

New Jersey Farmland Preservation



Post-Preservation Grants and Programs

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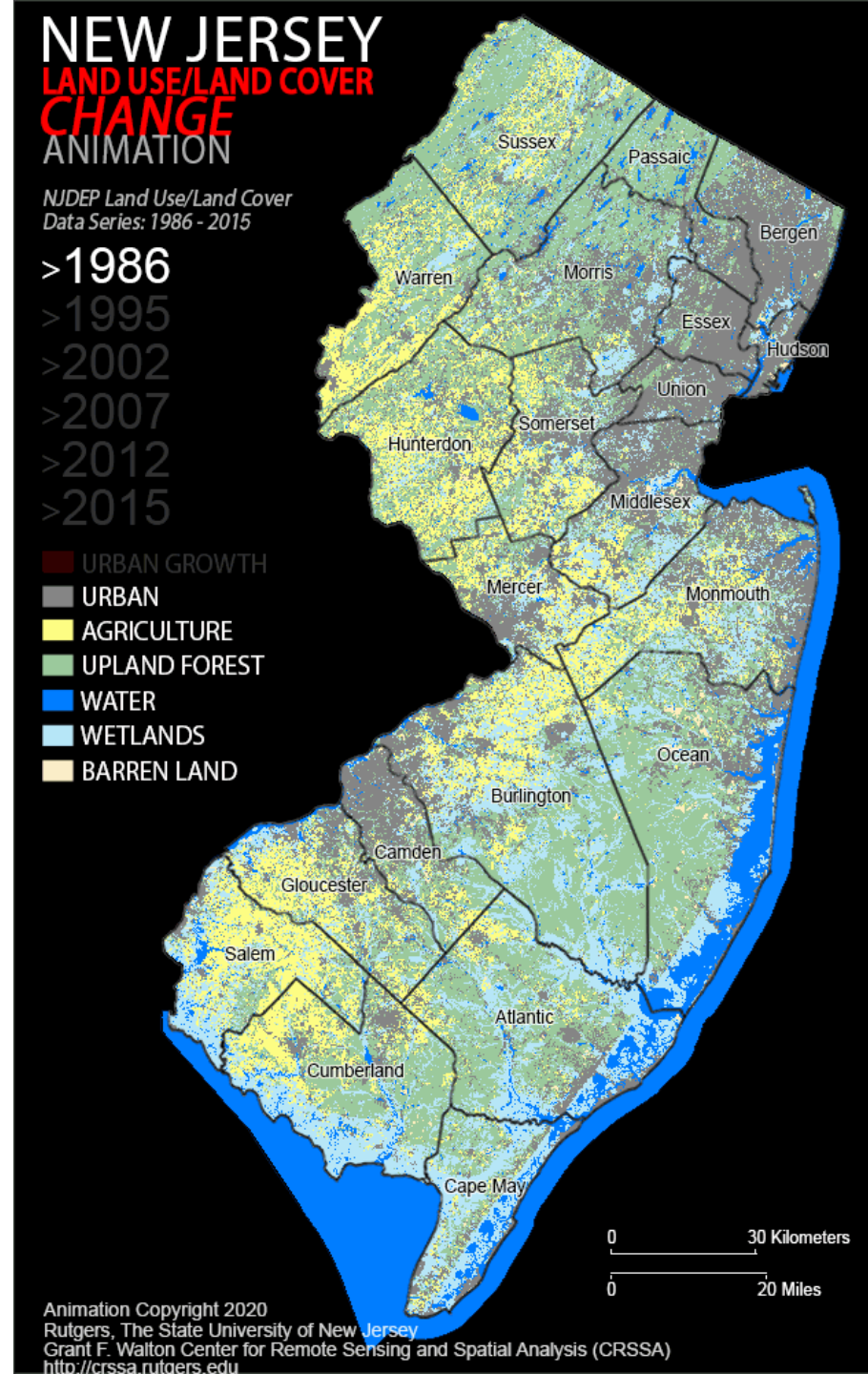




Development Over Time In New Jersey

- Most densely-populated state in US
- Farmland loss
 - 1995-2002 - 8,200 acres/year
 - 2002-2007 - 7,000 acres/year
 - 2007-2012 - 2,800 acres/year
 - 2012-2015 - 700 acres/year
- Overall - loss of more than 200,000 acres over 30 years

