Belvidere, and VonThun Farms in Washington. Additionally, the Foodshed Alliance is a grassroots group that is in Blairstown Township. This group sponsors the Blairstown Farmers Market and supports community agriculture in the greater Warren County area. The Foodshed Alliance seeks to “promote a robust farm economy in northwest New Jersey through local efforts and regional collaborations.” The Alliance promotes local efforts by assisting individual farmers with sustainable farming methods, making preserved farmland accessible to farmers at affordable long-term leases through the Sustainable Agriculture Enterprise (SAgE) program, protecting rivers through the voluntary River Friendly Farm Program, working towards establishing a food hub in New Jersey, connecting farmers with consumers through farmers markets and buyers clubs, and gathering information about how much land is
being farmed in the Ridge and Valley region. In addition, the Alliance has published the Food Hub Feasibility Study For Northern New Jersey, the Northern New Jersey Regional Foodshed Resiliency Plan, and the Sustainable Agriculture Enterprise Information and Application for Sustainable Farm Businesses.

Agricultural Education and Market Research Coordination

Franklin may want to consider coordinating with Warren County and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Warren County to identify and integrate market research on agriculture and economic trends. The NJAES website offers additional information relating to animal agriculture, farm management and safety, pest management, plant agriculture, and other elements of interest to those involved in commercial agriculture. The Warren County NJAES-RCE traditionally has been a sponsor of workshops, often funded through grants secured by the NJAES-RCE, and a helpful resource for local farmers in many other ways.

Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS) is “committed to the study of how human and environmental health can intersect to support a healthy and sustainable future.” Programs and activities include on-campus living labs, research laboratories, farms, greenhouses, gardens, living-learning communities, a historic herbarium, and an entomology museum. Strategies Franklin can use to support agricultural education and market research coordination include:

- Coordinate with NJAES-RCE and NJDA to research and market agricultural education.
- Seek grants to fund farmer education.

1. Businesses

Input Suppliers and Services

Very few, if any, large scale agriculture suppliers, which supply medium to large size agriculture operations, exist in Warren County. The several suppliers in the area operate on smaller, more local scales. Many such suppliers are farmers themselves (for instance, selling feed from their corn crops to other local farmers raising animals), without any formal business practices such as advertising. Without an adequate number of suppliers within reasonable driving distances of farms, the business of farming can become so expensive and time consuming as to not be profitable. The Township welcomes agriculture-related businesses within the confines of its existing zoning.

With the decline of local suppliers, and the ease of access through the internet, mail orders from supply stores further away might work for small equipment or shipments. It is not ideal for large orders. Equipment and supply stores in Warren County include:

- Tractor Supply in Blairstown and Washington Township, Warren County.
- Central Jersey Equipment in Columbia.
• Frank Rymon and Sons in Washington Township, Warren County.
• Tickner’s in Hackettstown.
• Smith’s Tractor in Washington Township, Warren County.
• Mayberry in Port Murray.
• S&L Kubota in Belvidere.

Seed and chemical supplies in the area include:

• Ace/Agway in Blairstown.
• Penwell Mills Feed in Port Murray.
• Ise Feed in Stewartsville.

Product Distributors and Processors

Processing facilities such as creameries, slaughterhouses, and lumber mills have become absent from Warren County, and therefore Franklin as well, forcing local farmers to ship their products out of town to be processed.

Field and forage crops are generally sold locally to cattle and equine operations, landscapers, nurseries, and farm stands as baled straw, or kept for the farmer’s own livestock and other uses. Small volumes are also sold at the Hackettstown Livestock Cooperative Auction Market. Corn products are almost entirely sold wholesale and fluctuate depending on the national market. Small amounts of corn are sold as retail to hunters for bait.

Produce products are sold through a variety of channels. The majority is sold through retail markets to maximize profits, and some are sold either directly to consumers or through roadside stands. Some farmers may travel to metropolitan areas, including New York City, to sell produce at farmers markets and/or greenmarkets. Additionally, some produce is wholesaled to local supermarkets.

Livestock products can be quite varied. Some animals are sold in their entirety directly to consumers (whether still alive or previously slaughtered). Other animals are sold at the Hackettstown Livestock Cooperative Auction Market. Farmers, as well as wholesalers, butchers, and private individuals sell, buy, and trade livestock, eggs, and crops at the Market. Franklin farmers use the Livestock Cooperative Auction for the purchase and sale of agricultural livestock and products. The Auction is located on West Stiger Street in Hackettstown and is open every Tuesday throughout the year. It is the only remaining livestock auction in the state and is a staple of the Warren County agriculture industry.

2. Anticipated Agricultural Trends

Product Demand

From a county historical perspective, total agricultural sales have increased sharply from $39.7 million in 2002, to $75.5 million in 2007, $91.2 million in 2012, and $93.2 million in 2017. Much of this growth has been fueled by increased grain, nursery, and greenhouse sales, in part due to the consolidation of several large farms and cost-savings through economies of scale. The nursery, greenhouse, grain, and vegetables sectors of the agricultural industry should continue to be healthy and viable sectors since they often serve the needs of increasing livestock practices such as sheep, goats, and poultry in the face of a declining cattle industry,
as well as a burgeoning population of homes and businesses within the County and the region.

The livestock sector has seen changes to its non-dairy and dairy subsectors, both of which have experienced lengthy declines in cattle stocks but have held constant since the early 2000s. Milk production follows this trend as well, with the commercial dairy industry completely gone now. The cattle industry is believed to be trending towards smaller and smaller farming operations, many of which will raise a small amount of cattle as part-time jobs to qualify for farmland assessment.

Value-added products can bring additional income to farms involved in direct marketing through farm stands and websites. Direct marketers can capitalize on the advantages of selling at retail rather than wholesale, selling from their own location rather than having to pay transport costs, and of generating additional income by developing value-added products such as pies, cheeses, jams, honey, and other products that serve the increasing numbers of customers who want the advantages of ready-made and the appeal of items “home-made” by someone else.

An increased demand for organic products may encourage farmers to adopt more natural farming methods. Since federal certification requires a three-year commitment, many farmers may lean toward “natural” farming methods for food crops and for livestock, such as grass-fed beef raised without hormones or antibiotics.

One emerging trend is the emerging resurgence of hemp (cannabis sativa). The growing support for hemp products, and the recent legislative actions which removed it from the Schedule I list of Controlled Substances Act, have created a new market. The “New Jersey Industrial Hemp Pilot Program” was signed in 2018, for hemp that is cultivated and tested to ensure that THC content does not exceed 0.3 percent.

Other avenues to explore include:

- Changing the farm operation’s mix of products.
- Consider new crop opportunities being researched/promoted by the NJDA, the NJAES-RCE, and the NJFB: hops, tree nut crops, organic or low input produce or meat products, aquaculture, biotechnical and pharmaceutical use of farm products or animals, and hemp.
- Marketing livestock as dressed meat on a retail basis.
- Fresh herbs, sold at retail, in bunches or as potted plants.
- Economic development through preservation.

Agricultural Enterprise District (AED) as a potential preservation mechanism. Modeled after Urban Enterprise Zones, the AED would provide economic development advantages, particularly to preserved farms, and use taxes from farmland assessed land to seed the formation of an economic development corporation and development of a program.

Market Location Franklin is located near the large population centers of New York City and Philadelphia, with a direct route to New York City.
Maximizing the use of nearby highways can increase the number and type of consumer markets to be reached by Franklin farmers. At least one County farm, Race Farm, takes advantage of these connections to bring produce as far as New York City on a weekly basis year-round and to community farmers markets in northeastern New Jersey.

The agriculture community in Franklin can seek contracts with area schools to supply healthy, fresh farm products for use in their cafeterias. Area hospitals and senior/nursing homes are also possible customers. Since all of these are permanent institutions, once established these markets can be considered as “permanent customers” and revenue sources for the Franklin agriculture community.

Future of Agriculture. Among the most substantial trends reshaping the Township’s agriculture base is the rapid rise of the crops sector. Since the 2002 Census, crop, nursery, and greenhouse products have outpaced livestock and poultry sales. Niche products such as packaged and organic goods that generate “value added” revenue streams are likely to increase.

Challenges facing Franklin’s farmers are land prices and property taxes. Higher land prices threaten to replace many of the County and Township’s farmlands and open space areas with residential and commercial developments that are less compatible with agricultural production.

The average age of farmers in Warren County is increasing. Young farmers are attracted by higher paying opportunities in other employment sectors, and fewer are becoming farmers. Consequently, the average age of farmers in Warren County has increased from 50 years old in 1982, to 56 years old in 2002, 59 years old in 2012, and between 55 and 64 in 2017.

3. Agricultural Support Needs

Agricultural Facilities and Infrastructure

The County lacks permanent suppliers of items such as seeds, feed, and chemicals required to keep farms productive. Most of these services involve local farmers selling these items to one another, hampering the stability of these support services. An increase in permanent agricultural suppliers would work to guarantee the stability of these services. Ultimately, it comes down to whether there are enough opportunities to make money in supporting the County and region’s agricultural industry. If those outside the farming community see ways to make profits doing so, then they will feel much more confident in setting up operations, whether they be cattle and equine veterinarians, feed and fertilizer suppliers, or machinery sales and repairs.

The Foodshed Alliance released a report in 2018 titled, “The Foodhub Feasibility Study,” which analyzes the benefit of having a food-hub (an aggregation and distribution facility). The report found that a food hub “could help strengthen the farm industry in New Jersey by giving farmers easy access to institutional buyers to fill the need for locally grown, fresh healthy food.”
Flexible Land Use Regulations

State Level – Examples where regulatory flexibility is important are the NJDEP’s “Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules” (N.J.A.C. 7:13-et. seq.), which grants exemptions for agricultural activities, and the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:13). The latter was adopted in 2007 and amended last in June 2019, with amendments for agriculture effective June 2016, including numerous agricultural permits.

Municipal level – Building an awareness of and provisions supportive of agriculture into municipal master plans and zoning ordinances can go a long way towards the kind of support agriculture needs to be an economically viable sector. Franklin farmers benefit from having a Right to Farm ordinance enacted in their town.

Other areas where municipal sensitivity to the land use needs of agriculture can be helpful include consideration of the following issues when creating municipal regulations:

- Setting specific buffer standards for non-farm development adjacent to working farms that help to limit trespassing and littering and protect the residential landowner from dust and spray materials spread during farm activities, thus minimizing potential Right to Farm conflicts.
- Code or ordinance provisions requiring developers to notify purchasers of the proximate existence of active agriculture.
- Exemptions for certain farm structures from building height restrictions.
- Allowing additional principal dwelling units on farms to meet the needs of farmers for additional housing for their children or for farm managers.
- Exemptions from setback requirements when farmers seek to expand an existing nonconforming structure.
- Flexible fencing ordinances that make allowances for types of fencing on farms that might not be desirable in residential zones, in consideration of the farmers’ needs to prevent wildlife damage.
- Construction fee reduction for agricultural buildings.
- Incorporating agriculture into local planning and zoning documents will help the Township protect its farmlands and rural character in the face of development pressure. As an example of its support of local agriculture, Franklin passed a Right to Farm ordinance to ensure farmers can practice accepted agricultural operations. In addition, Franklin supports farms, processing and packaging agricultural output, irrigation pumps and equipment, using tractors and other necessary equipment, and hiring and utilizing necessary farm labor. As such, the Township’s zoning is supportive of agriculture.

Agriculture Representation in Economic Development

The Warren County Economic Development Committee (EDC) was created in January 2016 to serve in an advisory capacity to the
Board of Commissioners, to assist the County in promoting economic development, including an increased focus on tourism and agritourism. An established framework will be used in coordinating local, state, and federal efforts towards this end, including a major emphasis in laying the basic groundwork necessary for attracting and encouraging sound economic growth within the County. A list of business resources within Warren County is available on the EDC website at http://warrenecdev.com/business-resources.

4. Agricultural Support Implementation

The NJAES-RCE of Warren County has always been a source of support to local farmers, helping them adapt to new technologies, introducing new farming practices to improve efficiency, and keeping farmers up to date with market trends. With the rise of online shopping, more and more people are choosing to order products, including agricultural products, from the comfort of their own homes. The NJAES-RCE can work with local farmers in expanding their presence to the web in addition to traditional advertising such as signage and roadside stands.

The average age of farmers is increasing as well, with a need for new generations of farmers to come in and take over agricultural operations in the years to come; the NJAES-RCE can reach out to those interested in or just beginning their own farming operations, assisting them in reaching the point where their operations become profitable.

The Township, as well as the County and other relevant parties, can also continue to promote agritourism, helping to boost farm revenues and raise local awareness of, and support for, farming operations. This can be done in conjunction with the non-farming community, such as local artists, who can help in attracting people who may primarily be more interested in artwork or music than agriculture and end up gaining exposure to farming activities and products when visiting art exhibits or concerts.

Federal agriculture support can be found through the USDA's Grants and Loans webpage including grant and loan programs ranging from farm loans, housing assistance, rural development loan and grant assistance, beginning farmers and ranchers, livestock insurance, specialty crop block grant program, the farmers market promotion program, and the organic cost share program.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is a USDA competitive grants program that helps build the future economic viability of agriculture in the United States. SARE funds are used for:

Farmer & Rancher Grants: These grants have the goal of helping farmers shift to practices that are environmentally sound, profitable, and beneficial to the wider farm community.

Partnership grants: These grants are for RCE and NRCS personnel, non-profits, and agricultural consultants who work directly with farmers. Grants are used for on-farm research and demonstration projects that address sustainability.

Sustainable Community Grants: These grants allow for key issues to
be addressed which connect farming with community prosperity and revitalization.

Professional Development Grants: These grants fund professional development projects that help RCE educators and other agricultural professionals learn and transmit the knowledge needed to help farmers move toward greater sustainability.

Research and Education Grants: These grants fund research and education projects that lead to farmers adopting sustainable practices. The emphasis is on improved farming practices and an enhanced quality of life for farmers and rural communities.


Farmland Preservation Programs support include State Acquisition, County Planning Incentive Grants, Municipal Planning Incentive Grants, and Grants to Non-Profits. More information can be found through the State Agriculture Development Committee webpage, accessed through the following link: https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/farmpreserve/programs/.

