

# COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN UPDATE - 2010

for the  
Township of Blairstown  
County of Warren



**The Land Conservancy  
of New Jersey**  
*A nonprofit land trust*

Compiled by

with

**Township of Blairstown Agricultural  
Advisory Committee**

December 2010

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Agricultural Advisory Committee**

**DECEMBER 2010**

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for

## Township of Blairstown County of Warren

*Produced by:*

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## DECEMBER 2010

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Blairstown Township in Warren County embraces the business of agriculture, which has been a major component of the Township’s economic base over the years, as well as welcome contributor to its rural character. Flanking the Paulins Kill valley, Blairstown stretches north to steep, forested parklands on the Kittatinny Ridge. To the west, south and east it borders prime agricultural areas in neighboring Knowlton, Hope and Frelinghuysen Townships. The Blairstown Village area has historically been a regional center drawing farmers and other area residents alike to its agricultural support services and other retail offerings. It is also the site of a weekly farmers market from mid July through the end of October. Township farmers’ agricultural pursuits range from field crops to woodland management and, increasingly, include smaller niche markets such as nursery, fruits and vegetables, equine and alternative livestock.

Since the Township established a Municipal Open Space, Recreation and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund in 2001, **1,258 acres** of farmland has been permanently protected within its borders. The Township is enrolled in the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) program for farmland preservation. The Township closed on its first farm through this program in 2005, protecting the 30-acre Manginge farm, which is one of the Township’s main nursery operations (Triple Creek Farm and Nursery). Since then, the Township has preserved five additional farms through the PIG program. The advantage of the PIG program is to leverage municipal funds with funding from the state and county to accelerate the number of farms protected in the community. For some of these purchases, the Township used bonding, which is being reimbursed through a combination of SADC and Warren CADB reimbursements and repayment of the debt obligation using Trust Fund dollars.

The Township’s Agricultural Advisory Committee has set an ambitious ten year goal of preserving an additional:

- 250 acres in year 1,
- 1,120 acres by year 5, and
- 2,200 acres by year 10 for a total of

***3,458 acres of preserved farmland in Blairstown Township.***

This *2010 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update* restates the Township’s emphasis on farmland preservation. It identifies four Project Areas (Project Area North, Project Area Route 94 North, Project Area Central, and Project Area South) that are the basis for farmland preservation program in Blairstown Township.

# CHAPTER 1: AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE OF BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP

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In 2007, the Township of Blairstown ranked sixth in Warren County, with 7,745 acres of farm assessed land devoted to agricultural or horticultural use, including cropland, pasture, woodland and equine operations. Total acreage in Blairstown Township reported under the farm assessment program in 2007, including land with farmhouses or other structures and other land not devoted to agriculture, was 8,085 acres (see *Farmland Map* in the Maps section of this Plan).. The phrase “farm assessed” refers to that portion devoted to agricultural or horticultural use, and the phrase “active agriculture,” when used in reference to farmland assessment data, refers to those portions of farm assessed properties that were harvested cropland, pastured cropland or permanent pasture.

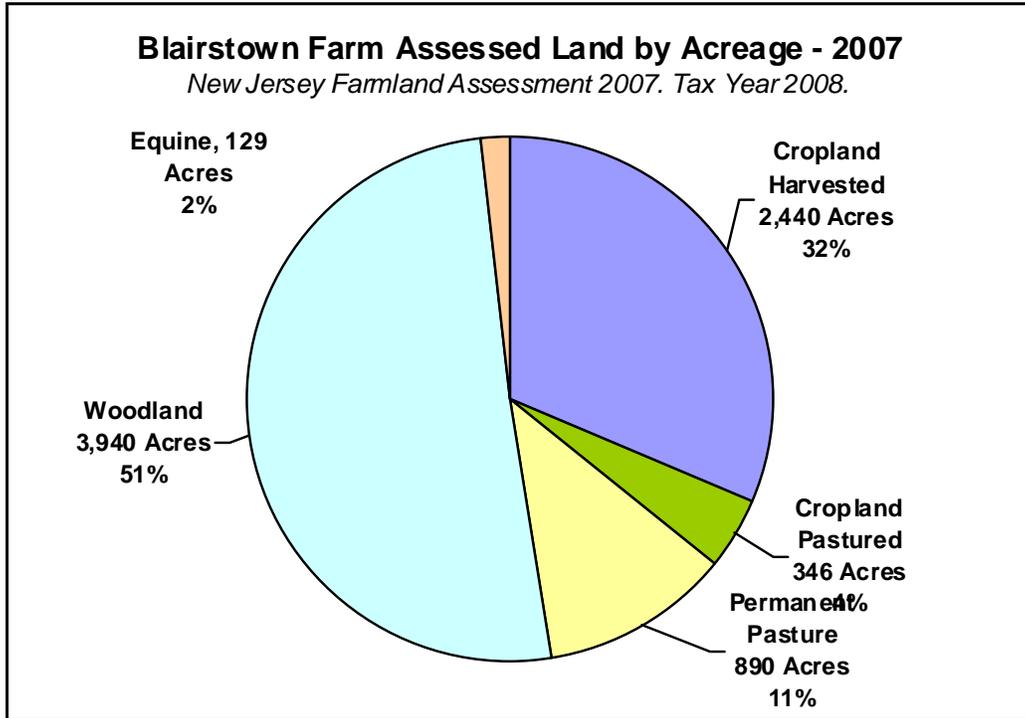
Due to the nature of the topography, slightly more than half of Blairstown’s farm-assessed acreage is woodland/wetland (3,940 acres); with 3,676 acres designated active agriculture (cropland and pasture), and 129 acres designated as equine. In total, this represents almost 8% of the County’s farm assessed acreage. The 2007 farmland assessment acreage for active agriculture is slightly higher than that projected by the NJDEP 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data, which estimates active agricultural land at 3,312 acres (see discussion under *Soils* on page1-7). (*New Jersey Farmland Assessment*)<sup>1</sup>

## ***Agricultural Landscape***

The Ridge and Valley Physiographic Province, one of four physiographic provinces in New Jersey, covers the northwestern 15% of the state. It is underlain by faulted and folded sedimentary layers of sandstone, shale and limestone formed from deposits in former seas and floodplains. These originally flat layers, ranging from 570 to 345 million years old, were tilted through compression into northeast-southwest trending sandstone ridges and shale and limestone valleys. Blairstown Township lies within the broad Kittatinny Valley between the Kittatinny Ridge to the west and the Highlands Physiographic Province to the east.

In terms of bedrock geology, 70% of the Township is identified as Martinsburg Formation, consisting primarily of shale, mudstone and slate. Other major groups are the Kittatinny Supergroup of dolomites (Allentown Dolomite and the Beekmantown Group), and the Jacksonburg Formation, which is primarily limestone. The Kittatinny Supergroup straddles the centrally located Paulins Kill valley, flanked both north and south by Jacksonburg limestone, then Martinsburg Formation, which is often exposed, cropping out on the

Township's steep slopes. However, most bedrock is overlain by loose deposits of sediment and soil.



Slopes in excess of 25% are scattered throughout the Township, but the highest elevations and largest concentrations of steep slope are found north of Route 94. Here the land rises to the Kittatinny Ridge, where elevations range up to a high of about 1,550 feet at Upper Yards Creek Reservoir. Most of the northern portion of the Township, adjacent to Worthington State Forest and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, is forested as is the area south of Route 94 along the Lackawanna Cutoff. The floodplain of the Paulins Kill, which flows southwest through the Township towards the Delaware River, delivers the Township's highest concentration of quality agricultural soils. (2006 Environmental Resource Inventory [ERI])<sup>2</sup>

In Warren County, the largest concentrations of pastured lands are found in the Appalachian foothills in the northern sector, including Blairstown and its neighboring Townships of Knowlton, Hope and Frelinghuysen, which lead the County in pastured acreage. In all cases, acres devoted to permanent pasture outnumber acres of pastured cropland. (New Jersey Farmland Assessment) A significant belt of woodland managed farmland extends from the Kittatinny Ridgeline and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area to encompass parts of Knowlton, Blairstown (northern section), Hardwick and Frelinghuysen. (2008 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan)<sup>3</sup> Blairstown is bordered to the north and east by Hardwick Township, with Frelinghuysen Township to the southeast, Hope Township to the south and Knowlton Township to the west.

The Farmland Assessment program is a tax incentive that reduces property taxes on active commercial farmed land, thereby assisting farmers with a critical financial aspect in helping to keep land in farms. This tax incentive is made possible by the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964, N.J.S.A. 54:4-23.1 et seq. For any additional information on farmland assessment see *Chapter 8* of this Plan.

Between 2006 and 2007, Blairstown lost 8% of its farmland assessed acres, compared with 5% for the county as a whole. Some of this loss was due to municipal purchase of farmland along Route 94 for recreation use; while some of this land is currently leased to farming operations, it no longer qualifies under farmland assessment since it is now classified as public land. The largest loss for Blairstown occurred in the area of pastured cropland (see *Comparison of Farm Assessed Acres* chart below), due to the conversion of former dairy pasture to harvested cropland. This conversion to harvested cropland helped to offset the loss of farmland that occurred as a result of a single-family conservation cluster development off Route 521, which converted a large parcel of farmland to single family homes and open space (70% of the land area). Notably, equine acres more than doubled in the same period, from 57 to 129 acres.

According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data, 16% (3,148 acres) of the Township is dedicated to land in agricultural use, versus 24% county wide. In part, this is because much of the Township is steep slope and woodland, with more than 50% of farm-assessed land identified as woodland. As a center for rural northwestern Warren County, Blairstown has a slightly higher percentage of urban land (21%) than the county wide figure of 17% (see *2007 Land Use/Land Cover* chart and *2007 Land Use/Land Cover by Acres* map below).

<b>Comparison of Farm Assessed Acres – Blairstown Township – 2006 vs 2007</b>						
	Cropland Harvested	Cropland Pastured	Permanent Pasture	Woodland	Equine	Total
2006	2,407	643	1,011	4,318	57	8,436
2007	2,440	346	890	3,940	129	7,745
% Change	1.37%	-46.19%	-11.97%	-8.75%	126.32%	-8.19%
<i>Source: NJ Farmland Assessment</i>						

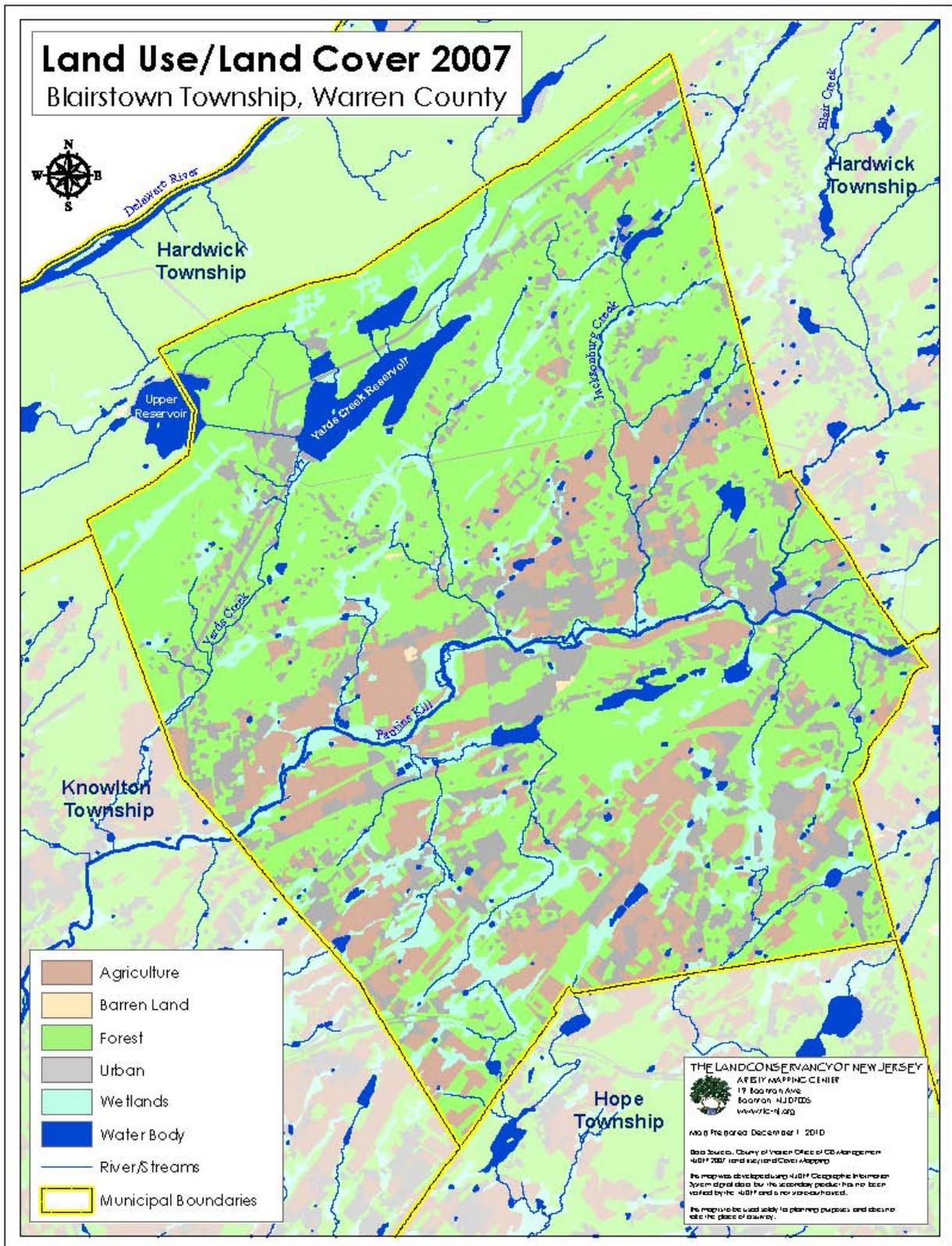
<b>2007 Land Use Land Cover By Acres</b>				
	Blairstown		Warren County	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	3,148	16%	55,325	24%
Barren	19	0%	1,525	1%
Forest	9,873	50%	108,028	47%
Urban	4,204	21%	39,823	17%
Water	712	4%	5,725	2%
Wetland	1,827	9%	21,464	9%

*Source: NJDEP 2007 Land Use/Land Cover Primary Land Use Categories*

In Warren County as a whole, between 1995 and 2007, there was a net loss in land devoted to agriculture and forest, with an almost equivalent gain, acre for acre, in urban land. (See *Warren County Land Use in Acres* chart below).

<b>Warren County Land Use in Acres</b>				
<i>Land Use Type</i>	1995	2007	Net Change	
			Acres	%
Agriculture	60,171	55,325	-4,846	-8%
Barren Land	1,876	1,525	-351	-19%
Forest	110,752	108,028	-2,724	-2%
Urban Land	32,094	39,823	7,729	24%
Water	5,557	5,725	168	3%
Wetlands	21,908	21,464	-444	-2%

*Source: NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover<sup>5</sup>*



## Soils

Soil types are determined by the parent bedrock material from which they were formed, the drainage characteristics they exhibit, and the steepness of the slopes on which they are found. Soil types are grouped into larger categories called soil series, which are based on the parent materials, chemical compositions, and profiles of their member soil types. Soil series are themselves grouped into broader categories, called soil associations, which were formed through similar processes. (NRCS Web Soil Survey)<sup>7</sup>

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) classifies certain soils as prime, of statewide importance, or unique based on their potential for agricultural productivity. The following chart identifies the major soils in Blairstown Township, grouped by the NRCS classifications for agricultural soils.

<b>Soils of Blairstown Township</b>		
<b>Soil Abbr</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
HdxAb	Hazen-Hoosic complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, very stony	508.15
HdxBb	Hazen-Hoosic complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	694.78
	<b>All Areas are Prime Farmland Total</b>	<b>1,202.93</b>
HonCb	Hoosic-Hazen complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	779.19
	<b>Farmland of Statewide Importance Total</b>	<b>779.19</b>
CatbA	Catden mucky peat, 0 to 2 percent slopes	181.85
	<b>Farmland of Unique Importance Total</b>	<b>181.85</b>
AhbBc	Alden silt loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	530.59
AruCh	Arnot-Lordstown complex, 0 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	83.25
ArvD	Arnot-Lordstown-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes	222.06
ArvE	Arnot-Lordstown-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 60 percent slopes	180.60
ChwBc	Chippewa silt loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	816.49
FdwB	Farmington-Wassaic-Rock outcrop complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	89.21
FrdAb	Fredon-Halsey complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, very stony	687.59
HopEb	Hoosic-Otisville complex, 25 to 60 percent slopes, very stony	187.97
WusBc	Wurtsboro-Swartswood complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	1,296.03
WusCc	Wurtsboro-Swartswood complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	2,277.05
USFARC	Urban land-Farmington-Rock outcrop complex, 0 to 15 percent slopes	41.00
USHAZB	Urban land-Hazen-Hoosic complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	58.21
UdauB	Udorthents-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	141.39
UdaB	Udorthents, 0 to 8 percent slopes, smoothed	172.46
WusDc	Wurtsboro-Swartswood complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	1,504.58
FaxC	Farmington-Rock outcrop complex, 0 to 15 percent slopes	52.27
SwfCc	Swartswood loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	8.21
NauBh	Nassau-Manlius complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very rocky	334.27
NauCh	Nassau-Manlius complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	2,150.04
NauDh	Nassau-Manlius complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky	2,228.50
NavE	Nassau-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 60 percent slopes	612.63
RnaF	Rock outcrop-Arnot-Rubble land complex, 60 to 80 percent slopes	422.67

<b>Soils of Blairstown Township</b>		
<b>Soil Abbr</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
RnfC	Rock outcrop-Farmington-Galway complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	867.70
RnfD	Rock outcrop-Farmington-Galway complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes	1,507.86
VepBc	Venango silt loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	350.00
VepCc	Venango silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	192.65
PHG	Pits, sand and gravel	31.29
WATER	Water	573.01
	<b>Not prime farmland Total</b>	<b>17,619.58</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19,783.54</b>

*Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Data Mart website (2008)*

Geographic locations of these types of soils within the Township can be seen on the *Agricultural Soil Categories Map* in the Maps section of this Plan. Prime, statewide and unique soils make up 11% of the Township's soils, but only a portion of these soils are in active agricultural use as identified by the 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data. *LU/LC active agriculture* is a more inclusive category than the *LU/LC agricultural land* category referenced earlier in this chapter. *LU/LC active agriculture* encompasses the following Land Cover Types: Agricultural Wetlands, Cropland and Pastureland, Former Agricultural Wetland, Orchards/Vineyards/Nurseries & Other Agriculture. As can be seen in the chart below, the total land in *LU/LC active agricultural use* (3,312 acres) represents 16% of Township land. Notably, the majority of these active agricultural acres in Blairstown Township are not prime farmland.

<b>LU/LC Active Agricultural Acres in Each Soil Category</b>			
<i>Source: NRCS Soil Data Mart; 2007 NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover Data</i>			
<b>Soil Classification</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Ag Acres</b>	<b>Ag % of Total</b>
Prime Farmland Soil	1,203	572	48%
Soils with Statewide Importance	779	240	31%
Soils with Unique Importance	182	2	1%
Not Prime Farmland	17,620	2,499	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,784</b>	3,312	16%

*Prime farmland soils*, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 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 water for a long period of time. There are 1,203 acres of prime farmland soils in Blairstown Township, of which 602 are in active agricultural use. Accounting for 6% of the total soils in the Township, these soils lie generally along the Paulins Kill and have been classified as belonging to the *Hazen-Hoosic Complex series* (Hdx), which can be used for alfalfa hay, corn, grass (legume), wheat, soybeans and oats.

- *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 779 acres of soils of statewide importance in Blairstown Township, of which 262 acres are in agricultural use. Accounting for 4% of Blairstown's soils, the soils of statewide importance belong to the *Hoosic-Hazen Complex series* (Hon) and are generally adjacent to the prime farmland soils but on land with more slope. These soils can support alfalfa hay, corn, grass hay, pasture, grass (legume) and oats.
- *Unique soils* exhibit specific qualities that may be favorable to the production of specialized crops. There are 182 acres of soils with unique importance in Blairstown Township, of which less than one acre is in active agricultural use. These soils have been identified as belonging to the *Catden series* (Catb) and are generally found in isolated pockets near water bodies or the headwaters of streams in the more northerly and southerly portions of the Township.

The following major soil series are also found in Blairstown Township:

- Wurtsboro-Swartswood (Wus) – 5,078 acres, or 28%
- Nassau-Manlius (Nau) – 4,379 acres, or 24%
- Rock outcrop (Arnot-Lordstown, Arnot-Rubble, Farmington, Farmington-Galway, Nassau, Urban land-Farmington) – 3,834 acres, or 19%

A third of Township land (6,867 acres) is located on slopes steeper than 15%. (*NRCS Soil Data Mart*)<sup>8</sup> These soils tend to have a high risk of erosion, require management to control runoff and erosion and have some equipment limitations. (*NRCS Web Soil Survey*)

### ***Irrigated Land & Water Sources***

Groundwater provides the supply of water for irrigation in Blairstown Township. Groundwater sources are generally preferred to surface waters because they contain less sediment and particulates that may clog irrigation pipes and damage crops. Groundwater aquifers are defined as geologic formations containing enough saturated permeable material to yield sufficient quantities of water to wells and springs. Aquifers and their recharge areas are essential to our water supply. While bedrock geology dominates much of the landscape of Warren County, there are significant overlying glacial deposits in the valleys. This surficial geology has a notable impact on groundwater availability. (*2008 Warren County Open Space and Recreation Plan*)<sup>9</sup>

The New Jersey Geological Survey (NJGS) considers the Martinsburg Formation, which underlies 70% of the Township, a poor aquifer. The Allentown Dolomite, Beekmantown Group and Jacksonburg Limestone formations have greater permeability and are considered fair aquifers. Glacial till surficial deposits exist in two pockets in the northern portion of the Township, but they are of generally low permeability. Alluvial and glacial deposits of sand and gravel exist along the Paulins Kill and are sufficiently permeable in places to form a potential aquifer. (*ERI*)

Blairstown Township’s farmers irrigate a very small amount of land. Due to local climate and soils, 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 amounts of land they occupy. Irrigation is more suited to crops such as vegetables, since they occupy relatively small land areas. However, the Township had only 75 acres of vegetables in 2006, with 18 acres in irrigation. In addition, 25 acres of fruit, 11 of field crops and one acre of ornamentals were irrigated for a total of 55 acres, up significantly from recent years but below the 65 acres reported for 1983. (See *Irrigated Acres* charts below) The 55 acres make up less than 1% of the Township’s farmland. (*NJDA Farmland Assessment Data, Warren County Summary*)<sup>10</sup>

<b>Irrigated Acres in Blairstown – 1983-2006</b>				
	1983	1990	2000	2006
Field Crops				11
Fruit		52	19	25
Ornamental				1
Vegetables		9	6	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>55</b>

*Source: Farmland Assessment*

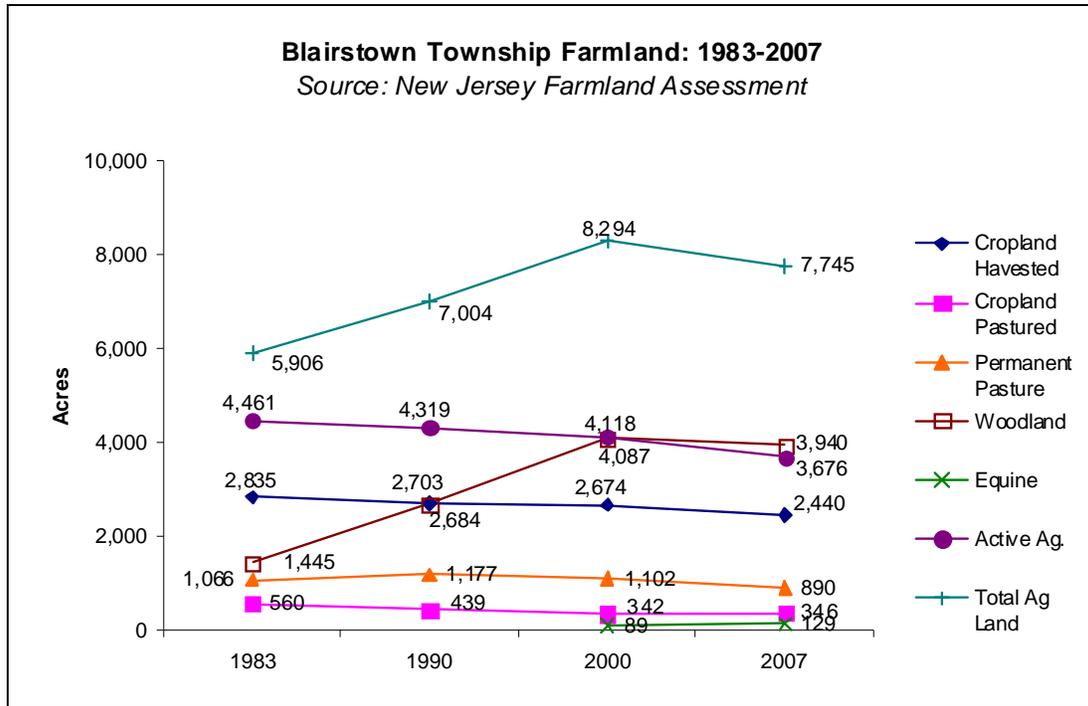
<b>Irrigated Acres – Comparison to County</b>				
	1983	1990	2000	2006
Blairstown	65	61	25	55
Warren County	835	376	335	343
% of County	8%	16%	7%	16%

*Source: Farmland Assessment*

### ***Farmland Trends & Statistics***

The overall size of the total farm assessed land base in Blairstown Township rose from 1983 (5,906 acres) to 2007 (7,745 acres), a 31% increase (see *Farmland* chart below). The overall Warren County farm assessed land base rose just under 3% in the same time period, from 100,231 to 102,789 acres. The composition of the Township’s farm assessed land has changed during this time. Overall, land devoted to active agriculture (cropland and pasture) has declined, while woodland acres have risen. Harvested cropland has dropped 14% (6% for the county), pastured cropland 38% (13% for the county) and permanent pasture 17% (22% for the county). Woodland has risen in acreage by 173% (26% for the county). (*Farmland Assessment, Warren County Summary*) According to a Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) report, woodland acres enrolled in farmland assessment peaked statewide in 1986. While appurtenant woodland declined after that point, “*USDA forest stewardship incentives in the 1990s encouraged active forest management in the state, leading to higher enrollment of [non-appurtenant] woodland under farmland assessment.*” More than one-third of this woodland is concentrated in Warren, Sussex and Hunterdon counties. (*NJAES*)<sup>11</sup>

The comparison of the 1995 and 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data above shows that much of the lost active agricultural land in Blairstown, and county wide, has been replaced by urban land, or development.



As stated above, harvested cropland, the largest category of active agricultural land in Blairstown, has declined 14% between 1983 and 2007, from 2,835 to 2,440 acres. Among the dominant crops in this category — hay, corn and soybeans — the biggest losses occurred in corn for silage, which declined 90% in the period 1983-2006 (the latest year for which data on individual crops is available), from 509 to 52 acres. This can most likely be explained by the loss of dairy farms in Blairstown, with dairy cattle showing a steady drop in numbers from 1,033 head in 1983 to just 228 head in 2006. Hay production actually increased in the same time period, from 1,325 acres to 1,550, with a decline in alfalfa hay offset by the growth of acres devoted to other hay. Soybean acres dropped 35% from 221 to 143 acres, with none reported in 2000. Other minimal crops such as barley, grass for silage and sorghum, virtually have disappeared from production in Blairstown. Fruit, vegetable and nursery crops, while representing a very small portion of Blairstown’s cropland, have risen steadily between 1983 and 2006, and together represented 222 acres, or close to 10% of total harvested cropland.

