

STATUS OF STATE PACE PROGRAMS

OVERVIEW

As of January 2024, 29 states had state-level purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) programs. The interior table displays the status and summarizes important information about farm and ranch land protection programs in 31 states. Montana and Alabama no longer have active programs but are included in the table because they have funded easement purchases in the past. Missouri has authorized PACE but has not yet allocated funds or acquired easements. For a program to be included, it must have state authorization and funding, and a stated purpose of the program must be to protect agricultural land for agriculture by funding easement acquisitions.

EXPLANATION OF COLUMN HEADINGS

Year of Inception/Year of First Acquisition

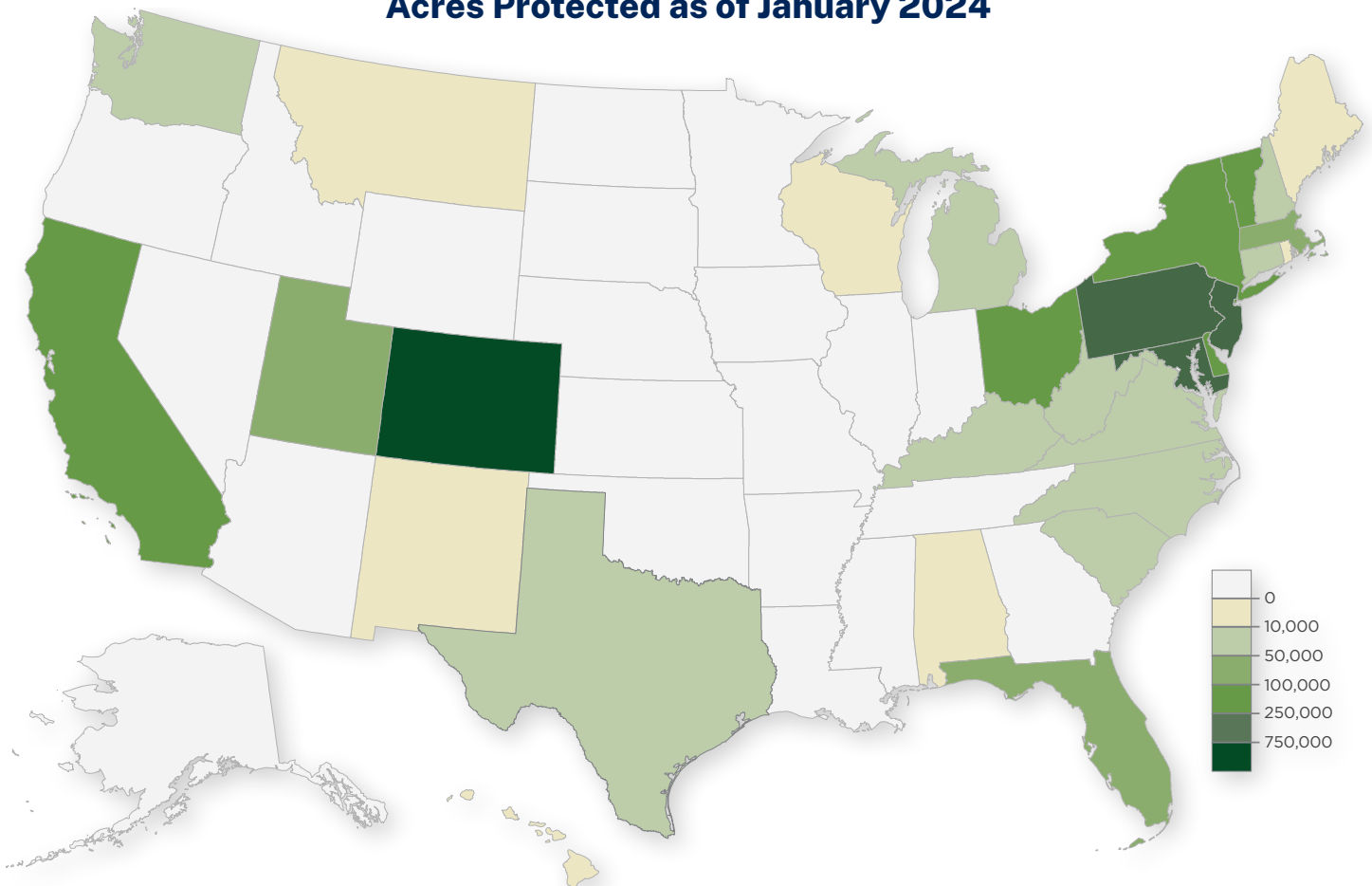
Year in which the PACE program was authorized and year in which the program acquired its first easement.