New Jersey Farm Bureau

The NJFB is a private, non-profit membership organization that represents the agricultural producers and enterprises in New Jersey at all levels of government. The NJFB advocates for farmland preservation, environmental regulations, wildlife and water issues, and legislation relating to agricultural labor and the Right to Farm. Through grants, initiatives, and partnerships, the NJFB educates the public about the agricultural industry and participates in farmer training and education programs.
Chapter 7.

Natural Resource Conservation

A. Natural Resource Protection Coordination

1. Natural Resources Conservation Service

There are numerous public and private entities which administer, fund, and provide technical guidance for Franklin farmers relative to natural resource conservation. An important partner in support of natural resource conservation for the agricultural community is the USDA NRCS. The NRCS “provides assistance to private landowners [including farmers] in the conservation and management of their soil, water, and other natural resources.” The NRCS provides technical assistance suited to the natural resource issues that are specific to a farmer’s needs, with ample opportunities for cost-shares and financial incentives.

NRCS also will reach out directly to landowners if they know of a farmer who needs technical assistance or could use the guidance of the NRCS staff. The local NRCS office serving Franklin Township:

Address: Building 1, 101 Bilby Road, in Hackettstown Commerce Park.

Phone and Website: 908-852-2576, www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov

Within one year of selling their development easement, owners of preserved farms are required to develop a Conservation Plan. A Conservation Plan is also required to apply for the Environmental...
Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The following strategies would strengthen natural resource conservation efforts for farms in Warren County and its municipalities, including Franklin:

Providing a mechanism and staff to ensure that Conservation Plans are prepared and implemented will guarantee that the objectives of the program are put in place, and active stewardship practices are underway.

While NRCS services are voluntary, farmers can benefit from conservation and the plans can help make farmers eligible for NRCS and USDA funding.

The NRCS “Field Office Technical Guide” contains information about the development and implementation of soil, water, air, flora, and fauna resource conservation practices, and is used to develop conservation and resource management plans. Conservation practices discussed in the Guide that are pertinent for Franklin include, but are not limited to:

- Riparian buffers, including necessary buffer widths and plant species.
- No till and minimum till practices.
- Prescribed grazing and pasture management.
- Nutrient management, including manure and fertilizers.

In November of 2020, the USDA NRCS completed an update to its National Conservation Practice standards. The 2018 Farm Bill required the NRCS to review these practices. They provide guidance for planning, designing, installing, operating, and maintaining conservation practices. Some of the main areas of interest they cover are:

- Irrigation water management.
- Heavy use area protection.
- Composting facilities.

Two new conservation practices which deal with wastewater treatment and wildlife habitat planning will be added, and an additional 18 conservation standards are being tested to establish and document natural resources benefits. This update addresses changes in technology and added criterion for soil health, water conservation, drought tolerance, and resiliency.

2. Upper Delaware Soil Conservation District

The NJDA Division of Agricultural and Natural Resources includes the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC). Among its objectives are the protection of agricultural lands through farmland retention and productivity improvements, control and prevention of soil erosion and sedimentation on agricultural land, protection of water quality and control, and prevention of storm and flood water damages.

The SSCC coordinates and supports the work of the state’s 14 local soil conservation districts (SCDs), including the Upper Delaware SCD. The SSCC are part of the New Jersey Conservation Partnership, which also includes the USDA NRCS and NJAES-RCE. The Upper Delaware SCD is charged with implementing natural resource conservation and assistance programs and services, which include agricultural conservation planning assistance,
agricultural conservation cost-sharing program grants, application of organic materials on agricultural land, agricultural water supply and management, soil erosion and sediment control, storm water discharge authorization, and soil surveys.

The Upper Delaware SCD works with the NRCS in providing survey assistance, engineering designs, and plans. For development easements which require a conservation plan for the farm to be obtained within one year, the NRCS will prepare a conservation plan at no cost to the farmer. It also provides administrative support to Conservation Assistance Program (CAP) in support of Federal Farm Bill Conservation programs and the New Jersey Farmland Preservation Program, including the preparation and implementation of Conservation Plans. Its goal is to promote best management practices (BMPs) for soil erosion and sediment control, animal wastes, nutrient management, water quality improvement, and other natural resource management concerns.

Franklin farmers may approach this local SCD office (as well as the local NRCS office) with a Request for Assistance (RFA) to apply for funds from the State Conservation Cost Share program and federal programs such as EQIP. If approved, the RFA is forwarded to the local NRCS office in Hackettstown for processing. The administration of the RFA includes preparation of a Conservation Plan and program contract. The Upper Delaware SCD is involved in review of Conservation Plans and program contracts and must give final approval to both. The Upper Delaware SCD office serving Franklin farms is:

Address: 51 Main Street, Suite B in Blairstown
Phone: 908-852-2579

Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, Cooperative Extension of Warren County (NJAES-RCE)

The NJAES-RCE of Warren County provides field and technical research on BMPs for farmers to ensure the long-term viability of the agricultural economy and the natural resources upon which it is based.

The NJAES-RCE of Warren County offers the Agriculture and Natural Resource Management program to provide educational programs and services including soil testing, insect identification, plant disease diagnosis, and pest management recommendations for agricultural operations. The NJAES-RCE of Warren County is:

Address: Warren County Administration Building, Suite 102, 165 County Route 519 South in White Township (mailing address of Belvidere)

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

The NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry oversees the Private Lands Management Program for the stewardship and retention of privately owned productive forest lands. This includes the private woodlands currently under Farmland Assessment, which totaled 228,000 acres statewide in 2020. Such tracts were added as “farm products” in the 1970s. There are two classifications of woodlands: appurtenant (or attached) and non-appurtenant
(or unattached). Requirements for non-appurtenant woodland tracts are listed in N.J.A.C. 18:15-2.7. These tracts must be utilized by the farmer as a sustainable “product,” and require Woodland Management Plans (WMPs) to receive reduced local property taxes accorded properties in the farmland tax assessment program.

The Division of Parks and Forestry, Bureau of Forest Management (BFM), reviews farmland assessment applications that include WMPs prepared for farmers by private consultants. The BFM maintains a list of foresters approved for this purpose. Once a WMP is in place, a Woodland Data Form (WD-1) must be submitted with the farmland assessment application yearly to certify compliance with the WMP.

Non-appurtenant woodlands are woodland acreage on a farm over and above total farmed acreage (tilled and pasture). For example, if 50 acres of a farm are tilled or pastured, and there are 125 acres of woodlands on the farm, 75 acres of woodlands would be non-appurtenant (125 woodland acres minus 50 farmed acres). In Franklin for 2022, there were 1,552 acres of non-appurtenant (or unattached) woodland acres in farmland assessment. The total of non-appurtenant woodland acres in 2022 was down from 2017 when there were 1,689 acres. The 2022 non-appurtenant acres are up from 2012 when there were 1,515 acres, and in 2009, when there were 1,461 acres in farmland assessment in Franklin. (Table 17)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Appurtenant Woodlands (acres)</th>
<th>Appurtenant Woodlands (acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>1,552</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1,689</td>
<td>1,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,515</td>
<td>1,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,461</td>
<td>1,558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Farmland Assessment (SADC)

Appurtenant woodlands are woodland acreage on a farm, less than or equal to, farmed acreage. Appurtenant woodland acres do not require a WMP to qualify for farmland assessment. In Franklin for 2022, there were 1,627 acres of appurtenant (or attached) woodland acres in farmland assessment, up from 2017 when there were 1,570 acres. In 2009, there were 1,558 appurtenant acres in farmland assessment in Franklin.

The NJDEP’s Nongame and Endangered Species Program administers the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP). This program worked to improve habitat management and protection for threatened and endangered species on private lands, some of which were agricultural lands. Since 2014, there is no expectation of congressional reapproval of LIP. While LIP is no longer available, other incentive programs through NJDEP are listed on the NJDEP, Division of Fish and Wildlife website.

USDA, Forest Service Forest Stewardship Program

The United States Forest Service (USFS) sponsors the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP), administered locally by the BFM. In the summer of 2017, the Forest Stewardship Program transitioned
to a new program that eliminated income requirements to qualify for the program and enhanced monitoring and management of enrolled acres. This program supports landowners whose property has a FSP that recognizes and manages the wetlands, wildlife, aesthetics, soil, and water in addition to the woodlands on the property. This program, when fully funded, offers landowners cost-share initiatives of up to 75% of the cost of a new or revised FSP to allow the landowners to fully follow the guidelines in their plan.

As of 2020, 184 properties covering 9,891 acres in Warren County are enrolled in FSP. The New Jersey Forest Service Northern Region office is located at:

Address: 204 Main Street (Route 206 N), Andover, NJ 07821
Phone: 973-786-5035
Website: https://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/forest/stw_inc_prog.html

**North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council (NJRC&D)**

The Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D) began in 1962 to “help people care for and protect their natural resources to improve an area’s economy, environment, and living standards.” Among other programs, the NJRC&D offers a River-Friendly Farm Certification, which is a voluntary certification program designed to provide technical assistance and recognize farms that protect natural resources through responsible management. In more recent years, the program has expanded into Warren County with the certification of four farms in the past seven years. Additional practice implementation and technical assistance has included the completion of conservation plans, certified nutrient management plans, and riparian buffers. Ongoing assistance by RC&D includes cover crop and no-till education, implementation, and management, in addition to structural manure management practices and in-field erosion and sediment control practices. NJRC&D is located at:

Address: 10 Maple Avenue in Asbury, Warren County
Phone: 908-574-5368

**Private Non-Profit Groups and Private Citizens**

The preservation of agriculture and agricultural resources requires not only the broad support of state, county, and local governments, but also the help of private non-profit groups and citizens. The Franklin agriculture community has the support of a variety of committees and organizations, including the Franklin Township Agricultural Advisory Committee. Other local committees and organizations include the Warren County Board of Agriculture, New Jersey Farm Bureau, 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and the Warren County Farmers Fair. Regional non-profit organizations include The Land Conservancy of New Jersey, The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and New Jersey Audubon Society.
B. Natural Resource Protection Programs

1. SADC Soil and Water Conservation Grants

The types of soil and water conservation projects funded by SADC include soil erosion and sediment control systems (terrace systems), control of farmland pollution (stream protection; sediment retention, erosion or water control systems; animal waste control facilities; and agri-chemical handling facilities), the impoundment, storage and management of water for agricultural purposes (diversions; water impoundment reservoirs; irrigation systems; and drainage systems), and management of land to achieve maximum agricultural productivity (land shaping or grading) while conserving natural resources.

These grants fund soil and water conservation projects approved by the Upper Delaware Soil Conservation District (UDSCD), with the program administered by both the UDSCD and the local NRCS office in Hackettstown. Once the District deems the conservation project necessary and feasible, applications are forwarded to the SCC, which recommends projects to the SADC for funding approvals. A permanent source of funding needs to be put in place to ensure that farmers can continue to participate in these beneficial programs.

2. SADC Deer Fencing Grant Program

Farmers can apply to the SADC for cost-sharing grants for the installation of high-tensile woven wire deer fencing on permanently preserved farms. Farmers who are successful in their applications can cover up to 50% of the cost of materials and installation. Assistance for this program is capped at $200/acre or a total grant amount of $20,000. Program contact:

Phone, Email: 609-984-2504, sadc@ag.nj.gov

3. Federal Conservation Programs

Farm Bill Programs

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill) was landmark legislation, with much of its focus on conservation funding and environmental issues. Since 2002, the legislature has drafted and instituted new Farm Bill programs in 2008, 2014, and 2018. Voluntary programs relevant to New Jersey, and Warren County, included the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Conservation Innovation Grant Program (CIG), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). These programs were continued under the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). These programs were renewed in 2014 and 2018, with the most recent legislation being The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill). The 2018 Farm Bill will be active until 2023. As in the past, these programs are administered by the local NRCS office in Hackettstown, and the Upper Delaware SCD.

In 2014, the Farm Bill repealed the 2008 Average Crop Revenue
Election (ACRE) program. This voluntary program provided payments when revenues fell below established levels. In 2014, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) replaced the ACRE program with two new programs: Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC), which are continued through the 2018 Farm Bill. These programs, “pay producers who have eligible historical base acres when prices and/or yields of covered commodities fall below a certain amount, regardless of their current planting decisions.” Since a significant acreage of field crops such as corn and soybeans are grown in Franklin, and are also covered commodities under these programs, such a revenue support system may well have a positive effect since it would help specialty crops and niche markets receive their fair share of payment support.

The 2018 Farm Bill, in effect since December 2018, made minor changes regarding conservation programs administered by the NRCS and the FSA. Some highlights include:

- Increases mandatory funding for conservation programs by about 2% from 2019-2023.
- Increasing Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage cap from 24 million acres to 27 million acres by 2023.
- Continuing the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), but at a reduced funding level, and replacing an acreage cap with a funding cap.
- Increases funding for EQIP, the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and direct funding for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

The CRP is a land conservation program where farmers enroll on a volunteer basis to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production. In exchange, participating farmers plant species that improve the environmental health of the land and receive a yearly rental payment. The contract period is between 10-15 years.

**Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**

The NJ CREP program is an offshoot of the CRP and establishes a partnership between the USDA and the state to address environmental impacts related to agricultural practices. The program’s goals are, “to maintain and improve water quality by reducing agricultural pollutants into streams, enhance farm viability, and to contribute to the State’s open space goals.” In exchange for removing environmentally sensitive lands from production, and introducing conservation practices, agricultural landowners are paid an annual rental rate. Like CRP, farmers enter in a voluntary contract for 10-15 years. This program targets 30,000 acres of agricultural lands throughout the state, requesting $100 million in federal funds and a state match of $23 million over the life of the program. 100% of the cost is paid to establish the conservation practices and annual rental and incentive payments to the landowner.
Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that offers financial and technical assistance to implement conservation practices on eligible agricultural land. Opportunities include:

• Funding opportunities for beginning farmers.
• Financial assistance to help agricultural producers and forest owners address specific natural resource concerns.
• Financial assistance to install high tunnels (similar to hoop houses) to protect high-value crops.
• Soil health initiative to provide technical and financial assistance for soil conservation practices.

As of 2014, portions of the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), which was not reauthorized in the 2014 Farm Bill, have been folded into the EQIP program; anyone interested in applying for wildlife projects should apply through the Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) initiative through EQIP.