Pastured cropland decreased by 38% in the same time period, and permanent pasture by 17%. This loss tracks with the decline in beef cattle, as well as dairy, operations, with beef cattle down 69% from 517 head in 1983 to 162 head in 2006. Offsetting this is the growth in equine operations, with ponies and horses increasing from 167 to 227, or a growth of 36%. Inventory of goats, sheep and other livestock (including llamas) is also on the rise.

The acreage of farm assessed woodlands in Blairstown has increased (1,445 acres in 1983 to 3,940 acres in 2007). There are two primary reasons for this. The first is that cropland left abandoned or fallow for extended periods of time undergoes ecological succession into forested land. The increasing costs of farming and farmland in the state and the Township may compel local farmers to produce less land-intensive products and leave parts of their farms fallow. Secondly, continuously rising property taxes and the USDA forest stewardship incentives mentioned previously have encouraged more landowners of forested properties to obtain farmland tax assessment, thereby increasing the amount of forested farmland in the Township.

Though the overall acreage of harvested cropland and pastureland has decreased in the Township, this has been more than offset by the increase in farm assessed woodland acres, resulting in an overall gain in the farmland assessed agricultural land base in Blairstown of 31%, from 5,906 acres in 1983 to 7,745 acres in 2007. The overland farmland assessed base reached 8,294 acres in 2000 but declined by about 7% by 2007, reflecting losses in all categories except pastured cropland, which held steady and equine acres, which rose from 89 to 129 acres.

A comparison of Blairstown Township and Warren County farmland assessment trends shows that in all categories except permanent pasture, Blairstown has lost active agricultural land at a faster rate than County wide. Overall, between 1983 and 2007, active agricultural land has decreased 18% in Blairstown and 10% in the County as can be seen in the chart below.

Farmland Assessment Comparison 1983-2007 (Acres)								
	Cropland Harvested		Cropland Pastured		Permanent Pasture		Total Active Agriculture	
	Blairstown Township	Warren County	Blairstown Township	Warren County	Blairstown Township	Warren County	Blairstown Township	Warren County
1983	2,835	49,033	560	5,865	1,066	13,513	4,461	68,411
1990	2,703	53,057	439	6,588	1,177	15,172	4,319	74,817
2000	2,674	51,147	342	5,240	1,102	12,891	4,118	69,278
2007	2,440	46,184	346	5,079	890	10,522	3,676	61,785
% Change 83-07	-14%	-6%	-38%	-13%	-17%	-22%	-18%	-10%

The trend towards smaller average and median farm sizes has been prominent throughout New Jersey and Warren County over the past thirty years. In contrast to a county wide 6% decrease in acreage since 1982, there has been a 34% increase in the number of farms, up from 608 to 933 in 2007. Following a continuing trend, the average farm size dropped from 144 to 80 acres. The definition of a farm used for the purposes of calculating farm size is not the individual parcels tracked in farmland assessment but a farm operation, which is composed of the total land area of the reporting farm and may include land rented from others. (NJDA 2007 Warren County Agricultural Profile<sup>12</sup> and 2007 Census of Agriculture<sup>13</sup>) The 2007 Census of Agriculture indicates that for ZIP code 07825, which

includes Blirstown and Hardwick Townships, 158 of 218 farm operations were under 50 acres and just 60 were 50 acres or greater. The ZIP code tabulations also indicated that of these 218 operations, 184 farmers operated only land they owned, 30 farmers worked both land they owned and land they rented from others, and 4 farmers were tenant farmers, operating only land rented from others or worked for shares. (*2007 Census of Agriculture Quick Stats*)<sup>14</sup>

Blirstown has the highest number of farm parcels in farmland assessment in Warren County. Its 358 approved farmland assessment forms represent 13% of the County total of 2,698 in 2007. However, average farm size, at 22 acres, is much smaller than the County average of 40 acres. Median farm parcel size is 10 acres, with as many parcels below that number of acres as above. The largest farm parcel in Blirstown is 177 acres. Despite the high number of farm parcels, because of the comparatively smaller size of these parcels, Blirstown ranks sixth in the County in total acres devoted to agricultural or horticultural use, at 7,745 acres, or 7%, versus number one ranked Franklin Township's 10,054 acres, or 10%. The following chart shows the breakdown of farm parcel sizes in Blirstown based on the 2008 tax tables:

<b>Farm Parcels in Blirstown Township - 2008</b>	
Size	# of Farms
Under 1 acre	6
1-9 acres	167
10-49 acres	150
50-179 acres	40
179+ acres	0
<i>Source: Blirstown Township Tax Database</i>	

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- <sup>1</sup> 2008 Farmland Data Report. 2007. Tax Year 2008.  
<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/lpt/statdata.shtml>. State and County Summaries. Accessed July 2009.
- <sup>2</sup> Township of Blirstown Environmental Resource Inventory. January 2006. Environmental Commission
- <sup>3</sup> County of Warren Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan. Compiled by Morris Land Conservancy with Warren County Agriculture Development Board. April 2008.
- <sup>5</sup> New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Land Use/Land Cover Data 1995/97-2002.  
<http://www.nj.gov/dep/gis/lulc2002statablescounty.htm> . Accessed July 9, 20.09
- <sup>7</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Web Soil Survey.  
<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>. Accessed July 8, 2009.
- <sup>8</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Soil Data Mart website.  
<http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>. Accessed July 2009.
- <sup>9</sup> Warren County Planning Department. 2008 Warren County Open Space and Recreation Plan, 1999, June 2, 2008 Update.
- <sup>10</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Agriculture Development Committee. New Jersey Farmland Assessment. Warren County Summary.
- <sup>11</sup> Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. Food Policy Institute. Evaluating Changes in the Eligibility Provisions for Farmland Assessment in New Jersey. October 8, 2008.
- <sup>12</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Agriculture Development Committee, 2007 Warren County Agricultural Profile.
- <sup>13</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. 2007 Census of Agriculture – County Data. New Jersey. County Summary Highlights.
- <sup>14</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. 2007 Census of Agriculture. Quick Stats. <http://quickstats.nass.usda.gov>. Accessed August 12, 2009.

## CHAPTER 2: AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY IN BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP



### *Agricultural History*

Blairstown is located in rural Warren County, almost as far west from the New York metropolitan area as a New Jersey community can get. From the beginning, agriculture helped drive the economy of the area, with the first settlements grouped around gristmills and sawmills, followed by other services such as smithies, a general store, a tannery, a wagon shop. John Blair provided a transportation link that connected the area's products to a broader market, by developing the Paulinskil Railroad and making the Village area a trading center for northern Warren County.

In the late 1800s, I. W. Smith operated a creamery in the Vail area of the Township, one of many dairy farms that once were abundant in Blairstown, and in the early 1900s the Empire State Dairy Company had creameries in Blairstown and several neighboring communities. Beginning in the 1960s, however, a number of factors combined to weaken the historically strong dairy industry in Warren County's farming communities. Improvements in refrigerated transportation technology reduced the dependence of the nearby metropolitan markets upon the dairy industry of western New Jersey. The greater availability of dairy products across the country caused milk prices to fall sharply, which hurt the economic viability of local dairy farmers. The price of fuel – a significant input to the transportation-dependent dairy industry – spiked as well. In addition, continuously rising land prices in the post World War II boom era put economic pressures (such as higher property taxes) on farmers. Consequently, many dairy farmers fell into debt or retired, and the number of local dairy farms steadily dropped over time. Today, agriculture in Blairstown is heavily oriented towards traditional field crops, especially hay, corn and soybeans, rather than dairy products.

### *Trends in Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold* *Agricultural Production Trends<sup>i</sup>*

Hay is the primary field crop in Blairstown Township, followed by corn, with soybeans a distant third. (see *Field Crop Acreage* chart below). (NJDA Farmland Assessment data)<sup>1</sup> Trends in the acreage of land planted for these three field crops are dictated by short-term and long-term market fluctuations (see *Field Crop Trend* chart below). Short-term trends include seasonal weather conditions and prices of inputs, such as fertilizers and fuel. For

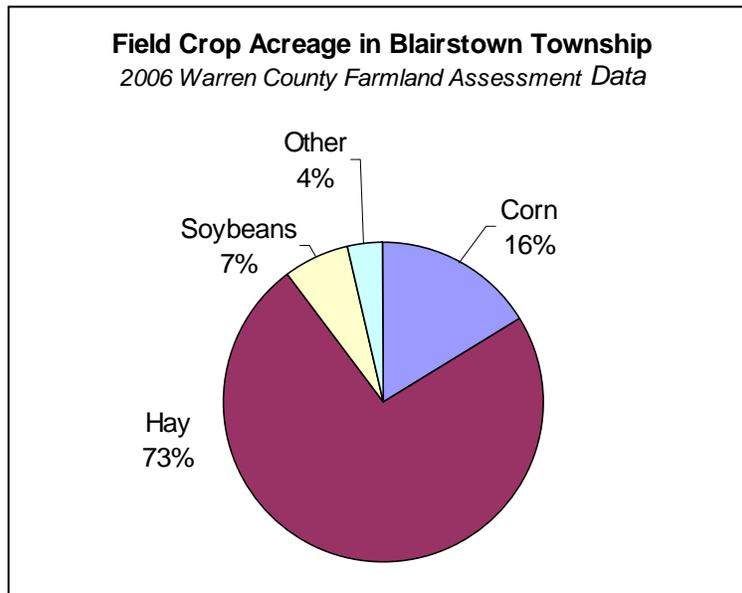
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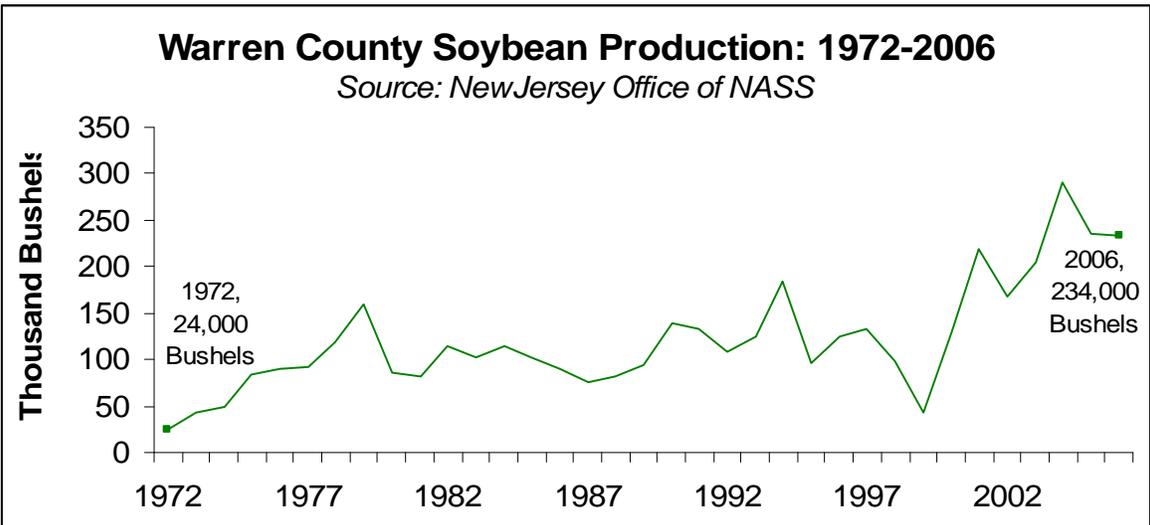
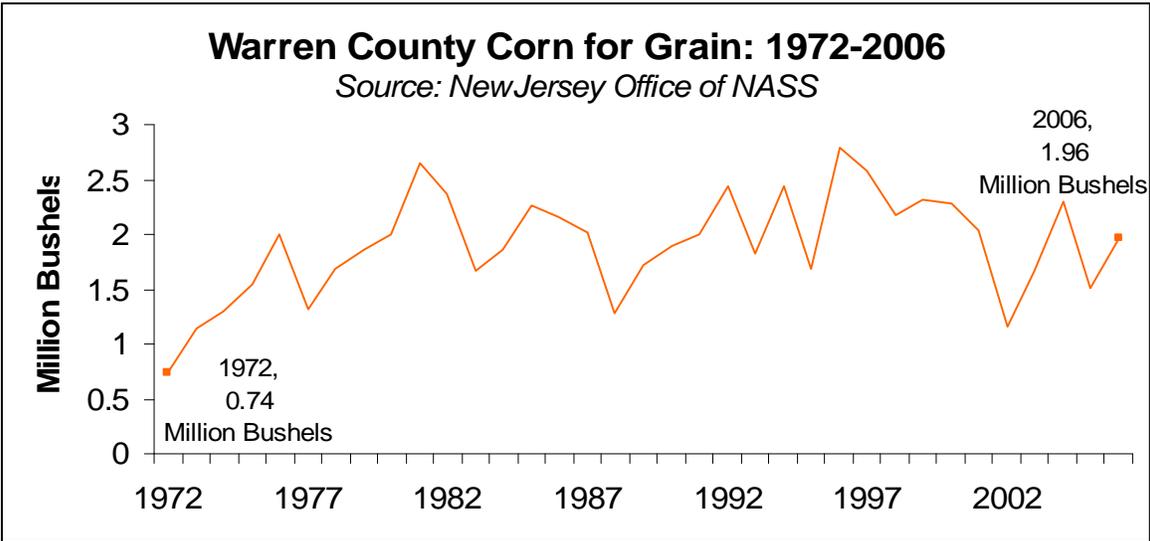
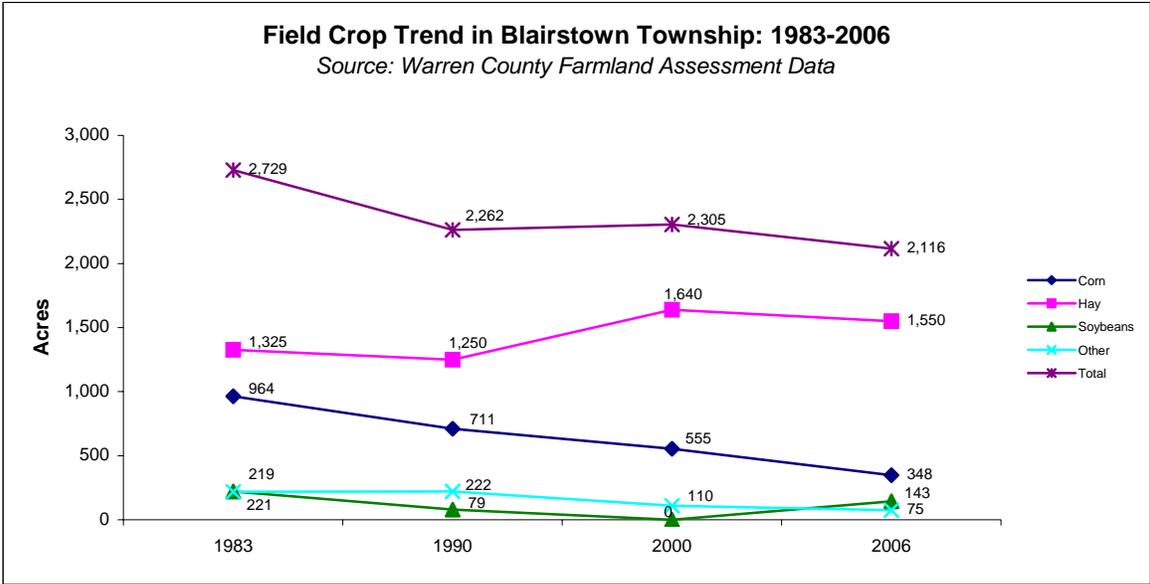
<sup>i</sup> Agricultural production trends in terms of product yields are not available at the municipal level.

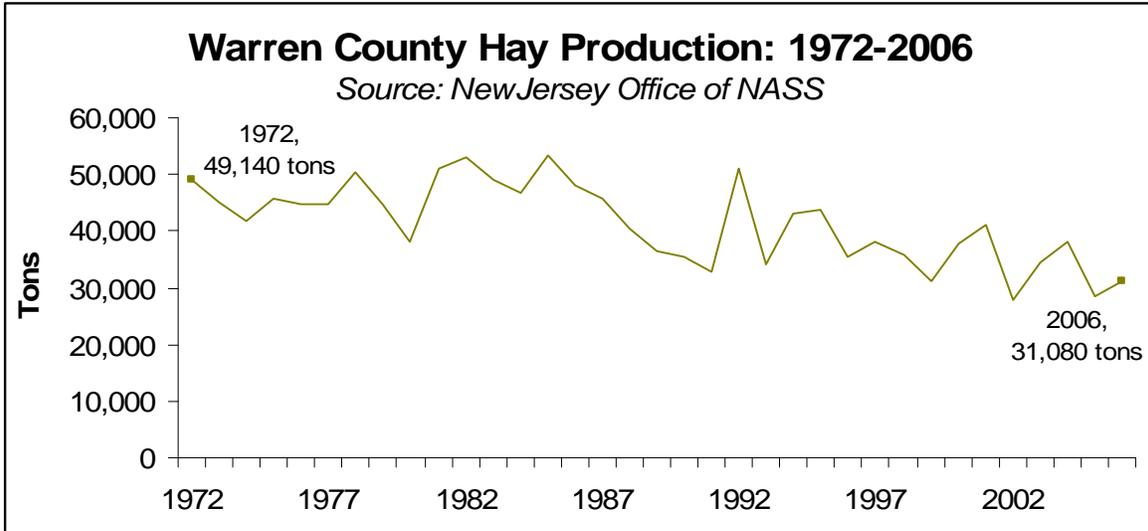
instance, Warren County’s field crop production (and Blairstown Township’s by inclusion) was significantly affected by severe drought conditions during 2002, causing historically low outputs of corn and hay (see *Corn for Grain* and *Hay Production* charts below). (*NJ Office of NASS*)<sup>2</sup> However, a recent and significant rise in grain prices, as well as better growing conditions, created dramatically higher sales for the County in 2007.

Long-term trends include availability of support services, land prices, and local demand for certain crops. With local support services (such as large animal veterinarians and supply stores) in shorter supply, local land prices steadily rising, and the dairy industry declining in the Township and County, long-term trends for field crops can be problematic. For example, the declining dairy and beef cattle industry in Blairstown signaled a parallel decline in the production of low-value, land-intensive corn for silage grown by those farms as feed for their stock. Consequently, with just one or two dairy farms left in Blairstown, corn for silage has dropped more than 90% since 1983 to a mere 52 acres. (*Farmland Assessment*)

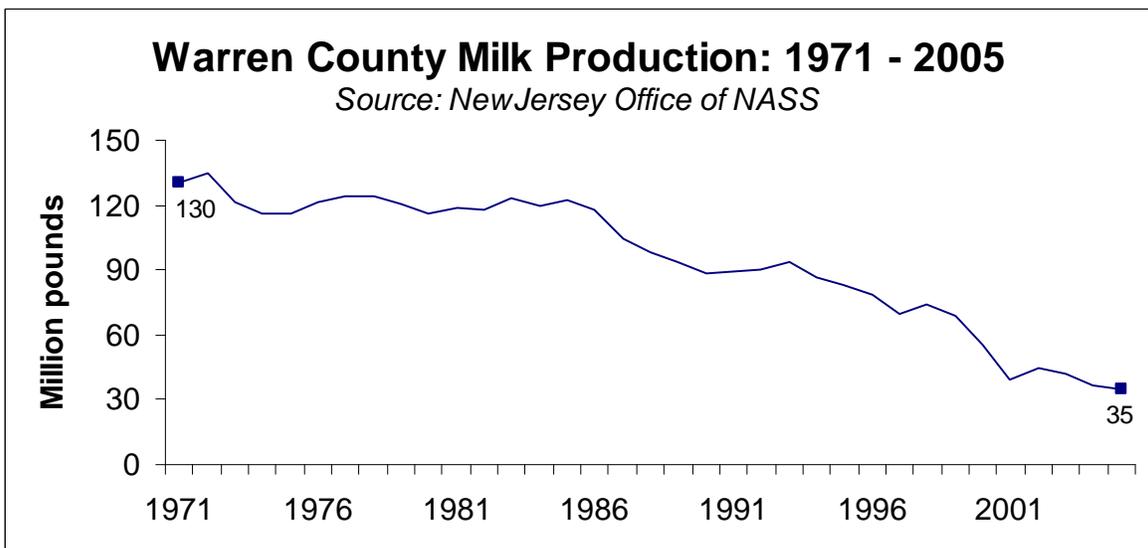
Increasing development pressures in Warren County often convince farmers to use their land for higher value return crops, development, or allowing woodland succession. While the land devoted to hay production in Blairstown has either grown or remained relatively stable, that is not the case for the rest of the County (see *Hay Production* chart below). Conversely, soybean production is on the rise in Warren County (see *Soybean Production* chart below), yet the number of acres devoted to it in Blairstown is lower than in 1983. This may be an effect of crop rotation, which causes temporary fluctuations between acreages devoted to the Township’s three major field crops from year to year. Most of Blairstown Township’s grain corn and hay is marketed to operations in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, for use as feed. (*Bob DeBlock*)<sup>3</sup>





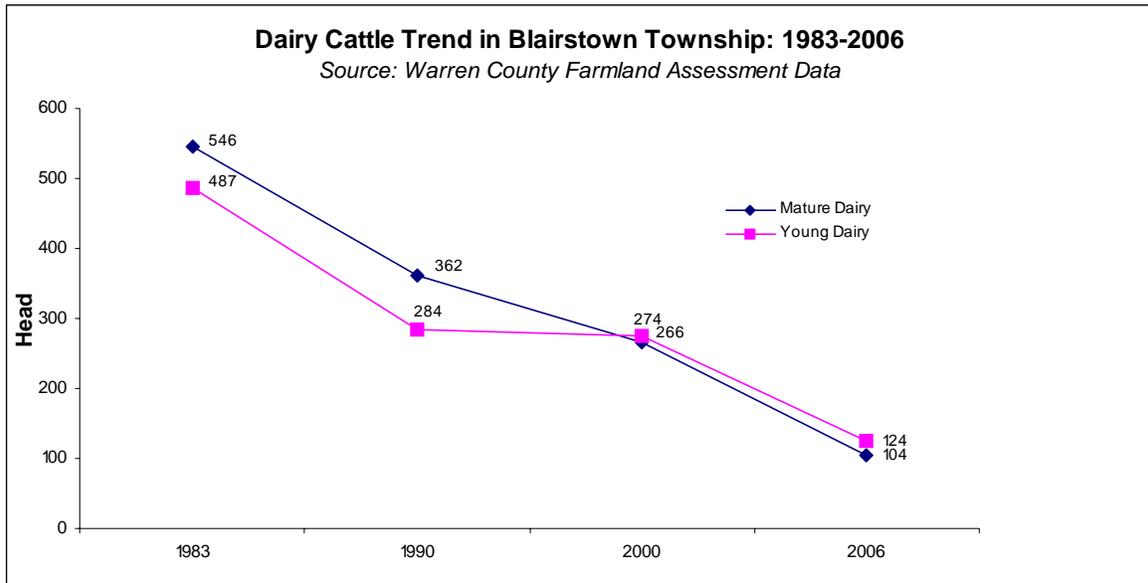


The dairy and livestock industries in Blairstown Township and Warren County have experienced significant declines since the 1970s (see *Milk Production* chart below). Decreasing demand for their products and other unfavorable market conditions have driven most dairy farmers to close their operations in Blairstown Township. A combination of high input costs, historically low milk prices, and weather related losses in 2005 created a scenario that the New Jersey Department of Agriculture likened to “a perfect storm.” (*2006 Annual Report of the NJDA*)<sup>4</sup> Although milk prices rebounded somewhat in 2007, this was a offset by record-high feed, fuel and fertilizer costs. (*2009 Economic Development Strategies*)<sup>5</sup> Among the most significant input costs faced by New Jersey’s dairy farmers are high land prices and property taxes. Dairy farms require more extensive plots of land than most agricultural operations, and rising land prices and property taxes have made other uses of dairy land (such as growing field crops) more economically attractive to many farmers.



Erosion of the local supporting infrastructure has impacted dairy producers as well. After the demand from New York and Philadelphia for New Jersey dairy products dropped during the 1960s, many dairy support businesses relocated or closed. Consequently, there are no remaining creameries in Warren County, which forces dairy producers to ship their products over considerable distances to be processed. This shipping, along with the spike in fuel prices for 2008, cost dairy farmers additional monies, cutting into their profit margins. Additionally, the shortage of large animal veterinarians in the region has made keeping livestock less feasible.

The expenses incurred by dairy farmers due to poor market conditions and inadequate support services have influenced the agriculture decisions for those that wish to remain in agriculture. Thus, many have transitioned their operations towards less infrastructure-intensive practices, such as field crop production or nursery operations. Many former dairy farmers have decided to discontinue farming, opting instead to sell their farms. This breakdown in the overall support structure presents significant risks to the future success of the dairy farms in and around Blairstown Township (see *Dairy Cattle* chart below).



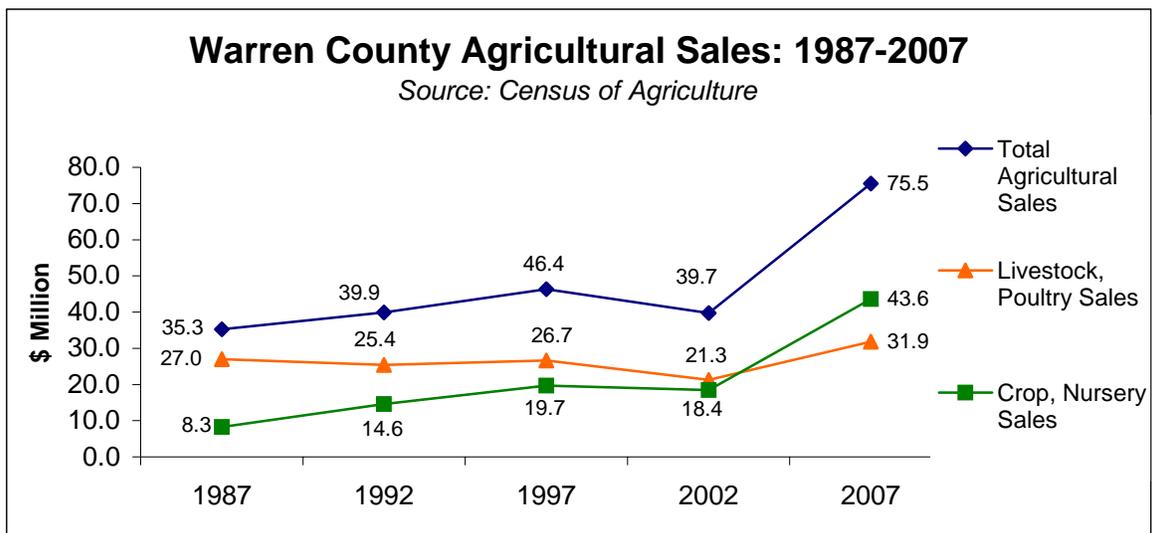
### ***Agricultural Sales Trends<sup>ii</sup>***

The Census of Agriculture separates agricultural activities into two categories: “livestock, poultry and their products” and “crops, including nursery and greenhouse products.” “Livestock, poultry and their products” from Warren County produced \$31.9 million in sales during 2007, up 50% from \$21.3 million in 2002. Sales from “crops, including nursery and greenhouse products” were up 137% from \$18.4 million in 2002 to \$43.6 million in 2007. This signals more than a recovery from the drought conditions of 2002, since both figures are also higher than the 1997 figures of \$26.7 million and \$19.7 million, respectively. (*Census of Agriculture*)<sup>6</sup> Rises in sales were seen across New

<sup>ii</sup> Agricultural Sales figures are only calculated at the County level every five years.