“Changing Landscapes in the Garden State”,
Rutgers/Rowan, July 2020







New Jersey Agriculture Retention and Development Act (ARDA)

*The **strengthening of the agricultural industry and the preservation of farmland** are important to the present and future economy of the State and the welfare of the citizens of the State, and that the Legislature and the people have demonstrated recognition of this fact through their approval of the "Farmland Preservation Bond Act of 1981," P.L. 1981, c. 276;*

*A landowner, or a farm operator as an agent for the landowner, whose land is within a municipally approved program or other farmland preservation program, or is subject to a development easement conveyed pursuant to subsection a. of this section, shall be eligible to, and **may, apply to the local soil conservation district and the board for a grant for a soil and water conservation project approved by the State Soil Conservation Committee**, subject to the provisions of P.L.1983, c.32 (C.4:1C-11 et al.)*

New Jersey Farmland Preservation

**~ 255,000+ ac.
Preserved**

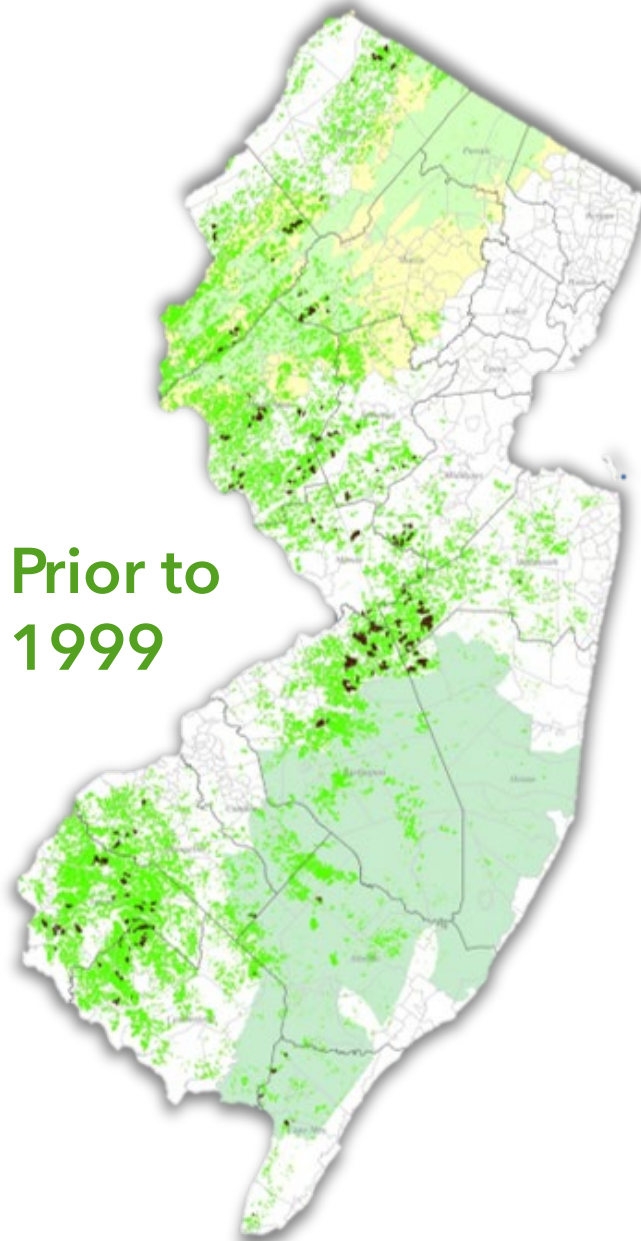
(over 2,900 farms)