Method of Protection

Methods used to permanently protect land. Options include directly acquiring easements, providing funds to public entities, like local governments or soil conservation districts, or providing funds to private entities, like land trusts. Some programs use multiple approaches.

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Acres Protected as of January 2024



Interests Held

Legal interests held or retained by the program once the land protection transaction has been completed. Options include agricultural conservation easement (ACE) as sole grantee, ACE as co-holder where the program and a partner both hold the easement and have equal interests, only third party right of enforcement, executory interest, and intervener and mediator. Some programs reported more than one type of interest held.

Easements Acquired

Number of agricultural conservation easements acquired through the program. This number does not necessarily reflect the total number of farms/ranches protected because some programs acquire a property in stages and/or may hold multiple easements on the same farm/ranch. As noted above, some programs do not hold easements but instead provide funds for

easement purchases to local governments or land trusts and retain a lesser legal interest in the easement.

Acres Protected

Number of agricultural acres protected by the program.

Program Funds Spent to Date

Dollars spent to date by each program to acquire easements on farms/ranches. This amount may include unspent funds dedicated for installment payments on completed projects. Unless otherwise noted, these figures do not reflect incidental land acquisition costs, such as appraisals, insurance and recording fees, nor the administrative costs of running the program. Also not included are additional funds contributed by federal programs, local governments, private land trusts, foundations, nor individuals (see "Additional Funds Spent").

PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAMS

State	Year of Inception/ Year of First Acquisition	Method of Protection	Interests Held	Easements Acquired
Alabama				
Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries ¹	2004/2005	N/A	N/A	21
California				320
Agricultural Land Mitigation Program ²	2016/2017	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	Right of enforcement, intervenor & mediator	15
California Farmland Conservancy Program ²	1995/1997	Provide funds to private entities	Executory interest, right of enforcement, intervenor & mediator	184
Rangeland, Grazing Land, and Grassland Program	2002/2004	N/A	N/A	27
Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program	2014/2015	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	Right of enforcement, intervenor & mediator	94
Colorado				
Great Outdoors Colorado ^{2,3}	1992/1995	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	567
Connecticut				
Farmland Preservation Program ²	1978/1979	Direct acquisition	ACE as sole grantee	431
Delaware				1183
Agricultural Lands Preservation Program	1991/1996	Direct acquisition	ACE as co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	1144
Young Farmer Loan Program	2011/2012	Direct acquisition	ACE as co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	39
Florida				
Rural and Family Lands Protection Program ²	2001/2001	Direct acquisition	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	68
Georgia				
Farmland Conservation Fund Program	2023/ N/A	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	N/A	0

Notes:

- 1 Program has terminated or is no longer acquiring agricultural conservation easements.
- 2 "Program Funds Spent to Date" includes incidental land acquisition costs and/or personnel costs.

Additional Funds Spent to Date

Funds contributed to date by federal programs, local governments, private land trusts, foundations, corporations, and/or individuals (see “Funding Sources Used”).

Program Funds Available

Program funds available for the current fiscal year to acquire easements on agricultural land.

Funding Sources

Funding sources currently used by each program. Blue text indicates the *primary* funding source, meaning the one that generates the most money for the program during the reporting period.

“Federal transportation funding” refers to money disbursed by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway

Administration to support transportation alternatives and enhancements.

The Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) provides funds to establish easement-protected buffer areas around military installations.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) protects agricultural land and conserves wetlands. The Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) component of ACEP provides matching funds to eligible entities to buy conservation easements on farm and ranch land.

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) is another source of federal funding for some programs.

In addition to these sources of funding, several programs reported contributions from private sources.

STATUS OF STATE PROGRAMS AS OF JANUARY 2024

Acres Protected	Program Funds Spent to Date	Additional Funds Spent to Date	Program Funds Available	Funding Sources Primary sources are in blue	State
					Alabama
4,591	\$1,636,866	\$3,273,731	N/A	N/A	
					California
234,603	\$277,420,388	\$180,720,125	\$124,978,642		
3,189	\$25,857,237	\$632,853	\$3,380,642	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, allocation for farmland impacted by high speed rail (cap and trade auction proceeds) , mitigation fees	
59,460	\$88,569,039	\$89,277,069	\$4,898,000	Appropriations, bonds , mitigation fees, private contributions	
70,385	\$35,688,779	\$24,807,682	\$0	N/A	
101,569	\$127,305,333	\$66,002,521	\$116,700,000	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (cap and trade auction proceeds) , California Coastal Conservancy (bonds, in combination with federal, local, and private funding sources), California Wildlife Conservation Board (appropriations, bonds), local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE, RCPP, REPI	
					Colorado
878,364	\$264,210,838	\$822,843,181	\$0	Lottery proceeds , local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE	
					Connecticut
49,557	\$138,554,256	\$53,443,226	\$7,232,000	Bonds , real estate transfer tax, recording fees, local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE	
					Delaware
148,356	\$188,407,328	\$375,264,522	\$10,000,000		
145,088	\$179,128,124	\$375,264,522	\$10,000,000	License plate revenue, property tax relief program withdrawal penalties, real estate transfer tax , local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE, REPI	
3,268	\$9,279,204	\$0	\$0	Licence plate revenue, property tax relief program withdrawal penalties, real estate transfer tax	
					Florida
86,810	\$142,557,359	\$37,844,234	\$130,000,000	Appropriations , gaming revenue, ACEP-ALE, Forest Legacy Program, U.S. Fish & Wildlife (RLA)	
					Georgia
0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000	Appropriations	

3 Program activity includes fee simple acquisitions of agricultural land. Great Outdoors Colorado grant recipients are required to resell land acquired in fee subject to a conservation easement.

PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAMS

State	Year of Inception/ Year of First Acquisition	Method of Protection	Interests Held	Easements Acquired
Hawaii				
Legacy Land Conservation Program	2005/2007	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities, acquire land in fee	Right of enforcement, intervenor & mediator	4
Kentucky				
Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program	1994/1998	Direct acquisition	ACE as sole grantee	218
Maine				
Working Farmland Access and Protection Program ⁴	1987/1990	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities, acquire land in fee	Right of enforcement	42
Maryland				
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation	1977/1980	Direct acquisition	ACE as sole grantee	2,662
Rural Legacy Program ²	1997/1999	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee, right of enforcement	903
Massachusetts				
Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program ²	1977/1980	Direct acquisition	ACE as sole grantee, ACE as a co-holder (only municipalities can co-hold)	959
Michigan				
Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program	1994/1994	Direct acquisition, provide funds to public entities	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	169
Montana				
Montana Agricultural Heritage Program ¹	1999/2000	N/A	N/A	8
New Hampshire				
Agricultural Lands Preservation Program	1979/1980	N/A	N/A	31
Land and Community Heritage Investment Program ³	2000/2001	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	Right of enforcement	111
New Jersey				
New Jersey Farmland Preservation Program	1983/1985	Direct acquisition, provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities, acquire land in fee	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	2,859
New Mexico				
New Mexico Natural Heritage Conservation Program ^{5 (2015)}	2010/2010	N/A	N/A	3
New York				
Agricultural and Farmland Protection Program ²	1996/1998	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	Intervenor and mediator	389
North Carolina				
Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund ²	1986/2005	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee, right of enforcement	227
Ohio				
Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program ²	1999/1999	Direct acquisition	ACE as a co-holder	710

Notes:

- 1 Program has terminated or is no longer acquiring agricultural conservation easements.
- 2 "Program Funds Spent to Date" includes incidental land acquisition costs and/or personnel costs.