EQIP is the most popular and widely used conservation program in Warren County. There were 1,285 contracted acres, with 16 contracts in 2019. These contracts totaled $141,205 (amount available, not paid out). While some farms in Franklin may be assisted through EQIP, the number of farms enrolled is not tracked on a municipal level.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

Funded by EQIP, the aim of the CIG is to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in conjunction with agricultural production. Funds are awarded as competitive 50-50 matching grants to non-governmental organizations, tribes, or individuals for projects with a one- to three-year duration. Each year, the NRCS announces a new round of competitive grants; NJRC&D was the most recent Warren County recipient of such a grant in 2019 worth $74,995 to assess the use of short season variety corn and soybeans to facilitate adoption of multi-species cover crop.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The CSP, initiated in 2007, is a voluntary conservation program that provides technical and financial assistance to manage and maintain existing conservation systems, implementing additional conservation activities on land currently under production. CSP provides two types of payments through five-year contracts: annual payments for installing new conservation activities and maintaining existing practices; and supplemental payments for adopting a resource-conserving crop rotation. Participants earn payments for conservation performance – the higher the performance, the higher the payment. Minimum annual payments amount to $1,500. Participants can apply for renewal at the end of the five-year contract. The local NRCS administers this program.
**Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) Program**

Administered by the local NRCS, WLFW provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers to assist the implementation of conservation practices that benefit target species and priority landscapes. Franklin is situated in focal areas for two out of three target species in New Jersey, the Golden Winged Warbler, and the American Black Duck.

**Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)**

In 2014, the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) was repealed and consolidated into the ACEP. Administered by the local NRCS, the ACEP merges three former programs – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP). It has two components:

- **Agricultural Land Easements** – prevents the loss of working agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. NRCS may contribute up to 50% of the fair market value of the easement.
- **Wetland Reserve Easements** – provides habitat for fish and wildlife and improves water quality through restoration and enhancement and may provide opportunities for limited recreational activities. There are two types available in New Jersey: permanent (100% of the value and 50-75% of restoration costs) and 30-year easements (50-75% of the value and of the restoration costs).

In February 2021, the USDA released a final rule to update ACEP as directed by the 2018 Farm Bill. This update incorporates public comments and makes minor changes improving the processes in place to protect ecologically important lands.

**Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)**

RCPP was introduced in the 2014 Farm Bill, and significant changes were made in the 2018 Farm Bill. This program encourages partnerships to implement solutions to conservation challenges. Partnerships can be formed by agricultural producer associations, farmer cooperatives, municipal entities, and non-government organizations. Significant changes that were made in 2018 to RCPP are:

- RCPP is now a standalone program with its own funding of $300 million annually. Moving forward, landowners and ag producers will enter RCPP contracts and RCPP easements.
- Enhanced Alternative Funding Arrangement provision – NRCS may award up to 15 AFA projects, which are more grant-like and rely more on partner capacity to implement conservation activities.
- Three funding pools reduced to two – the National pool was eliminated. Partners must apply to either the Critical Conservation Area (CCA) or State/Multistate funding pool.
- Emphasis on project outcomes – all RCPP projects must now develop and report on their environmental outcomes.

Partnerships must apply for a project grant on a competitive basis during the grant applications period.
are two funding categories: critical conservation areas (CCA) (New Jersey does not fall within one of these eight areas), and state/multi-state. To apply for state funding, the project must address at least one of the national or state priorities of soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, and wildlife habitat. In September 2021, the NRCS announced investment in 15 projects totaling $75 million; none of these projects reside in New Jersey. The most recent New Jersey projects that were awarded funding were in 2018:

- Columbia Dam Removal and Restoration on Paulins Kill ($567,000) – Plan to remove the Columbia Dam and a downstream remnant dam to restore and reconnect habitat for diadromous fish species.
- Black River Gateway – Soil and Water Protection ($922,000) – Plan to preserve farms in the Black River.

C. Water Resources

1. Supply Characteristics

The physiographic and geologic layout of Franklin dictates water supply, availability, and recharge, as well as location of agriculture. Franklin is located within eight sub-watersheds, four of which are in a deficit for net water availability, and seven are on the Highlands Impaired Water list. (Figure 4) The Township does have 3,941 acres of prime groundwater recharge area, 2,780 acres in the Planning Area and 1,161 acres in the Preservation Area. Franklin Township’s distribution within the Highlands management areas is as follows:

- 3,347 acres of Protection Zone (2,019 acres in the Planning Area, 1,328 acres in the Preservation Area)
- 164 acres of Wildlife Management Sub-Zone (115 acres in the Planning Area, 49 acres in the Preservation Area)
- 3,284 acres of Conservation Zone (3,004 acres in the Planning Area, 280 acres in the Preservation Area)
- 7,921 acres of Conservation Zone – Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone (5,846 acres in the Planning Area, 2,075 acres in the Preservation Area)
- 341 acres of Existing Community Zone (280 acres in the Planning Area, 61 acres in the Preservation Area)
- 5 acres of Existing Community – Environmentally Constrained Sub-Zone (all within the Planning Area)
- 15 acres of Lake Community Sub-Zone (all within the Planning Area)

As discussed in Chapter 3, two environmentally contaminated sites in adjacent municipalities are causing contamination of the groundwater in Franklin, meaning than net water availability may not accurately reflect the amount of usable, clean water. A public water supply system has been installed to provide clean water to the contaminated portions of the Pohatcong Valley, and another system is planned for the contaminated portions of the Musconetcong Valley.
The 2018 Warren County Open Space Plan indicates the importance of agriculture to the water resource by stating,

“Sixty percent of Warren County is deep, non-stony soil, well suited for farming and community development etc. These areas also provide scenic vistas and watershed protection. Agricultural landowners should be encouraged to participate in the Farmland Preservation Program, to help ensure the viability of agriculture as a land use and economic activity while preserving them as open or undeveloped land areas. The remaining 40 percent is soil so stony, steep, shallow or wet that it is not suited for development.”

The Plan also states that “Areas designated for open space can protect many natural resources, such as the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater, cultural and historic areas, and view sheds associated with ridge tops.”

2. Agricultural Demand & Supply Limitations

Agricultural lands are identified as cropland harvested, cropland pastured, woodland, equine, and permanent pasture. About 57% of this total is harvested cropland, land that requires the most amount of water for production.

Franklin’s water demand for agricultural use stems primarily from the production of water-intensive crops such as hay, corn, and soybeans, which comprise 91% of the field crops grown in the Township. However, because of the region’s climate, none of the township’s field crops are labeled as irrigated as of 2018.

In some cases, population pressures and climate change can affect water supply in New Jersey towns. Increased pressure from development and the concomitant demands on water supplies are being felt by Franklin farmers. Increased development exacerbates water supply concerns, not only by increased water usage from occupants of the units, but also by creating more impervious surface, causing more stormwater runoff (which often washes pollutants into waterways) and less opportunity for aquifer recharge. Lack of sufficient water recharge areas can compromise soil conditions and means less water stays in the area and flows away to other areas, adversely impacting the region due to the fluctuations in natural water distribution.

3. Water Conservation and Allocation Strategies

Droughts in recent years have highlighted the precarious nature of the agriculture (and general) water supply, and the need for water conservation systems and regimens. Historically, from 2008 to 2018, dry conditions occurred with greater frequencies than in years prior. The dominant crops in Franklin are hay, corn, and soybeans. These crops rely on rain and some groundwater for water needs, making water conservation strategies difficult to implement. For the more water intensive nursery, greenhouse, and produce farming, it is possible to implement conservation strategies such as drip irrigation, water reuse, or watering crops in the cooler parts of the day. However, since vegetable, fruit, and nursery agriculture are minor to hay, corn, and soybeans, the positive effects and opportunities
of water conservation efforts for the Township are minimal. Total irrigated acres in Franklin decreased from 62 acres in 2005, to 2 acres in 2015, and then to 0 acres in 2018. Water conservation strategies may become more important as irrigation in Franklin grows.

Franklin falls in the scope of the Highlands Act and so has access to water resource studies. Franklin can benefit from analyses done for neighboring communities within the Highlands, and the use of stream base flow monitoring as a measure of water sustainability, using the severity and duration of low flow to understand impacts of water use on ecosystem and water supply, as well as the need to protect ground water recharge areas, which are susceptible to variations in soil, land cover, and precipitation.

The NJDA encourages farmers to implement water-management practices as a routine part of their conservationist approach to agriculture. The faculty of NJAES-RCE publishes annual crop production recommendation guides for multiple crop groups that include irrigation guidelines and recommendations. These guides include tips for maximizing irrigation efficiency, such as optimizing irrigation scheduling, selecting appropriate growing mediums, planning, and installing irrigation systems that provide efficient water use, managing stormwater runoff, and collecting and recycling irrigation water. Farmers can use floats and timers to eliminate the needs for constantly running water to keep troughs full for livestock.

The Office of the New Jersey Climatologist at Rutgers University operates the Weather and Climate Network of weather monitoring stations. Farmers can use the information from stations near them to assist with irrigation scheduling, as well as pest management and other conservation issues, temperature, precipitation, wind speed and gusts. Other stations measure barometric pressure and New Brunswick measures soil temperatures as well. Farmers can set favorite locales and view charts and tabular data.

D. Waste Management Planning

Livestock farmers in Franklin may opt to participate in SCD/NRCS conservation programs that cost share the creation of animal waste facilities on their farms. By building these temporary holding tanks, usually concrete, the farmer accomplishes two purposes: preventing the waste from mixing with runoff and polluting streams and other water bodies and providing a ready source of manure or fertilizer for farm fields. When convenient, farmers can remove the waste from the temporary storage facilities and apply it to the fields, following BMPs.

Animal Waste

Waste production from horses and cows is a continuous focal point of conservation practice in the Township. Horse waste on farms can be a problem due in part to the relatively small land area of horse farms, making the manure more difficult to distribute on fields effectively and safely. This can contribute to the spread of disease from the manure if not controlled. For dairy farms, however, manure
concentration and distribution are less of a concern because of the relatively large land area dedicated to those operations assuming that manure is managed and applied in an appropriate manner and in accordance with New Jersey state regulations.

Many farmers have “Nutrient Management Plans” to manage the manure generated on their farms. For livestock waste disposal services, Ag Choice LLC in Andover, Sussex County, picks up, accepts, and composts food and livestock waste on a commercial scale. It is then available as bulk pickup, sold to landscapers and garden centers, or bagged and sold at retail outlets. This type of operation not only helps control the problem of livestock waste on farms but is also a good revenue source for the owners.

Animal feeding operations (AFOs) have the potential to cause water pollution since mismanagement of the animal waste can lead to soil and groundwater contamination via introduction of organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorus, and bacterial pathogens into nearby surface waters. The Criteria and Standards for Animal Waste Management (N.J.A.C. 2:91), which went into effect on March 16, 2009, set forth requirements for the development and implementation of self-certified Animal Waste Management Plans (AWMPs), high-density AWMPs and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMPs) for farms that generate, handle, or receive animal waste.

In general, self-certified waste management plans will be coordinated through the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension (NJAES-RCE), which continues to aid farmers who have not yet completed AWMPs or implemented environmental BMPs on their farms. Farmers can apply for funding through Environmental Quality Inventive Program (EQIP) to obtain a CNMP for their operation. Any livestock operation receiving EQIP funds for waste management practices such as a Heavy Use Area Protection (HUAP) site or waste storage facility must have a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP). NRCS can assist producers with the development of a CNMP which in turn can be used as guide for implementing waste management practices in the future. These plans are developed with the assistance of a Technical Service Provider (TSP).

**Recycling**

Recycling is an important part of natural resource conservation for the agriculture industry. Hay, corn and soybeans, dominant farm products in Franklin, use limited products that can be recycled, and as such limit recycling opportunities. Although nursery and produce make up a small part of Franklin’s agricultural operations, there still is a need to provide outlets for recyclable waste from these operations. The following are the recycling facilities available to Franklin farmers:

- Warren County Recycling Center – 500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, Oxford, 908-453-2174. This facility is open to all Warren County residents and accepts #1-#7 plastics in addition to glass bottles and jars and aluminum, tin, steel, and bimetal cans.
• The Recycling Center of North Jersey – 48 Hope Road, Blairstown, 908-362-1255. This facility accepts commingled glass and plastics, all types of metal and aluminum.

• Warren County District Landfill – 500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, Oxford. 908-453-2174. This facility accepts tires on a “daily basis” between 8:00 am – 3:30 pm. Proof of Warren County residency is required. Charges range from $2.50 for each automobile tire up to 22” to $10.00 for each farm equipment tire up to 50”.

In the past, Warren County has organized “Tire Amnesty Day,” which provided opportunities for farmers to dispose of their used tractor tires for free. For other farm-oriented recyclables, the NJDA website lists resources for agricultural recycling. Programs listed include options for nursery and greenhouse film, pesticide containers, nursery pots, plug trays, flats, mulch film, and irrigation tape. Some of these services are free, and others come at a cost to the farmer.

E. Energy Conservation Planning

In January 2010 (P.L. 2009, c.213) allows for the construction, installation, and operation of biomass, solar, or wind energy generation facilities, structures, and equipment on commercial farms, including preserved farms, with certain caveats regarding interference with agricultural productivity, valuation for farmland assessment, amount of farm acreage that can be devoted to such facilities, local and State approvals.

In 2019, Governor Phil Murphy signed the Updated Global Warming Response Act seeking to reduce greenhouse emissions 80% by 2050. Green energy policy is also echoed in Governor Murphy’s Energy Master Plan, in which, the state seeks to transition to 100% clean energy by 2050. Franklin farmers can take advantage of this initiative by applying for the financial incentives to implement energy efficient improvements to their farms and operations. The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) funds grant and loan guarantees to agricultural producers for assistance in purchasing renewable energy systems. Renewable energy systems include generation from: biomass, geothermal, hydropower, hydrogen, wind, and solar.

The NRCS also has the authority to use EQIP to implement Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) to address concerns of energy conservation. As a part of the EQIP On-Farm Energy Initiative, these plans are designed to evaluate energy use and efficiency within farming operations. These energy audits can qualify a farmer for financial assistance to implement recommendations of the process if the audit meets the proper time and standard requirements. This plan is implemented to assist the landowner’s goals of achieving cheaper and more efficient energy consumption.