**~37% of Farmland
Preserved**

**~2 billion on
easements**

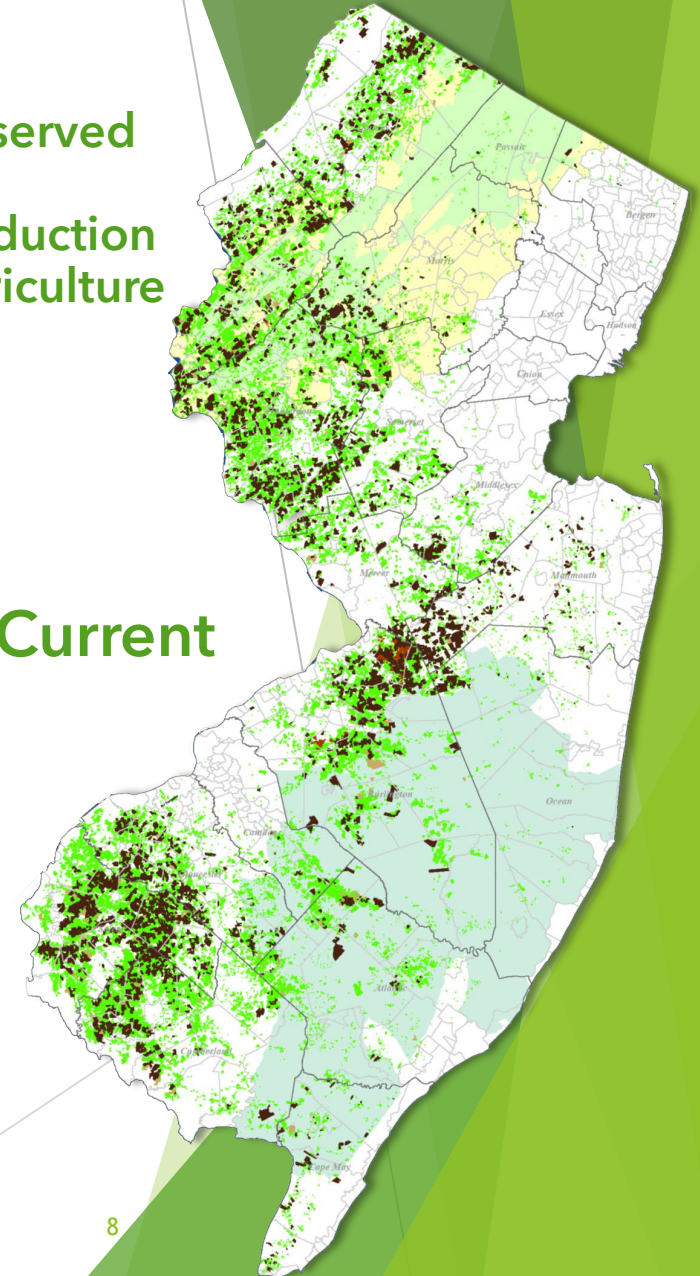
Goal: ~500,000 acres

**Prior to
1999**



Preserved
**Production
Agriculture**

Current



“The conservation of natural resources is the fundamental problem. Unless we solve that problem it will avail us little to solve all others.”

-Theodore Roosevelt, address to the Deep Waterway Convention, Memphis, Tenn., Oct. 4, 1907

Officials signal NJ ready to preserve more farmland slated for warehouse development

Officials complete purchase of Warren County parcel as developer drops warehouse plan

JON HURDLE, INSIDE CLIMATE NEWS | MAY 20, 2024 | [ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT, WATER](#)



Susan Payne, retiring executive director of the State Agriculture Development Committee, New Jersey's farmland preservation agency, at the 566 acres of Warren County farmland that was slated for warehouse development but has been purchased by the state, and will remain agricultural land in perpetuity.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/05/nj-buys-farmland-slated-warehouse-development-signals-more-purchases/>

short-term effects

Acquisition **protects** from loss due to use conversion



long-term effects

Stewardship **manages** loss due to degradation from use

NEW JERSEY

Fruit growers in NJ suffer catastrophic losses from unexpected freeze

by: [Jim Vasil](#)

Posted: May 1, 2026 / 06:01 PM EDT

Updated: May 1, 2026 / 06:02 PM EDT

<https://pix11.com/news/local-news/new-jersey/fruit-growers-in-nj-suffer-catastrophic-losses-from-unexpected-freeze/>

After 101 years in business, beloved farm stand in New Jersey closing down for good

By [Anthony Johnson](#)

Monday, September 1, 2025



<https://abc7ny.com/post/depieros-farm-stand-greenhouses-montvale-nj-closing-down-101-years/17664550/>

[Local News](#)

Lingering drought threatens top New Jersey crops, raising fears of higher prices and shortages

By [Ryan Hughes](#)

April 24, 2026 / 5:45 PM EDT / CBS Philadelphia

<https://www.cbsnews.com/philadelphia/news/drought-crops-higher-prices-peach-farm/>



Because Agriculture Matters!