STATUS OF STATE PROGRAMS AS OF JANUARY 2024

Acres Protected	Program Funds Spent to Date	Additional Funds Spent to Date	Program Funds Available	Funding Sources Primary sources are in blue	State
					Hawaii
2,646	\$4,309,425	\$10,609,425	\$8,958,423	Appropriations, real estate transfer tax	
					Kentucky
34,521	\$11,863,284	\$11,597,016	\$0	Appropriations, bonds, tobacco settlement funds, ACEP-ALE, REPI	
					Maine
9,819	\$12,706,622	\$17,295,282	N/A	Appropriations , bonds, credit card royalties, local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE	
					Maryland
479,241	\$1,086,921,618	\$257,677,801	\$191,814,357		
356,592	\$680,265,840	\$246,512,856	\$129,779,023	Appropriations, real estate transfer tax , agricultural transfer tax, local government contributions	
122,649	\$406,655,778	\$11,164,945	\$62,035,334	Real estate transfer tax , local government contributions, ACEP-ALE, REPI, U.S. Fish & Wildlife (NAWCA)	
					Massachusetts
75,433	\$249,189,465	\$79,143,851	\$2,295,840	Bonds , local government contributions, private contributions	
					Michigan
29,081	\$41,323,248	\$14,162,433	\$2,000,000	Appropriations , ACEP-ALE, RCPP	
					Montana
9,923	\$888,000	\$1,420,710	\$0	N/A	
					New Hampshire
18,448	\$22,497,708	\$39,278,094	\$5,750,000		
2,864	\$5,000,000	\$140,000	\$750,000	Appropriations	
15,584	\$17,497,708	\$39,138,094	\$5,000,000	Appropriations, bonds, mitigation fees, recording fees , local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE	
					New Jersey
250,697	\$1,203,425,783	\$655,883,617	\$212,671,911	Bonds, sales tax, corporate business tax , local government contributions, REPI	
					New Mexico
5,930	\$850,000	\$1,200,000	\$0	N/A	
					New York
114,910	\$275,698,792	\$0	\$19,300,000	Environmental Protection Fund (license plate fees, real estate transfer tax, unclaimed container deposits)	
					North Carolina
34,985	\$42,924,735	\$85,884,435	\$15,000,000	Appropriations , local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE, REPI, RCPP	
					Ohio
106,319	\$86,511,801	\$35,754,842	\$6,000,000	Bonds , ACEP-ALE	

3 Program activity includes fee simple acquisitions of agricultural land. Great Outdoors Colorado grant recipients are required to resell land acquired in fee subject to a conservation easement.

4 The Working Farmland Access and Protection Program, established in 2021, is currently funded through Land for Maine's Future.