The EQIP natural resource conservation program pays for some energy production programs, such as replacement of older, dirty polluting working diesel engines, with newer, more efficient, cleaner burning diesel engines that will meet EPA Tier requirements for the
program year. The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities offers rebates for solar electric, wind, and sustainable biomass systems if funding is available.

**Solar Energy**

Solar generating facilities are permitted on both unpreserved and preserved farms in New Jersey, though different regulations apply. Solar facilities on all farm-assessed property are regulated by P.L. 2009, Chapter 213, and the SADC provides Agricultural Management Practices (AMPs) relating to solar facilities on their [website](#). Those AMPs include:

- Solar panels (solar energy general facilities) are allowed on commercial farms (preserved and unpreserved).
- Panels cannot be constructed/installed on prime farmlands (to the maximum extent practicable).
- The SADC prefers panels be constructed on buildings or facilities; if on the ground, they are to be installed without concrete footing or permanent mounting.
- System cannot exceed height of 20 feet.
- Must minimize views from public roadways and neighboring residences.
- Facilities must use existing roadways to provide access to facilities to avoid construction of new roadways.
- Panels may not exceed 10 acres per farm assessed property.
- Production capacity may not exceed 2 megawatts.
- The area ratio of solar to agricultural and horticultural operations may not exceed 1:5.

Subchapter 24 of N.J.S.A 2:76 establishes additional rules for the installation of solar panels on preserved farms. Those rules state that the primary purpose of solar facilities must be to provide energy for the farm, with an allowance for income opportunity for farmers. The scale of solar facilities is limited by whichever of the following allows more solar panels:

- Facilities cannot exceed 1% of total farm area.
- Energy generation cannot exceed 110% of the farm's energy demand in the previous calendar year.

EQIP provides cost-share funding for solar livestock watering facility as part of a grazing system. Special rates are available to qualified farmers. In 2018, two contracts were planned and applied, but in 2019 no contracts were developed.

**Wind Energy**

According to the NJDA, the northwest part of New Jersey, which includes Warren County, has ample and consistent enough wind power to make turbine energy feasible. New Jersey and Franklin farmers might take advantage of a distributed or "small" wind system, which uses turbines of 100 kilowatts or smaller to directly power a home, farm, or small business. New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program provides a model small wind ordinance for municipal adoption. Although this is a first step toward encouraging wind energy, New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program incentives for wind energy installations have been on hold since 2011.

In Franklin, a wind turbine would be deemed a principal or accessory use
under current land development regulations and thus would require a height variance. This, along with Warren County’s embrace of alternative energies through the New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program, indicates Franklin’s willingness to consider alternative energy source.

Incentives and Assistance for Terrestrial and Small Wind Systems include the Renewal Energy Incentive Program (REIP) and the Anemometer Loan Program, administered by Rutgers and four other state universities. The program is funded by the United States Department of Energy Wind Powering America Program and funds provided by the NJ Board of Public Utilities Office of Clean Energy Program. By measuring wind power at the target location, the anemometers help determine the economic feasibility for wind turbine installation. Target market includes municipalities, farms, residential and small commercial customers. Both Rutgers and Rowan University have waiting lists for anemometer loans. Currently, anemometers are installed on farms as close to Franklin as Hackettstown and Long Valley.

Biopower

Starting in 2017, biopower projects are incentivized through the Combined Heat and Power Program (CHP). Program participants are eligible to receive financial incentives for CHP installations to further enhance energy efficiency in their buildings through on-site power generation and using distributed generation to provide reliability solutions for New Jersey while supporting the state’s Energy Master Plan. Franklin farmers can find the program eligibility requirements and the program’s financial incentives in the CHP-FC Program Guide.

Ethanol and Pelletized Switchgrass

Corn, the most dominant field crop in Franklin, could position the Township’s farmers to financially capitalize on the spreading movement towards ethanol-blended fuels. In addition, interest has been shown in utilizing switchgrass to make energy producing pellets. This could add another market for Franklin farmers, and another source of clean energy.

Biodiesel

Biodiesel, made from the oils of soybeans, is an alternative to petroleum diesel. The Environmental Protection Agency reported a record 2.1 billion gallons of biofuel were consumed in 2015. Countywide, soybean production has nearly doubled since 2011, from 221,000 bushels to 430,000 bushels in 2015. Warren County leads northern New Jersey in soybean production. Franklin can utilize its soybean production to maximize the benefits of its third largest field crop. While no bio-diesel producers are available nearby, several retailers operate within the region, including:

- Dixon Energy – 99 Cobb St. Rockaway, NJ, 973-334-1000
- Wooley Fuel Co. – 12 Burnett Ave. Maplewood, NJ, 973-762-7400
- Quarles – 1046 N Godfrey St. Allentown, PA, 877-444-3835

Biogas

In 2020, New Jersey ranked 30th nationwide in biogas production. Out of 59 operational systems, down from 62 in 2015, 22 are landfill systems and
32 are wastewater systems, and five are food waste systems. Increasing biogas operations can lead to economic opportunity through job creation and environmental benefits through reducing greenhouse gasses.

**Renewable Energy Grant Programs**

New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program: Administered by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, this program provides financial incentives to install clean energy systems, including fuel cells, solar energy, small wind, and sustainable biomass equipment. Financial incentives are in the form of rebates, grants, energy certificates, and loans.

Renewable Energy Incentive Program (REIP): This program previously offered funding assistance for solar, wind, and sustainable biomass installations. Currently, this program is on hold for wind systems. Solar projects are no longer eligible for REIP incentives. Those who sought assistance for solar projects used to register for Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SREC) through the SREC Registration program (SRP). Since the Spring of 2020, those who seek to register solar projects do so through the Transition Incentive Program (TI).

Anemometer Loan Program: administered by five New Jersey universities, provides a way for prospective locations to test the potential for wind power production and assess its economic feasibility.

New Jersey Smart Start Buildings: Operated by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, this program is a statewide energy efficiency program available to qualified commercial, industrial, institutional, governmental, or agricultural customers that seek to change their electric or gas equipment.

USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP): Reauthorized under the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill), the REAP program provides guaranteed loan financing to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. For agricultural producers, a guaranteed loan and grant program can provide financial assistance with the installation of renewable energy systems.

Advanced Biofuel Payment Program: This program is to increase the production of advance biofuels. Quarterly payments are distributed to participants for actual quantity of eligible advance biofuel production. An advanced biofuel is a fuel that is derived from renewable biomass, other than corn kernel starch. Biofuels that may be specific to Franklin farmers are those derived from waste material such as crop and animal wastes.

Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program: This program provides loan guarantees up to $250 million to assist the development of new and emerging technologies. These technologies include advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals, and biobased products.

**F. Outreach and Incentives**

The Township’s AAC is committed to working with the Warren CADB, the State, and regional agencies to
assist in outreach and education to farmers and landowners regarding natural resource conservation and agricultural productivity. Franklin Township looks to the County, State, and regional agencies for leadership, direction, and help. The Franklin AAC will continue to work with the Warren CADB to implement programs to aid in natural resource conservation on farms in the Township.

As competing uses impact farmers in Warren County and in Franklin, education, outreach, and regional coordination will become more integral to the success of farming operations.
Chapter 8.
Agricultural Industry, Sustainability, Retention, & Promotion

A. Existing Agricultural Industry Support

1. Right to Farm

In 1983 the State Legislature enacted the Right to Farm Act (RFA) and amended it in 1998, ensuring that farmers can continue accepted agricultural operations. Another critical piece of legislation in support of agriculture was the 1983 Agriculture Retention and Development Act. This Act created the SADC, and authorized counties to create CADBs.

The SADC works to maximize protection for commercial farmers under the RFA by developing AMPs, tracking right-to-farm cases, offering a conflict resolution process, and reviewing rules proposed by other state agencies for the impact they may have on agriculture. To qualify for right-to-farm protection a farm must meet the definition of a “commercial farm” in the RFA; be operated in conformance with federal and state law; and comply with AMPs recommended by the SADC, or site-specific AMPs developed by the Warren County CADB at the request of a commercial farmer.

Franklin Township Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan
As of 2021, the SADC had 12 AMPs in place, the latest being an AMP for On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities, and Events, adopted April 7, 2014. The SADC lists 19 site-specific AMPs for Warren County, all of which the Warren CADB resolved.

All right to farm complaints or issues that are brought before the Warren CADB are first handled with fact finding and efforts to resolve differences between the parties. The mediation can be informal, or, if the parties agree, the SADC will provide mediation or conflict resolution at no cost to the participants through its Agricultural Mediation Program. If a formal complaint is filed with the Warren CADB, it is sent to the SADC for a determination as to whether the farm qualifies as a commercial farm (N.J.S.A. 4:1C-3) and whether the operation or activity is eligible for right-to-farm protection. The CADB and/or SADC typically conducts a site visit for additional fact finding, sometimes consulting with agricultural experts and municipalities (in cases where municipal regulations are involved in right-to-farm disputes. Depending on the nature of the issues, either the CADB or SADC (or both in some cases) holds a public hearing at the county level. Decisions made by the Warren CADB may be appealed to the SADC, and final SADC determinations may be appealed to the New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division.

Municipalities can and should limit the number of right-to-farm complaints and encourage farming as an industry by:

- Working to better understand the Right to Farm process to adopt or update comprehensive Right to Farm ordinances as outlined by the SADC.
- Making agriculture a permitted use in all appropriate zones.
- Requiring buffers between new non-agricultural development and adjacent existing farmlands.
- Requiring notification to homeowners purchasing a home in a new subdivision where active agriculture occurs on adjacent property.

Right to Farm ordinances are a necessary item for municipalities that wish to enter the Farmland Preservation Program. Franklin adopted its Right-to-Farm Ordinance (Ord. No. 80-15) in 1980. (Appendix F)

The Ordinance states that “it is hereby recognized to exist as a right of the farmer and his agents and employees to utilize their land and property in a manner of good common agricultural practices and the pursuit of their livelihood, however, within and subject to the regulations established by the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, in regard to health code regulations. Henceforth, it is hereinafter recognized that, under the right to farm, all residents in pursuit of agricultural livelihood shall be allowed to continue previous practices established as good farming techniques and procedures with regard to all aspects of farming, including but not limited to plowing, seeding, fertilizing and spraying by the use of tractors or air spraying, the right to use the large equipment and tractors, including the application of chemical fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides, as well as other customary farm equipment for the purpose of producing from the land
agricultural products, including vegetables, grains, feed, crops, fruits, fibers, wood, trees, plants, shrubs, flowers and seeds. The right to farm shall further include the right to utilize the land for grazing of all animals, subject to all health restrictions for intensive livestock farms or other restrictions in regard to spreading of manure.”

The Ordinance declares the right to engage in agriculture to be permitted and must not be contrary to Township zoning and land use regulations. The protected farming activities under Franklin Township’s Right to Farm Ordinance are those adopted by the Administrative Procedure Act (N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq.) or whose specific operation or practice has been determined by the Warren County Agricultural Development Board to constitute a generally accepted agricultural operation or practice. Further, the owner and operator of a commercial farm may engage in all agricultural activities permitted by N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9.

The RTF Ordinance allows of a series of farming activities to not be restricted or compromised:

“The activities, agricultural uses and good farming practices as hereinabove set forth may occur without abatement or interference seven days a week, including Sundays, holidays and on a twenty-four-hour daily basis. Further, said activities and farming rights as hereinabove provided shall not be hindered, abated or interfered with in regard to the reasonable common farming practices of noise, odors and dust related to those activities and recognized as being a part thereof and shall be the established right of agricultural pursuits within reasonable bounds and cannot be hindered by adjoining or contiguous residential development.”

Franklin Township’s AAC can help avoid or minimize Right to Farm conflicts by making farmers and other residents aware of the provisions in the Township’s code and by having an open-door policy that allows those with issues to talk informally with a member or members of the AAC or Township officials to try to resolve issues before engaging the formal processes of appeals to the Warren CADB or the SADC.

2. Farmland Assessment

The Farmland Assessment program is a tax incentive that reduces property taxes on active commercial farmed land. This tax incentive is made possible by the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964, N.J.S.A. 54:4-23.1 et seq. Its provisions were recently updated by legislation that was signed into law in 2013, becoming effective in tax year 2015. Basic eligibility requirements include:

- The applicant must own the land.
- The property owner must apply annually for Farmland Assessment on or before August 1 of the year immediately preceding the tax year, and effective as of tax year 2015, must submit proof of sales or clear evidence of anticipated gross sales along with the FA-1 application form.
- Land must be devoted to agricultural and/or horticultural uses for at least two years prior to the tax year.
- Land must consist of at least five contiguous farmed and/or woodland management plan
acres. Land under or adjoining a farmhouse is not counted towards the minimum five acres.

- Effective as of tax year 2015, gross sales of products from the land must average at least $1,000 per year for the first five acres, plus an average of $5.00 per acre for each acre over five. In the case of woodland or wetland, the income requirement is $500 for the first five acres and $0.50 per acre for any acreage over five. Dependent on the agricultural or horticultural products being produced, the farmer can also offer clear evidence of anticipated yearly gross sales, payments, or fees within a reasonable period.

- The property owner must represent that the land will continue in agricultural or horticultural use to the end of the tax year.

The Farmland Assessment program does not apply to farm structures, such as barns and storage facilities.

Franklin has devoted 6,475 acres in agricultural use as either cropland or pasture, and 4,078 acres are collectively used as woodland/wetland areas, equine boarding/rehabilitation or training operations, or for renewable energy. According to New Jersey Farmland Assessment data from 2012 to 2022, general trends indicate:

- Total assessed acreage decreased 4%.
- Harvested cropland decreased 3%.
- Pastured cropland increased 47%.
- Permanent pasture decreased 1%.
- Total acreage in active agricultural use (cropland harvested, cropland pastured, and permanent pasture) decreased 10%.
- Woodland/wetland acreage increased 12%.
- Equine boarding, rehab, & training acreage increased 300%.
- Renewable energy acreage decreased 66%.

By making agriculture more profitable and viable, tax incentives will help to ensure a steady, permanent source of agricultural lands for the Township’s farmland preservation efforts. The Township considers the assessment procedure as essential to continued agricultural success and supports the law in its current form.