<https://njfb.org/>

THIS WEEK IN FARM BUREAU

"It's devastating when something like this happens because it's out of your hands. It is hard to see your livelihood, your way of living, wiped out in one night."

-Dana Davis, Stony Hill Farms

... the cost of keeping the farm has gotten way too expensive. The upkeep and maintenance is excessive and it is getting harder to find anyone who wants to work on a farm.

"When you're dry, you have to have water, everything needs water. Stuff doesn't grow as well. Puts a lot more stress on the plant, puts a lot more stress on you." - John Hurff, Schober's Orchards

Iran War Impacts on Ag: ... real economic impact is being done to the cost of inputs of food production like diesel fuel and fertilizer...

SADC Soil and Water Cost-Share Grants



Soil and Water Conservation Cost-Share Grants

"**Soil and Water Conservation Project**" means any project designed for the control and prevention of soil erosion and sediment damages, the control of pollution on agricultural lands, the impoundment, storage and management of water for agricultural purposes, or the improved management of land and soils to achieve maximum agricultural productivity.



2:90-2.14 Water impoundment reservoirs



2:90-2.9 Sod waterways



2:90-2.18 Underground drainage systems



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS

2:90-2.15 Irrigation systems



2:90-2.11 Stream protection

Soil and Water Conservation Cost-Share Grants



Soil and Water Grant Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Land*

- All ARDA preserved farms

Eligible Applicants

- Landowners
- Farmers/Farm Operators with landowner approval.

Eligible Practices:

Included in
farm conservation plan

Grant Criteria	
Eligibility Formula	\$50,000 + 500/Ac
Maximum Eligibility	\$150,000
Project Reimbursement	Based on cost-estimate OR lowest of 3 quotes
Allow matching grants	Yes* - not federal
Maximum Reimbursement	Up to 75%



Eligible Projects

- 2:90-2.5 Terrace systems
- 2:90-2.6 Diversions
- 2:90-2.7 Contour farming
- 2:90-2.8 Strip-cropping systems
- 2:90-2.9 Sod waterways
- 2:90-2.10 Windbreak restoration or establishment
- 2:90-2.11 Stream protection
- 2:90-2.12 Permanent vegetative cover on critical areas
- 2:90-2.13 Land shaping or grading
- 2:90-2.14 Water impoundment reservoirs
- 2:90-2.15 **Irrigation systems**
- 2:90-2.16 Sediment retention, erosion, or water control structures
- 2:90-2.17 Permanent open drainage systems
- 2:90-2.18 **Underground drainage systems**
- 2:90-2.19 Developing facilities for livestock water
- 2:90-2.20 Forest tree stand improvement
- 2:90-2.21 Forest tree plantations
- 2:90-2.22 Site preparation for natural regeneration
- 2:90-2.23 Animal waste control facilities
- 2:90-2.24 Agrichemical handling facility

**More
Projects
Being
Added for
2027!**

**Should I apply for the Soil and Water
Grant Program or the Environmental
Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)?**



Soil and Water Grant

Pros

- Rolling applications
- Faster turn around
- More flexibility in program rules
- No AGI limits
- 3-year contract plus 1 year extension
- Public entities eligible
- No penalties if project isn't completed

Cons

- Funding limited by farm acres
- Limited number of practices
- Practice maintenance period 8 years
- Lower cost-share rate on most practices



Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Pros

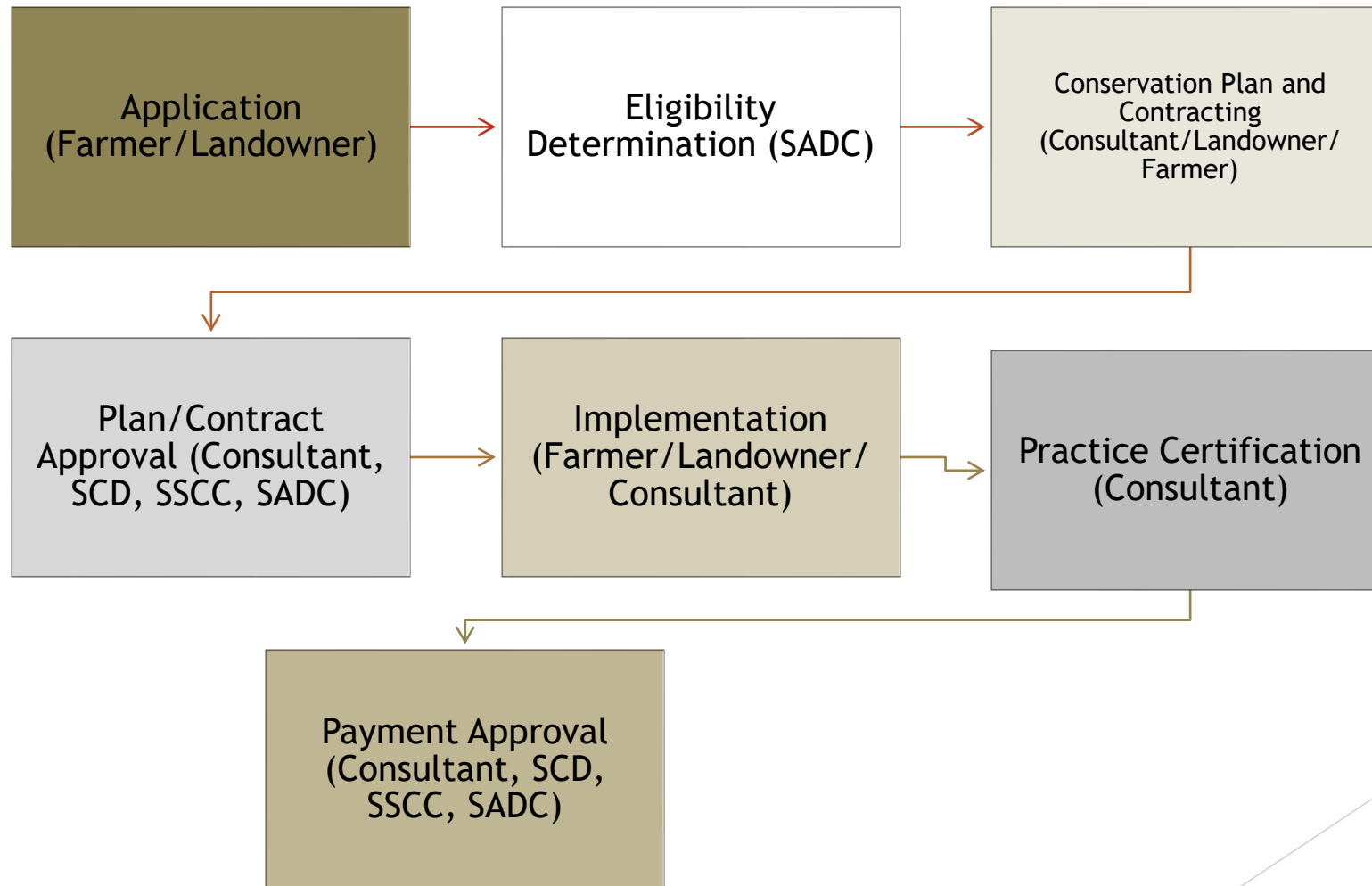
- More funding on an annual basis
- Higher funding limit per contract
- Variety of Conservation Practices
- Flat-rate grant payments
- Easier reimbursement process
- Preservation is not a prerequisite
- Typically, up to a 5-year contract
- No penalties once contract expires