Jersey, but not, on average, to the same extent as in Warren County. The market value of all agricultural products sold in New Jersey rose 32% between 2002 and 2007, while the market value of all agricultural products sold in Warren County rose 90% in that same period.

Although still a small percentage of total agricultural acres in the Township, land devoted to nursery and vegetable production has increased since 1983. This type of farming in Blairstown represented 4 and 4.5% of County acreage in 2006, up from 2 and 2.5% in 1983. (*Farmland Assessment*) Thus, Blairstown farmers would likely have benefited from the county wide 61% increase sales of vegetables to \$7.1 million, and 190% increase in nursery, greenhouse, floriculture and sod to \$22.1 million from 2002 to 2007. Livestock is a different story. In 2006, Warren County reported 27.4% of all dairy cattle in the state (with Blairstown’s 228 head representing 4.3% of the County total), a decline of 78% since 1983. As signaled by the numbers, only one or two farms in the Township still have dairy herds, but one positive note is that the young dairy cattle outnumber the mature cattle, which may indicate that farmers are raising these young cattle for sale to dairy farms in other areas. Beef cattle have declined by 69% over the 1983–2006 period, to 162 head, representing 6% of the County’s beef cattle stock. Chickens and other livestock, including goats and turkeys, are up. County sales for all livestock are up 50% from the 2002 Census, to \$31.9 million. An interesting phenomenon in Blairstown is the 73 acres devoted to pond fish in 2006, which represents the majority of Warren County’s 97 acres and is a steep rise from the 24 acres reported in 2000. It also represents 7% of the 507 acres statewide devoted to this type of enterprise. Due to the small number of farms engaged in this activity, sales numbers are not reported in the *Census of Agriculture* statistics. In the instance of Blairstown, this is generally attributable to a small hatchery operation that raises fish for commercial fishing purposes.<sup>7</sup>



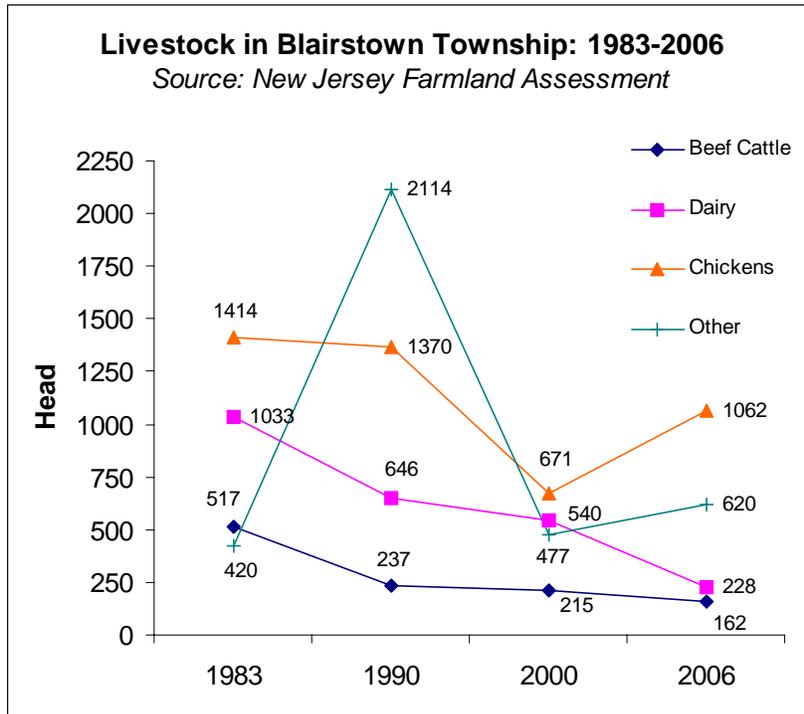
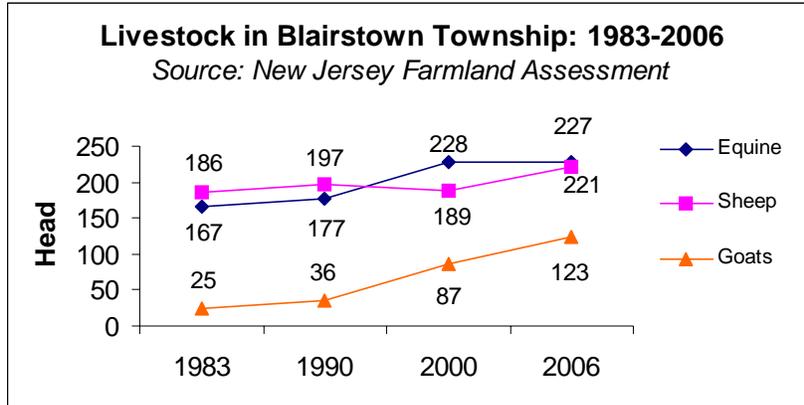
## **Livestock and Poultry Products**

Even with declining sales, dairy and livestock form the most significant economic contributor to the agricultural economy of Warren County. Warren County supports the largest concentration of dairy and livestock operations in New Jersey. The livestock industry helps support field crop production as well because much of the grain and hay that is produced in Warren County is sold to, or grown by, County dairy or livestock farmers to feed their herds. However, in Blairstown, this is no longer case, and much of the hay and corn for grain is marketed outside the state to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. (*Bob DeBlock*)

Dairy has been the dominant sub-sector in Warren County throughout its history. Unfortunately, dairy sales have declined from over \$12.6 million in 1987 to just over \$9.0 million in 1997.<sup>8</sup> This corresponds to a similar decrease among the number of farms that sold dairy products within the County (from 118 in 1987 to 45 in 2002); the number of farms rose slightly, however, in 2007, to 53. Without corresponding sales figures, it is hard to know how this increase in farms has affected sales. However, dairy farms in Blairstown do not appear to be on the rise.

Milk production trends show that the decline in Warren County's dairy industry has been occurring gradually for some time. The County's best year on record in terms of milk production was 1972 when it produced over 135 million pounds, while its worst year on record was 2005 when it produced less than 35 million pounds (see *Milk Production* chart). The reasons for this declining milk production – improvements in refrigerated transportation technology, falling milk prices, lack of a local creamery, rising land and fuel prices, lack of support services – have all contributed, and are discussed earlier in this chapter.

Among large livestock, there are 104 mature dairy cattle and 124 young dairy cattle in Blairstown Township. The next most abundant large livestock are ponies and horses (227), sheep (221), beef cattle (162), goats (123) and swine (31). Among small animal livestock, egg chickens are the most abundant with 996. Ducks (84), meat chickens (66), turkeys (42), fur animals (10), and other livestock (398), plus 55 beehives, make up the remainder of this livestock sector; all except beehives are included in the "Other Livestock" category in the *Livestock in Blairstown Township* chart below, which is modestly growing, excluding a sharp rise in 1990, reflecting a brief but significant spike in the turkey population to 1,536. The growth in other livestock reflected in the chart below, from 420 in 1983 to 620 in 2006, is attributable, in part, to the introduction of exotic animals, such as llamas at Heavens Gate and Shoebox Farms and alpacas at Atlantico Ranch Alpacas. Equine is another growing sector, with 129 acres devoted to such operations in 2007, versus 89 acres in 2000. (*Farmland Assessment*)



### Crops, Including Nursery and Greenhouse

Crops in Warren County sold for a total of \$43.6 million in 2007, 137% higher than the \$18.4 million reported for 2002. (*Census of Agriculture*) Though overall sales figures are not available at the municipal level, Blairstown's results for its cropland may be slightly lower than the County as a whole. Acreage devoted to harvested cropland decreased by 8.75% for Township between 2000 and 2007, while basically holding steady county wide (*Farmland Assessment*). However, Blairstown farmers, similar to other County farmers, should have benefited from a recent significant increase in prices for grain crops. Prices for the Township's leading field crops, hay, corn for grain and soybean have seen rises of 13%, 183% and 91% respectively since 2005. (*NJAES*)<sup>9</sup>

Within this category of agricultural products, **nursery and greenhouse operations** have become the County's highest grossing sub-sector. In 2007, sales of nursery and greenhouse products, including sod, accounted for roughly 41% of the County's agricultural sales, or \$22.1 million, a 190% rise in sales over 2002 (see *Crops Sales: 1987-2007* chart below). Blairstown Township's 104 acres of land devoted to nursery products in 2006 represented 4.6% of the County. Nursery products in Blairstown were predominantly Christmas trees (81 acres) and trees and shrubs (19 acres). (*2006 NJDA Farmland Assessment data*)

Likely due to increased demands from the growing residential sector of Blairstown Township, Warren County, and environs, the nursery and greenhouse industry has experienced far more growth than any other agricultural sector in the County over the last 20 years. A continued upward trend is likely. (see *Crop Sales* chart below).

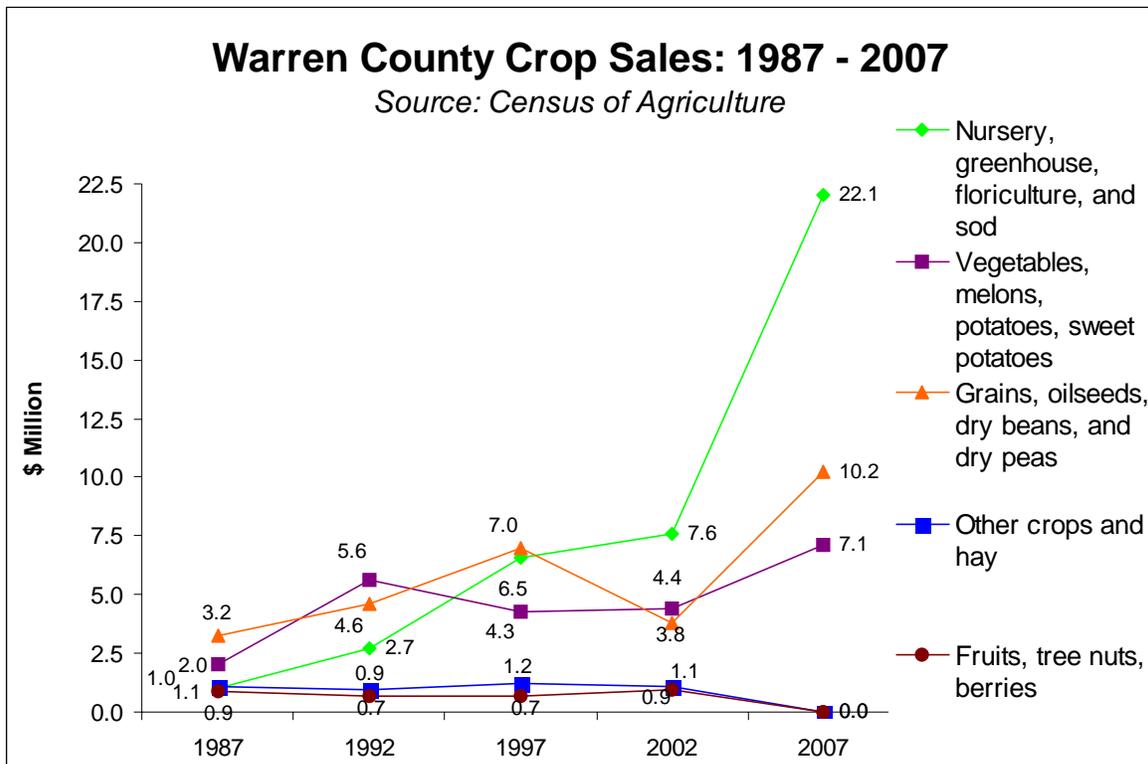
**Vegetables** were the County's third highest earning crop during 2007 with \$7.1 million in sales, a 61% increase over 2002. (*Census of Agriculture*) Approximately 75 acres in Blairstown Township were planted with vegetables during 2006, with the largest acreages devoted to sweet corn (13), pumpkins (17) and mixed vegetables (16). Also present were squash (6 acres), white potatoes (4 acres), eggplant (4 acres), tomatoes (2 acres), cucumbers (2 acres), peppers (2 acres), and sweet potatoes (1). Acreage devoted to vegetables doubled from 30 in 1983 to 54 in 1990, then rose again by a third to 75 in 2006. (*Farmland Assessment*) Vegetables do not require as much land as other field crops, and most vegetable-producing farms use only a few acres or less for each type of vegetable. Expenses incurred by the County's vegetable farmers tend to exceed those of other farmers. Vegetables require more intensive irrigation than most field crops, and usually require seasonal laborers during their harvest. These additional expenses reduce the overall profit derived from vegetable production compared with similar sales of other field crops. However, as farm sizes decrease vegetables may make more sense for some Blairstown farmers.

The **grains** subcategory, which encompasses corn for grain and silage, and soybeans, was the second largest sales category for Warren County in 2007, totaling \$10.2 million and representing a 168% increase over 2002. (*Census of Agriculture*) Corn for grain (296 acres) and soybeans (143 acres) are the two crops in this category with the most acres in Blairstown Township. (*Farmland Assessment*) Sales from this subcategory were heavily influenced by extreme weather conditions during the 2002 Census year, which reduced the available supply to historically low levels. Conversely, sharp rises in grain prices between 2005 and 2008, of 183% for corn for grain and 91% for soybeans, most likely contributed to the higher sales figures in 2007, despite a loss in acreage devoted to these crops. Grains have traditionally been the highest selling field crops among the County's farms; however, in Blairstown Township they are overshadowed by hay.

A small but significant portion of Warren County's agricultural sales come from other crops, such as **hay**. Warren County produced roughly 33,000 tons of hay and other forage crops during 2007, just slightly ahead of the 32,023 produced in 2002. However, acres devoted to hay were down to 13,395 in 2007 from 15,075 in 2002, which means that yields per acre were better. Sales figures were not disclosed for this category in 2007, but in 2002

they amounted to \$1.1 million. (*Census of Agriculture*) Additionally, the price for alfalfa hay rose 14% between 2005 and 2008 and the price for other hay rose about 13%. (*NJAES*) As of 2006, Blairstown Township supported 1,550 acres of alfalfa and other hay, ranking third in total hay acres out of the 18 Warren County municipalities that produce hay (four towns do not produce hay). (*2006 NJDA Farmland Assessment data*)

Warren County is home to many *fruit* farms as well. These farms are currently experiencing a surge in production. Warren County produced roughly four million pounds of apples in 2005 – three times more than it did during the 2002 Census year. While the 2007 Census did not disclose sales figures for this category, the number of farms reporting fruit operations rose from 221 to 271 between 2002 and 2007, and there was a similar rise in berry operations, from 80 to 109. (*Census of Agriculture*) In 2006, Blairstown Township ranked fifth in the County in acres devoted to fruit, predominantly apples (30 acres), followed by peaches (4 acres), pears (2 acres) and other fruits (4 acres). Another 2 acres were devoted to berries and one to grapes. Blairstown’s fruit and berry production was relatively steady between 1983 and 2000, but rose from 27 acres in 2000 to 43 acres in 2006. Pick-your-own, cut-your-own, farmers’ markets and other direct marketing methods are growing distribution channels for such farm products. (*Farmland Assessment*)



Although not considered active agriculture, farm-assessed woodland acres play a significant role in Blairstown’s agricultural community, with 4,318 acres reported in 2006 and 3,940 acres in 2007. The decline in acres occurred mostly in unattached woodland versus attached woodland. 323,122 board feet of timber was produced in 2000 and 105,465

in 2006, representing 11% and 6% respectively of total Warren County production. As a general trend, the amount of woodland under farmland assessment in Blirstown Township rose through 2006 but shows an 9% decline from 2006 to 2007 (see chart below). This tracks with the overall County trend for the same period, but Blirstown's percentage of County totals has risen significantly from 5% in 1983 to 10% in 2007.

<b>Woodland Acres in Farmland Assessment 1983-2007</b>					
Blirstown Township	1983	1990	2000	2006	2007
Attached Woodland	1,445	1,690	3,076	3,439	3,058
Unattached Woodland	430	994	1,011	879	882
<b>Total Woodland</b>	<b>1,875</b>	<b>2,684</b>	<b>4,087</b>	<b>4,318</b>	<b>3,940</b>
Warren County Total	35,071	39,190	45,864	44,000	4,0018
Blirstown % of County	5%	7%	9%	10%	10%
<i>Source: Farmland Assessment Data</i>					

### ***Agricultural Support Services and Related Industries***

The agricultural support services in Blirstown Township and Warren County are predominantly oriented towards supplying the raw materials necessary for farming. They include businesses such as tractor sales and supply stores, feed vendors, and hardware/equipment retailers. With the opening of Tractor Supply in early 2009, Blirstown now has two farm supply stores offering small equipment and other farm needs. Both Tractor Supply and the Warren County Service Center are located on Route 94. The North Warren Farm & Home Supply on Bridge Street in the Village area also offers practical supplies for the farmer of the type generally found at local hardware stores in farming communities. However, for large farm equipment, farmers generally must go out of state to dealers in Pennsylvania. This is true for replacement parts for this equipment as well, with farmers often using mail order services for such parts. *(Bob DeBlock)*

While Blirstown offers several supply outlets, the largest cluster of agricultural support firms in Warren County is located in and around Washington Borough, where equipment and tractor retailers such as Smith's Tractor, Frank Rymon and Sons, and another Tractor Supply Company store are located. Hackettstown contains a second notable concentration of agricultural support firms. It houses the largest agricultural auction house in New Jersey – the Livestock Cooperative Auction – where local farmers can sell or trade their products, as well as general farm supply stores such as Tickner's. Also, local hardware and grocery stores throughout Warren County serve as vendors for farming goods and supplies. *(2008 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan)*

Local farmers generally are adept at minimizing the need for many outside repair services by addressing a variety of mechanical problems themselves. Also, farmers tend to specialize in certain types of agricultural repair, supplementing their incomes by offering their services to other farmers. There is at least one provider of farm equipment repair services in Blirstown, who is busy enough with existing farmers that he is not taking on new customers. *(Bob DeBlock)*

In addition to the Livestock Cooperative in Hackettstown mentioned above, other outlets for Blirstown farmers' agricultural products include the Blirstown Farmers Market, held June through October at the Fire Department property on Route 521, Races Farm Market on Route 94, the Fresh & Local Vegetable Consignment and Natures Harvest on Main St., the Blair Academy, and Sweet Jane's Café in Frelinghuysen. For other local and regional outlets see the Blirstown Farmers Participating in Direct Sales and/or Agri-Tourism listings below.

The Township's farmers also rely heavily upon mail order and out-of-state retailers for their agricultural supplies, although there are several seed dealers in Warren County, serving the large farm. These include a local Hubner Seed agent in Hackettstown, a Pioneer agent in Asbury, and an NK agent in Belvidere. (*Bob DeBlock*) Processing facilities such as creameries and lumber mills are now absent from the area, forcing farmers to ship their products out-of-town to be processed. Some farmers have found that reliance upon out-of-state suppliers and non-local processing facilities impose transportation costs that cut deeply into their operations profitability, though mail order is often an option that minimizes transportation costs.

Local farmers note a shortage of large animal veterinarians available to treat farm animals. Two of the closest vets for Blirstown farmers are in Phillipsburg and Alpha and because these veterinarians are so few and far between, the demands on their time often make it hard for a farmer to get necessary aid in a timely fashion. (*Bob DeBlock*)

Despite the loss of many support businesses from the region, local farmers still benefit from the wide range of these services throughout Warren County, northern New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania. The Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County has compiled a comprehensive listing of all the agriculture-related businesses, organizations, and markets in the State of New Jersey called the *Green Pages*. (*Green Pages*)<sup>10</sup> The agricultural businesses listed in these Green Pages that are located in, or around, Warren County are provided on the following pages.

## **Agricultural Businesses Servicing Warren County and Blirstown Township**

*Sources: Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County, New Jersey and Personal communication with Bob DeBlock, Blirstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee*

### **Animal Removal**

Day & Nite Animal Recovery Svc  
Bartley Rd.  
Long Valley, NJ 07853  
Phone: (908) 876-3341

Walter Keever  
Old Beaver Run Road  
PO Box 257  
Lafayette, NJ 07848  
Phone: (973) 383-6829

### **Construction**

Morton Buildings, Inc.  
PO Box 126  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865-0126  
Phone: (908) 454-7905  
Website: <http://www.mortonbuildings.com>

Barn Works  
Phone: (973) 300-5146

Tim Terry  
Washington, NJ 07882  
Phone: (908) 689-6934 (equine)

### **Crop Insurance Agents**

GS Newton Associates  
7 Maple Ave.  
Flemington, NJ 08822  
Phone: (908) 788-9080

### **Equipment (New, Used, Parts, Service)**

Tractor Supply  
128 Route 94  
Blirstown NJ 07825  
(908) 362-0082

Warren County Service Center, Inc.  
228 Route 94  
Blirstown, NJ 07825  
Phone: (908) 362-6916

Frank Rymon & Sons Inc  
399 Route 31 South  
Washington, NJ 07882  
Phone: (908) 689-1464  
Fax: (908) 689-7729  
Email: [rymon399@comcast.net](mailto:rymon399@comcast.net)  
Website: [www.rymons.com](http://www.rymons.com)

Smith Tractor & Equipment Incorporated  
15 Hillcrest Ave  
Washington, NJ  
(908) 689-7900

### **Feed for Large Farms**

Cochecton Mills Inc  
Cochecton, NY  
(570) 224-4144

F.M.Brown's Sons Inc.  
Fleetwood, PA  
610-944-7654

Penwell Mills Feed  
448 Penwell Rd  
Port Murray, NJ 07865  
Phone: (908) 689-3725

Tomer Ernest J Trucking Inc  
3109 Belvidere Road  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865-9584  
Phone: (908) 475-2578 (brewers grain)

**Feed for Small Farms/Equine**

K & D's Feed and Tack Emporium  
 324 State Route 24  
 Chester, NJ 07930-2631  
 Phone: (609) 654-4312

North Warren Farm & Home Supply  
 2 Bridge Street  
 Blairstown, NJ 07825  
 Phone: (908) 362-6177

Outlaw Outfitters  
 530 US Highway 206 S  
 Newton, NJ 07860-6003  
 Phone: (973) 300-5939

Roy Company Inc  
 P.O. Box 456  
 Branchville, NJ 07826  
 Phone: (973) 948-3400  
 Fax: (973) 948-2072

The Tack Room  
 Main St.  
 Pittstown, NJ 08867  
 Phone: (908) 730-8388

Tickner's Inc.  
 90 Main St.  
 Hackettstown, NJ 07840  
 Phone: (908) 852-4707

**Fertilizers, Lime, Chemicals, Supplies**

Crop Production Services  
 127 Perryville Rd.  
 Pittstown, NJ 08867  
 Phone: (908) 735-5545  
 Fax: (908) 735-6231  
 E-mail: cpsjutland@agriumretail.com  
 Website: [www.cropproductionservices.com](http://www.cropproductionservices.com)

Growmark FS, Inc  
 PO Box 116  
 Bloomsbury, NJ 08804  
 Phone: (908) 479-4500 or (800) 248-4649

Growmark FS, Inc.  
 148 Johnsonville Road  
 Bangor, PA 18013  
 Ph: 610-588-1095  
 Email: [johnsonville@growmarkfs.com](mailto:johnsonville@growmarkfs.com)

**Financial Services**

First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA  
 North Jersey Division  
 9 County Road 618  
 Lebanon, NJ 08833-3028  
 Phone: (908) 782-5011  
 NJ: 1-800-787-FARM (3276)  
 Fax: 908-782-5229  
 Website: [www.firstpioneer.com](http://www.firstpioneer.com)

FSA: Warren-Morris-Sussex Counties  
 Hackettstown Commerce Park  
 101 Bilby Road, Bldg. 1-H  
 Hackettstown, NJ 07840  
 Phone: (908) 852-2576  
 Fax: (908) 852-4666

Wachovia  
 2W. Washington Avenue  
 Washington, NJ 07882  
 Phone: (908) 689-0661  
 Website: [www.wachovia.com](http://www.wachovia.com)

First Hope Bank  
 1301 Hope Bridgeville Road  
 Hope, NJ 07844  
 Phone: (609) 459-4121  
 Website: [www.firsthope.com](http://www.firsthope.com)

U.S. Small Business Administration  
 Phone: (973) 645-2434  
 Website: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

New Jersey Economic Development  
 Authority (NJEDA)  
 Capital Place One  
 36 West State Street  
 P.O. Box 991  
 Trenton, NJ 08625-0991  
 Phone: (609) 292-1800  
 E-mail: [njeda@njeda.com](mailto:njeda@njeda.com)  
 Website: [www.njeda.com](http://www.njeda.com)

Telmark  
 Northern, NJ  
 Phone: (800) 451-3322  
 Phone: (717) 866-9217  
 Website: [www.telmark.com](http://www.telmark.com)

New Jersey Department of Banking and  
 Insurance  
 P.O. Box 325  
 Trenton, NJ 08625-0325  
 Website: [www.state.nj.us](http://www.state.nj.us)

**Greenhouse & Nursery Supplies**

Griffin Greenhouse & Nursery Supplies  
1005 Whitehead Rd Ext.  
Ewing, NJ08638-2424  
Phone: (609) 530-9120  
Web Site: [www.griffins.com](http://www.griffins.com)

Pennington Sales and Service  
63 Route 31 N  
Pennington, NJ 08534  
Phone: (609) 737-0445  
Fax: (609) 737-0472  
E-mail: [Penningtonsales@verizon.net](mailto:Penningtonsales@verizon.net)

**Hoof Trimmers and Farriers**

Bob Pethick  
Bedminster Forge  
Box 348  
Bedminster, Somerset County, NJ 07921  
Phone: (908) 879-5627  
Email: [Bpethick@aol.com](mailto:Bpethick@aol.com)  
International Consulting Services  
Certified Journeyman Farrier  
AFA Examiner, Judge, Clinician

Dan Bias  
11B Central Avenue  
High Bridge, NJ 08829  
Serving: NJ, PA  
Joseph Boehringer  
Serving: NJ, DE, PA  
Phone: (609) 697-4442

Steve Bostwick  
Serving: NJ, PA  
Phone: (908) 537-7596

Troy Brighton  
Phone: (908) 303-7625

Harvey Clark  
Augusta, NJ 07822  
(973) 948-6140

Doug Craig  
Chester, NJ  
Phone: (908) 879-2793

Melissa Dodd  
Serving: Sussex Co. NJ  
Phone: (973) 209-2830

Fairweather Forge  
37 Cromwell Drive  
Mendham, Morris County, NJ 07945  
Phone: (908) 619-6798  
Email: [Boxer1203@aol.com](mailto:Boxer1203@aol.com)

Lehigh Valley Farrier Service  
Phillipsburg  
Phillipsburg, Warren County, NJ 08865  
Phone: (732) 744-0122  
Email: [anglotrake@yahoo.com](mailto:anglotrake@yahoo.com)