B. Additional Strategies to Sustain, Retain, and Promote Agriculture

1. Permit Streamlining

Municipalities play a key role in the preservation of farming as an industry. Without strong and active support from municipal governments, farming can be too costly and burdensome to be profitable or worthwhile. The viability of farming in New Jersey is impacted by many issues, including government regulation, development pressures, and the economics of the marketplace. While land preservation is vital for maintaining a sufficient land base suitable for farming, sustaining Franklin’s strong agricultural base requires support on many fronts, one of which is flexibility in government regulation.

Positive and supportive public policy: This includes legal protection
(right to farm), priority in decisions on taxation (farmland assessment), regulation exemptions, and financial incentives (planning incentive grants).

Flexibility: State agencies should consider the NJDA Agricultural Smart Growth Plan when making decisions regarding existing and proposed infrastructure, developing and amending regulations and programs, and protecting environmental and historical resources. These agencies should coordinate with NJDA to ensure that regulations and programs are attuned to the needs of Warren County and Franklin Township farmers.

Agriculture-Friendly Zoning: This refers to a comprehensive land use practice that coordinates zoning and land use policy in a proactive way which encourages agribusiness, while at the same time reducing the incidence of farmer-homeowner nuisance issues.

2. Agriculture Vehicle Movement

Franklin farmers need to move heavy, slow-moving agricultural equipment over local, county, and sometimes state roads to access unconnected fields and barns. The township’s residents also need to commute to workplaces, or drive to area destinations for shopping, town sports, and social activities, at a pace much faster than the slow-moving agricultural equipment. These different transportation paces can cause conflict between Franklin’s farmers and suburban dwellers, while creating unsafe road conditions as residents and farmers “compete” for road space.

Since many farm vehicles travel over local municipal roads, municipalities should continue to support local agricultural business right to do so. The SADC model Right to Farm ordinance recognizes, as a specific right, the operation and transportation of large, slow-moving farm equipment over roads. Franklin Township does not include slow-moving equipment as a protected farming activity in their Right-to-Farm ordinance.

Signage alerting fast-moving cars to possible movement, and road crossing, of slow-moving farm vehicles is an additional, effective tool to protect farmer (and automobile passenger) safety. Signage also informs the public at large that agriculture is an important, equal, and permanent fixture of Franklin life. Where absent or inadequate, appropriate signage can be posted. Township officials may consult with farmers as to what adequate signage is and where it should be posted.

3. Agricultural Labor Housing/Training

An adequate labor supply is integral to harvesting vegetables, fruits, and berries. Measured in farmed acreage, Franklin has a relatively small industry for these products compared with field crops such as hay, corn, and soybean. Harvesting of the latter farm products is more mechanized, and/or not as labor intensive as produce, with most work being done by farm family members. As of 2018, only 30 acres in Franklin Township were devoted to fruits, berries, and vegetables, while 6,138 acres were devoted to field crops and nursery products. Since the overall acreage devoted to labor intensive farming is small in Franklin, farm
labor housing, a large issue in towns and counties with high farm labor populations is, for the most part, not of high concern in the Township.

New Jersey’s statewide minimum wage is $14.13 for most employees, and will gradually increase to $15 an hour by 2024 for most employees. This minimum wage applies to farm workers. The cost of labor in New Jersey is a significant issue for some farming sectors such as produce, and one that needs further consideration for its effect on agriculture in New Jersey, Warren County, and Franklin.

**Agricultural Labor Housing**

Since the overall acreage in Franklin dedicated to the intensive labor is few, likewise, the demand for agricultural labor housing is scarce. There are no seasonal labor housing structures in the Township.

**Farmer Education and Training**

To sustain a modern, diverse, and stable food and agricultural industry, education and progressive ongoing training for farmers promotes a more efficient and productive business environment.

The NJAES-RCE of Warren County provides one-on-one, on-site consultations with farmers to assist with control of insect infestations and plant diseases for fruits. NJAES of Warren County also provides practical assistance to farmers, such as assistance with obtaining pesticide application licenses and water certification and registration permits from the NJDEP.

The Warren County Community College teaches crop monitoring for precision agriculture techniques in their photogrammetry class. The College would be willing to explore the possibility of setting up college-level or continuing education courses if requested to so by the Warren CADB, or the wider agriculture community.

NOFA-NJ offers educational programs for farmers of all ages and skill sets, including a Beginning Farmer Program. Other educational programming includes organic gardening, permaculture design certification, business courses, technical assistance, and farm-to-table workshops.

Through its Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Natural Resource Conservation Program, the NJDA offers technical, financial, and regulatory assistance, and provides educational outreach to landowners throughout the state.

Agriculture labor education and training funding may be available through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Programs. These programs can help assist in upgrading the skills and productivity of the agricultural workforce. The NJDA hosts a web page with links and information on Agricultural Education, geared mostly toward teachers but also listing conferences and other information of potential education interest to farmers.

The NJFB also hosts educational meetings and provides educational information for farmers on its website about legislative issues, farmland preservation, and labor resources.
Youth Farmer Education Programs

According to the Census of Agriculture, the farmer population in Warren County is getting older, with an increase of 2.2 years of an average age of 59.4 in 2017 versus 57.2 in 2007. The nationwide average age of operators in 2017 was 58.6, less than a one-year difference compared to Warren County. In 2017, there were 83 farmers (5.5%) out of 1,516 farmers in Warren County who were under the age of 35.

Due to the aging farmer population, the next generation of the county's farmers needs to become interested in, and exposed to the business of agriculture, and prepared to enter the industry. At the post-secondary level, neither Centenary University nor Warren County Community College offer agriculture education courses, but Centenary University does offer programs in Equine Sciences and Equine Studies. Typically, students who enter programs in natural sciences (biology, chemistry, etc.) at these schools can also adapt their degree plan to include elements of business, economics, and resource management to receive a well-rounded education that can translate to practical use on Franklin farms.

The closest post-secondary institutions to Franklin Township that offer programs relating to agriculture and horticulture are:

- 35 miles – Sussex County Community College, One College Hill Road, Newton.
- 32 miles – County College of Morris, 214 Center Grove Road, Randolph.
- 50 miles – Mercer County Community College, 1200 Old Trenton Road, West Windsor Township.
- 71 miles - Bergen County Community College, 400 Paramus Road, Paramus.

Changes in the cost of attendance/financial assistance for college education in New Jersey may offer incentives for young farmers to seek enrollment in higher education. In the Spring of 2019, the state piloted the New Jersey Community College Opportunity Grant, where students may be eligible for tuition-free college.

Future Farmers of America (FFA) is a national educational organization that helps prepare youth for careers and leadership in agriculture by aiding students in the development of agricultural skills. The National FFA has 8,612 chapters and 700,170 members aged 12-21 in all 50 states. In 2020, there were 36 chapters in New Jersey with more than 2,400 members. North Warren Regional High School in Blairstown offers Applied Horticulture/Horticultural Operations and has a local FFA Chapter. North Warren Regional High School in Blairstown also offers courses in animal science/wildlife management. Based on student interest, the school could consider offering other related courses such as environmental science or agriculture business management.

4-H is an informal, practical educational program for youth, which assists young people interested in farm animals through livestock projects. The 4-H Youth Development Program is overseen by the Warren County NJAES-RCE. The 4-H program is led by volunteers.
that teach about different areas of interest varying from animals, plants, agriculture, and leadership. Within Warren County, all 4-H club members are active in County events such as the Warren County Farmers Fair.

NJ Farm Link is a program for farmers, new and established, and assists:

- New farmers looking for opportunities to gain experience
- New farmers looking for land to get started
- Established farmers looking for land to expand
- Farm owners looking to lease, sell, or make land available for farming
- Retiring farmers who would like to ensure their land stays in agricultural production but have no family members who want to continue to farm
- Farmers looking to hire farm managers, fill apprenticeship positions, or mentor a new farmer
- Non-profits, municipalities, and counties looking for farmers for farmland they own or manage
- Farmers and landowners working on farm transfer plans.

Farmers interested in land or partnership/job opportunities, as well as those wanting to advertise available land and opportunities, can sign up and create and manage their own listings through the interactive NJ Land Link website. In 2023 there are 13 farmland listings in Warren County.

4. Wildlife Management Strategies

Crop damage from wildlife leads to economic loss for the farmer and is a serious problem throughout Warren County. At present, hunting is about the only effective method available to farmers. Although many farmers are avid hunters and do apply for depredation permits that allow them to hunt out of season, even hunting is becoming a less viable solution. Encroaching development that takes away territory from these animals also limits the farmers ability to hunt. As farms become smaller and more developments are built adjacent to farms, areas can no longer be hunted, even by the farmers who own the land, because they would be hunting too close to a neighborhood dwelling. In many instances, this is the only short-term solution to control crop damage. Special hunting options include:

- License exemptions for farm families.
- Special farmer black bear permit.
- Farmer Depredation Permit.
- Deer Management Assistance Program.

Insects are also causing crop damage. The pesticides used to control them can cause other kinds of damage, possible health concerns for the end user of the product, and pollution of the County’s water supply. At the county level, studies undertaken by the NJAES-RCE, such as the perimeter trap study on insects and pumpkins undertaken several years ago and the integrated pest management resources available through the NJAES-RCE, are attempts to help solve these problems in ways that work for both the farmer and the environment.
Warren County has also been placed on quarantine by the NJDA, due to an outbreak of the spotted lanternfly. This insect has the potential to damage crop output and has been a concern since at least 2018.

The NJDA’s Division of Plant Industry works to safeguard the state’s plant resources from injurious insect and disease pests. The Division implements several programs for detection, inspection, eradication, and control of insect pests, which helps to ensure that the public can enjoy high quality, pest-free agricultural products. The Division’s Gypsy Moth Suppression Program is a voluntary cooperative program involving local governments, county, and state agencies, as well as the USDA Forest Service. Aerial spray treatments of Bacillus thuringiensis are utilized when gypsy moth cycles are at a peak and natural controls are not sufficient to control defoliation. The gypsy moth was reported as a “heavy problem” in Franklin Township in 2015 aerial defoliation surveys. Township was not included in any aerial defoliation surveys since 2017, showing that the invasion has improved through the years, though it is still present in Warren County.

5. Agricultural Education and Promotion

The USDA has an array of loans and grants, known as the Rural Development Program, to assist residents in rural areas of the country to support essential public facilities and services such as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. The Agricultural Act of 2018 (Farm Bill) updates the Rural Development Program in several ways, including:

- Amends the definition of rural to exclude from population thresholds individuals incarcerated on a long-term or regional basis and excludes the first 1,500 individuals residing in on-base military housing.
- Increases annual appropriated funding for broadband deployment from $25 million in FY2019 to $350 million in FY2023.
- The 2018 Farm Bill redirects program funds of existing rural development programs to target a range of rural health issues.
- The 2018 Farm Bill also includes other provisions to reauthorize and/or amend loan and grant programs that help with rural water and wastewater infrastructure, business development and retention, and community and regional development.

Grants and loans are available in three key areas: Business-Cooperative, Housing and Community Facilities (including farm labor housing), and Utilities (including Broadband). To qualify for some of the program’s loans and grants, municipalities must have less than 10,000 residents, other program thresholds have increased. At a population of approximately 2,970 as of July 2021, Franklin may qualify for these loans and grants.

The U.S. Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury’s Internal Revenue Service, is meant to smooth out economic disparities that farmers experience from year to year due to the cyclical nature of agriculture.
Known as Farm Income Averaging, qualified farmers can average all or part of their current year farm income over the previous three years. Substantial tax dollars can be saved by income averaging.

The New Jersey Legislature has considered bills that would provide income averaging similar to the federal program. In the 2018-2019 Regular Session, Bill NJ A236 was introduced and has since been referred to the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee. The NJDA, SADC, Warren County Commissioners, and Warren County CADB can work with, and encourage, the New Jersey Legislature to continue to introduce bills that would assist Warren County and Franklin farmers to remain economically viable.

The New Jersey FSA has both Direct and Guaranteed Farm Ownership loans available for farmers, including those in Warren County. Direct Farm Ownership Loans are available up to $600,000, and guaranteed loans can go up to $1,776,000. Down Payment loan funds may be used to partially finance the purchase of a family farm. Loan applicants must contribute a minimum down payment of 5% of the purchase price of the farm and the Agency will finance 45% to a maximum loan amount of $300,015. The Hackettstown Service Center handles loans for Warren County.

FSA loans can be used for most agriculture necessities such as purchasing land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, supplies, and for construction of buildings, or to make farm improvements.
Maps

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Franklin Township, Warren County

Map 5: Project Area Map

Franklin Township, Warren County

Data Sources: Township of Franklin, Warren County, NJOGIN, NJGIN Road Centerline 2021
This map was developed using NJDEP Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by the NJDEP and is not state-authorized.
This map is to be used solely for planning purposes, and does not take the place of a survey.

Map Prepared April 5, 2023

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Franklin Township Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan
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Map B: Farm Parcels that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Agricultural Soils*
Franklin Township, Warren County

*SADC defines Agricultural Soils as soils capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production. This is measured using the NRCS Soil Survey or NJDEP Land Cover/Land Use for tillable land.

Data Sources: Township of Franklin, Warren County, NJOGR, NJGIN Road Centerline 2021
This map was developed using NJDEP Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by the NJDEP and is not state-authorized.
This map is to be used only for planning purposes, and does not take the place of a survey.

Map Prepared May 17, 2023
Franklin Township Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan
Map C: Target Farms
Franklin Township, Warren County

Target Farms are those farms that meet the SADC minimum eligibility criteria, and are located within the County ADA.
Appendix

A. Public Meeting Materials
Referenced in Executive Summary 112

B. Sampling of Agricultural Support Services in Warren County
Referenced in Chapter 1 Section B 122

C. 2022 Zoning Map
Referenced in Chapter 2 Section C 130

D. Inventory Tables 1, 2, 3
Referenced in Chapter 4 Section B 131

E. SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria
Referenced in Chapter 5 Section C 143

F. Franklin Township Right to Farm Ordinance
Referenced in Chapter 5 Section D 145
Appendix A. Public Meeting Materials

Public Meeting Materials

Public Meetings Handout

Public Meeting 1: May 8, 2023, Agricultural Advisory Committee
  • Resolution

Public Meeting 2: June 1, 2023, Land Use Board
  • Agenda
  • Resolution

Public Meeting 3: June 5, 2023, Township Committee
  • Agenda
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
2023 FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON THE FARM PLAN UPDATE:
THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2023 - 7:30 PM, LAND USE BOARD
AND
MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2023 - 7:00 PM, TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

FAST FACTS

- 72% of the town is assessed as farmland (10,839 ac).
- 3,736 acres (49 farms) are permanently preserved through the farmland preservation program.
- 95% of the funding to preserve farms in Franklin Township have come from outside sources.
- 22 farms (1,571 acres) have been preserved in Franklin Township since completion of the 2008 Farm Plan.