Cons

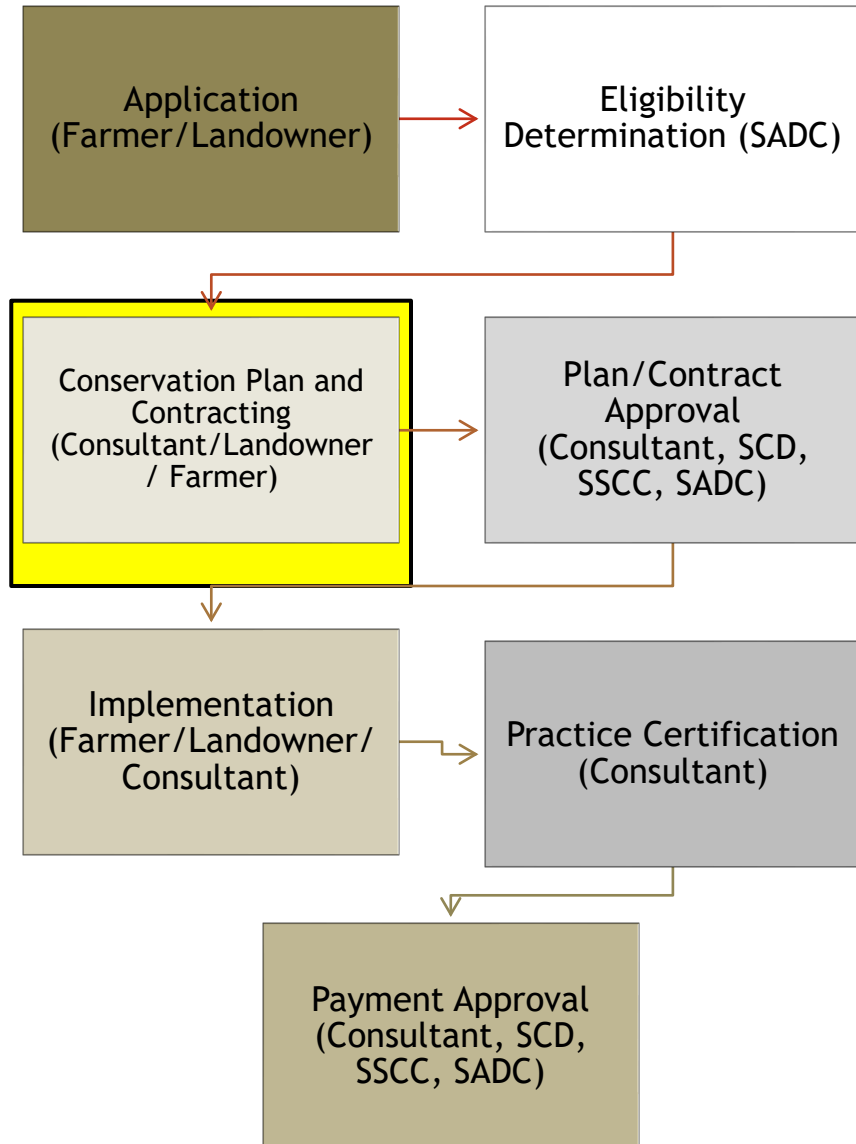
- Annual signup deadline
- Less flexibility on program rules and installation timeline
- Liquidated damages if not completed once contracted
- AGI limitation
- Public land ineligible*



SW Grant Process



Technical Assistance Grants



Challenge:

Changes at NRCS limit opportunities for conservation assistance

Solutions:

- ▶ SADC-SCD Pilot Agreement
- ▶ SADC funded Conservation Planning Grant
 - ▶ Up to \$20k every 5 years
 - ▶ Reimbursed up to 100% of actual costs
 - ▶ Conservation planning, engineering, etc.

Wildlife Challenges



New Jersey White-Tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginiana*)
Population Density Survey using sUAS Infrared;
New Jersey Farm Bureau - 2019 Study



“Many biologists, ecologists, and environmental experts agree that a healthy and sustainable deer density is far below what we found, some say it is as low as five to fifteen deer per square mile,” said Gene Huntington, RLA LEED AP, Steward Green’s founder

On average, approximately 80-100 white-tailed deer per square mile in the areas covered by the study

https://njfb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NJFB-SG-State-Report_10.2019.pdf

Wildlife Fencing Grants

- ▶ Grants for installation of wildlife fencing (usually high-tensile woven wire deer fencing).
- ▶ Up to a 50% cost-share grant, up to **\$50,000**.
- ▶ Each preserved farm premises eligible for same grant amount - refreshes every 8 years.
- ▶ Fencing standards specified in Policy P-53.
- ▶ Need to have or obtain a farm conservation plan that addresses soil and water resources for the area to be fenced.
- ▶ Process - Apply, get approved, install fence, request reimbursement. Then SADC inspects fence and issues payment.