5 Figures are carried forward from previous PACE tables. Information current as of year indicated in parentheses.

PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAMS

State	Year of Inception/ Year of First Acquisition	Method of Protection	Interests Held	Easements Acquired
Oregon				
Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program	2017/ N/A	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	Right of enforcement	0
Pennsylvania				
Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program ²	1988/1989	Direct acquisition, provide funds to public entities	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	6,315
Rhode Island				
Farmland Preservation Program	1981/1985	Direct acquisition, provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities, acquire land in fee	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee, right of enforcement	131
South Carolina				
South Carolina Conservation Bank	2002/2004	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	N/A	87
Texas				
Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program ²	2005/2005	Provide funds to private entities	Right of enforcement	33
Utah				
LeRay McAllister Working Farm and Ranch Fund	1999/2000	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	49
Vermont				
Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Farmland Conservation Program ²	1987/1987	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	ACE as a co-holder	829
Virginia				
Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Land Conservation Foundation	2000/2001	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	N/A	32
Department of of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Virginia Farmland Preservation Fund ²	2001/2008	Direct acquisition, provide funds to public entities, acquire land in fee	ACE as sole grantee	115
Washington				
Farmland Protection and Land Access	2022/2023	Direct acquisition, provide funds to private entities	ACE as sole grantee, right of enforcement	1
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Farmland Protection Category ²	2005/2007	Provide funds to public entities, provide funds to private entities	Right of enforcement	114
West Virginia				
West Virginia Agricultural Land Protection Authority - Farmland Protection Program (State)	2000/2009	Direct acquisition, acquiring land in fee	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	44
West Virginia Farmland Protection Boards (County) ⁶	2000/2003	Direct acquisition, acquiring land in fee	ACE as a co-holder, ACE as sole grantee	281
Wisconsin				
Farmland Preservation Program ²	2009/2011	Provide funds to private entities	ACE as a co-holder	17
STATE TOTALS				19,933

Notes:

² "Program Funds Spent to Date" includes incidental land acquisition costs and/or personnel costs.

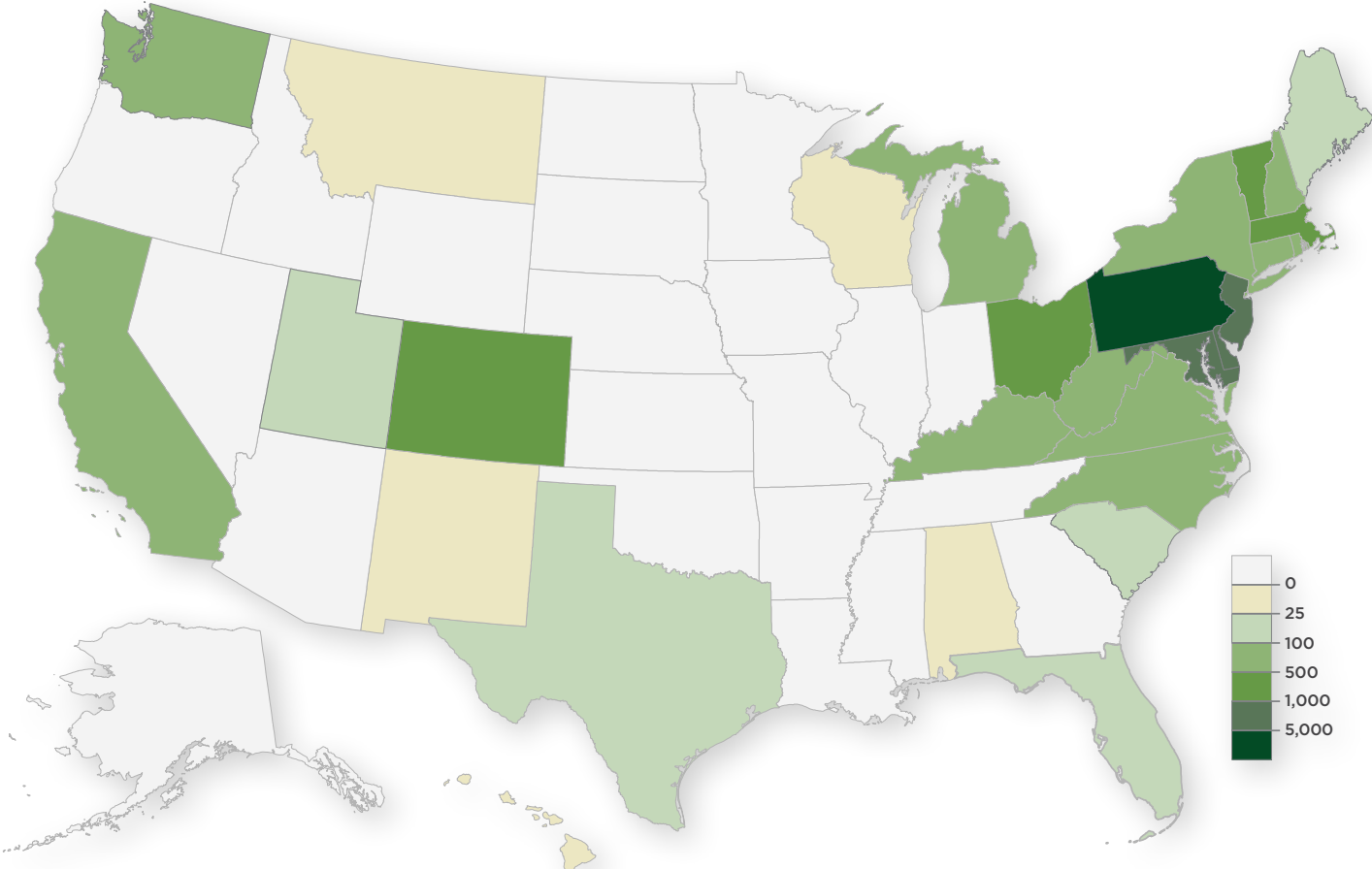
STATUS OF STATE PROGRAMS AS OF JANUARY 2024