Over the next 10 years Franklin Township would like to preserve an additional 1,000 acres of farmland.

BENEFITS OF PRESERVATION

- Stabilizes property taxes
- Limits urban development and traffic
- Supports agri-tourism, local markets, and fresh produce
- Protects water resources and aquifer recharge
- Maintains rural character
FUNDING

Franklin Township Open Space Trust Fund
- 1998: established Trust Fund levy at two cents per $100 property value
- 2023: currently collects 1/4 cent per $100 property value

Cost Share - Farmland Preservation:
- Franklin Township: $897,135 (5%)
- State: $9,307,954 (49%)
- County: $7,035,916 (37%)
- Other: $1,631,052 (9%)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Based on the State’s Minimum Eligibility Criteria for productive soils and tillable land:

4,668 acres (90 farms) are potentially eligible for farmland preservation. This includes 27 multiple-lot farms and 63 single-lot farms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Number of Farms</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Percent of Preserved Farm Acres in Franklin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County EP</td>
<td>County Easement Purchase</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2,379</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County PIG</td>
<td>County Planning Incentive Grant</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUNI PIG</td>
<td>Municipal Planning Incentive Grant</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP EP</td>
<td>Non-Profit Easement Purchase</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP PIG Fee</td>
<td>Non-Profit Planning Incentive Grant (Fee)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC EP</td>
<td>State Easement Purchase</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Franklin Township Agriculture Advisory Committee held a on Monday, May 8, 2023, at the hour of approximately 7:05 p.m. Chairperson Bonnie Butler, opened the meeting in accordance with the "Open Public Meeting Act" Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 having been duly advertised and a copy posted in the office of the Township Clerk.

Following the flag salute, Roll Call of persons present: Bonnie Butler, Joel Reger, Rick Gardner (3)Yes, (2) Absent – Sam Santini, Ron Smith.

The 3 committee members reviewed the Comprehensive Farmland Update Draft as prepared by the Land Conservancy of New Jersey, both the text and the included maps. The committee noted the progress that has been made in the past with respect to the preservation of approximately 1570 acres of farmland in Franklin Township and is on board with the 1,5-, and 10-year goals as outlined in the plan. At the present time, there are no farms in the pipeline.

Further clarification will be communicated to the Land Conservancy about the water issue as outlined on page 23 of the plan.

Mr. Gardner related that the lack of a nearby abattoir is a deterrent to farmers wishing to raise cows, pigs, sheep, and goats for meat. Currently farmers must truck animals to Pennsylvania or a couple of hours from Warren County. He commented that since the pandemic, consumers are more interested in the source of their food.

Based on soils quality and varied location in the Township the Committee identified the Banghart, Smith, and Van Riper farms as possible target farms.

**INTRODUCTION/ADOPTION of: RESOLUTION 2023-35**
RESOLUTION 2023-35

Resolution of the Agriculture Advisory Committee of the Township of Franklin Concerning the Acceptance of the Franklin Township Farmland Plan and Recommending its inclusion into the Franklin Township Master Plan by Franklin Township – June 1, 2023

Whereas Franklin Township has an active farmland preservation program; and

Whereas Franklin Township wants to retain a rural community with an active and vibrant agriculture community; and

Whereas Franklin Township’s Agriculture Advisory Committee intends to continue pursuing farm preservation in Franklin Township and the previous Farmland Plan has expired; and

Whereas The Land Conservancy of NJ updated Franklin Township’s Farmland Plan April 6, 2023, to reflect current status of farming in Franklin Township and provides the framework for future farmland preservation; and

Whereas two public meetings were held outlining the plan and the Agriculture Advisory Committee reviewed the plan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that:

Franklin Township’s Agriculture Advisory Committee formally approves the update to Franklin Township’s Farmland Plan dated April 6, 2023, by Committee members; Bonnie Butler, Rick Gardner, Joel Reger. (3) Yes (2) Absent Sam Santini, Ron Sigler

Bonnie Butler, Chairperson

Dated: May 8, 2023

On motion by Rick Gardner and seconded by Bonnie Butler, hearing no objection, meeting stands adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Butler
Chairperson
CALL TO ORDER: Statement of Compliance
Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required by law, by posting of the annual meeting notice on the Municipal bulletin board and website and by mailing to the Express Times and Star Ledger in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act 1975.

ROLL CALL:

MINUTES:
May 4, 2023 meeting
(Eligible to Vote Mr. Butler, Mr. Corde, Ms. Payne, Mr. Herzer, Mr. Meltzer, Mr. Santini, Mr. Sigler, Mr. Onembo, Mr. Guth, Mr. Balogh)

OLD BUSINESS:


2. CASE 23-1; OK Auto, 4WD & Tire Inc. Preliminary & Final Site Plan & Use Variance

3. Broadway Solar Amended Sub-Division

4. CASE 23-2; Asbury Grist Mill Restoration Project Preliminary Site Plan & Use Variance Completeness Determination And Public Hearing
   -Approve Request to be carried to July 12, 2023 without further notice

NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

BILLS: Motion to approve bills as submitted

EXECUTIVE SESSION IF REQUIRED:

ADJOURNMENT:

This Agenda May Be Changed At Any Time During The Meeting
At the Sole Discretion Of The Board
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP LAND USE BOARD
RESOLUTION OF MEMORIALIZATION

DECIDED: June 1, 2023
ADOPTED: June 1, 2023

RESOLUTION OF THE LAND USE BOARD
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN ADOPTING
THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN AS AN
ELEMENT OF THE MASTER PLAN
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN

WHEREAS, the Franklin Township Land Use Board ("Board") is in receipt of and
has reviewed a report entitled "Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update for
the Township of Franklin, County of Warren" prepared by The Land Conservancy of
New Jersey dated May 18, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Board gave required notice of a public hearing for the adoption
of the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update as an element of the
Franklin Township Master Plan for a public hearing to be conducted by the Board on
June 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was conducted by the Board on June 1, 2023,
which meeting was open to the public for the purposes of an opportunity to comment on
said plan; and

WHEREAS, the Board, at the public hearing held on June 1, 2023, received a
presentation by Barbara Davis, P.P. on behalf of The Land Conservancy of New Jersey
as to all relevant aspects of the proposed Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan
Update; and
WHEREAS, the Board finds that the report entitled "Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update for the Township of Franklin, County of Warren" should be incorporated as an element into the Township Master Plan, and therefore, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28, the Board hereby amends the Franklin Township Master Plan to include the above plan as an element to the Master Plan of the Township of Franklin.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Land Use Board of the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that the report entitled “Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update for the Township of Franklin, County of Warren" is hereby adopted as an element into the Franklin Township Master Plan, and the Board Secretary is hereby directed to effectuate notice of said amendment in conformance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-13.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the above is a true copy of the resolution adopted by the Land Use Board at its meeting of June 1, 2023.

[Signature]
Kelley Smith, Secretary
AGENDA
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
June 5, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

1. Flag Salute

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required by law, by posting the annual meeting notice on the municipal bulletin board and by mailing to the “Express Times-NJ Zone” and the “Star Ledger”. In accordance with the “Open Public Meetings Act” Chapter 231, P.L. 1975

NOTICE * This Agenda is subject to change by order of the Franklin Township Committee before, and/or during the scheduled meeting *

ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS (Butler - Ferri – Guth - Herzer – Mayor Toretta)

2. 2023 MUNICIPAL BUDGET Public Hearing and Consideration
   - Motion to open Public Hearing
   - Public Comments
   - Motion to close Public Hearing
   - Motion to adopt (Resolution 2023-42)

3. PUBLIC HEARING:
   a. Adoption of: Ord. 2023-6
      RE: Ordinance to exceed the municipal budget appropriation limit and to establish a Cap Bank
      - Motion to open Public Hearing
      - Public Comments
      - Motion to close Public Hearing
      - Motion to adopt

CONSENT AGENDA:
(One Roll Call to approve the following agenda items 4-5)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/AGREEMENTS
   a. Regular Meeting
      RE: May 1, 2023
   b. Executive Meeting
      RE: May 1, 2023
   c. Snow/ice removal in exchange for Community Center floor cleaning/buffing agreement between Franklin Township and Franklin Township Board of Education July 1, 2023-June 20, 2024

5. RESOLUTIONS – FIRST READING/ADOPTION
   a. Res. 2023-37
      RE: Resolution of the Municipality of Franklin Township, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, authorizing the appointment of Craig R. Brotons as Tax Assessor
   b. Res. 2023-38
      RE: Renewal of Liquor Licenses 7/01/2023-6/30/2024
   c. Res. 2023-39
      RE: Resolution to hire a Certified Financial Officer (memorialized 5/1/2023)
   d. Res. 2023-40
      RE: Designating Block 41 Lots 12, 12.01 & 12.02 & Block 27 Lots 1 & 1.01 on the Township Tax Map as area in need of redevelopment
   e. Res. 2023-41
      RE: Designating Block 34 Lot 20 on the Township Tax Map as an area in need of redevelopment
NEW BUSINESS

6. DISCUSSIONS/PRESENTATIONS/APPROVALS
   a. Public Hearing/Comment RE: Farmland Plan (TLC)-Barbara Haskins Davis
   b. Introduction of Leaf Ordinance RE: Ordinance 2023-4 Leaf Disposal an Ordinance to amend Chapter 120 of the Code of the Township of Franklin entitled, Sidewalks and Streets”
   c. Introduction of RE: Salary Ordinance 2023-7
   d. Sprinkler System Inspection RE: Replacement of Water Motor Gong
   e. Discussion RE: WC Agriculture Development Board Special Occasion Event Application, 8 Wolverton Road, Frank Boghos

OLD BUSINESS

7. DISCUSSIONS:
   a. Discussion RE: Open Space Secretary (Re-Organization of Commission)
       Agriculture Advisory Committee Secretary

REPORTS/UPDATES
   a. Engineer
   b. Attorney
   c. Township Committee Members
   d. Open Space
   e. Zoning Officer
   f. Recycling Coordinator
   g. Fire/EMS
   h. DPW
   i. FTCC
   j. FTYA
   k. OEM
   l. NJSP

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:

EXECUTIVE SESSION:
   a. Personnel-DPW Road Laborer position
   b. Contract Negotiations-Shared Services (Municipal Court)

MOTION FOR PAYMENT OF BILLS:

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT:
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

Agricultural Businesses Servicing Warren County and Franklin Township

Sources: SADC Green Pages

**Equipment**

Central Jersey Equipment
228 State Rt 94
Columbia, NJ 07832
Warren County
(908) 362-6916

Everitt Equipment LLC
258 County Rd 579
Ringoes, NJ 08551
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-5082
http://www.everittequipment.com/

Powerco, Inc
12 NJ-173
Clinton, NJ 08809
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-2149
https://www.powercoinc.com/

Smith Tractor & Equipment, Inc
115 NJ-31
Washington, NJ 07882
Warren County
(908) 689-7900
https://www.smithtractorandequipment.com/

**Seed**

Growmark FS
60 Lehigh Ave
Bloomsbury, NJ 08804
Hunterdon County
(908) 479-4500

Nutrien Ag Solutions
127 Perryville Rd
Pittstown, NJ 08867
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-5545

Garden State Heirloom Seed Society
82 Delaware Rd
Columbia, NJ 07832
Warren County
(973) 475-2730

**Animal Feed**

Blairstown Ace
2 Bridge St
Blairstown, NJ 07825
Warren County
(908) 362-6177

Morristown Agway Store
176 Ridgedale Ave
Morrison, NJ 07960
Morris County
(973) 538-3232
https://morristownagway.com/

Sergeantsville Country Store
735 Route 523
Sergeantsville, NJ 08557 Hunterdon County
(609) 397-0807
https://sergeantsvillegrainandfeed.com/

Tractor Supply Company
128 NJ-94 #9
Blairstown, NJ 07825
Warren County
(908) 362-0082
https://www.tractorsupply.com/

Tractor Supply Company
293 US Hwy 206, Unit 15A
Flanders, NJ 07836
Morris County
(973) 252-2925

Tractor Supply Company
144 Hwy 202/31 North
Ringoes, NJ 08551
Hunterdon County
(908) 284-2021
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

Tractor Supply Company
775 NJ-23
Sussex, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 875-7087

Tractor Supply Company
398 Rte 57 West 4
Washington, NJ 07882
Warren County
(908) 689-3202

Dover Pet Shop
112 E Blackwell St
Dover, NJ 07801
Morris County
(973) 361-2322

Ise Feed
110 Good Springs Rd
Stewartsville, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 859-8424

Mike’s Feed Farm
90 Hamburg Turnpike
Riverdale, NJ 07457
Morris County
(973) 839-7747
https://www.mikesfeedfarm.com/

New Village Farms
11 Stewartsville Rd
Stewartsville, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 859-3381

Outlaw Outfitters
530 US-206
Newton, NJ 07860
(844) 780-3261
Sussex County
https://outlawtack.com/

Penwell Mills
448 Penwell Rd
Port Murray, NJ 07865
Warren County
(908) 689-3725
https://www.penwellmills.com

The Tack Room
367 Pittstown Rd
Pittstown, NJ 08867
Hunterdon County
(908) 730-8388

Schaefer Farms
1051 County Rd 523
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
http://www.schaeferfarms.com/

Delaware Valley Feed and Farm Supply
1133A NJ-12
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Hunterdon County
(908) 628-3550

Deer Run Hay Company
110 Amwell Rd
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(732) 904-5137

Brodhecker Farm, LLC
2 Branchville-Lawson
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(973) 383-3592
https://brodheckerfarm.com/

Slaughterhouses
A&M Packing LLC
268 Newton-Swartswood Rd
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(873) 383-4291