69 Applications

~200,000 linear feet fence installed

~\$600,000 reimbursed to farmers





Chickadee Creek Farm Wildlife Fence Grant

- ▶ Max Grant - \$16,180
- ▶ Acres Fenced - 46 Ac
- ▶ Linear Feet of Fence - 5,900 Ft
- ▶ 8 foot high woven wire fence with 1 high tensile top wire: Overall ~8.5 foot high fence.
- ▶ Will allow for conversion of remaining 19 Ac hay to organic vegetable production by 2020.
- ▶ Paid for itself in 2-3 years



Farmland Stewardship Grants

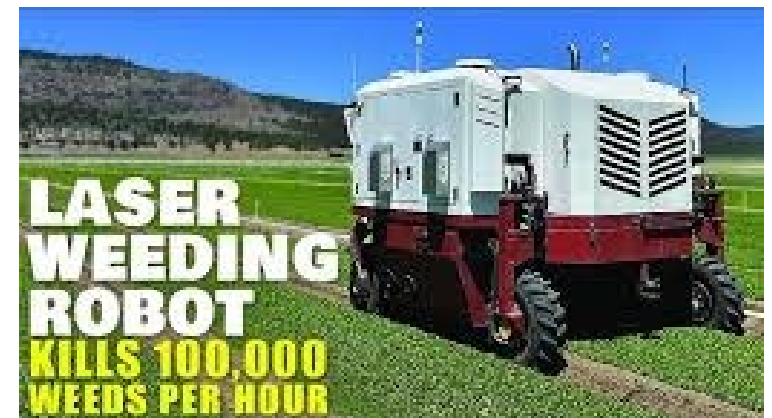
- ▶ N.J.A.C. 2:76-20 Farm viability program that can include two parts:
 - ▶ Technical assistance develop an **updated business plan**.
 - ▶ Cost-share grants to implement the plan.
- ▶ Implementation grants
 - ▶ Capital fixed assets - Ag buildings, markets, equipment, and infrastructure, including maintenance and improvements
 - ▶ Production diversification
 - ▶ Production efficiency - Processing, software, precision ag systems, conservation cropping
 - ▶ Marketing improvements



Stewardship Grants - On the Horizon



- ▶ Staff recommendations:
 - ▶ Increase Grant Eligibility from \$20,000 per farm
 - ▶ Increase rate to 75%
 - ▶ Utilize for other allowable uses:
 - ▶ Precision Agriculture Equipment
 - ▶ Value Added facilities
 - ▶ Convert from one type of ag to another
 - ▶ Software





Farm Link

- ▶ Online linking website
 - ▶ Looking for farmland?
 - ▶ Have land available and looking for a farmer?
 - ▶ www.njlandlink.org
- ▶ Resources and support for farmers and landowners
 - ▶ Finding land/opportunities
 - ▶ Finding farmers
 - ▶ Leasing
 - ▶ Farm transfer
 - ▶ Resource listings of support professionals and businesses



nj land link. *helping farmers set roots in the garden state.*

FIND FARMLAND FIND A FARMER RESOURCES ABOUT CONTACT LOG IN REGISTER NOW

MAP VIEW LIST VIEW SELECT COUNTY FILTER RESULTS RESET MAP

Most Recent Listings

Ocean
Acres: 28.00
Opportunity: For Lease, Partnership
Date Added: 01/13/2025
Gloucester
Acres: 29.00
Opportunity: For Lease, Partnership
Date Added: 01/15/2025
Burlington
Acres: 76.00
Opportunity: Farm for Sale
Date Added: 01/06/2025
Warren
Acres: 37.00
Opportunity: For Lease
Date Added: 10/22/2024
Warren
Acres: 38.50
Opportunity: For Lease
Date Added: 10/22/2024

Farmland Listing Results: 58

SADC Next-Gen Program



The Next Generation of Farming in New Jersey

Report on Cultivating the Future of Farming
in the Garden State



State Agriculture Development Committee

March 27, 2025

- Funding – State appropriation for specific purpose.
- New staff – May 2024.
- Year 1 – outreach/research; Years 2, 3, 4... – new initiatives.
- March 2025 – Nex Gen Policy Report adopted by SADC.
- New programs, resources, support based on report.
 - Direct assistance & resource referral – For getting started, advancing, diversifying, transfer/succession.
 - Land access – Farm Link; possible incubator on SADC land.
 - Education and training – SkillBridge and Apprenticeship programs.
 - Farm transfer – Navigator services, 1:1 support, LTN mini-grant.
 - Ag resource pages – Contractors, support professionals, programs.
 - Urban ag – Working groups, site visits, building relationships.
 - Coordination – Foster communication, awareness, collaboration.

Questions?



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