Michael McClain  
Serving: NJ  
Phone: (973) 887-1962

V & G Equine Services  
162 Mudtown Road  
Wantage, Sussex County, NJ 07461  
Phone: (973) 702-1176 Fax: (973) 702-1485  
Email: [Vcuppari@aol.com](mailto:Vcuppari@aol.com)

**Livestock Haulers  
Warren County**

Craig Ackerman Livestock Hauling  
Phone: (201) 317-8623

**Livestock Artificial Insemination**

Bovine Breeders Service  
Alta Genetics U.S.A. Inc.  
Walter Haves – Technician/Dealer  
41 Havens Road  
Sussex, NJ 07461  
Phone: (973) 875-4641

Acorn Embryos-Semex U.S.A.  
Jon E. Higgins VMD  
Phone: (908) 359-3846

**Insurance**

New Jersey Department of Banking and  
Insurance  
P.O. Box 325  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0325  
Phone: (609) 292-5360  
Website: [www.state.nj.us/dobi](http://www.state.nj.us/dobi)

**Agricultural Testing Labs**

Rutgers Soil Testing Laboratory  
P.O. Box 902  
Milltown, NJ 08850  
Phone: (732) 932-9295  
Website:  
<http://pp301.rutgers.edu/soiltestinglab>

**Legal Issues**

New Jersey Bar Association  
New Jersey Law Center  
One Constitution Square Lane  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1520  
Phone: (732) 249-5000  
Fax: (732) 249-2815

**Poultry**

Kuhl Corporation  
Kuhl Road  
P.O. Box 26  
Flemington, NJ 08822-0026  
Phone: (201) 782-5696

**Seed Suppliers**

Robert Kayhart  
Hubner Sales Rep  
Port Murray, NJ  
Phone: (980) 689-2605

Sam Santini  
Hubner Sales Rep  
Stewartsville, NJ  
Phone: (908) 619-3579

Jake Bilyk  
NK Brand Syngenta Seeds Rep  
347 Route 519  
Belvidere, NJ 07823

Ronald Sigler  
Pioneer Sales Rep  
Asbury, NJ  
Office Phone: (908) 689-7306  
Cell Phone: (908) 339-2150

Penwell Mills, LLC  
448 Penwell Road  
Port Murray, NJ 07865  
Phone: (908) 689-3725  
Phone: (800) 273-5201

**Sheep Shearers**

Rebecca Gunther  
Hillsborough, NJ  
Phone: (908) 369-4088

Brynn Kirby  
Hillsborough, NJ  
Phone: (908) 369-1009

**Custom Slaughterhouses**

Halal Packing, Inc.  
Mehmet or Ali  
368 Swartwood Road  
Newton, NJ 07860  
Phone: (973) 383-4291  
Buyer: Yes

**Large Animal Veterinarians**

Brockbrader, Nordstrom & Ellis  
Tranquility Large Animal Vet  
Andover, NJ  
Phone: (908) 852-1300

Dr. Frey  
Alpha Veterinary Care  
Alpha, NJ 08865  
Phone: (908) 454-8384

Dr. Grodkiewicz  
Washington Animal Hospital  
Washington, NJ 07882  
Phone: (908) 689-3267

Dr. Wasser  
Brass Castle Animal Hospital  
Washington, NJ  
Phone: (908) 689-0773

Dr. Wessel & Zaccheo  
Warren Animal Hospital  
Phillipsburg, NJ  
Phone: (908) 859-0702

**Blairstown Farmers Participating in Direct Sales and/or Agri-Tourism:**

Atlantico Ranch Alpacas, LLC  
88 Hoagland Road, Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 520-2266  
Available: Farm Market Products

Blairstown Garden Center & Nursery  
66 Cedar Lake Rd., Blairstown  
Phone: (973) 362-9670, Fax: (908) 362-8105  
Available: Annuals; perennials; shrubs; trees; garden mums; herbs; Christmas trees, wreaths, grave blankets; landscape planting; mulch; top soil

Community Supported Garden at Genesis Farm  
41B Silver Lake Road , Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 362-7486  
Community Supported Agriculture

Double D Guest Ranch  
81 Mt. Hermon Road, Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 459-9044  
Website: [www.doubledguestranch.com](http://www.doubledguestranch.com)  
Equine: Rentals

Gap View  
104 Kerrs Corner Road, Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 581-7535  
Email: [tgubernard@gmail.com](mailto:tgubernard@gmail.com)  
Available: Naturally grown produce including cucumbers, tomatoes, hot peppers, herbs, melons, and more.  
Farmers Market: Blairstown

Glenview Farm  
2 Glenview Lane, Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 362-6904  
Email: [Glenviewfarm@embrqmail.com](mailto:Glenviewfarm@embrqmail.com)  
Website: [www.glenviewfarm.com](http://www.glenviewfarm.com)  
Open: October -December, Daily 9 am - 5 pm  
Roadside Market: Pumpkins  
Pick Your Own: Pumpkins, squash, Indian corn, gourds  
Cut Your Own: Christmas trees; Sat after Thanksgiving until Christmas.  
Farmers Market: Blairstown

Simon Griskonis  
49 Belcher Rd., Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 362-5934  
Open: Daily Apr. - Christmas, 12 pm - 8 pm  
Roadside Market: Variety of fruits & vegetables  
Also Available: WIC and Senior FMNP checks accepted

Heavens Gate Llama Farm  
60 Gaisler Road, Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 362-5604  
Email: [lydiachiappini@yahoo.com](mailto:lydiachiappini@yahoo.com)  
Available: Llama fiber, hand spun, hand woven, felted artwork and small sculptures. Working in washed, processed and raw llama wool.  
Farmers Market: Blairstown

Homeland Farm  
175 Cedar Lake Rd., Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 362-7315  
Email: [Homelandfarm@hotmail.com](mailto:Homelandfarm@hotmail.com)  
Open: July thru October, Sat. & Sun. 7am - 6pm  
Roadside Market: Potatoes, tomatoes, zucchini, yellow squash, peppers, eggplant, beets, beans, & eggs.

Little Big Farm  
111 Heller Hill Road, Blirstown  
Phone: (908) 459-5484  
Email: [patti.doell@littlebigfarm.com](mailto:patti.doell@littlebigfarm.com)  
Website: [www.littlebigfarm.com](http://www.littlebigfarm.com)  
Available: Organically grown cut flowers, cut flower bouquets, and gift baskets.  
Farmers Market: Blirstown

Jolly Holly Christmas Tree Farm  
56 Maple Lane, Blirstown  
Phone: 908-362-6327  
Website [www.jollyhollytreefarm.com](http://www.jollyhollytreefarm.com)  
Open: 12-5 (Sat & Sun), Nov. 28 - Dec. 20  
Available: 200 trees; Blue Spruce, Norway Spruce, Concolor Fir  
Cut Your Own: Christmas trees

Race Farm  
93 Belcher Rd., Blirstown (pick-your-own farm)  
Route 94, Blirstown (roadside stand)  
Phone: (908) 362-8151  
Web site: [www.racefarmllc.com](http://www.racefarmllc.com)  
Open: Daily, Apr. 1 - Nov. 30, 9 am - 6 pm  
Roadside Market: Apples; pumpkins; vegetables  
Pick Your Own: Apples; broccoli; cabbage; pumpkins; beans (lima, snap); peppers; tomatoes; raspberries; eggplant; greens; Brussel sprouts; sunflowers  
Apple Varieties: Cortland; Empire; Gala; Golden Delicious; Jonagold; Jonathan; Macoun; McIntosh; Red Delicious; Stayman/Winesap  
Also Available: Nursery stock; bedding plants; baked goods; pottery; WIC and Senior FMNP checks accepted  
Farmers Market: Boonton, Summit, Wharton, NYC

Silver Fox Farm  
313 Union Brick Rd., Blirstown  
Phone: (908) 459-5662  
Equine: Training, Boarding, Lessons

Silver Lake Farm & Greenhouses  
161 Silver Lake Rd., Blirstown  
Phone: (908) 362-8107, Fax: (908) 362-6384  
Open: April - October, Daily, 9 am - 6 pm  
Roadside Market: Vegetables, fruits  
Also Available: Bedding plants, perennials, cut flowers, WIC and Senior FMNP checks accepted

Sunset Christmas Tree Farm  
21 Frontage Rd, Blirstown  
Phone: (908) 459-4048  
Website: [www.sunsetchristmastreefarm.com](http://www.sunsetchristmastreefarm.com)  
Open: 9-4:30 (daily), Nov. 27 - Dec. 24  
Available: 1,500 trees; Blue Spruce, Norway Spruce, Douglas-fir, Concolor Fir, Fraser Fir  
Cut Your Own: Christmas trees

Thistleberry Farm  
111 Cemetary Road, Blirstown  
Phone: (908) 459-4509  
Email: [contact@thistleberryfarm.org](mailto:contact@thistleberryfarm.org)  
Website: [www.thistleberryfarm.org](http://www.thistleberryfarm.org)

Available: Pork from registered, purebred Berkshire hogs. Hogs raised on pasture and woods when possible. Supplemented with corn (locally grown)/soy/vitamins ground and mixed on the farm. No growth hormones or unnecessary antibiotics. Free Range Eggs.  
Farmers Market: Blairstown

Triple Creek Farm and Nursery  
42 Frog Pond Road, Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 797-4341  
Email: jam01@ptd.net

Website: [www.triplecreekfarmandnursery.com](http://www.triplecreekfarmandnursery.com)

Available: Trees, shrubs, perennials, vegetable plants and thousands of Christmas trees. Mulch is also available for delivery.

Retail Shop on premises: April-October; December

Cut Your Own: Christmas trees

Farmers Market: Blairstown

### **Restaurants using local products:**

Gourmet Gallery  
31 Main Street, Blairstown  
Phone: (908) 362-0051

The Cupcake Factory  
91 Union Brick Road, Blairstown  
Phone: (201) 317-3428  
Website: [www.thecupcakefactory.net](http://www.thecupcakefactory.net)  
Farmers Market: Blairstown

### **Sources for Information:**

NJDA Jersey Fresh ([www.state.nj.us/jerseyfresh/](http://www.state.nj.us/jerseyfresh/))

VisitNJFarms ([Visitnjfarms.org](http://Visitnjfarms.org))

Foodshed Alliance ([www.foodshedalliance.org](http://www.foodshedalliance.org))

Fun New Jersey.com ([www.funnewjersey.com](http://www.funnewjersey.com))

New Jersey Christmas Tree Growers Association ([www.njchristmastrees.citymax.com](http://www.njchristmastrees.citymax.com))

NJDA Jersey Equine ([www.jerseyequine.nj.gov/](http://www.jerseyequine.nj.gov/))

Local Harvest ([www.localharvest.org/](http://www.localharvest.org/))

NJDA Jersey Grown ([www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/prog/jerseygrown.html](http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/prog/jerseygrown.html))

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<sup>1</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Agriculture Development Committee. New Jersey Farmland Assessment. 1983 (tax year 1984), 1990 (tax year 1991), 2000 (tax year 2001) and 2006 (tax year 2007). Warren County – Blirstown Township.

<sup>2</sup> New Jersey Office of the National Agriculture Statistics Service.  
[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/New\\_Jersey/index.asp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_Jersey/index.asp). Accessed December 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication with Bob DeBlock, Blirstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee. August 2009.

<sup>4</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture. New Jersey Agriculture 2006 Annual Report.  
[www.state.nj.us/agriculture/pdf/06AnnualReport.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/pdf/06AnnualReport.pdf). Accessed July 2009.

<sup>5</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture. 2009 Economic Development Strategies.  
<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/conventions/2009/strategies.html>. Accessed August 2009.

<sup>6</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov). Accessed August 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Personal communication with Bob Canace, Ridge and Valley Conservancy. November 2010.

<sup>8</sup> The 2002 and 2007 Census reports withheld this data to avoid disclosing information for individual farms.

<sup>9</sup> Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. Evaluating Changes in the Eligibility Provisions for Farmland Assessment in New Jersey. October 8, 2008.  
[http://www.foodpolicy.rutgers.edu/docs/news/Farmland%20assessment%20report\\_2008.pdf](http://www.foodpolicy.rutgers.edu/docs/news/Farmland%20assessment%20report_2008.pdf). Accessed July 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County. Green Pages: An Agricultural Resource Guide. Online at: <http://salem.rutgers.edu/greenpages/index.html> . Accessed July 9, 2009.

## CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLANNING CONTEXT OF BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP



### *Land Use Patterns*

A land parcel in the area of present-day Blairstown Township is known to have been deeded to John Hyndshaw in 1729, and another surveyed to William Penn as early as 1718. By 1760, Benjamin Smyth had built a gristmill in what is now the historic Blairstown Village area, north of Route 94. Other hamlets, such as Vail, Paulina, Walnut Creek, Cedar Lake and Jacksonburg, grew up to service the rural settlers. Today, commercial activity is mainly clustered in Blairstown Village and westward along Route 94 then south to another pocket along Vail Road, where a small village was established in 1888. Today, the remaining hamlets are basically residential clusterings set amid the woodlands and farms that define Blairstown's character. The Township consists of 31.8 square miles and has approximately 5,747 residents (*Census 2000*). While Blairstown Township has traditionally been a farming community, the character of farming has changed from predominantly dairy in the early 1900s to predominantly field crops in recent years.

As the northeast United States grew into one of the major commercial areas on the continent, regional transportation routes were established throughout the area and John Blair, for whom the Township is named, contributed to these as a railroad magnate. At one time, three railroads ran through the Township. Now, the path of the former Paulins Kill Railroad, established by Blair in 1876, serves as a recreational rail trail through the center of the Township. The 27-mile trail stretches west to the Delaware River at Columbia, and northeast to Sparta Junction in Sussex County. A section of railroad known as the Lackawanna Cutoff runs through Blairstown south of the Paulins Kill Valley Trail. It is currently inactive, but the NJ Department of Transportation plans to reactivate the line, providing service from Pennsylvania to New York by connecting to the existing train service at Netcong. Through his railroads and other industries, Blair made Blairstown a regional trading center for northern Warren County and it remains so today.

A centers-based land use pattern, with development in small towns and hamlets surrounded by agricultural or natural areas, remained prevalent throughout Blairstown and Warren County into the mid-twentieth century. Following World War II, suburban-style development expanded westward from New York City, and from eastern New Jersey. These development patterns were promoted by government incentives that encouraged the construction of single-family homes, and the construction of Interstate highways, including Interstates 78 and 80, that greatly increased the ease of living in rural communities, away from traditional employment centers.

Despite serving as a regional center since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Blairstown has not seen the rapid growth that has occurred in other Warren County centers such as Hackettstown and Phillipsburg that were closer to the major east/west roadways. Indicative of the differences, both Hackettstown and Phillipsburg were proposed by the county as regional centers in its *2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*, while Blairstown was not.<sup>1</sup> No centers are currently designated under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan for Warren County, although Oxford Township and Washington Township/Washington Borough (shared center) have submitted pre-petitions. (*NJ Department of Community Affairs, Office of Smart Growth*)<sup>2</sup>

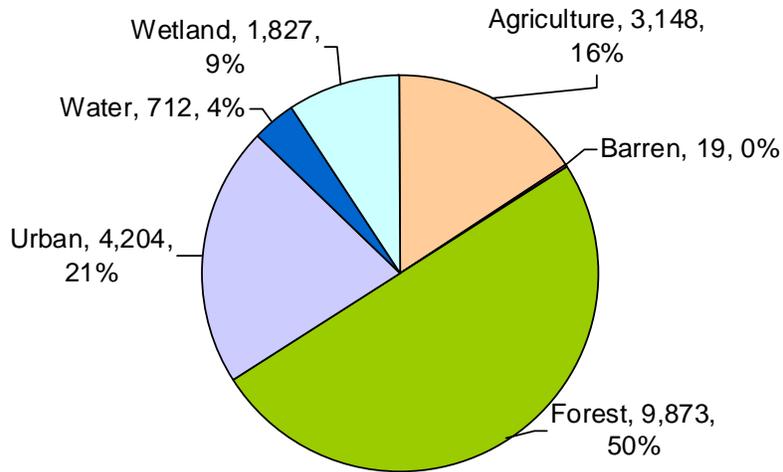
Today, Route 94 and Blairstown Village maintain the most notable concentrations of non-residential development in Blairstown Township. The Township's new municipal building, one of its firehouses and two farm equipment supply stores are all located on Route 94, as are the North Warren Regional High School and land set aside for future active recreation facilities. The Township library and additional fields for the high school are located off Route 94. Additional pockets of non-residential areas are near the Blairstown Airport off Lambert Road; on Hope Road (County Route 521) near its intersection with Edgehill Road; and near the intersection of Vail Road with Mt. Hermon Road.

*“Most of the homes in Blairstown have been constructed along the existing roadways in the Township, in the so-called ‘Ribbon Residential’ pattern of development. There are only a few suburban type residential developments in Blairstown” (2006 Environmental Resource Inventory/2004 Master Plan)*<sup>3</sup>, such as the Ridge Lane cul-de-sac off Hoagland Road and a development between the Lackawanna Cutoff and the Shotwell farm, both in the southwestern portion of the Township. In recent years, developers have taken advantage of the Township's single-family conservation cluster zoning to create developments such as Partridge Glen and Scenic Hills, along Heller Hill and Hope roads.

The remainder of Blairstown is either active agricultural lands, private woodlands, or public lands such as portions of Worthington State Forest, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Limestone Ridge Marsh Preserve and several other properties preserved by the municipality, the state or nonprofit organizations to protect environmentally-sensitive areas, water bodies and forests and for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. According to the 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data, forested areas make up the largest percent of Blairstown's lands (50%), with urban and agricultural uses, second and third at 21% and 16% respectively. While the change in forested area has been insignificant, the largest loss has been in agriculture (-23%), which has been replaced by urban land (+39%). (see *Land Use/Land Cover* maps, and *Land Cover Types in Blairstown Township* and *Land Cover Trends* charts, below).

### Land Cover Types in Blairstown Township (Acres)

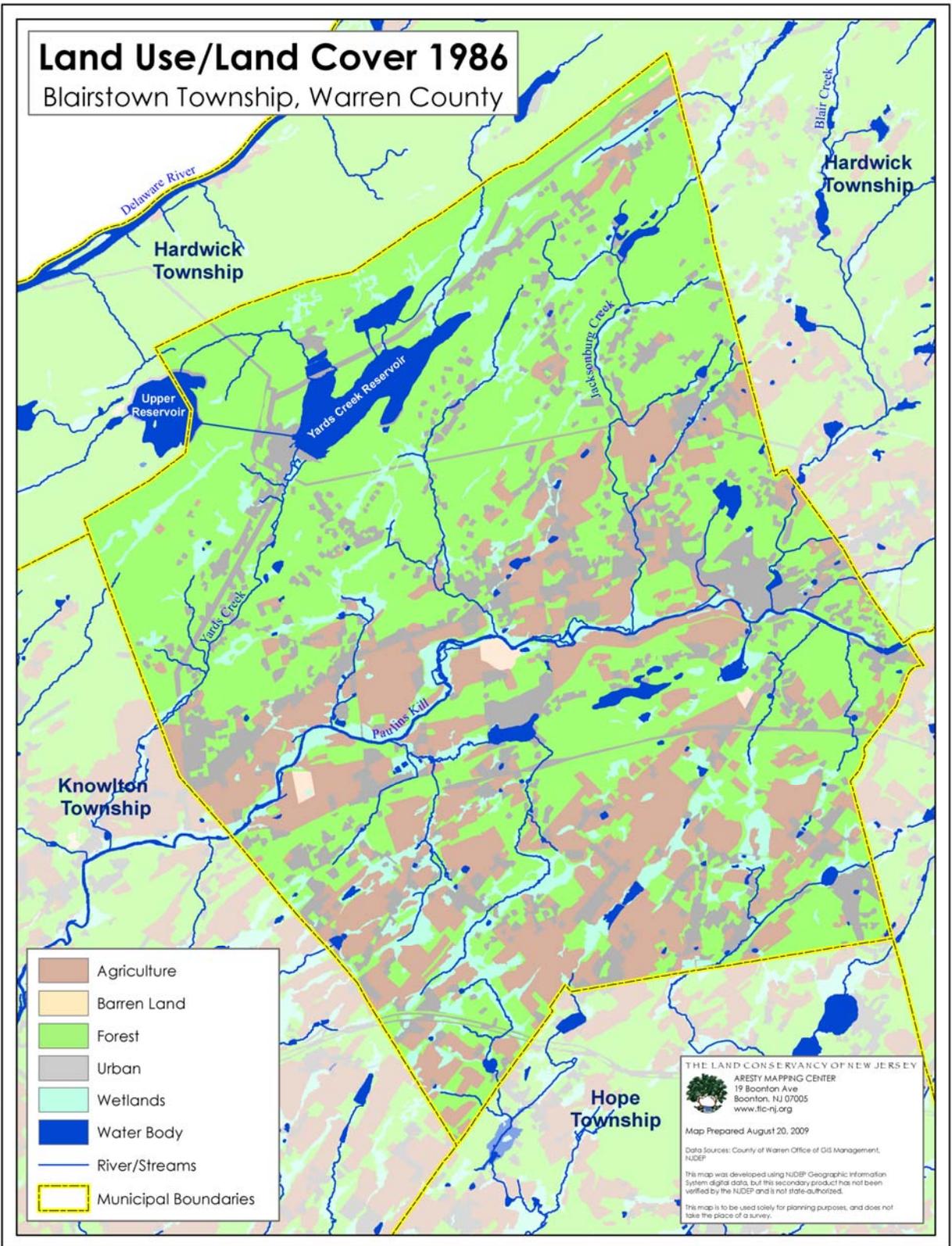
Source: NJDEP 2007 Land Use/Land Cover Data

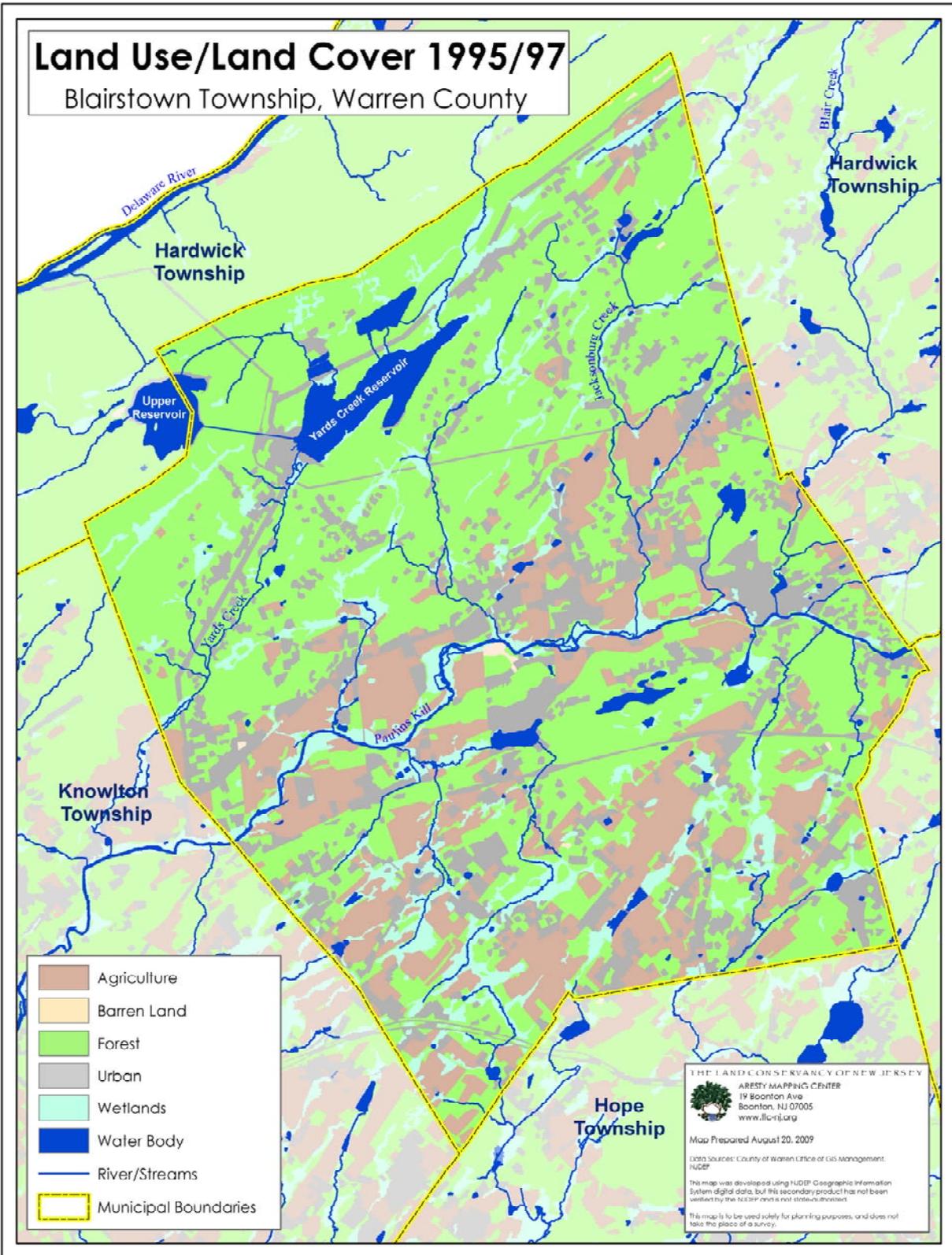


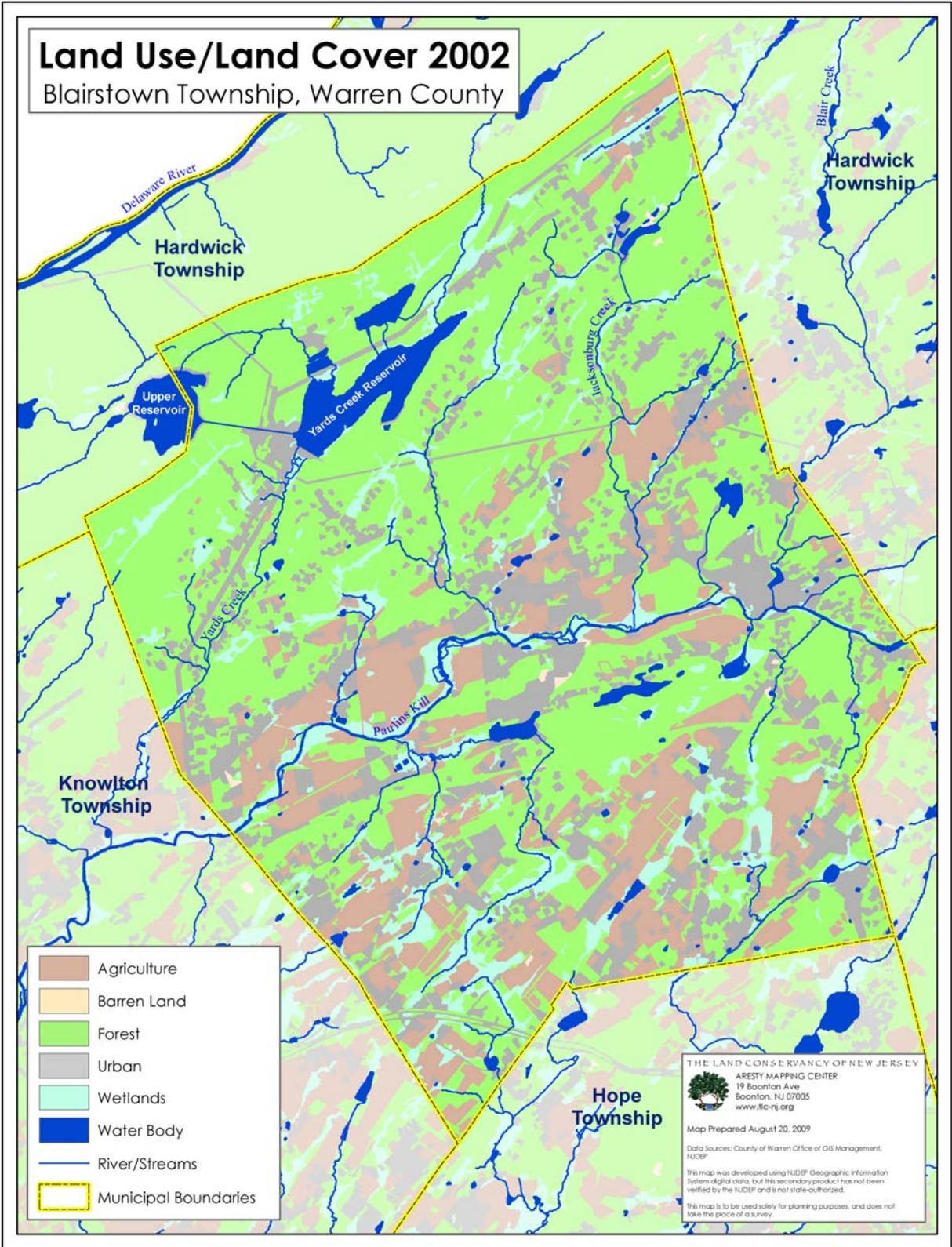
### Land Use/Land Cover Trends in Blairstown Township