Seugling Meat Packing Inc.
9 Mandeville Ave
Pequannock, NJ 07440
Morris County
(973) 694-3156

V Roche Butcher Shop
9 High St
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2006
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

Green Village Packing Co.
68 Britten Rd
Green Village, NJ 07935
Morris County
(973) 377-0875
https://greenvillagepacking.com/

Louie Chiu Slaughterhouse
40 Montana Rd
New Village, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 859-6635

Livestock Supplies
Ackerman & Sons Livestock Hauling LLC
932 Maple Ave
Stillwater, NJ 07875
Sussex County
(973) 383-4240

Construction & Concrete
Morton Buildings
512 State Rt 57
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-7900
https://mortonbuildings.com/location/phillipsburg-nj

Fine Woodworking
606 Rt 519
Sussex, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 875-8779

County Concrete Corp.
50 Railroad Ave
Kenvil, NJ 07847
Sussex County
(973) 584-7122
https://www.countyconcretenj.com/

Lentini Ready Mix, Inc.
217 Limecrest Rd
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(973) 300-4146

SCC Concrete, Inc.
1051 River Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 859-2172
https://www.sccconcreteinc.com/

Sparta Redi-Mix
33 Demarest Rd
Sparta, NJ 07871
Sussex County
(888) 383-4651
https://www.spartaredimix.com/

County Concrete Corp.
50 Railroad Ave
Kenvil, NJ 07847
Sussex County
(973) 584-7122
https://www.countyconcretenj.com/

Lentini Ready Mix, Inc.
217 Limecrest Rd
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(973) 300-4146

Flemington Precast & Supply, LLC
18 Allen St
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-3246
https://www.flemingtonprecast.com

Franklin Precast
95 Scott Rd
Franklin, NJ 07416
Warren County (973) 827-7563
https://www.franklinprecast.com/

Precast Manufacturing Co.
187 Stryker’s Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-2122
https://www.precastmfgco.com/

B&B Concrete Co.
811 Rt 57
Stewartsville, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 454-1622

Donald Baker Mason Contractors, Inc.
188 Thatcher Hill Rd
Flemington, NJ 08822
Warren County
(908) 782-2115
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

JM Lenze Construction
69 Upper North Shore Rd
Branchville, NJ 07826
Sussex County
(937) 948-5491

SMB Construction
73 Mercer St
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-9530

William R. Hunt Stonework & Masonry, LLC
PO Box 346
Whitehouse Station, NJ
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2194
https://huntstonework.com/

Bill Wroblewski, LLC
5 Whitehall Rd
Andover, NJ 07821
Sussex County
(973) 347-3888

Brad Lauyer Masonry Contractor, LLC
611 Main St
Pattenburg, NJ 08802
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-0875

PowerPro Equipment
70 Rt 202
Ringoes, NJ 08551
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-4278

Colaluce Well & Pump Service
2293 Rt 57
Washington, NJ 07882
Warren County
(908) 454-8008
https://www.colalucewell.com/

Dan Ballentine Well Drilling, Inc.
PO Box 178, Port Murray Rd
Port Murray, NJ 07865
Warren County
(908) 689-7666
https://www.ballentinedrilling.com/

Bill Wrobleski, LLC
5 Whitehall Rd
Andover, NJ 07821
Sussex County
(973) 347-3888

Brad Lauyer Masonry Contractor, LLC
611 Main St
Pattenburg, NJ 08802
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-0875

PowerPro Equipment
70 Rt 202
Ringoes, NJ 08551
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-4278

Well Drilling
Samuel Stothoff Co., Inc.
PO Box, 59 Rt 31
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-2116
https://www.stothoffwellwater.com/

Colaluce Well & Pump Service
2293 Rt 57
Washington, NJ 07882
Warren County
(908) 454-8008
https://www.colalucewell.com/

Dan Ballentine Well Drilling, Inc.
PO Box 178, Port Murray Rd
Port Murray, NJ 07865
Warren County
(908) 689-7666
https://www.ballentinedrilling.com/

Site Work Contractors
Apgar Brothers Excavating Co.
PO Box 91
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
Hunterdon County
(903) 303-9758

Harrington Contractors
50 Parker Pd
Chester, NJ 07930
Morris County
(908) 879-7500
http://www.harringtoncontractors.com

KOR Companies
1 Greenwood Place
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(908) 284-2272

Charles T. Matarazzo Excavating & Masonry, LLC
1024 Route 173
Asbury, NJ 08802
Warren County
(908) 479-2025

John P. Martin Excavating, LLC
112 Ferry Rd
Flemington, NJ 08822
(908) 782-2512
Hunterdon County
https://www.jpmartinexcavating.com
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

A.S. Milkowski & Sons Contracting
249 Rocky Run Rd
Glen Gardner, NJ 08826
Hunterdon County
(908) 537-2590

Rick Mueller Excavating, Inc.
31 Rick Rd Milford, NJ 08848
Hunterdon County
(908) 996-3031

S Snook Excavating, Inc.
150 Pelltown Rd
Lafayette, NJ 07848
Sussex County
(973) 875-5754

Wantage Excavating Co.
137 Holland Rd
Sussex, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 875-5670
http://www.wantageexcavating.com/

Willever Excavating
200 Creek Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-6242

Bill Wrobleski, LLC
5 Whitehall Rd
Andover, NJ 07821
Sussex County
(973) 347-3888

Petersen Excavating
273 Mt. Lake Rd
Belvidere, NJ 07823
Warren County
(908) 637-8531

Earthway Excavating
16 Greengate Rd
Lebanon, NJ 08833
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-4343

William R. Hunt Stonework & Masonry
PO Box 346
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2194
https://huntstonework.com/

The Viersma Companies
PO Box 224, Airport Rd
Allamuchy, NJ 07820
Warren County
(908) 852-0552
https://www.viersma.com

Richard Pfauth, Jr. & Son
239 Halls Mill Rd
Lebanon, NJ 08833
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2535

John Peach Excavating
PO Box 78, Pleasant Grove Rd
Schooleys Mountain, NJ 07870
Morris County
(908) 852-5875

William H. Wilson Contracting Co., Inc.
210 Houses Corner Rd
Sparta, NJ 07871
Sussex County
(908) 479-6911

D & V Construction Co.
83 Good Springs Rd
Asbury, NJ 08802
Warren County
(973) 579-5353

A. Mokros Backhoe Service, Inc.
17 Lynnbrook Dr
Lambertville, NJ 08530
Hunterdon County
(609) 737-8311

Razz Construction
79 Sky Manor Rd
Pittstown, NJ 08867
Hunterdon County
(908) 996-3298
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

Ravcon Construction Group LLC  
PO Box 1098  
Whitehouse, NJ 08889  
Hunterdon County  
(908) 482-7037  
https://www.ravcon.us/

Paul W. Steinbeiser Landscape  
718 County Rd 519  
Frenchtown, NJ 08825  
Hunterdon County  
(908) 996-6609  
https://www.pwsteinbeiser.com/

Fence Installation  
Farmette Services  
67 Henry Rd  
Newton, NJ 07860  
Sussex County  
(973) 300-0103

Hunt’s Fencing  
567 Rt 94  
Newton, NJ 07860  
Sussex County  
(973) 383-4426

The Fence Company  
3 Hill Hollow Rd  
Pittstown, NJ 08867  
Hunterdon County  
(908) 735-8879

J & M Fence & Sheds  
328 Rt 46 West  
Great Meadows, NJ 07838  
Warren County  
(908) 637-8799

Seamless Gutters  
Warren Valley Seamless Gutters  
17 Ernella Dr  
Belvidere, NJ 07823  
Warren County  
(908) 752-5397

Wayne Johnson & Sons, Inc.  
1167 NJ-23  
Kinnelon, NJ 07405  
Morris County  
(201) 838-2358  
https://www.waynejohnsonandsons.net

NJ Soil Conservation Districts  
Upper Delaware Soil Conservation District  
51 Main Street, Suite B  
Blairstown, NJ 07825  
Warren County  
(908) 852-2579  
https://upperdelawaescd-nj.com

NJ County Agricultural Development Boards  
Warren County Agricultural Development Board  
500 Mt. Pisgah Ave, PO Box 179  
Oxford, NJ 07863  
(908) 453-3252  
https://www.co.warren.nj.us/Land%20Preservation%20Dept/CADB.html

Rutgers  
Cooperative Extension of Warren County  
165 County Rd 519 South, Suite 102  
Belvidere, NJ 07823  
(908) 475-6505  
https://warren.njaes.rutgers.edu/

United States Department of Agriculture  
(USDA) – Farm Service Agency (FSA)  
Hackettstown Service Center  
101 Bilby Rd, Suite 1H  
Hackettstown, NJ 07840  
(908) 852-2576  
https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/New-Jersey/index
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

**USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**
Hackettstown Service Center
101 Bilby Rd, Suite 1H
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
(908) 852-2576
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/nj/home/

**USDA Rural Development**
Hackettstown Service Center
101 Bilby Rd, Suite 1H
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
(908) 852-2576
https://www.rd.usda.gov/nj

**Auctions**
Hackettstown Livestock Auction
225 W Stiger St
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
Warren County
(908) 852-0444
https://www.hackettstownauction.com

**Crop Insurance Agents**
Crop Growers, LLC
9 County Rd 618
Lebanon, NJ 08833
Hunterdon County
(800) 234-7012
https://www.cropgrowers.com/

**Financial Services**
Farm Credit East
9 County Road 618
Lebanon, NJ 08833
(908) 782-5215
https://www.farmcrediteast.com/

**Licensed Foresters**
G. Lester Alpaugh
PO Box 211
Stockton, NJ 08559
Hunterdon County
(609) 397-0615

Andrew Bennett
PO Box 790
Lafayette, NJ 07848
Sussex County
(973) 729-7430
https://www.ridgeandvalleyforest.com/

Dylan Borger
PO Box 790
Lafayette, NJ 07848
Sussex County (570) 730-1977
https://www.ridgeandvalleyforest.com/

E. Joseph Bruschetta
1178 Bridge Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 475-8466

Donald Donnelly
650 Jackson Valley Rd
Oxford, NJ 07863
Warren County
(908) 752-2538

Thomas D. Doty
45 Lilac Dr
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(973) 813-3222

Joseph Dunn
49 Millbrook-Stillwater Rd
Blairstown, NJ 07825

Lorens D. Fasano
PO Box 72
Brookside, NJ 07926
Morris County
(973) 214-8294
Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

G. Mike Fee
10 Paulinskill Rd
Hardwick, NJ 07825
Warren County
(908) 362-5565

William Grundmann
151 County Rd
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Hunterdon County
(908) 309-6611
https://www.organicplantcarellc.com/

Kris Hasbrouck
9 East Buena Vista Way
Bloomingdale, NJ 07403
Passaic County
(201) 819-6454

Thomas Koeppel
PO Box 54
Pequannock, NJ 07440
Morris County
(973) 633-0360

John D. Linson
PO Box 6089
West Orange, NJ 07052
Essex County
(973) 766-2143

Robert A. Sidor
154 President St
Passaic, NJ 07055
Passaic County
(973) 356-8828

Timothy J. Slavin
319 Route 515
Stockholm, NJ 07460
Sussex County
(973) 697-6646

Douglas Tavella
PO Box 313
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(570) 350-5359

Richard S. Wolowicz
4 Maude Lane
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
Warren County
(973) 220-6797

Veterinarians

Dr. Carole Edwards AVCA, CHI, FIAMA
Specialty: Equine
PO Box 232
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Hunterdon County
(908) 575-7834
https://www.carole-edwards.com

Mountain Pointe Equine Veterinary Services
Specialty: Equine
14 Schooleys Mountain Rd
Long Valley, NJ 07853
Morris County
(908) 269-8451
https://www.mountainpointeequine.com

Woods End Equine Veterinary Services
Specialty: Equine
67 Rose Morrow Rd
Wantage, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 209-4994
https://www.woodsendequine.com

Equihart Veterinary Services
Specialty: Equine
PO Box 215
Califon, NJ 07830
Hunterdon County
(732) 616-6188
https://www.equiheartvet.com
Appendix C. 2022 Zoning Map

Zoning Map
Township of Franklin
Warren County, NJ

January 2022

Legend
- Zone District Boundaries
- Highlands Preservation Area

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Map Scale = 1:16,200
1"=1,350'

Feet

0 675 1,350 2,700 4,050 5,400 6,750 8,100
## Appendix D. Inventory Table 1: Unpreserved Farmland

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**Appendix D. Inventory Table 1: Unpreserved Farmland**

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<th>Class</th>
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## Appendix D. Inventory Table 1: Unpreserved Farmland

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Unpreserved Farmland: 6,215.62  6,429.38

Preserved Farmland: 3,749.53  3,847.18

Total Farm Assessed Land: 9,965.16  10,276.56
### Appendix D. Inventory Table 2: Preserved Farms

*Entries in grey denote farms in multiple municipalities

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### Appendix D. Inventory Table 2: Preserved Farms

*Entries in grey denote farms in multiple municipalities*

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Appendix D. Inventory Table 2: Preserved Farms

*Entries in grey denote farms in multiple municipalities

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<th>Year Closed</th>
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<th>Lot</th>
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*Block 59, Lot 9 is not identified independently in tax records, but is an additional lot to Block 59, Lot 8. It is not listed in the deed of easement, but its acreage is included through Lot 8.
## Appendix D. Inventory Table 3: Target Farms

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Farm Units Potentially Eligible for Preservation (Acres): **2,416.58**  **2,501.17**  **2,501.17**

Farm Units Potentially Eligible for Preservation (Number): **27**
## Appendix D. Inventory Table 3: Target Farms