Acres Protected	Program Funds Spent to Date	Additional Funds Spent to Date	Program Funds Available	Funding Sources Primary sources are in blue	State
					Oregon
0	\$40,000	\$0	\$4,541,680	Appropriations	
					Pennsylvania
632,948	\$1,189,793,353	\$75,191,588	\$40,000,000	Cigarette tax, municipal landfill fees, use value assessment withdrawal penalties, local government contributions, ACEP-ALE, RCPP	
					Rhode Island
8,314	\$39,523,630	\$83,670,015	\$2,836,000	Appropriations, bonds, private contributions, ACEP-ALE	
					South Carolina
30,644	\$23,359,115	\$0	\$32,500,000	Appropriations	
					Texas
36,837	\$6,316,698	\$26,059,907	\$2,000,000	Appropriations, ACEP-ALE	
					Utah
56,742	\$15,741,224	\$95,538,482	\$1,350,000	Appropriations, local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE	
					Vermont
174,323	\$95,532,538	\$135,589,638	\$6,825,457	Appropriations, bonds, mitigation fees, real estate transfer tax, local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE	
25,619	\$20,065,311	\$23,494,086	\$3,275,000		Virginia
10,669	\$6,853,494	\$94,125	\$2,400,000	Appropriations, ACEP-ALE	
14,950	\$13,211,817	\$23,399,961	\$875,000	Appropriations, local government contributions, ACEP-ALE	
40,516	\$36,410,348	\$55,730,714	\$5,257,765		Washington
40	N/A	\$0	\$5,257,765	Appropriations, bonds	
40,476	\$36,410,348	\$55,730,714	\$0	Appropriations, local government contributions, private contributions, ACEP-ALE, REPI	
					West Virginia
10,745	\$8,469,302	\$7,961,971	\$4,862,000	Recording fees, local government contributions, ACEP-ALE	
35,459	\$53,852,179	\$28,077,113	\$6,960,000	Real estate transfer tax, local government contributions, ACEP-ALE, RCPP	
					Wisconsin
5,124	\$4,824,076	\$1,753,907	\$0	N/A	
3,631,505	\$5,545,825,290	\$3,238,862,884	\$846,409,075		STATE TOTALS

6 The West Virginia legislature explicitly authorized county farmland protection boards and gave counties the authority to impose a real estate transfer tax to generate revenue for farmland protection. For this entity, “Year of Inception/First Acquisition” is the year the first county farmland protection program formed and acquired easements. All other figures represent cumulative activity of the state-authorized county programs. “Program Funds Spent” includes dollars invested by the county boards.

FARMLAND INFORMATION CENTER

Easements Acquired as of January 2024



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For more information on Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE), see the [PACE fact sheet](#) and other PACE resources on the [Farmland Information Center \(FIC\) website](#). The FIC is a clearinghouse for information about farmland protection and stewardship and is a public/private partnership between the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and American Farmland Trust.