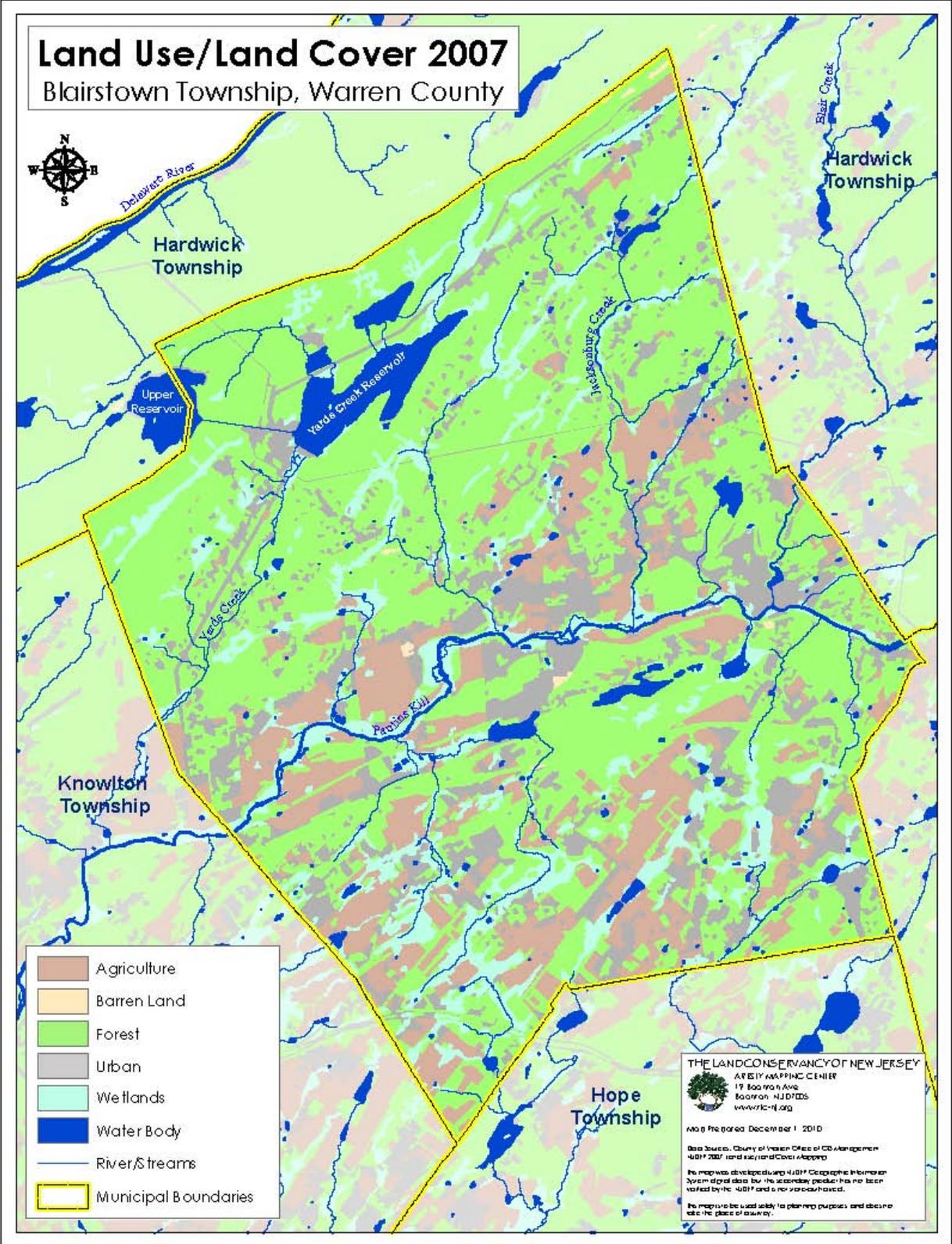
	1986		1995/97		2002		2007		1986-2007
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	% Change
Agriculture	4,103	21%	3,515	18%	3,261	16%	3,148	16%	-23%
Barren	69	0%	28	0%	37	0%	19	0%	-73%
Forest	10,043	51%	10,142	51%	10,046	51%	9,873	50%	-2%
Urban	3,022	15%	3,559	18%	3,907	20%	4,204	21%	39%
Water	661	3%	647	3%	676	3%	712	4%	8%
Wetland	1,885	10%	1,891	10%	1,856	9%	1,827	9%	-3%
	19,784		19,784		19,784		19,784		

Source: NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover Data









## Development Pressure

Despite its limited access to regional highways and mass transit, Blaiirstown Township has experienced significant growth, particularly from the 1960s through 1990. Between 1930 and 1970 Blaiirstown represented less than 3% of Warren County’s population, but between 1970 and 1980 the Township’s population doubled from 2,189 to 4,360, Since then the population of Blaiirstown has represented upwards of 5% of the county total. (*U.S. Census*) Blaiirstown’s population is projected to rise between 10% and 12 % in each 10-year period between 2000 and 2030, while the overall County population is expected to rise more slowly (see *Population Trends* chart below). (*Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)

Population Trends											
	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
<b>Blaiirstown</b>	1,416	1,449	1,571	1,797	2,189	4,360	5,331	5,747	6,312	7,120	8,001
<i>Growth</i>		2.33%	8.42%	14.39%	21.81%	99.18%	22.27%	7.80%	9.83%	12.80%	12.37%
<b>Warren Co.</b>	49,319	50,181	54,374	63,220	73,960	84,429	91,607	102,437	116,436	126,834	136,666
<i>Growth</i>		1.75%	8.36%	16.27%	16.99%	14.15%	8.50%	11.82%	13.67%	8.93%	7.75%
<b>BT % of WC</b>		2.89%	2.89%	2.84%	2.96%	5.16%	5.82%	5.61%	5.42%	5.61%	5.85%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Census; Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*

The Township’s growth has accumulated from individual homes constructed on small lots along the local road network or in several single-family cul-de-sac developments scattered throughout the Township. In an effort to limit development and development density, the Township rezoned its 2- and 3-acre residential zones to 5-acre minimum lots in 2001. It also offered developers a single-family conservation cluster housing option to help preserve open space, farmland and critical natural resources such as steep slopes, scenic vistas and wetlands. This option allow the developer to increase the density of single family homes on a portion of the developable tract while preserving a minimum of 70% of the land as open space.

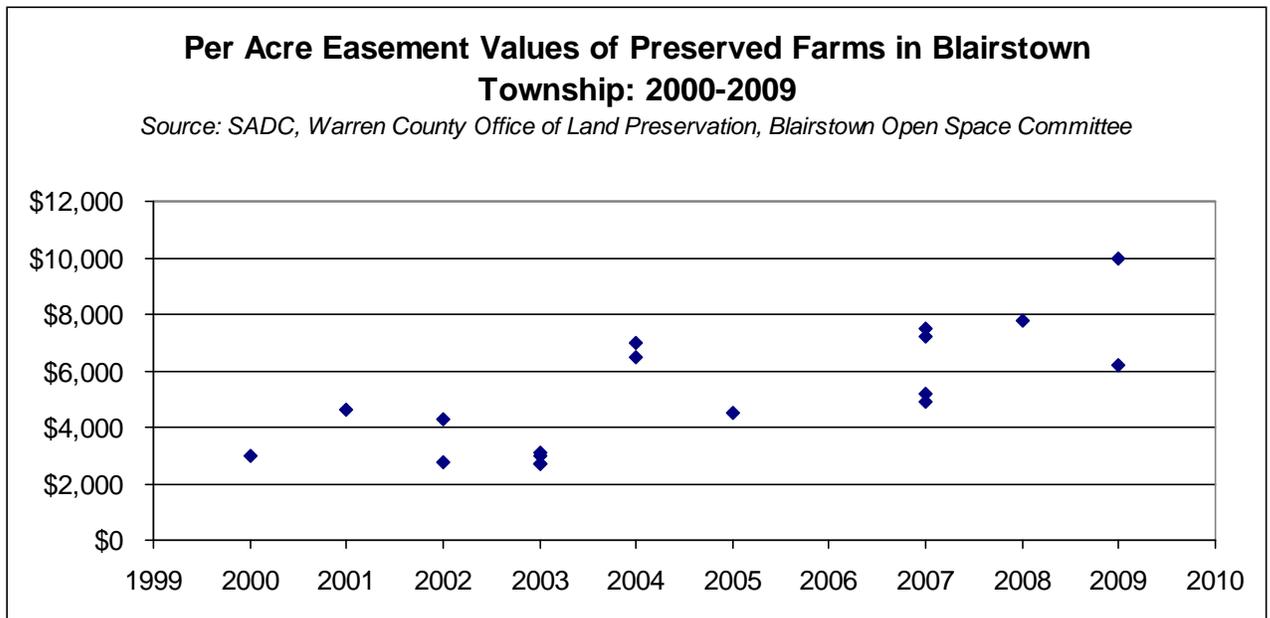
A study showing snapshots of the development saturation of Warren County in 1972/1984/1995/2000 shows the most significant change occurring between 1972 and 1984, which tracks with the population growth pattern. (*Rutgers Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis*)<sup>4</sup> Another study showing growth in developed use areas in Blaiirstown from 1986 to 1995/97 reveals that 78 acres of impervious surface were added to the Township in that period, bringing the total impervious surface to 599 acres, or about 3% of the land area in the municipality. This development occurred predominantly in the area of the Township south of Route 94. (*NJDEP*) In the period between 1990 and 2009, growth slowed, as can be seen by the number of building permits authorized. Both historically and for the first half of 2009, building permits in Blaiirstown were exclusively for single family homes, and represent a little over 4% total county permits (see *Residential Building Permits* chart below). (*State of New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development*)<sup>5</sup>

Residential Building Permits 1990- June 2009																					
Blairstown Twp.	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>422</b>
Single	14	7	18	22	31	40	35	22	32	32	28	29	23	15	13	18	26	13	1	3	422
Multi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0										
<i>Cumulative</i>		21	39	61	92	132	167	189	221	253	281	310	333	348	361	379	405	418	419	422	422
<b>Warren County</b>																					
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>10083</b>
Single	209	166	288	434	562	424	444	449	761	868	755	734	867	580	573	441	452	241	136	0	9384
Multi	18	30	0	32	44	20	0	2	23	22	141	31	10	5	47	119	60	17	10	68	631
<i>Cumulative</i>		423	711	1177	1783	2227	2671	3122	3906	4796	5692	6457	7334	7919	8539	9099	9611	9869	10015	10083	10083

Source: State of New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
[http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/bp/bp\\_index.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/bp/bp_index.html) web site. Data from U.S. Bureau of the Census

Development pressures may be expected to intensify in Blairstown for the near future, “due to the relative scarcity of land for new residential development in the northeastern part of the state” (*Township of Blairstown Master Plan*) coupled with potential restrictions on future development in the Highlands Preservation Area within nearby townships such as Allamuchy, Independence and Liberty. The NJ Department of Transportation’s planned reactivation of service to the Lackawanna Cutoff and proposed station on Route 521 in Blairstown could provide an additional impetus for more development. The Warren County Planning Department anticipates that the population of Blairstown Township will increase approximately 39% by 2030. (see *Population* chart above).

From the perspective of land values, there has been a general trend upward in the per-acre easement values paid to preserve farms. The Township experienced a revaluation of property in 2005. Since then, the per-acre easement values paid to preserve farmland in Blairstown have risen from an average of \$4,016/acre for farms preserved between 2000 and 2005 to an average of \$6,971/acre for farms preserved between 2007 and 2009 (there were no farms preserved in 2006) (see *Per Acre Easement Values* chart below).



### ***Public Infrastructure – Sewer and Water***

Two public wells managed by the Blairstown Water Department provide water supply to approximately 200 businesses and residences, including the elementary school and Blair Academy, in the Blairstown Village area at the eastern end of the Township. This area is also served by several old subsurface cesspools. There are three package sewerage plants in the Township, located at North Warren Regional High School, Blair Academy and the A&P strip mall on Route 94, sized to meet the needs of the facilities they. The majority of the Township is dependent on individual wells and septic systems, and there are no plans to introduce sewer service to the Township, nor to expand the existing sewerage facilities or public water supply<sup>6</sup>. Both the community and the non-community wells are located in areas where concentrations of agricultural soils can be found, particularly along the Route 94 corridor. (*2006 Environmental Resource Inventory*)<sup>7</sup>

### ***Land Use Planning Initiatives***

Blairstown Township and its farmers can look to extensive and sustained land use planning efforts undertaken by all levels of government to guide its land use planning decisions. These tools include the *2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan* and the *2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*, as well as municipal tools such as the Township *Master Plan*, zoning regulations and other planning and resource documents such as *2006 Environmental Resource Inventory* and this *Farmland Preservation Plan Update*.

### **State Development and Redevelopment Plan**

The New Jersey State Planning Commission has drafted the *State Development and Redevelopment Plan* (SDRP) that outlines general policy objectives concerning land use and future development in the State. (*2001 NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan*)<sup>8</sup> The SDRP identifies five Planning Areas within the State where different sets of goals and guidelines are considered appropriate to determine development activities (see *NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan* map below). These Planning Areas are labeled as Metropolitan, Suburban, Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive lands.

The SDRP also identifies Designated Centers where future development and redevelopment activities are most appropriate and will be actively promoted. Centers are categorized as Urban Centers, Regional Centers, Towns, Villages, and Hamlets corresponding to criteria including size, regional location, population, residential and employment densities, and available housing stock. The combination of Planning Areas and Designated Centers establishes a comprehensive framework for pursuing land use and development regulation throughout New Jersey.

*Metropolitan Planning Areas (PAI)* comprise the most intensely developed regions in the state. The goals in this planning area category revolve around revitalizing existing cities and towns by encouraging compact growth and redevelopment. The Metropolitan Planning Area is identified as the most appropriate location for future development in New Jersey. Blairstown Township does not contain land within the Metropolitan Planning Area. The

only Metropolitan Planning Area in Warren County is to the southwest along the Delaware, including Phillipsburg and portions of Alpha Borough and Lopatcong Township

*Suburban Planning Areas (PA2)* are called upon to support most of the new development that will occur in New Jersey while maintaining the character of existing communities there. Growth in suburban town centers is especially encouraged in order to help protect and preserve the natural resources that exist in these areas. The Suburban Planning Area is meant to complement metropolitan areas, and is most commonly found outside heavily urban areas. Blairstown Township does not contain land within the Suburban Planning Area. The only Suburban Planning Area in Warren County is in the vicinity of the Phillipsburg Metropolitan Planning Area, including portions of Alpha Borough and Greenwich and Lopatcong Townships.

*Fringe Planning Areas (PA3)* serve as an appropriate interface between suburban and rural areas. They are not as developed as metropolitan and suburban areas, but support more development activity than nearby rural lands. Fringe Areas play the important role as a buffer between these largely incompatible land uses. Consequently, they are often the frontlines of urban sprawl, and must be carefully planned to ensure that development is appropriately restricted to existing urbanized areas. Blairstown Township does not contain any land within the Fringe Planning Area.

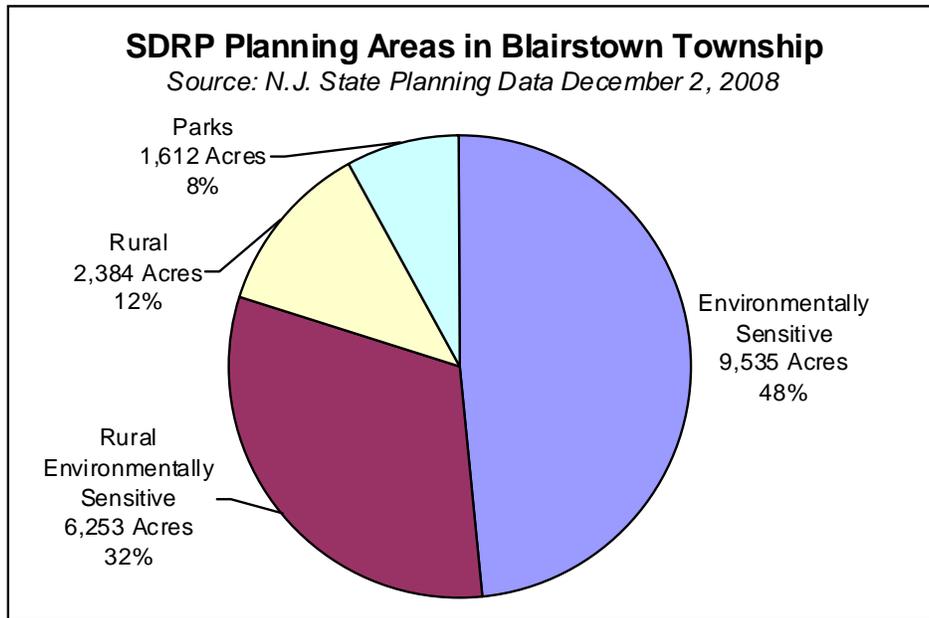
*Rural Planning Areas (PA4)* are suitable for the preservation of large contiguous areas of farmland. Sustaining the agricultural industry while confining development and redevelopment within existing towns are included among the policy objectives applicable to these areas. Lands within the Rural Planning Area in Blairstown Township total approximately 2,384 acres (12%), and are located exclusively in the southern portion of the Township. Of these, 679 acres (21%) are identified as land in active agricultural use by the 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data.

The *Rural-Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B)* is a subset of the Rural Planning Area and separately identified on the Policy Map. Lands in this Planning Area are suitable for agriculture but also contain environmentally sensitive features that must be taken into account, such as steep slopes or critical wildlife habitats. These areas number approximately 6,253 acres (32%) in Blairstown Township and occupy much of the central portion of the Township between the Rural Planning Area to the south and Route 94 to the north. There are additional sections just north of Route 94. Of these, 2,308 acres (70%) are identified as land in active agricultural use by the 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data.

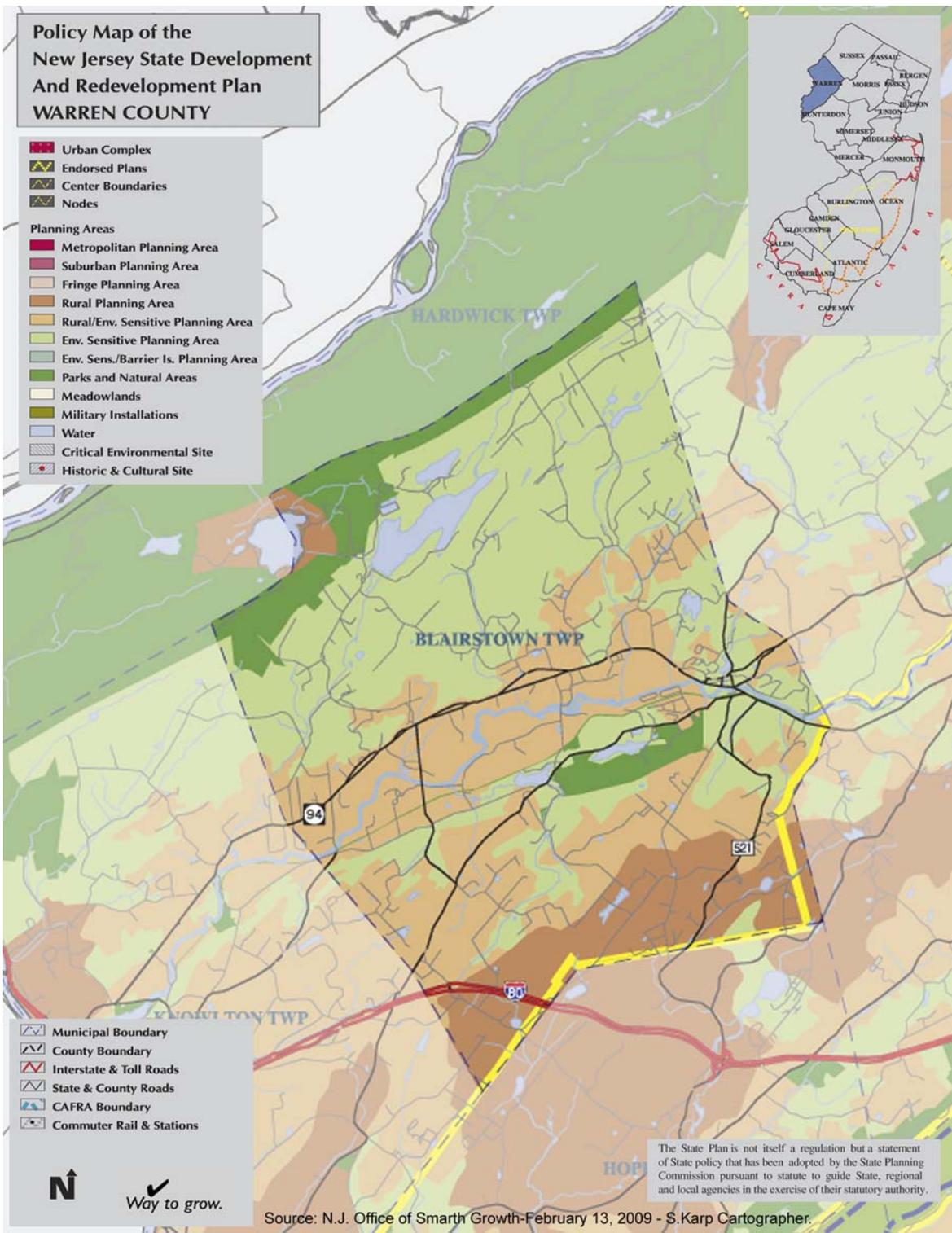
*Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (PA5)* contain lands where natural resource preservation should be the primary planning consideration. Development should be minimized or constrained to existing centers while large contiguous natural areas should be preserved as open space. These lands occupy much of the northern section of the Township as it rises to the Kittatinny ridgeline, where they border state and federal public lands. There are also pockets of environmentally sensitive land along and south of the Paulins Kill. This Planning Area occupies approximately 9,535 acres (48%) of the Township. Of

these, 313 acres (9%) are identified as land in active agricultural use by the 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data.

Blairstown also contains a number of public lands, such as Worthington State Forest, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Limestone Ridge Marsh Preserve, which are categorized on the State Plan Policy Map as Parks and Natural Areas. These lands total 1,612 acres (8%) of Blairstown. (See *Planning Areas in Blairstown Township* chart below). Of these, 13 acres are identified as land in active agricultural use by the 2007 Land Use/Land Cover data.



The discussion above references the adopted *2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan* (SDRP) and the official State Plan Policy Map from February 3, 2009, but a *Draft Final Plan* and corresponding draft mapping are currently available for review. The map below shows Blairstown as projected by the policy map of the *2001 SDRP*.