### Single Lot Farms

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<th>Class</th>
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<td>ROUTE 57, 2028</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>10.49</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.01</td>
<td>ROUTE 57, 2036</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>97.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>ROUTE 57, 2044</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>ROUTE 57, 2100</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>9.51</td>
<td>95.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.01</td>
<td>10.02</td>
<td>BEIDLEMAN ROAD, 35</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.01</td>
<td>10.03</td>
<td>BEIDLEMAN ROAD, 23</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>94.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.04</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>BRYAN ROAD, 12</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>8.79</td>
<td>9.18</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.04</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>BRYAN ROAD, 20</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>9.32</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ROUTE 57, 2130</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>6.42</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>99.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>ROUTE 57, 2130</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>99.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>HALFWAY HOUSE ROAD, 35</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>9.65</td>
<td>9.88</td>
<td>79.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>EDISON ROAD, 55</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>74.83</td>
<td>123.14</td>
<td>09.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>WILLOW GROVE ROAD, 227</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>9.62</td>
<td>10.12</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>GOOD SPRINGS ROAD, 190</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>32.84</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>11.56</td>
<td>12.42</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>7.85</td>
<td>9.06</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>WILLOW GROVE ROAD, 300</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>105.42</td>
<td>112.46</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD, 44</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>13.19</td>
<td>26.33</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.01</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD, 56</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>50.69</td>
<td>18.20</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.02</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD, 65</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>11.31</td>
<td>13.20</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.03</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD, 60</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>8.09</td>
<td>9.67</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.04</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD, 40</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>14.84</td>
<td>9.21</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>HERLEMAN ROAD, 70</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>59.00</td>
<td>56.27</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>HARLEY COURT, 30-32</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>135.93</td>
<td>146.29</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD, 340</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>29.43</td>
<td>29.73</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD, 482</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>10.25</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>BUTTERMILK BRIDGE RD, 204</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>104.80</td>
<td>108.45</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD, 115</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>15.98</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD, 117</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>9.16</td>
<td>10.20</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>97.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>SCHNETZER LANE</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>33.14</td>
<td>33.90</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>OLD MAIN STREET, 357</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>104.80</td>
<td>105.89</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>KITCHEN ROAD, 29</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>KITCHEN ROAD, 66</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>16.71</td>
<td>16.12</td>
<td>82.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MAPLE AVENUE, 140</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>11.50</td>
<td>12.86</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 43</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>47.65</td>
<td>45.92</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 93</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>61.11</td>
<td>62.99</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>ASBURY-BROADWAY ROAD, 278</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>8.26</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>ASBURY-BROADWAY ROAD, 250</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>33.98</td>
<td>33.38</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>29.02</td>
<td>MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD, 375</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix D. Inventory Table 3: Target Farms

#### Single Lot Farms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Lot</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Acres (Tax Data)</th>
<th>Acres (GIS)</th>
<th>Tillable Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>31.01</td>
<td>BUTLER ROAD, 74</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>58.41</td>
<td>65.38</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>31.02</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 170</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>12.93</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>31.03</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 154</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>12.51</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 380</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>111.52</td>
<td>110.71</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>BUTLER ROAD, 79</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>24.96</td>
<td>25.15</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 229</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>13.29</td>
<td>12.11</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>WOLVERTON ROAD, 3</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>38.73</td>
<td>41.07</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 241</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>12.41</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>11.01</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD, 341</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>BLOOMSBURY ROAD</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>257.25</td>
<td>233.87</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farm Parcels Potentially Eligible for Preservation (Acres): 2,089.76 2,166.34

Farm Parcels Potentially Eligible for Preservation (Number): 63

TOTAL:

Farms Potentially Eligible for Preservation (Acres): 4,506.34 4,667.51

Farms Potentially Eligible for Preservation (Number): 90
Appendix E. SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria

SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Minimum Eligibility Criteria are based upon the SADC’s rules for farmland preservation and project eligibility.\(^1\) In order to be eligible for preservation the site must be developable, have soils capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production, and meet minimum tillable land standards. (N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.20)

In summary:

For all lands less than or equal to 10 acres:
- The land must produce at least $2,500 worth of agricultural or horticultural products annually; and
- At least 75% or a minimum of 5 acres of the land (whichever is less) must be tillable; and
- At least 75% or a minimum of 5 acres of the land (whichever is less) must be capable of supporting agriculture or horticulture; and
- The land in question must exhibit development potential as defined by the SADC (based upon zoning, ability to be subdivided, less than 80% wetlands, less than 80% slopes of 15% or more); or
- The land must meet the above criteria or be eligible for allocation of development credits pursuant to a Transfer of Development Credits (TDR) program.

For lands greater than 10 acres:
- At least 50% or a minimum of 25 acres of land (whichever is less) must be tillable; and
- At least 50% or a minimum of 25 acres of land (whichever is less) must have soils capable of supporting agriculture or horticulture; and
- The land in question must exhibit development potential as defined by the SADC; or
- The land must meet the above criteria or be eligible for allocation of development credits pursuant to a Transfer of Development Credits (TDR) program.

For a farm application to qualify for SADC cost share, the farm must have at least one parcel listed on the targeted farm list; comprise an assemblage of substandard parcels which together meet SADC minimum standards; or have sufficient justification by the Hunterdon CADB that the parcels were not identified as targeted due to a specific mapping issue or other error.

Within the identified project area, candidate farms are identified which meet the tillable land and soils minimum eligibility standards. To determine farms that are potentially eligible for preservation, a series of queries were made utilizing the ArcGIS digital mapping software for soils and tillable land. These are described in further detail below and shown on target farm map.

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\(^1\) Adopted by the SADC May 21, 2007, and July 25, 2019.
Appendix E. SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Farmland that meets the SADC Criteria for Tillable Land
Tillable acreage was determined using the NJDEP 2015 Land Use/Land Cover mapping for agricultural lands. The land categories that are defined as the “tillable land” are as follows:

- Agricultural Wetlands (Modified)
- Confined Feeding Operations
- Cropland and Pastureland
- Former Agricultural Wetland
- Orchards/Vineyards/Nurseries/Horticultural Areas
- Other Agriculture

Farm parcels were sorted by size based upon the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for tillable land:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Size</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-6.667 acres</td>
<td>75% tillable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.667-10 acres</td>
<td>5 acres tillable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-50 acres</td>
<td>50% tillable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+ acres</td>
<td>25 tillable acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmland that meets the SADC Criteria for Agricultural Soils
Agricultural soils as defined by the SADC are those soils capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production. The use of the NRCS Soil Survey identifying prime, statewide, and unique agricultural soils is the first and best indication of the farmland soils.

Farm parcels are sorted by size based upon the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for soils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Size</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-6.667 acres</td>
<td>75% soils capable of supporting agricultural production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.667-10 acres</td>
<td>5 ac of soils capable of supporting agricultural production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-50 acres</td>
<td>50% soils capable of supporting agricultural production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+ acres</td>
<td>25 ac of soils capable of supporting agricultural production</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmland that meets SADC Criteria for both Tillable Land and Soils
Utilizing the tillable acreage determined from the NJDEP 2015 Land Use/Land Cover mapping for agricultural lands and soil acreage determined using the Soil Survey as prepared by the NRCS for prime farmland soils, soils of statewide importance and soils of unique importance, farm parcels were sorted by size based upon the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for tillable land and soils.

Hunterdon County may proceed without state funding on projects that do not meet these Minimum Eligibility Standards, but typically, Hunterdon County will not cost share on applications that do not meet SADC minimum standards. In all cases, the CADB will review and process applications from landowners for farmland preservation and follow all state procedures to ensure consistency in application review and processing.
Chapter 73. Farming

Article I. Agricultural Rights

§ 73-2. Right to farm.

In that the policy as above stated under § 73-1 is further provided in the land use study and land use acts as adopted by the Township[1] in allowing farming and all farming agricultural uses in all zoning districts within the Township of Franklin, it is hereby recognized to exist as a right of the farmer and his agents and employees to utilize their land and property in a manner of good common agricultural practices and the pursuit of their livelihood, however, within and subject to the regulations established by the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, in regard to health code regulations. Henceforth, it is hereinafter recognized that, under the right to farm, all residents in pursuit of agricultural livelihood shall be allowed to continue previous practices established as good farming techniques and procedures with regard to all aspects of farming, including but not limited to plowing, seeding, fertilizing and spraying by the use of tractors or air spraying, the right to use the large equipment and tractors, including the application of chemical fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides, as well as other customary farm equipment for the purpose of producing from the land agricultural products, including vegetables, grains, feed, crops, fruits, fibers, wood, trees, plants, shrubs, flowers and seeds. The right to farm shall further include the right to utilize the land for grazing of all animals, subject to all health restrictions for intensive livestock farms or other restrictions in regard to spreading of manure.

[1]  Editor's Note: See Ch. 90, Land Use and Development.
Chapter 73. Farming

Article I. Agricultural Rights

[Adopted 12-8-1980 by Ord. No. 80-15]

§ 73-1. Statement of findings.

The Mayor and Township Committee, being aware and having studied the character, history and economic and sociological history of the Township, and upon the finding that the historical economic backbone of the Township of Franklin has been that of a farming and agricultural community and in furtherance of protecting the agricultural rights that have existed for hundreds of years, further state that the policy of the Township is to maintain the farming characteristics of the Township and the effects thereon as a result of residential, industrial and commercial development which, in surrounding communities, have been eroding the existence of working farms and the effects thereon by said development and the further effects of technological needs for the agricultural community which have engendered the development of conflicts of said new development with the necessary and good farming practices and other activities indigenous to farming, and the Mayor and Township Committee further find, as a result of these changed conditions and the effects that future development have upon the ability of farmers to maintain a livelihood and utilize customary procedures and techniques, that this chapter should be adopted stating the public policy and protecting the farmers in preservation of their farms and common farming practices within the areas of the Township of Franklin.

§ 73-2. Right to farm.

In that the policy as above stated under § 73-1 is further provided in the land use study and land use acts as adopted by the Township[1] in allowing farming and all farming agricultural uses in all zoning districts within the Township of Franklin, it is hereby recognized to exist as a right of the farmer and his agents and employees to utilize their land and property in a manner of good common agricultural practices and the pursuit of their livelihood, however, within and subject to the regulations established by the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, in regard to health code regulations. Henceforth, it is hereinafter recognized that, under the right to farm, all residents in pursuit of agricultural livelihood shall be allowed to continue previous practices established as good farming techniques and procedures with regard to all aspects of farming, including but not limited to plowing, seeding, fertilizing and spraying by the use of tractors or air spraying, the right to use the large equipment and tractors, including the application of chemical fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides, as well as other customary farm equipment for the purpose of producing from the land agricultural products, including vegetables, grains, feed, crops, fruits, fibers, wood, trees, plants, shrubs, flowers and seeds. The right to farm shall further include the right to utilize the land for grazing of all animals, subject to all health restrictions for intensive livestock farms or other restrictions in regard to spreading of manure.

[1] Editor's Note: See Ch. 90, Land Use and Development.

§ 73-3. Activities not restricted.
Appendix F. Right to Farm Ordinance

The activities, agricultural uses and good farming practices as hereinabove set forth may occur without abatement or interference seven days a week, including Sundays, holidays and on a twenty-four-hour daily basis. Further, said activities and farming rights as hereinabove provided shall not be hindered, abated or interfered with in regard to the reasonable common farming practices of noise, odors and dust related to those activities and recognized as being a part thereof and shall be the established right of agricultural pursuits within reasonable bounds and cannot be hindered by adjoining or contiguous residential development.

Article II. Farmland Preservation Program


§ 73-4. Recommendation by Mayor and Township Committee.

The Mayor and Township Committee, being the governing body of the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, do hereby recommend to the Warren County Agricultural Development Board that the petitions for the creation of a municipally approved farmland program within the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, be hereby approved for the following reasons:

A. The intent and purposes of the farmland preservation program, as established under N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., conforms to the Franklin Township Master Plan of 1978 and the reexamination of said Master Plan in May of 1988 in preserving the prime farmland within the Township.

B. The lands of the petitioners were zoned low-density areas pursuant to their high quality Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 agricultural soils.

C. The Master Plan reexamination thereof supports the agricultural preservation program in that said lands and the preservation thereof are recognized as part of the Township's agricultural base and that the same is expected to be a goal of the Township plan in the future.

D. The objectives, goals and general concept of the farmland preservation program complement the future planning goals of the Township.

§ 73-5. Establishment.

The Mayor and Township Committee hereby establish a farmland preservation program within the limits of the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, and hereby authorize the Clerk to forward a copy of this chapter, duly passed, to the Warren County Agricultural Development Board as a requirement to establish a municipal program within the Township.

§ 73-6. Creation; funding.

The establishment of a municipal farmland preservation program is created without funds being appropriated therefor. The creation of said program is based upon and subject to funding for the same by the State of New Jersey and/or the County of Warren pursuant to P.L. 1983, c. 32 (N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq.).

Article III. Farm Assessed Lands

[Adopted 7-28-1997 by Ord. No. 97-11]

§ 73-7. On-site inspection.
Appendix F. Right to Farm Ordinance

The Franklin Township Tax Assessor shall conduct an on-site inspection of each and every farm assessed land and land for which farm assessment has been applied within the Township of Franklin once every three years in accordance with N.J.S.A. 54:4-23.13.

§ 73-8. Fee.

Each owner of farm assessed land or land for which farm assessment has been applied shall pay a fee to the Township of Franklin of $25 for each parcel of said land, except that contiguous and noncontiguous parcels of land owned by the same owner shall be subject to a single fee. Such fee shall be paid by the owner of the land every three years at the time of filing of the application for farm assessment, and prior to the on-site inspection by the Tax Assessor.
References

Chapter 1


Chapter 2


**Chapter 3**


Township of Franklin. Schedule of Use Regulations.


Chapter 4


Chapter 5


Personal Communication with Robert Baumley, Deputy Executive Director, State Agriculture Development Committee, August 8, 2008.


Chapter 6


New Jersey Farmland Assessment. Warren County Data. Received from Steven Bruder, SADC in July 2021.


Personal communication with Hank Bignell, Agriculture & Natural Resource Senior Program Coordinator. NJAES-RCE Warren County. March 2021.


Personal communication with Hank Bignell, Agriculture & Natural Resource Senior Program Coordinator. NJAES-RCE Warren County. March 2021.


Personal communication with Hank Bignell, Agriculture & Natural Resource Senior Program Coordinator. NJAES-RCE Warren County. March 2021.


Chapter 7


Personal Communication with Michael Hart, Regional Forester, New Jersey Forest Service, July 2020.


Personal Communication with Michael Hart, Regional Forester, New Jersey Forest Service, June 2020. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, updated numbers were not accessible for individual municipalities in Warren County.


SADC. New Jersey Farmland Assessments. Warren County municipal data. Received July 2021.


Chapter 8


Personal communication. Marianne Van Deursen, Vice President of Academics at Warren County Community College. February 2021.