Source: New Jersey State Planning Commission. New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan. March 2001 Policy Map Update: February 3, 2009

For Blirstown, the only apparent change in Planning Area designations between the current State Policy Map and the Draft Final Plan Policy Map is a parcel on the eastern edge of the Upper Reservoir that straddles the Blirstown/Hardwick border. Under the Draft Final Plan, this parcel would be redesignated from Environmentally Sensitive to Rural Planning Area. The other changes to the map in the Blirstown area are enhancements to show Category One waters such as Yards Creek, preserved farms, and additions to public lands within the Township since the previous version of the map. Notable in Warren County are the removal of the proposed Regional Center designation for Phillipsburg and Proposed Town Center designation for Alpha. The closest designated centers to Blirstown are Byram (village) and Newton (regional) in Sussex County (see *Policy Maps* above). Another change proposed in narrative of the Draft Final Plan is the opportunity to establish Agricultural Nodes through the Plan Endorsement Process. The purpose of Agricultural Nodes is to concentrate infrastructure and services supportive of maximizing agricultural viability in appropriate locations, preferably where infrastructure already exists, “with suitably planned and implemented measures to protect the characteristics of surrounding areas.” (*Office of Smart Growth Draft Final Plan*)

Centers are defined by the New Jersey State Planning Commission as “compact forms of development that, compared to sprawl development, consume less land, deplete fewer natural resources and are more efficient in the delivery of public services.” (*SDRP*) Centers become *proposed* and then *designated* after the municipalities or counties that encompass them submit development plans to the State Planning Commission, which are subsequently endorsed by the Office of Smart Growth. (*SDRP*) Although Warren County currently does not contain any designated centers, Oxford, Washington Borough, and Washington Townships have held pre-petition meetings. (*Office of Smart Growth*) Two areas in Blirstown that could have potential as Centers are the Blirstown Main Street Village area as a designated Village and the Vail section as a Hamlet, but the Township has no current plans to pursue such designations.<sup>9</sup> (*Joel McGreen*)

### **Highlands Regional Master Plan**

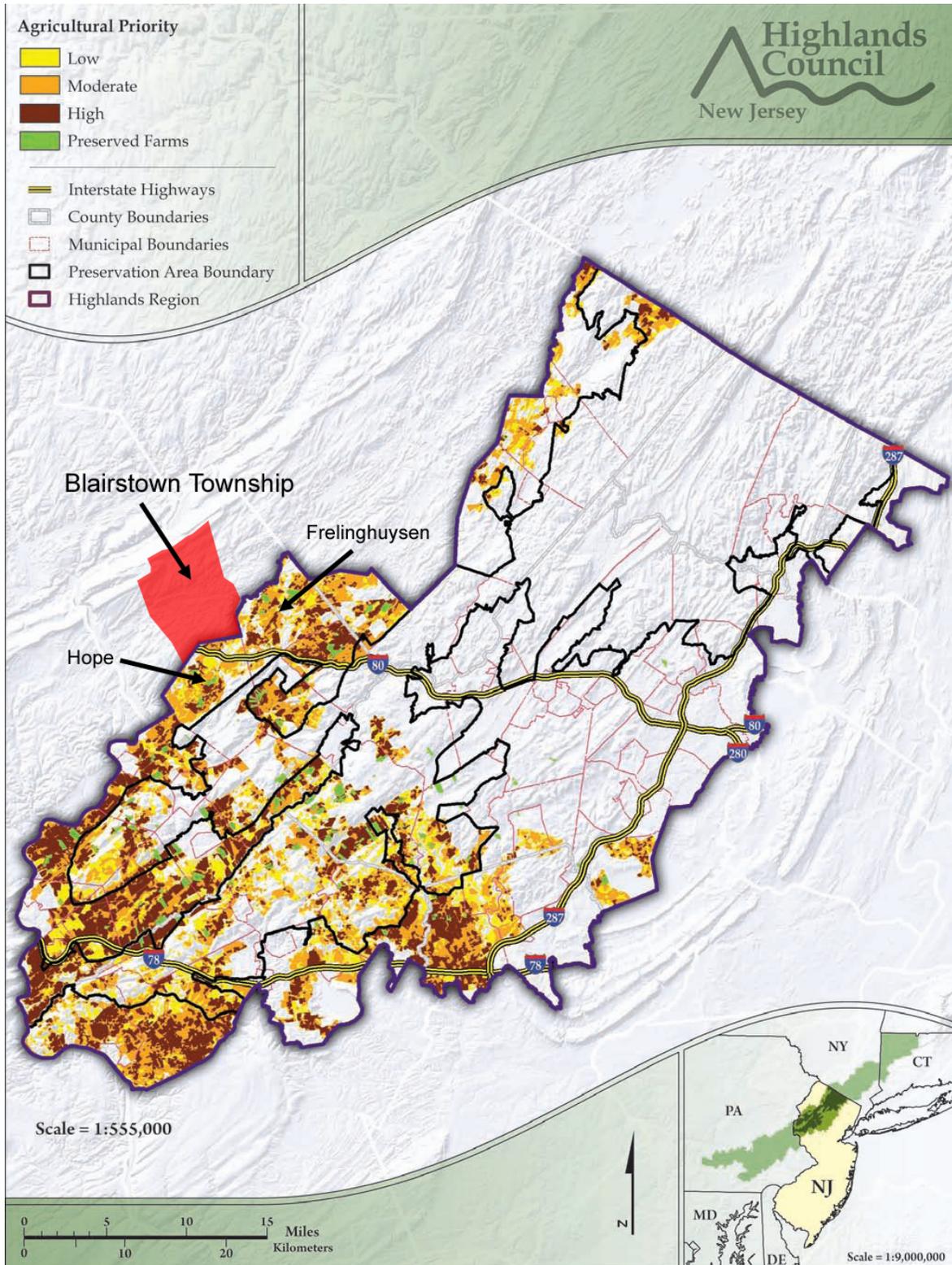
The State Plan supports the recognition of Special Resource Areas (SRA). SRAs are defined as having “unique characteristics or resources of statewide importance which are essential to the sustained well being and function of its own region and other regions or systems—environmental, economic, and social—and to the quality of life for future generations.” The Highlands Region is the first, and currently the only, SRA, although a petition has been presented for consideration of a Sourland Mountains SRA. To ensure the continued uniqueness of such areas, or regions, which straddle counties and municipalities, the State Planning Commission seeks to foster regional planning initiatives for these areas. Other areas that are similarly acknowledged as planning regions, established by statute, include the New Jersey Meadowlands and Pinelands (both overseen by commissions), and coastal area of New Jersey under the auspices of the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act. (*Office of Smart Growth*) Additionally, nine municipalities in Monmouth County began working in 2006 with the Office of Smart Growth, among other agencies, to establish a Bayshore Regional Strategic Plan for the Raritan Bay<sup>10</sup>, and several counties are participating in a regional initiative called the Liberty Corridor, which focuses on economic

development through transportation improvements and brownfield reuse, among other objectives.<sup>11</sup>

The New Jersey State Legislature enacted the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (HWPPA) on August 10, 2004. The Act identified areas within the Highlands Region as either Preservation or Planning Areas. In an effort to ensure the integrity of northern New Jersey's drinking water resources, the HWPPA imposes strict land use controls within the Highlands Preservation Area, which encompasses large parts of the 88-municipality region. Lands within the Preservation Area are subject to heightened restrictions on development, water use and activities that affect water quality, or environmentally sensitive lands. The HWPPA expands mandatory buffers around the region's streams and water bodies, sets limits on impervious coverage for individual properties and requires *Highlands Regional Master Plan* (RMP) conformance from Preservation Area municipalities, among other criteria. Lands in the Highlands Planning Area are not subject to the strict land use controls of the Preservation Area. However, municipalities can opt in to the stricter standards if they choose to, and are offered planning grants by the N.J. Highlands Council to help align Municipal Master Plans with the RMP. The Council passed the final RMP in July 2008, which was then ratified via a September 5, 2008 Executive Order by N.J. Governor Jon S. Corzine.

The Highlands region covers 13% of New Jersey's land area. Situated in northwestern New Jersey, its western boundary stops at Blairstown's border with neighboring Hope and Frelinghuysen Townships. The portions of these Townships closest to Blairstown fall within the Highlands Region Planning Area, where conformance with the RMP is voluntary. However, these western portions of the Townships are also classified predominantly by the RMP as Agricultural Resource Areas (ARAs). ARAs are defined as areas that contain contiguous farm belts and quality agricultural soils. Furthermore, the ARAs in these Townships include large sections defined as moderate to high Agricultural Priority Areas, based on their suitability to agricultural production and other criteria such as development potential, local commitment, contiguity with other farm parcels, and size (see *Highlands Region Agricultural Priority Areas* map below). (*Highlands Regional Master Plan*)<sup>12</sup> The impact for Blairstown is twofold: the Township has the advantage of being in close proximity to areas defined as high priority for agriculture, and the pressures of being outside the Highlands region and thus potentially more easily accessible to developers.

## Highlands Region Agricultural Priority Areas in Proximity to Blirstown



Source: N.J. Highlands Council Regional Master Plan

## Warren County Strategic Growth Plan

The *Warren County Strategic Growth Plan* fulfills the requirement set forth by the New Jersey County Planning Act (N.J.S.A. 40:27-1 et seq.), that counties must adopt a plan that governs their physical development. The *Strategic Growth Plan* was adopted in December 2004 and revised in October 2005, and serves as an update to the County's 1979 *General Development Plan* and the 1984 *Transportation Plan*. The *Strategic Growth Plan* is an effort to enhance intergovernmental coordination by serving as an intermediary between State and local governments. As such, it is a vital link in the planning process that connects policy with action. It incorporates State-level land use policies—as outlined in the State Plan—into plans for local, on-the-ground initiatives such as center designations and resource conservation efforts. (*2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)<sup>13</sup>

The *Strategic Growth Plan* was developed with input from the Warren County Planning Board, an 88-member steering committee, and eight public meetings held throughout the planning process. This resulted in a series of general policy goals and indicators that measure the progress being made towards these goals. The number one goal identified in the *Strategic Growth Plan* is the preservation and enhancement of the County's rural character. Corresponding indicators include preserved open space and farmlands, designated historic sites, agricultural output and agricultural land base. Among the goals identified by the *Strategic Growth Plan* are concentrating growth in existing centers, improving public infrastructure in these centers, and maintaining quality of life for local residents. (*2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)

The *Warren County Strategic Growth Plan* supports an alternative, centers-based scenario where commercial and industrial zones are restricted to existing centers of development. Public opinion surveys that were conducted as part of the *Strategic Growth Plan* identify this alternative scenario as the preferred option to the existing zoning scheme. The Plan's transportation modeling also shows that the alternative zoning is less likely to induce additional traffic delays. (*2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)

The *Strategic Growth Plan* concludes with a series of recommendations that are aimed at advancing this alternative, centers-based scenario. Many recommendations are focused on promoting development in existing centers. These include allowing non-residential zones only in existing centers, reviewing and improving local design standards, creating transportation financing districts and pursuing downtown revitalization through brownfield redevelopment and Urban Enterprise Zone designation. Other recommendations advocate resource preservation efforts such as open space and farmland preservation, stormwater planning, density transfer programs (including TDR) and subdivision design ordinances that mandate clustering or conservation design. (*2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)

The *Strategic Growth Plan* indicates that it may be appropriate for Blairstown Township to seek SDRP designation of its Blairstown Village area as Village Center “as recommended in municipal comprehensive plans and the County General Development Plan.” It further recommends that municipalities “apply the smart growth principles inherent in their

existing centers” whether or not they seek center designation under the SDRP. In its transportation section, the *Strategic Growth Plan* references the State’s plan to reactivate train service on the Lackawanna Cutoff, with a proposed passenger station to be located on Route 521 in Blirstown, approximately one mile from the Blirstown Village area. Although zoned commercial, the proposed station area is surrounded by low-density residential zoning. Thus, the Plan suggests that a park and ride located in the higher density Village Area, with jitney service to and from the station, may be appropriate to the Township’s intended densities and uses. (*2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)

## **Municipal Planning**

The *Master Plan of Blirstown Township* includes two elements that specifically address farmland and agriculture. As the introduction to the November 2004 *Periodic Reexamination Report and Land Use Plan Amendment* states, “Blirstown Township characteristically is a rural municipality [that] includes diverse areas of forests, parks and agricultural land, with development nodes at Blirstown, Jacksonburg, Paulina and other crossroad settlements.”

- 1) ***Master Plan Periodic Reexamination Report (MPPRR)***, adopted 1995 and reaffirmed in 2001, key goals and objectives, as they relate to agricultural sustainability and farmland preservation:
  - “...*the rural and country atmosphere which prevails throughout most of Blirstown Township should be maintained*”
  - Farmland should be preserved “*to the maximum extent possible in a manner that is reasonable, achievable and equitable to the farmer. A “Right to Farm” ordinance should be required to be shown on all approved subdivision maps and communicated to prospective buyers and “both public and private participation in the New Jersey State Farmland Preservation Program should be encouraged.”*<sup>14</sup>
- 2) ***Land Use Plan Element***, adopted 1978 and amended 2001 and 2004:
  - *2001 Land Use Plan Element* recommendations resulted in consolidation of previous R-2 and R-3 zones into one R-5 zone with a 5-acre minimum lot size, elimination of the lot averaging provisions, continuation of the Single-Family Conservation Cluster option, and rezoning of a portion of the General Commercial & Industrial Zone to R-5, “*in order to maintain the prevailing rural character...and safeguard the identified environmental characteristics of the land.*”
  - *2004 Land Use Plan Element* recommendations focused on nonresidential areas in order to create a balance with residential areas and maintain the Township’s rural character. These recommendations included a) creation of Village Neighborhood (VN) mixed-use zoning districts in the Village Area and near the cross roads of Vail Road and Polkville Road, b) removal of agricultural support services as a permitted use in the Professional and Research Office (PRO) zoning districts “*since they are not compatible with other permitted uses nor the intended purpose of the zoning district*”; and “*to ensure the rural atmosphere...is maintained,*” eliminating automobile sales, hotels and motels,

and car washes as permitted uses in the Highway Commercial (HC) district but permitting farms “in concert with the rural character of the township.”<sup>15</sup>

3) **Farmland Preservation Plan Element**, December 2002

- **Purpose:** “To identify existing farmland and areas of significant agricultural value in the Township of Blairstown, to assess which of these identified areas have the greatest worth for preservation, to formulate a strategy for preserving farmland and the agricultural areas of value to the greatest extent possible, and to consider the various options and mechanisms to effectuate the Plan.”<sup>16</sup>

**Municipal Zoning**

The majority of Blairstown Township is zoned R-5, Single-Family Residential, with a minimum lot size of 5 acres, as a method to maximize low density and thereby preserve the rural character of the Township. The other zones in Blairstown generally are clustered in the vicinity of Route 94 and the Village Area and range from a minimum of 10,000 square feet in the Village Neighborhood and Village Residential zones to 1 acre in the Community Commercial Zone, 2 acres in the Highway Commercial and Professional and Research Office Zones and 5 acres in the General Commercial & Industrial Zones (see *Zoning* map below). The R-5 zone occupies approximately 95% of Blairstown’s land area, followed by General Commercial & Industrial and Highway Commercial zones. The *Blairstown Township Zoning Districts* chart below shows the number of parcels and number of acres in each zone, reflecting that, as is the Township’s intent, the highest densities are in the Village Neighborhood and Village Residential zones.

<b>Blairstown Township Zoning Districts by Lot Size, Acres and Parcels</b>				
<b>Zone</b>	<b>Min. Lot Size</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Parcels</b>	<b>% of Land</b>
Community Commercial (CC)	1 acre	19	13	0.10%
General Commercial & Industrial (GCI)	5 acres	339	14	1.75%
Highway Commercial (HC)	2 acres	234	72	1.21%
Professional and Research Office (PRO)	2 acres	131	15	0.68%
Single Family Residential (R-5)	5 acres	18,379	2,617	94.95%
Village Neighborhood (VN)	10,000 sq ft	20	83	0.10%
Village Residential (VR)	10,000 sq ft	67	86	0.35%
Mixed Zone - HCR5		45	1	0.23%
Mixed Zone - VRR2		45	3	0.23%
No Zone Assigned		76	14	0.39%
<b>Total</b>		<b>19,356</b>	<b>2,918</b>	
<i>Sources: New Jersey Association of County Tax Boards; Blairstown Municipal Code</i>				

In addition to strategically locating development of high and low density, the Township offers two higher density options in its R-5 zone, with the intent once again, of maximizing the retention of the Township’s character through maximizing retention and contiguity of its open spaces and concentrating high density developments.

- The *senior citizen housing developments* option permits a higher density in a limited area of the R-5 zone that is adjacent to, and would allow seniors access to, the services of Village Neighborhood zone near Vail Road.
- **Single-Family Conservation Clusters** are permitted on tracts of land at least 100 acres in size in the R-5 zone. The minimum tract was set at 100 acres because development/subdivision costs were deemed uneconomical on smaller parcels. (*Joel McGreen*) Where possible, they allow the same number of units to be built as if the land were being conventionally developed, but a minimum 70% of the tract must be preserved as open space for conservation, recreation or other approved purpose. Since the purpose of this option is to preserve and protect treed areas, steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, scenic vistas and other desirable open space, conservation of environmentally sensitive features takes precedence over placement of building lots. The open space may be offered to the Township or managed through a homeowners association. As of November 2010, the conservation cluster option has been employed twice in Blairstown, preserving almost 100 acres. The Partridge Glen parcel (Block 2003.01/Lot 5) preserved 18.5 acres of primarily woodland and wetlands and the Scenic Areas development, which was originally a farm, includes about 80 acres of conserved land (Block 2003/Lots 14.22 & 14.23), approximately 25 acres of which is leased out for farming hay. (*Joel McGreen*)

Other planning tools to control density include:

*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 in order to accommodate affordable housing units, neighborhood commercial stores, or “village” development densities, while other lots can be very large in order to encompass active farms or natural areas. As discussed above, this provision was removed from the Blairstown code following the Township’s 2001 reexamination report. This was due to concerns about impervious surfaces, nitrate concentrations and runoff. (*Joel McGreen*)

*Non-contiguous cluster zoning*, in contrast to regular cluster zoning, permits the transfer of development density *between* parcels instead of only within parcels. First, a “sending” parcel (where the permitted development density is reduced) and a “receiving” parcel (where the permitted development density is increased) are designated. Then, the total development potential on both properties is calculated. In a case where two fifty-acre parcels are undergoing non-contiguous clustering under ten-acre zoning, there are five permitted units on each lot and ten permitted units overall. Finally, the overall development potential (10 units in this case) is applied to the receiving parcel while the sending parcel is permanently protected from future development. Non-contiguous clustering allows for development to be moved out of prime agricultural areas and concentrated into more appropriate and desirable locations. This is not currently an option in Blairstown Township, where there is minimal opportunity for new development in the higher density zones that accommodate residential development.

Blairstown's zoning does, however, recognize and support the significance and viability of agriculture in the Township (see *Blairstown Agricultural Permitted and Accessory Uses By Zone* below). All zones allow farms as principal permitted uses. The R-5 zone, accounting for 95% of the Township, allows outbuildings, farm stands, residential agriculture and housing for seasonal workers as accessory uses, and the GCI zone also allows agricultural support businesses such as feed and supply stores, feed lots and slaughterhouses. In addition, the buffers from new development incorporated in the current zoning are deemed sufficient for farmers. (*Joel McGreen*)

### ***Mandatory vs. Voluntary Options***

The above tools are voluntary options that a town can use when determining maximum lot sizes and mandatory set asides for resource protection. If the Borough turns to mandatory cluster provisions or a mandatory transfer of development rights (TDR) program, the Agricultural Advisory Committee will work the Planning Board to ensure agriculture resources and land are set aside in a manner to ensure viability of the farm in the future.

<b>Blairstown Agricultural Permitted and Accessory Uses by Zone</b>		
<b>Zone</b>	<b>Principal Permitted Uses</b>	<b>Accessory Uses</b>
R-5 Single-Family Residential <i>Min. Lot Size: 5 acres</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Farms -- min. 5 acres (or 6 acres w/single-family dwelling)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and other outbuildings, produce processing facilities; fences</li> <li>● Farm stands</li> <li>● Residential agriculture</li> <li>● Housing for seasonal agricultural workers, as conditional use</li> </ul>
VR Village Residential <i>Min. Lot Size: 10,000 sq ft</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Farms (see R-5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and other outbuildings, produce processing facilities; fences</li> <li>● Farm stands</li> <li>● Residential agriculture</li> <li>● Housing for seasonal agricultural workers, as conditional use</li> </ul>
VN Village Neighborhood <i>Min. Lot Size: 10,000 sq ft</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Residential agriculture</li> </ul>
PRO Professional and Research Office <i>Min. Lot Size: 2 acres</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Farms (see R-5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and other outbuildings, produce processing facilities; fences</li> </ul>
HC Highway Commercial <i>Min. Lot Size: 5 acres</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Farms</li> </ul>	
GCI General Commercial & Industrial <i>Min. Lot Size: 2 acres</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Farms (see R-5)</li> <li>● Agricultural support uses, including, but not limited to, feed and supply stores. Slaughterhouses, feed lots, and similar uses are specifically prohibited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and other outbuildings, produce processing facilities; fences</li> </ul>
CC Community Commercial <i>Min. Lot Size: 1 acre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Farms as conditional uses under N.J.S.A. 40:55D-67</li> </ul>	
General Exceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Christmas tree sales...permitted in all zoning districts between November 15 and December 25...time restrictions shall not apply to farms which shall be permitted to sell Christmas trees throughout the year.</li> <li>● Height limits. Silos, barns and similar structures on farms are not bound by the height restrictions of this chapter.</li> <li>● Signs. farms shall be permitted to erect unlighted wood signs off site from the farm to advertise the sale of seasonal agricultural products grown on the farm, provided that each such sign shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet in area;</li> <li>● Fences and walls. Farm fences shall not require any permits, are exempt from height requirements</li> </ul>	
<i>Source: Blairstown Code Online<sup>17</sup></i>		

**BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP**  
Warren County-New Jersey



**ZONING MAP**

SEPTEMBER 2006

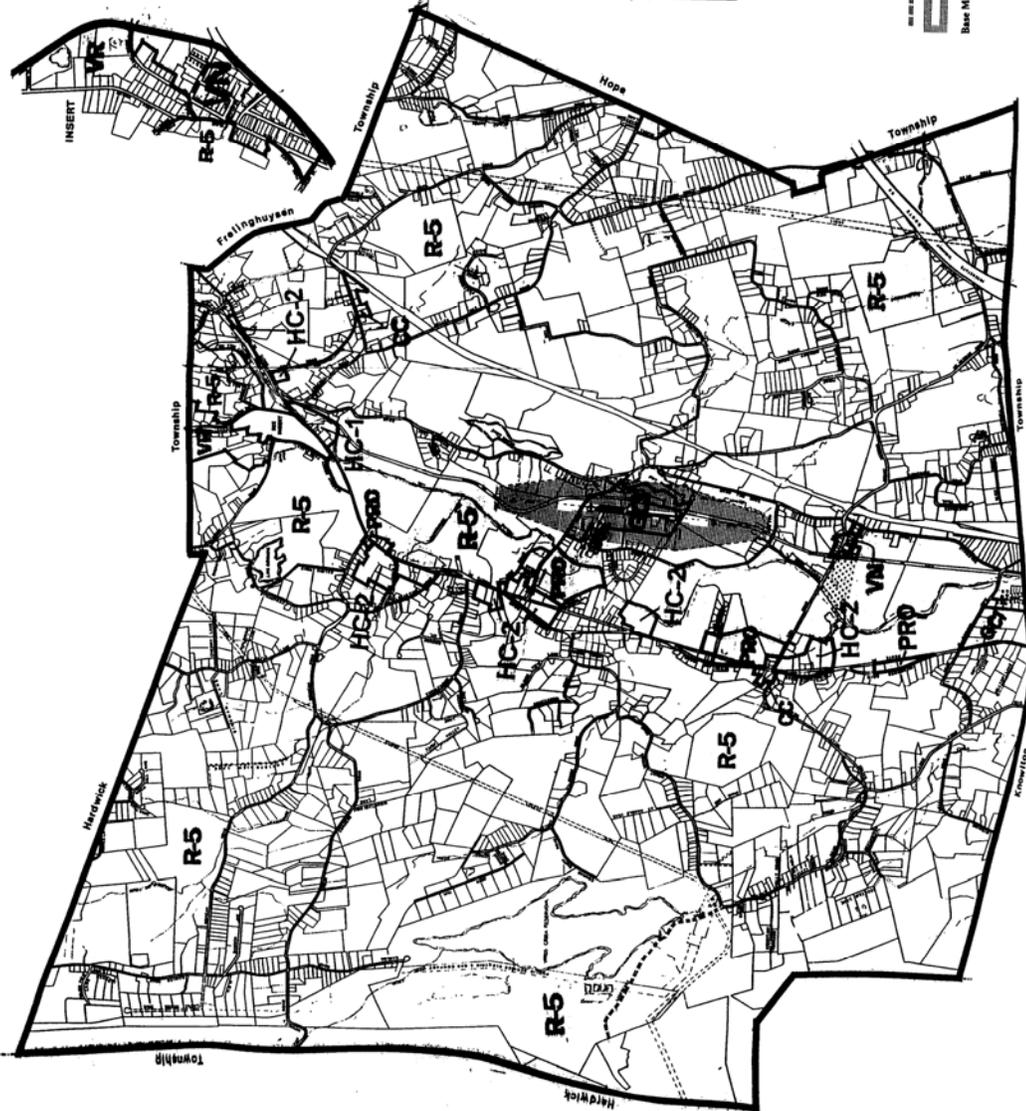
LAND USE DISTRICT AREAS	
VR	VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL
R-5	SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
VN	VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD
PRO	PROFESSIONAL & RESEARCH OFFICE
CC	COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL
HC-1	HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
HC-2	HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
GCI	GENERAL COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL

DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS	
R-5	SINGLE-FAMILY CONSERVATION CLUSTERS
	SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING

ZONING MAP PREPARED BY RODMAN ASSOCIATES  
BLAIRSTOWN, NEW JERSEY  
SEPTEMBER, 2006

PRIVATE ROAD  
AIRPORT HAZARD AREA

Base Map Originally Prepared April 1980 By Richard T. Coppola, P.E.  
Base Map Revised By Coppola & Coppola Associates  
Princeton Junction - New Jersey  
April 2001  
From Blairstown Tax Map  
Revised To November 2006



Source: Blairstown Code Online

### ***Transfer of Development Rights***

*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 developers, 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. To date, this program has not been utilized by Blirstown Township to preserve farmland.

The New Jersey State Transfer of Development Rights Act (*N.J.S.A. 40:55D-140*)<sup>18</sup> authorizes the transfer of development rights by municipalities and outlines what a town must do in order 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*)

One program Blirstown might consider is the *intra-municipal* TDR 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 in 2008 and pilot programs being facilitated statewide through local or County TDR banks and grants and technical assistance available from the State TDR Bank Board and the Office of Smart Growth.

The New Jersey TDR Bank and the Office of Smart Growth (OSG) 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. The New Jersey Office of Smart Growth (OSG) also offers Smart Future Planning Grants to municipalities in order to help them plan for and implement TDR programs. Blirstown Township may benefit from participating in a TDR program, primarily as a Township with sending areas.

The general sentiment in Blairstown regarding TDR is that management of such a program on the municipal level is beyond the capacity of the municipal government at the time of the writing of this Plan, in view of the recent economic recession and resultant municipal layoffs and reduction of services. In addition, respect for property rights tempered by non-infringement on neighbors is the prevailing ethos, making mandatory TDRs unwelcome unless there were some outside monetary benefit. *(Joel McGreen)*

As regards the introduction of additional, innovative planning techniques, the general consensus is that the rural character should be retained, but there is no consensus on a specific approach or approaches to be taken in regard to strategies for future development. *(Joel McGreen)*

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- <sup>1</sup> Warren County Planning Department. Warren County Strategic Growth Plan, 2005 update. <http://www.co.warren.nj.us/planning/includings/2005strategicgrowthplan/Section%203-1.pdf>. Accessed July 15, 2008.
- <sup>2</sup> State of New Jersey. Department of Community Affairs. Office of Smart Growth. State Plan. <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/osg/plan/>. Accessed August 21, 2009.
- <sup>3</sup> Township of Blaiirstown Environmental Resource Inventory. January 2006. Prepared by the Township of Blaiirstown Environmental Commission. With reference to the Master Plan Report as Adopted on December 20, 2004.
- <sup>4</sup> Rutgers Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis. Land Use Change Research. <http://www.crssa.rutgers.edu/projects/lc/index.html>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>5</sup> State of New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development [http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/bp/bp\\_index.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/bp/bp_index.html). Data from U.S. Bureau of the Census. Accessed August 21, 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> Personal communication with Joe McGreen, Blaiirstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee. November 2010.
- <sup>7</sup> Township of Blaiirstown Environmental Resource Inventory. Township of Blaiirstown Environmental Commission. January 2006.
- <sup>8</sup> New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan. March 2001.
- <sup>9</sup> Personal communication with Joel McGreen, Blaiirstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee.
- <sup>10</sup> Bayshore Regional Watershed Council. <http://www.bayshorewatershed.org>. Accessed November 2010.
- <sup>11</sup> New Jersey Department of Transportation. Liberty Corridor. <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/libertycorridor/>. Accessed November 2010
- <sup>12</sup> New Jersey Highlands Council. <http://www.state.nj.us/njhighlands/>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>13</sup> Warren County Planning Department. Warren County Strategic Growth Plan, 2005 update. [http://www.co.warren.nj.us/planning/county\\_strategic\\_growth\\_plan.html](http://www.co.warren.nj.us/planning/county_strategic_growth_plan.html). Accessed July 15, 2008 and August 22, 2009..
- <sup>14</sup> Township of Blaiirstown. Master Plan Periodic Reexamination Report. 1995, 2001. Prepared by Coppola and Coppola.
- <sup>15</sup> Township of Blaiirstown. Master Plan and Development Regulations Periodic Reexamination Report and Land Use Plan Element Amendment. November 2004. Prepared by Coppola & Coppola Associates.
- <sup>16</sup> Township of Blaiirstown. Master Plan Farmland Preservation Plan Element. December 2002. Prepared by Coppola & Coppola Associates.
- <sup>17</sup> General Code. Online Code Library. Blaiirstown Township. <http://www.ecode360.com/ecode3-back/getSimple.jsp?custId=BL1895&guid=BL1895>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>18</sup> New Jersey Statutes Annotated 40:55D: Municipal Land Use Law.

# CHAPTER 4: FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM – OVERVIEW



Farmland is an irreplaceable natural resource that contributes to the economic and ecological value of a community. Farmers have been land stewards throughout most of history with agricultural uses contributing food and fiber, clean air, storm water management, groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, and valued open vistas. In addition to providing employment, agriculture contributes to the local economy through the sale of produce and the purchase of equipment and other materials. Productive farmland is beneficial to a municipality in that it helps keep municipal taxes down, increases property values, adds to the community's character, and creates a sense of open space.

There are 8,027 acres of farm-assessed land in Blairstown Township, including 3,451 acres devoted to active agricultural use.<sup>1</sup> The first farm preserved was the 124-acre Teel Farm in 2000, and the most recent farm preservation, the 65-acre De Pietro farm, occurred in 2009. Farms in the Township have been preserved using a variety of programs, including the County Easement Purchase, State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Direct Easement, Nonprofit Grant and Municipal Planning Incentive Grant programs. The Blairstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee and local farmers remain firmly committed to farmland protection and support the preservation of agricultural land throughout the Township.

## Warren County Agricultural Development Areas (ADAs)

The Warren County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) developed the Warren County Agricultural Development Area (ADA) based upon both statutory and county criteria. The ADA designates land that has the potential for long-term agricultural viability. ADA agricultural use would be the preferred, but not the exclusive, use.

### *Statutory Criteria:*

- 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.

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<sup>1</sup> *Note:* These numbers are determined by GIS parcel data analysis and thus differ slightly from the Farmland Assessment statistics referenced in Chapters 1 and 2, which derive from reports compiled by the New Jersey Division of Taxation based on filings from Township tax assessor.

- Suburban and/or commercial development must be reasonably non-existent in the proposed ADA area.
- The land must comprise 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 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan*, the Warren CADB updated their ADA, designating land capable of supporting agriculture and excluding those lands that are protected as public open space, developed areas, and land contained within the developed Boroughs and Towns located within the County.

Utilizing 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. A map of the location of the ADA in Blirstown is included within the *Project Areas Map* in this Plan.

***County 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.

Overall, there are 8,027 acres of farm assessed parcels in Blirstown Township. Of this, 4,905 acres (61%) of farm assessed land in Blirstown is included within the Warren County ADA. The *Farmland Map* in this Plan shows the farm assessed lands in the Township, including all preserved farms.

All lands in Blirstown Township south of Route 94 are included in the Warren County ADA. The following lands north of Route 94 are excluded due to the necessity of state statute requirements limiting the total land area located within a County ADA not exceed 90% of the total farm assessed land in the County. The Township may request the inclusion of additional land, north of Route 94, into the County ADA to the Warren CADB. (*Bob Resker*)<sup>1</sup>

*All land in Blirstown Township north and west of Wishing Well Road to its intersection with Frog Pond Road, south on Frog Pond Road to its intersection with Benton Road, south on Benton Road to its intersection with NJ-94, northeast on NJ-94 to its intersection with Cobblewood Road, north on Cobblewood Road to its intersection with Mohican Road, north on Mohican Road to its intersection with Johnsonburg Creek and east to Maines Lane near its intersection with Millbrook Road in Hardwick Township. (2008 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan)*<sup>2</sup>

## Farmland Preserved to Date by Program

In 1983, the New Jersey State Legislature adopted the State Agriculture Retention and Development Act, and created the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), which provides funding for farmland preservation programs, establishes farmland preservation policy statewide, and oversees program administration. Ten years later, in 1993, a non-binding referendum was placed on the Warren County election ballot to provide dedicated revenue for land acquisitions. Warren County voters approved the referendum to create an Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust by a 2 to 1 ratio, allowing \$0.02 per \$100 of total county equalized real property valuation to be collected. This referendum gave Warren County elected officials the tools to “*preserve prime farmland, including small operations, which receive low priority from the present state program.*” Since 1999, Warren County voters have approved two increases to the amount collected for the Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust to the current amount of \$0.06 per \$100 of total county equalized real property valuation to be collected. Funding allocation to farmland preservation has increased to 55% of the Fund. (2008 Warren County Open Space and Recreation Plan)<sup>3</sup>

As of August 2009, there are 18 farms (26 parcels) preserved in Blairstown Township, at an average cost of \$4,663 per acre. New Jersey has spent \$3,552,294, approximately 61% of the total cost share in Blairstown. The County has spent a total of \$1,695,468, or approximately 29% of the total cost share.

### Preserved Farms in Blairstown Township

Farm	Program	Acres	Total Cost	State Cost	County Cost	Municipal Cost	Nonprofit Cost	Per Acre Cost	Year Purchased
Teel, G.	Cty EP	124	\$371,334	\$272,312	\$99,022	0		\$3,000	2000
Pehowski, L.	Cty IEP	161	\$742,610	\$500,455	\$242,155	0		\$4,600	2001
Gouger	Cty EP	113	\$315,337	\$231,610	\$83,727	0		\$2,784	2002
Handel, M. & T.	Cty EP	96	\$410,117	\$284,220	\$125,897	0		\$4,291	2002
Mowbray, M.	Cty EP	81	\$218,981	\$161,397	\$57,584	0		\$2,700	2003
Braun, R. & A.	Cty EP	41	\$111,310	\$82,119	\$29,191	0		\$2,697	2003
Dukes, P.	Cty EP	67	\$200,541	\$147,057	\$53,484	0		\$3,000	2003
Flitcroft	Cty EP	1	\$3,719	\$2,387	\$1,331	0		\$3,100	2003
Round Hill (RVC)*	NPG	42	286226	100948	56638	161,500		\$7,000	2004
DeBlock/Blairstown Twp	SADC Direct EP	165	\$1,069,543	\$822,725	0	\$246,818		\$6,500	2004
Mangine (Triple Creek)**	PIG	30	\$135,000	\$91,574	\$21,713	\$21,713		\$4,500	2005
Black (Glenview) (RVC)	NPG	38	\$187,066	\$113,676	\$40,000	\$25,000	\$8,390	\$4,900	2007
Hill, N. (Bittersweet)	PIG	29	\$216,638	\$134,315	\$63,366	\$18,956		\$7,500	2007
Ruh, A. (Sunset)	PIG	136	\$705,000	\$474,520	\$182,009	\$48,471		\$5,200	2007
Woodcock, S. (Old Acres)	PIG	22	\$156,946	\$98,091	\$29,427	\$29,427		\$7,200	2007
Maine, E. (Hope Springs)	PIG	23	\$176,335	\$108,514	\$52,460	\$15,361		\$7,800	2008
De Pietro***	Cty EP	65	\$402,992	0	\$402,992	0		\$6,200	2009
Murray, P. & M. (Shoebox)	PIG	23	\$226,410	\$27,322	\$153,806.00	\$45,282		\$10,000	2009
<b>Totals (24 parcels)</b>		<b>1,258</b>	<b>\$5,883,462</b>	<b>\$3,552,294</b>	<b>\$1,695,468</b>	<b>\$511,328</b>		<b>\$4,677</b>	

\*State and County costs calculated as Blairstown's 42. acre share of 69 acres (27 acres are in Hardwick; HT costs excluded)

\*\*Blairstown portion only (also in Knowlton Twp)

\*\*\*Costs proportionate to Blairstown's 65-acre share of total cost of \$557,676 for 89.95 acres (remainder in Hope Twp)

Sources: SADC Preserved Farms by County, Municipality, Program Option 3/31/2009;

SADC NJ FPP Listing of Preserved Farmland 7/10/2009;

Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan April 2008

Personal communication with Bob Resker, Administrator, Warren County Department of Land Preservation, and staff July/August 2009

Blairstown Open Space Committee

Nine projects (60% of the total preserved farmland, or 749 acres) in Blirstown Township are protected through the County Easement Purchase program. Six farms, totaling 263 acres (21%) were preserved through municipal PIG and two farms totaling 81 acres (6%) were preserved through the Nonprofit Grant Program under the leadership of the Ridge and Valley Conservancy. The SADC Direct Easement Purchase program supported one farm of 165 acres, representing 13% of Blirstown Township's preserved farmland acres.

There are no additional farms currently pending for farmland preservation.

### ***County Easement Purchase***

County Easement Purchases (CEP) involve the sale of farmland development rights to the county by the landowner. By selling their development rights to the county, the landowner agrees to restrict their land to agricultural use. The landowner still retains ownership of his or her farm and can sell it on the open market at any time, but the land is deed-restricted in perpetuity for agricultural use.

To be eligible for the County Easement Purchase program, the land must be in an Agricultural Development Area and be eligible for farmland assessment. A landowner must complete an application, which is reviewed by the CADB and then approved applications are forwarded to the SADC. In the past, these applications were distributed once a year. With the new County Planning Incentive Grant program there will no longer be an annual application date for the County Easement Purchase program.

Following review of the application and a site visit by the CADB, two independent appraisals must be conducted. Each appraisal should determine the land's fair market value and agricultural value. The difference between these two is the price of the farm's "development rights," also known as the easement value. This is the price that the County offers to the landowner based on the SADC's certified value of the development rights. The County can negotiate with the landowner for a development easement price that is no higher than the higher of the two appraisals for the State to participate in the transaction. The SADC typically certifies the easement value somewhere between the values presented by the two independent appraisers and County presents the offer to the landowner. If this price is accepted, the County has title work and a survey done for farms receiving final State, County and Municipal approvals, and then schedules a closing. The landowner still retains ownership of his or her farm and can sell it on the open market at any time, but the land is deed-restricted, in perpetuity, for agricultural use.

The SADC will cost share on an easement which has been, or is being acquired, by the County. The SADC will apply its cost share "sliding scale" formula to the certified per acre value, which is presented in *Chapter 5* of this report.

In Blirstown Township, nine farms have been preserved through the County Easement Purchase program, protecting 755 acres of farmland.

### ***County Planning Incentive Grants***

The goal of County Planning Incentive Grants (PIGs) is to protect and preserve a significant area of reasonably contiguous farmland that will promote the long term viability of agriculture in a municipality or county through the purchase of development easements. The SADC has updated their rules (N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.3 through 2:76-17A.17), effective July 2, 2007, to promote County PIGs to streamline and expand the farmland preservation program throughout the state. Applications are now accepted year round. In order to qualify for PIGs, an agricultural advisory committee, for which the CADB functions for the county, is necessary. Additionally, the county must maintain a dedicated source of funding or alternative means for funding farmland preservation. Warren County developed their *2008 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan* in order to bring it into compliance with the newly adopted guidelines, and qualify for the County Planning Incentive Grant program.

Both county and municipal applications should correlate with county comprehensive farmland preservation plans. The *2008 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan* utilized the 1979 Soil Survey produced by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). This Soil Survey was recently updated (May 2009) and is now the official Soil Survey for Warren County. The *Blairstown Township Farmland Preservation Plan* utilizes the updated Soil Survey and thus varies from the County Plan with respect to soils. (*Frederick C. Schoenagel*)<sup>4</sup>

As stated above, the SADC will cost share on an easement which has been, or is being acquired, by the County through the Planning Incentive Grant program. The SADC will apply its cost share “sliding scale” formula to the certified per acre value, which is presented in *Chapter 5* of this report.

### ***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. Upon the completion of a municipal Farmland Preservation Plan and application to the SADC, grants are provided by the SADC in order to purchase development easements. In order to qualify for this program, the municipality must have an Agricultural Advisory Committee and a source of funding for farmland preservation.

Farms to be preserved through a municipal PIG need to be approved by the CADB, but only in the case where the CADB is contributing funds towards the farm. The CADB has the opportunity to comment on the application, but if the town is purchasing the property through the PIG program without the County’s funds there is no requirement for the County’s approval. The County will hold the farmland preservation easement if County funding is involved, but the SADC can hold the easement if County funding is not included. As part of a municipal PIG, Warren County provides matching funding (50:50) between the County and the municipality.

Blairstown Township has an approved Planning Incentive Grant under the 2005 Round of the former municipal PIG program with three Project Areas receiving SADC preliminary approval on May 27, 2004. The Township submitted its first Planning Incentive Grant application in 2003 and preserved its first farm under the PIG program in 2005. As of July 2009, six farms in Blairstown, totaling 262 acres, have been preserved through this program.

The municipality may apply annually for funding through the Municipal PIG program, but it must “*expend its funding eligibility within three years from the date the funds were appropriated or risk the loss of those funds or funds to be allocated in subsequent funding cycles.*” (N.J.A.C. 2:76-17A.8)

The Township has four proposed municipal Planning Incentive Grant Project Areas as part of this Farmland Preservation Plan Update, which encompass all of the Township south of Route 94 and a portion of the Township north of Route 94. These can be seen on the *Project Area Map* in this plan and are described in detail in *Chapter 5*. The Route 94 North Project Area includes 12 farm parcels targeted for preservation, the North Project Area includes 10 parcels, the Central Project Area includes 9 parcels, and the South Project Area includes 18 farm parcels targeted for preservation.

Similar to the County Easement and PIG programs, the SADC will cost share on an easement which has been, or is being acquired, by the municipality through the municipal Planning Incentive Grant program. The SADC will apply its cost share “sliding scale formula to the certified per acre value, which is presented in *Chapter 5* of this report.

### ***Municipal Farmland Preservation Program***

In some cases, a municipality may choose to purchase a development easement or farmland in fee simple prior to submitting an application to the SADC or the CADB. This may occur if the municipality feels it is at risk of losing the opportunity for preservation of a particular parcel if it waits to go through the entire application process before acquiring the land. However, the SADC states that “*Counties and municipalities that pre-acquire a development easement or farmland in fee simple without Green Light approval proceed at their own risk.*” If a municipality does not carefully adhere to SADC guidelines and regulations, it may “*jeopardize chances of qualifying for subsequent reimbursement.*” [N.J.A.C. 17A.9] <sup>5</sup>

In addition the SADC may provide a grant to a municipality to pay up to 80% of a fee simple purchase of farmland from a willing seller. The municipality is obligated to offer these lands for resale or lease with agricultural restrictions and dedicate any proceeds from the resale shall be dedicated for farmland preservation, with the SADC receiving pro rata compensation for their portion of the original purchase price. (N.J.A.C. 2:76-8.11)

In 2004, prior to the inception of the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program, Blairstown preserved a portion of the DeBlock farm (about 10 acres) with an option for the

remainder. This enabled the Township to be a “contract buyer” and submit an application directly to the SADC through its Easement Purchase program. Based on two appraisals, the SADC came up with a certified market value of \$6,500 per acre, and subsequently offered the offered the Township a price of \$5,000 per acre, which the Township accepted. The farmer was paid \$5,000/acre from the State and \$1,500/acre from Blirstown. (*Joel McGreen*)<sup>7</sup>

### ***State Farmland Preservation Program***

Also important to Blirstown farmers is the SADC. The SADC is the lead agency in administering the state’s Farmland Preservation Program. The SADC:

- Provides cost share funding for the purchase of development easements;
- Directly purchases farms and development easements from landowners;
- Administers grants to landowners in the Farmland Preservation Program to fund up to 50% of soil and water conservation projects;
- Administers the Right to Farm Program (discussed in *Chapter 8*);
- Administers the Transfer of Development Rights Bank; and,
- Operates the Farm Link Program, which helps connect owners of both preserved and unpreserved farms with potential purchasers and tenant farmers.

### ***State 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. By participating in this program, the landowner still retains ownership of their land, but agrees to restrict land use to agricultural purposes. The Direct Easement Program applications do not usually receive contributions from the County or the municipality, but in some situations can include local cost share.

In Blirstown, one farm, the DeBlock farm, has been preserved under the SADC Direct Easement Purchase program, at a cost of \$1,069,543. In this case, Blirstown Township became the contract purchaser, with the state contributing its appraised value of \$822,725 and Blirstown Township making up the difference of \$250,318 between the State’s payment and the SADC’s established certified market value.<sup>8</sup>

### ***SADC Fee Simple***

A 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 SADC negotiates a purchase price subject to recommendations of two independent appraisers and review by a state review appraiser. The land becomes restricted so that it becomes permanently preserved for agriculture. In this type of acquisition, the landowner does not retain any rights. The property is then resold at auction, and the SADC can, but does not usually, retain ownership of farmland preserved through the Fee Simple Program.

To participate in this program, the farmland must be within an ADA, and be eligible for Farmland Assessment.

### ***Nonprofit Grant Program***

Grants are provided to nonprofit organizations by the SADC. These grants fund up to 50% of the fee simple or development easement values on farms. Generally these transactions involve properties with both agricultural and environmental significance. The grants are obtained through an application process in which the land is valued by independent appraisers. The Ridge and Valley Conservancy used this program to preserve two farms, Glenview and Round Hill (partially in Hardwick Township), for a total of 81 acres in Blairstown.

### ***Transfer of Development Rights***

The transfer of development rights 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. The development rights, purchased by a developer, are used to allow for development at a higher density than previous zoning of the receiving area allowed. To date, this program has not been used by Blairstown Township to preserve farmland.

## **Consistency with SADC Strategic Targeting Project**

The purpose of the SADC Strategic Targeting Project is to prioritize farmland to be preserved by targeting farms for preservation based on specific criteria, including the prioritization of prime and statewide soils in agricultural production outside sewer service areas. According to the SADC, the Strategic Targeting Project has three primary goals. These are as follows:

- *“To coordinate farmland preservation / agricultural efforts with proactive planning initiatives,*
- *To update / create maps used to target preservation efforts, and*
- *To coordinate farmland preservation efforts with open space, recreation and historic preservation investments.”<sup>9</sup>*

Through the use of the Strategic Targeting Project, the SADC hopes to more efficiently target and designate farmland for preservation and, by doing so, strengthen the State’s agricultural industry. Blairstown Township, through the completion of its *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update*, meets each of the goals as outlined in the Strategic Targeting Project. As a participant in the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant program, Blairstown’s Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) will coordinate directly with the Warren CADB to identify and target farms for preservation in Blairstown Township. Currently in Warren County there is no formal coordination process between the municipal AAC and the CADB. The County is actively soliciting applications from the towns for farmland preservation through PIG program and maintains an “open door” policy for local boards and landowners. *(Bob Resker)<sup>10</sup>*

## **Eight Year Programs**

The 8-Year Farmland Preservation Program and the Municipally Approved 8-Year Farmland Preservation Program are programs in which farmland owners agree to voluntarily restrict nonagricultural development for a period of eight years in exchange for certain benefits. Landowners enrolled in the program receive no direct compensation for participating but are eligible to apply to the SADC for grants that fund up to 50% of the costs of approved soil and water conservation projects. Additionally, those in the program enjoy greater 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 8 years. For entrance into these programs and to qualify for benefits, a farm must be located within the county ADA, be eligible for Farmland Assessment, and meet appropriate program criteria. Technical assistance for the soil and water practices comes through the Natural Resource Conservation Service. In Blairstown Township, no farms currently participate in the eight-year programs.

Soil and water conservation projects include projects designed to control and prevent soil erosion and sediment damages; control pollution on farmland; impound, store and manage water for agricultural purposes; or improve management of land and soils to achieve maximum agricultural productivity. Examples of eligible projects include: terrace systems; diversions; stream protection; water impoundment reservoirs; irrigation systems; sediment retention, erosion or water control systems; drainage systems; animal waste control facilities; agri-chemical handling facilities; and land shaping or grading.

## **Coordination with Open Space Preservation Initiatives**

A cooperative project involves a partnership and/or funding from more than one agency. This kind of project leverages farmland preservation dollars and makes use of open space funds, and is an opportunity to use traditional open space funds, where appropriate, to help preserve farm properties, especially where those properties are a mixture of cropland and woodland areas. The use of open space funds is becoming increasingly important to preserving agricultural landscapes.

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. To date there have been no conflicts with trails and agricultural operations in the Township, although the multi-use Paulins Kill Rail Trail, which allows bicycle, equestrian and pedestrian traffic, passes through the Township in proximity to some agricultural lands. Blairstown has a Municipal Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund, which is used to preserve farmland and open space. Members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) who are actively engaged in farming also serve on the Open Space Committee, providing expertise and advice regarding farmland preservation.

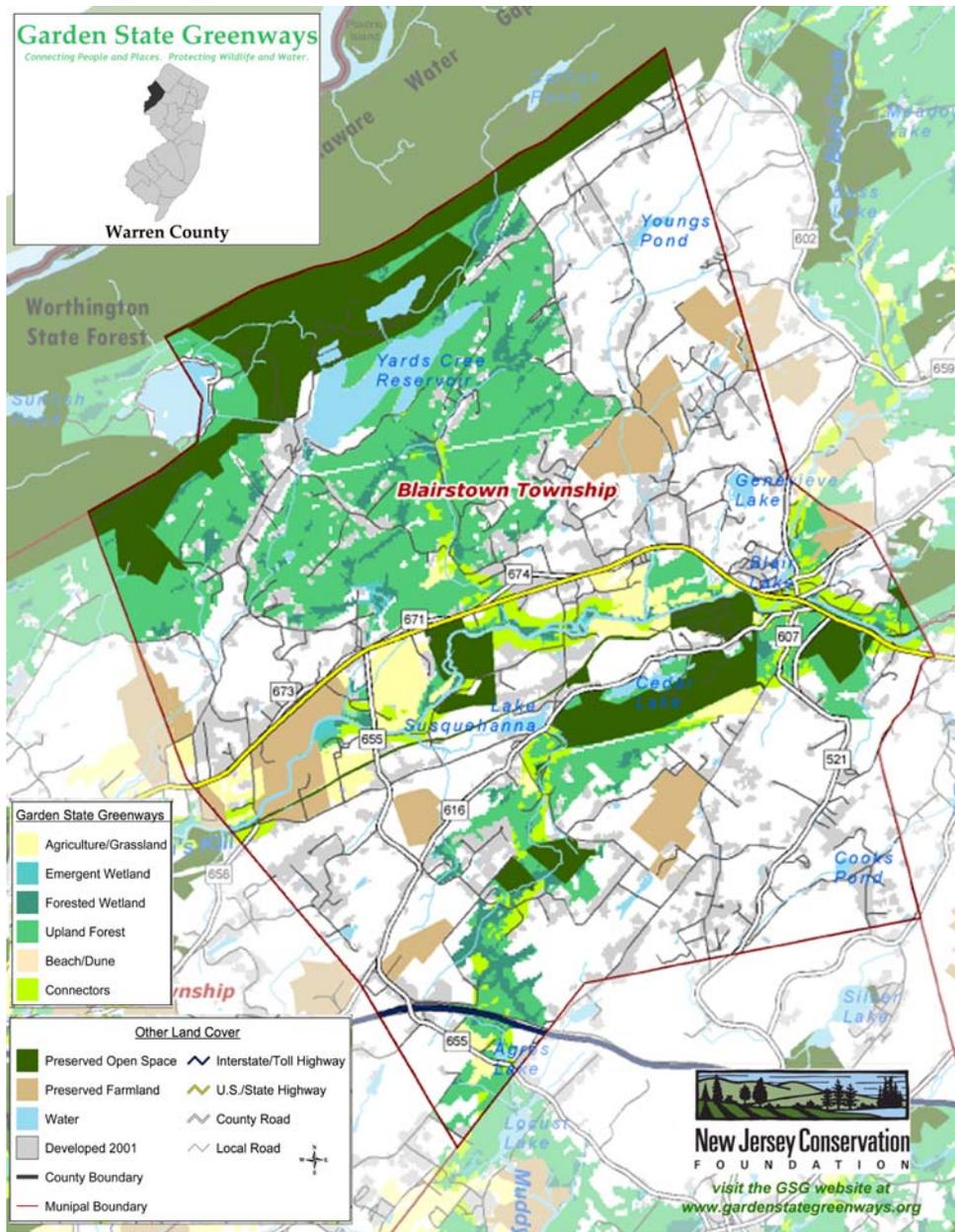
In Blairstown, two farms have been preserved using open space funds. Both farms were in the highway commercial zone along Route 94 and were offered for sale as strip mall

development opportunities and were purchased by the Township for active recreation. The Jones Farm Field was a joint Green Acres/Township venture, the first of its kind in New Jersey. It is managed by the NJDEP Division of Parks and Recreation, which must approve all uses and development. Wood turtle presence has precluded any active recreation development; however, the fact that it has lain fallow since the acquisition is a subject of disappointment to the agricultural community, since this provides an inviting condition for the spread of invasive species. Once they take up residence in fallow areas, they are spread by birds into active agricultural areas, potentially necessitating an increased use of pesticides on the part of the farmer. The other parcel has not, due to fiscal restraints, been developed for active recreation as of yet. It is currently leased out for farming and the Township is looking into the possibility of a long-term lease. (*Joel McGreen*)

On the County level, all open space and farmland projects are coordinated by the Department of Land Preservation. In this way, the County is informed of all open space and farmland projects and can facilitate any coordination, if needed. (*Bob Resker*)

*Garden State Greenways*, a collaborative project of the NJDEP and The New Jersey Conservation Foundation, provides a regional planning tool that identifies areas of natural resource value and suggested connectors between this. It provides an interactive mapping system that details the location of local and regional open space and recreational lands, forested areas and agricultural and wetlands in and around Blairstown and may be used in conjunction with the *Project Area Map* to identify land for open space and farmland protection.

All preserved open space is shown in “green” on the *Farmland Map*. The *Garden State Greenways* map (below) for Blairstown details the location of local and regional open space and recreational lands in and around the Township. This maps may be used in conjunction with the Borough’s *Project Areas Map* to identify land for open space and farmland protection.



Source: Garden State Greenways

## Farmland Preservation Program Funding Expended to Date by Source

In November 2000, Blairstown Township residents approved the establishment of a tax for the purposes of Municipal Open Space, Recreation and Farmland Preservation at a rate not to exceed \$.02 per \$100 of assessed valuation, and in March 2001 the Township Committee adopted Ordinance 2001-04 establishing the Municipal Open Space, Recreation, and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. In November 2003, residents voted to increase the tax rate to an annual rate not to exceed \$.04 per \$100. Beginning in 2004, the rate was set at \$.04 until May 2007, when the Township Committee reduced the rate to \$.035 to mitigate the effect on residents of a revaluation of the Township. The name of the Trust Fund was changed in 2004 to the Municipal Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. The Fund generated approximately \$320,005 in 2008 and had a balance of \$169,070 in August 2009.

The table below details the amount generated per year beginning in 2001 and the percent change in the Trust Fund since that time.

Year	Tax Rate	Amount Generated by Taxation	Percentage Change
2001	\$0.02	\$86,507	
2002	\$0.02	\$88,273	2.04%
2003	\$0.02	\$89,536	1.43%
2004*	\$0.04	\$182,026	103.30%
2005	\$0.04	\$184,804	1.53%
2006	\$0.04	\$187,399	1.40%
2007**	\$0.035	\$318,112	69.75%
2008	\$0.035	\$320,005	0.60%
2009***	\$0.035	\$320,005	0.00%

\*Voter referendum in November 2003 approves increase to up to \$.04;  
implemented in 2004 by ordinance 2004-1

\*\* Resolution 2007-74 lowers rate to \$.035 following revaluation of Township

\*\*\* Estimate

The Township has funded its farmland preservation to date predominantly as a direct payment from its Open Space Trust fund and partially through bonding, which is being repaid from the Township's Open Space Trust Fund. It is the Township's intent that future purchases will be done on a "pay as you go" basis through the Township's Open Space Trust Fund, without the need for additional bonding. The bond obligation was set at \$709,733 in July 2008, including principal and interest, and is expected to be paid off by 2023. (Joel McGreen) For more detailed information see *Chapter 5*.

As of September 30, 2010, Blairstown has expended approximately \$1.5 million to preserve both open space and farmland. The funding is approximately evenly split (51% Open Space and 49% farmland). County funding has been critical to preserving farmland (and open space) in Blairstown. In addition to the obvious financial help, their expertise and advice have been invaluable to the Township.

## **Monitoring the Easements**

The easement holder is responsible for the monitoring of preserved farms, depending on the program option. That is, the SADC is responsible for the monitoring of farms preserved through the Fee Simple and Direct Easement. The farms under easement through the County program in Blairstown Township are monitored by Warren County. The County monitors the property to verify that compliance with the deed restrictions on the preserved property is taking place. Generally, for farms preserved through the municipal PIG program, the County will hold the easement, but the SADC may hold the easement in cases where County funding is not involved. Nonprofit organizations who hold easements on preserved farms are responsible for monitoring the easement and reporting to the SADC on an annual basis in compliance with N.J.A.C. 2:767-16.5. The Township and the AAC will notify the responsible agency if violations are suspected.

The Warren County Soil 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
- 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

## **Coordination with Transfer of Development Rights Programs**

Transfer of Development Rights (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, Blairstown Township is not currently enrolled in or developing a TDR program.

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<sup>1</sup> Personal Communication with Bob Resker, Director, Department of Land Preservation. County of Warren. November 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Warren County Agriculture Development Board. Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan. April 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Warren County Planning Department. Warren County Open Space and Recreation Plan, 1999. June 2, 2008 Update.

<sup>4</sup> Personal Communication, Frederick C. Schoenagel III, Soil Survey Project Leader, United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service North Jersey Field Support Office, Clinton, NJ, July 30, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> State Agriculture Development Committee. Farmland Preservation. Frequently Asked Questions. <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/home/preservation/FAQs.pdf> Accessed November 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Personal communication with Joel McGreen, Chair, Open Space Committee. Township of Blirstown. November 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Personal communication with Joel McGreen, Chair, Blirstown Township Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees. September 2009.

<sup>9</sup> SADC/CADB Farmland Preservation Program. Strategic Targeting Project Preliminary Report. March 2003. <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/home/preservation/>. Accessed July 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Personal Communication with Bob Resker, Director, Department of Land Preservation. County of Warren. November 2010.

# CHAPTER 5: FUTURE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM



## Preservation Goals

Blairstown Township is 31.8 square miles (20,352 acres) in size. Of this, **8,027 acres** are under farmland assessment, which includes croplands, woodlands, farm structures and wetlands/waterways that occur on an agricultural property.<sup>1</sup> Since 2000, Blairstown Township has preserved **1,290 acres** of farmland. There are another **266 acres** of farm assessed land that have been preserved as open space. Thus, **6,471 acres** of farm assessed land remains unprotected in Blairstown Township. Of the total farm assessed acres in Blairstown, **3,451 acres** are in active agricultural land. Based upon the State's Minimum Eligibility Criteria for productive soils and tillable land, **2,207 acres** are potentially eligible for farmland preservation in Blairstown Township. Thus nearly 64% of the active agricultural lands are potentially eligible for preservation through the State program.

The Blairstown Township Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees have identified 88 farm parcels covering **2,140 acres**, which they have targeted for protection. These farms are contained in four Municipal Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) project areas. The *North Project Area* is located east of Cobblewood Road and north of Route 94 and High Street at the eastern end of the Township. The *Route 94 North Project Area* is located north of State Route 94 and west of the North Project Area, between Cobblewood Road and Benton Road. The *Central Project Area* is located south of Route 94 and north of the currently inactive Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Lackawanna Cutoff. The *South Project Area* is located south of the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad and north of Hope Township.

Based upon the Agricultural Advisory Committee's goal of preserving 2,166 acres as identified in the municipal PIG project areas, available funding to purchase and preserve farmland, and the amount of farmland potentially eligible for preservation, the following preservation goals are identified for Blairstown Township:

One year target:	250 acres
Five year target:	1,200 acres
Ten year target:	2,200 acres

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<sup>1</sup> *Note:* For the ADA and Project Area analyses the farmland assessed data is derived from the GIS digital data, which is slightly different from that reported for 2007 in the NJ Division of Taxation's 2008 Farmland Data Report (see *Chapter 1*). Preserved farm acreage for this chapter is also derived from the GIS digital data, which also differs slightly from the historical data on individual farm preservation (see *Chapter 4*).

## **Public Participation**

For the development of this *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update*, Blairstown Township hosted two public meetings seeking input and direction from local residents, farmers, officials, and representatives of agencies and nonprofit organizations interested in farmland preservation. The first meeting was held in August 2009, near the beginning of plan development. The second meeting was held after comments on the Draft Plan were received from the SADC.

### ***Public Hearing #1 – August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009***

The first public meeting was held on Thursday, August 12, 2009, at the Blairstown Township municipal building. This meeting was held as part of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Township Committee and noticed in advance of the meeting in the local newspapers. The purpose of the meeting was to present and discuss the proposed plan to the public, the Township Committee, the Open Space Committee and Agricultural Advisory Committee, and to seek input from the Committees on the draft maps identifying project areas and parcels for preservation.

Concerns raised from residents and committee members included the impact on Blairstown's farmland of proposed revisions in the eligibility rules for farmland assessment, which may cause a number of currently farm assessed properties to fall out of farmland assessment, and the effect of the recent NRCS Soil Survey update, which resulted in a decrease in the amount of Blairstown soils identified as agricultural under the NRCS classification system. The timeline for the Plan was reviewed and questions answered by the members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, Township Committee, and The Land Conservancy of New Jersey, which is working with the Township to prepare the plan.

The notice and agenda for this public meeting is included in the *Appendix*.

### ***Public Hearing #2 – December 20, 2010***

A second meeting was held to provide the opportunity for local residents and farmers to offer their input on the *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update*. The meeting will be held once comments are received on the *Draft Plan* from the Warren CADB and SADC. The Planning Board hosted the public meeting where the maps were displayed and reviewed for the members of the Board and public.

## **Project Area Summaries**

As part of its 2008 *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan*, the Warren CADB identified seven project areas within the County's ADA for farmland preservation. A major portion of Blairstown Township falls within Project Area North for Warren County. The Blairstown Township AAC further identified four municipal project areas within the municipality focusing on agricultural lands that are productive, tillable, and enlarge

existing preserved farm belts in the community. These four project areas are described below and shown on the *Project Area Map* included within this plan.

- North Project Area: Located north of Route 94 and High Street and east of Cobblewood Road, this project area contains eight preserved farm parcels (five farms), totaling **327 acres**. There are currently no pending applications within this project area.
- Route 94 North Project Area: Located north of Route 94 and west of the North Project Area, between Cobblewood Road and Benton Road, this project area currently contains no preserved farms, and there are no pending applications. This project falls outside the Warren County ADA; however, it contains active farms that meet the SADC’s minimum criteria for productive soils and tillable land. Should the owner of a targeted farm in this project area express an interest in becoming a participant in the farmland preservation program, Blairstown Township may approach the Warren CADB to see if it would consider amending its ADA. Such an amendment would require approval by the SADC.
- Central Project Area: Bounded by Route 94 on the north and the currently inactive Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Lackawanna Cutoff on the south, Knowlton Township on the west and Frelinghuysen Township on the east, this project area contains three preserved farm parcels (two farms) totaling **293 acres**. There are no pending applications within this project area.
- South Project Area: This project area is bounded by the Central Project Area, Knowlton, Hope and Frelinghuysen Townships. This project area contains ten preserved farm parcels (eight farms) totaling **591 acres**. There are no pending applications within this project area.

The below table summarizes the acreage and farm parcels within each of the Projects Areas in Blairstown Township:

	Total Farm Assessed Properties		Unpreserved Farmland		Preserved Farm Parcels		Preserved Open Space Assessed as Farmland		Farms Pending Preservation (FY2010 Application)	
	#	Acreage	#	Acreage	#	Acreage*	#	Acreage	#	Acreage
Blairstown Township	363	8,027	334	6,471	24	1,290	5	266	0	0
Within the County ADA	215	4,905	188	3,539	23	1,249	4	117	0	0
<b>Project Areas</b>										
North	42	743	30	298	8	327	4	117	0	0
Route 94 North	23	639	22	491	0	0	1	149	0	0
Central	41	1,212	38	918	3	293	0	0	0	0
South	120	2,797	110	2,206	10	591	0	0	0	0
<i>Total in Blairstown PAs</i>	<i>226</i>	<i>5,390</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>3,914</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>1,211</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>266</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

*\*Note: These numbers are from the GIS Parcel Data Analysis and include the entire parcel as “preserved.” Thus this number is slightly higher than the actual recorded data shown in Chapter 4.*

Blairstown Township also has identified specific farmland parcels for preservation within each of the Project Areas. The *Targeted Farms Map* identifies each of these farms and they are listed within the *Appendix* of this plan. Project Area North includes 11 parcels targeted for preservation, Project Area Route 94 North includes 12 parcels, Project Area Central includes 13 parcels, and Project Area South includes 47 parcels targeted for preservation.

## **Project Area Inventory**

For each project area, an analysis was completed to identify the amount and density of preserved farmland, soils and size of the area. The following data was determined:

- i. The total acreage of targeted farms (2012 projects);
- ii. The total acreage of farms with final approval (2011 applications);
- iii. The total acreage of preserved farmland;
- iv. The total acreage of other deed restricted farmland;
- v. The total acreage of farms enrolled in the eight-year farmland preservation program or municipally-approved farmland preservation program;
- vi. The total acreage of preserved open space compatible with agriculture.

For each of the above categories, the land area within each project area is expressed as a ratio between the total acreage for each category and the total acreage of the project area. Also included is the percentage of each category expressed as a percentage of the total project area.

Note: There are no “*other deed restricted farmlands*” in Blairstown Township. All farmland has been preserved through the farmland preservation program.

“*Open space compatible with agriculture*” excludes any open space that has active recreational facilities on it, as this is an incompatible use with agriculture. In Blairstown Township this includes Sycamore Park, Vail Field and Fireman’s Field. Footbridge Park has basketball courts but no ball fields, thus was included in the calculations.

The “*Density of the Project Area*” is presented as the sum of the acreages of items (ii) through (vi) (*see above*), as compared to the total acreage of the project area (*Acreage of Land Type/Aggregate Size of Project Area*). These tables are presented below.

<b>NORTH PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio*</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
i. Targeted Farms (2012 Applications)	127	127 : 1,819	7%
ii. Farms with Final Approval (2011 Applications)	-	- : 1,819	0%
iii. Preserved Farmland	327	327 : 1,819	18%
iv. Other Deed Restricted Farmland	-	- : 1,819	0%
v. Farms Enrolled in 8 Year Program	-	- : 1,819	0%
vi. Preserved Open Space Compatible with Agriculture	122	122 : 1,819	7%
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	1,819		
<i>Total Project Area Inventory: Items (i) through (vi):</i>	576	576 : 1,819	32%
<b><i>(Selected) Density of the Project Area (without targeted farms): Items (ii) through (vi):</i></b>	<b>449</b>	<b>449 : 1,819</b>	<b>25%</b>

<b>ROUTE 94 NORTH PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio*</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
i. Targeted Farms (2012 Applications)	209	209 : 1,375	15%
ii. Farms with Final Approval (2011 Applications)	-	- : 1,375	0%
iii. Preserved Farmland	-	- : 1,375	0%
iv. Other Deed Restricted Farmland	-	- : 1,375	0%
v. Farms Enrolled in 8 Year Program	-	- : 1,375	0%
vi. Preserved Open Space Compatible with Agriculture	149	149 : 1,375	11%
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	1,375		
<i>Total Project Area Inventory: Items (i) through (vi):</i>	358	358 : 1,375	26%
<b><i>(Selected) Density of the Project Area (without targeted farms): Items (ii) through (vi):</i></b>	<b>149</b>	<b>149 : 1,375</b>	<b>11%</b>

<b>CENTRAL PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio*</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
i. Targeted Farms (2012 Applications)	494	494 : 3,763	13%
ii. Farms with Final Approval (2011 Applications)	-	- : 3,763	0%
iii. Preserved Farmland	293	293 : 3,763	8%
iv. Other Deed Restricted Farmland	-	- : 3,763	0%
v. Farms Enrolled in 8 Year Program	-	- : 3,763	0%
vi. Preserved Open Space Compatible with Agriculture	834	834 : 3,763	22%
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	3,763		
<i>Total Project Area Inventory: Items (i) through (vi):</i>	1,621	1,621 : 3,763	43%
<b><i>(Selected) Density of the Project Area (without targeted farms): Items (ii) through (vi):</i></b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>1,127 : 3,763</b>	<b>30%</b>

Project Area inventory analysis: (continued)

<b>SOUTH PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio*</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
i. Targeted Farms (2012 Applications)	1,310	1,310 : 5,350	24%
ii. Farms with Final Approval (2011 Applications)	-	- : 5,350	0%
iii. Preserved Farmland	591	591 : 5,350	11%
iv. Other Deed Restricted Farmland	-	- : 5,350	0%
v. Farms Enrolled in 8 Year Program	-	- : 5,350	0%
vi. Preserved Open Space Compatible with Agriculture	109	109 : 5,350	2%
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	5,350		
<i>Total Project Area Inventory: Items (i) through (vi):</i>	2,010	2,010 : 5,350	38%
<b>(Selected) Density of the Project Area (without targeted farms): Items (ii) through (vi):</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>700 : 5,350</b>	<b>13%</b>

For all Project Areas, the summary total is as follows:

<b>ALL PROJECT AREAS</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio*</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
i. Targeted Farms (2012 Applications)	2,140	2,140 : 12,307	17%
ii. Farms with Final Approval (2011 Applications)	-	- : 12,307	0%
iii. Preserved Farmland	1,211	1,211 : 12,307	10%
iv. Other Deed Restricted Farmland	-	- : 12,307	0%
v. Farms Enrolled in 8 Year Program	-	- : 12,307	0%
vi. Preserved Open Space Compatible with Agriculture	1,214	1,214 : 12,307	10%
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	12,307		
<i>Total Project Area Inventory: Items (i) through (vi):</i>	4,565	4,565 : 12,307	37%
<b>(Selected) Density of the Project Area (without targeted farms): Items (ii) through (vi):</b>	<b>2,425</b>	<b>2,425 : 12,307</b>	<b>20%</b>

## Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Minimum Eligibility Criteria are based upon the SADC's rules for farmland preservation and project eligibility (adopted *May 21, 2007*). 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 Township Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) and the Warren CADB that the parcels were not identified as targeted due to a specific mapping issue or other error.***

The Township may proceed without State funding on projects that do not meet these Minimum Eligibility Standards, but as a rule, the County and Blairstown will not cost share on applications that do not meet SADC minimum standards. Should a large commercially successful farm that does not meet these standards seek preservation, that rule might be reconsidered. (*Joel McGreen, Blairstown Agricultural Advisory Committee*) In all cases, the Blairstown Township AAC will work closely with the Warren CADB to review and process applications from landowners for farmland preservation. The Blairstown AAC will follow all County and State procedures to ensure consistency in application review and processing.

Within the identified project areas, candidate farms (or “targeted farms” as referenced in the May 21, 2007 rules) are identified which meet the tillable land and soils minimum eligibility standards. In order to determine farms that are potentially eligible for preservation, a series of queries were made utilizing the ArcGIS 9.2 digital mapping software for soils and tillable land. These are described in further detail below.

*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. The interpretation of the tillable land layer from the NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover data (including pastureland) is the second screen for soils capable of supporting agriculture with the following provisions:

- It is best to make determination of soils capable of supporting agriculture on a site specific basis (that is for individual submitted applications);

- For farmland planning, on a municipal and county basis, the tillable land layer can also be used to show general areas of farmland potentially eligible for preservation as long as it is noted that this picture of farmland would need to be confirmed on an individual basis by studying:
  - Practices the individual farmer has made to farm the land (Conservation Plans, Drainage Plans, etc.)
  - Amount and location of steep slopes on the farm
  - Amount of stony/gravelly soils on the farm

In summary, the SADC has agreed that soils capable of supporting agricultural production are those classified as agricultural by the NRCS Soil Survey or identified as tillable by the NJDEP Land Cover/Land Use mapping. (*Robert Baumley*)<sup>1</sup>

Farm parcels are sorted on size based upon the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Minimum Eligibility Criteria for soils:

<u>Farm Size</u>	<u>Requirements</u>
0-6.667 acres	75% soils capable of supporting agricultural production
6.667-10 acres	5 acres of soils capable of supporting agricultural production
10-50 acres	50% soils capable of supporting agricultural production
50+ acres	25 acres of soils capable of supporting agricultural production

*Farmland that meets the SADC Criteria for Tillable Land*

Tillable acreage was determined using the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection 2007 Land Use/Land Cover mapping for agricultural lands. The land categories that are defined as the “tillable land” based on the 2002 NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover, 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 on size based upon the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for tillable land:

<u>Farm Size</u>	<u>Requirements</u>
0-6.667 acres	75% tillable
6.667-10 acres	5 acres tillable
10-50 acres	50% tillable
50+ acres	25 tillable acres

*Farmland that meets SADC Criteria for both Tillable Land and Soils*

Utilizing the tillable acreage determined from the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection 2007 Land Use/Land Cover mapping for agricultural lands and soil acreage determined using the Soil Survey as prepared by the Natural Resource Conservation

Service for prime farmland soils, soils of statewide importance and soils of unique importance, farm parcels were sorted on size based upon the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Minimum Eligibility Criteria for tillable land and soils.

The Project Area Summaries and Minimum Eligibility Criteria analysis for each project area are presented in the tables below and GIS Maps (included within the *Maps Section* of this Plan). As stated earlier, for each category, the land area within each project area is expressed as a ratio between the total acreage for each category and the total acreage of the project area. Also included is the percentage of each category expressed as a percentage of the total project area.

<b>NORTH PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	1,819		
<b>Soil Acreage using data from NRCS Soil Survey</b>			
i. Total Acreage of Prime Farmland Soils	118	118 : 1,819	6%
ii. Total Acreage of Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance	118	118 : 1,819	6%
iii. Total Acreage of Unique Farmland Soils	0	0 : 1,819	0%
<b>Qfarm Parcel Analysis for Soils and Tillable Land</b>			
i. Qfarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Agricultural Soils	179	179 : 1,819	10%
ii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Tillable Land	127	127 : 1,819	7%
iii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria: Soils & Tillable Land	127	127 : 1,819	7%

<b>ROUTE 94 NORTH PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	1,375		
<b>Soil Acreage using data from NRCS Soil Survey</b>			
i. Total Acreage of Prime Farmland Soils	108	108 : 1,375	8%
ii. Total Acreage of Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance	284	284 : 1,375	21%
iii. Total Acreage of Unique Farmland Soils	0	0 : 1,375	0%
<b>Qfarm Parcel Analysis for Soils and Tillable Land</b>			
i. Qfarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Agricultural Soils	220	220 : 1,375	16%
ii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Tillable Land	209	209 : 1,375	15%
iii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria: Soils & Tillable Land	209	209 : 1,375	15%

Minimum Eligibility Criteria analysis for each project area: (continued)

<b>CENTRAL PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	3,763		
<b>Soil Acreage using data from NRCS Soil Survey</b>			
i. Total Acreage of Prime Farmland Soils	880	880 : 3,763	23%
ii. Total Acreage of Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance	244	244 : 3,763	6%
iii. Total Acreage of Unique Farmland Soils	26	26 : 3,763	1%
<b>Qfarm Parcel Analysis for Soils and Tillable Land</b>		0 3,763	
i. Qfarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Agricultural Soils	516	516 : 3,763	14%
ii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Tillable Land	494	494 : 3,763	13%
iii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria: Soils & Tillable Land	506	506 : 3,763	13%

<b>SOUTH PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	5,350		
<b>Soil Acreage using data from NRCS Soil Survey</b>			
i. Total Acreage of Prime Farmland Soils	17	17 : 5,350	0%
ii. Total Acreage of Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance	0	0 : 5,350	0%
iii. Total Acreage of Unique Farmland Soils	105	105 : 5,350	2%
<b>Qfarm Parcel Analysis for Soils and Tillable Land</b>		0 5,350	
i. Qfarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Agricultural Soils	1,362	1,362 : 5,350	25%
ii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Tillable Land	1,310	1,310 : 5,350	24%
iii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria: Soils & Tillable Land	1,310	1,310 : 5,350	24%

For all project areas, the summary total is as follows:

<b>ALL PROJECT AREAS SUMMARY</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Density Ratio</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Aggregate Size of Project Area:	12,307		
<b>Soil Acreage using data from NRCS Soil Survey</b>			
i. Total Acreage of Prime Farmland Soils	1,123	1,123 : 12,307	9%
ii. Total Acreage of Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance	646	646 : 12,307	5%
iii. Total Acreage of Unique Farmland Soils	131	131 : 12,307	1%
<b>Qfarm Parcel Analysis for Soils and Tillable Land</b>		0 12,307	
i. Qfarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Agricultural Soils	2,277	2,277 : 12,307	19%
ii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria for Tillable Land	2,140	2,140 : 12,307	17%
iii. QFarm Parcels meeting SADC Criteria: Soils & Tillable Land	2,140	2,140 : 12,307	17%

Based on the GIS parcel data analysis, there are **8,027 acres** of total assessed farmland (QFarm Parcels) in Blairstown Township, of which 3,451 acres, or 43%, are active agricultural land and 2,165 acres, or 27%, meet both the Minimum Eligibility Criteria for soils and tillable land. **2,140 acres** that meet the Minimum Eligibility Criteria fall within

the four Project Areas targeted for farmland preservation. Included within the *Appendix* is the complete list of potentially eligible parcels.

In addition to the State's new Minimum Eligibility Criteria, the SADC has also identified an "Eligible Farm" standard as defined in section 17.2 of the newly adopted rules which applies only to the County PIG program. In this case, grant funding will be based upon an individual farm having a rank score that is "equal to or greater than 70% of the county's average quality score of all farms granted preliminary approval by the SADC through the county easement purchase program and/or the county planning incentive grant program within the previous three fiscal years." The SADC has released this rank score for Fiscal Year 2011 for Warren County; the minimum score for an Eligible Farm is 40. A detailed score listing is included within the *Appendix*.

## **County and Municipal Ranking Criteria**

The Warren CADB uses the SADC's ranking criteria as the basis for qualifying farms for preservation (*Appendix*). The County would consider on cost sharing on applications 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 overall plan for the County for farmland preservation (*Bob Resker*) 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.

Blairstown's Agricultural Advisory Committee and Township Committee is committed to preserving as much of the Township's agricultural land base as possible and supports innovative funding mechanisms and preservation tools. The focus of the Township's farmland preservation program is to preserve the productive agricultural landscape of the community. Blairstown's ranking criteria, in descending order of importance is:

- acreage
- proximity to other preserved farms
- income percentage derived from farming
- proximity to preserved Open Space
- imminence of sale or other extenuating circumstances.

## **Municipal and County Policies Related to Farmland Preservation Applications**

Blairstown Township follows the policies established by Warren County regarding housing opportunities, division of premises, and exception areas. These policies are documented in the *2008 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan*. The Warren CADB follows the SADC's policies regarding these issues and below is a brief summary of the state policies for each issue.

### ***Approval of Housing Opportunities***

As a general statement, housing opportunities are preferred from a security and pride of ownership perspective. Farms without housing opportunities that are next to existing preserved farms are not as critical. (*Joel McGreen*)

*Agricultural labor housing:* Agricultural labor housing is not currently protected under the Right to Farm Act in the State of New Jersey. However, the State Agriculture Development Committee understands the need for this type of housing and does have a policy that a landowner must refer to in order to construct labor housing on preserved farms for work on the preserved farm. These applications are reviewed by the State Agriculture Development Committee and the County Agriculture Development Board. The Township of Blairstown Code, Chapter 19, Land Development, allows housing for seasonal agricultural workers as a conditional accessory use in the majority of the Township and sets out detailed conditions and standards in Section 19-601. These conditions allow for seasonal/temporary housing on farms of at least seven acres that are qualified farms under the Farmland Assessment Act. The housing must be designed for temporary occupancy rather than year-round use, cannot include housing provided on a commercial basis to the general public and must be used to house only those workers hired for the farmer's own use. (*BlairstownCode*)<sup>2</sup>

*House replacement:* The policy of the State Agriculture Development Committee 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, in order to minimize the impact on the agricultural operation. This is supported by the CADB and AAC for Blairstown Township. In addition, the Township's position is that replacement houses should retain the same overall footprint and overly expensive dwellings should be avoided. (*Joel McGreen*)

*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." (*2007 SADC Appraiser Handbook*)<sup>3</sup> 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 Blirstown 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.

### ***Division of the Premises***

The goal of the SADC, supported by the Warren CADB and Blirstown 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.

### ***Approval of Exception***

Exceptions are defined by the SADC as “acres within a farm being preserved” 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. Exceptions are not a practice that is generally encouraged by the SADC 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 which is part of an existing Block and 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.” (2007 SADC Appraiser Handbook) A severable exception is made “if a landowner wants to be able to sell the excepted area separate from the deed-restricted farm.”

*Non-severable:* Non-severable exceptions are defined by the SADC as “area which is part of an existing Block and Lot owned by the application that will not be subject to the restrictions of the Deed of Easement but cannot be sold separately from the remaining premises.” (2007 SADC Appraiser Handbook) Unlike a severable exception, a non-severable exception is “always attached to the protected farm.”

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 Blirstown 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.

## **Funding Plan**

### ***Installment Purchases and Donation/Bargain Sales***

Blairstown Township is supportive of donation/bargain sales and installment purchases. Both of these tools serve to leverage limited funding resources and are described below:

*Donation and Bargain Sale:* This mechanism for preserving a farm involves a 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.

### ***Overview of Warren County Trust Fund and Municipal PIG requirements***

The Warren County Open Space Recreation Farmland Preservation Trust Fund generates approximately \$7.8 million annually. Of this, \$4.2 million is expected to be available for farmland preservation in 2010. (*Resker*) Blairstown Township works with Warren County according to its current cost-share requirements for preserving farms. The County's policy is that Warren CADB will fund one-half of the difference between the amount the SADC funded and the total cost for preserving a farm, based upon the Certified Market Value (CMV), through the municipal Planning Incentive Grant program. The remainder is funded by the municipality.

### ***Overview of SADC "sliding scale"***

As part of the municipal PIG program, the SADC will cost share on an easement that has been, or is being, acquired by a municipality. The SADC will not authorize a grant for greater than 80% of the SADC's certified fair market value of the development easement. If the landowner's asking price is greater than the certified fair market value, the SADC's cost share grant shall be based upon the SADC's certified fair market value. The landowner can request a higher price, but the transaction cannot exceed an amount greater than the higher of two independent appraisals. If the landowner accepts less than the certified value, the SADC will apply its cost share "sliding scale" formula to the discounted per acre value and share in a portion of the discount. The SADC percent cost share is based upon the following sliding scale:

Landowner's Asking Price	Percent Committee Cost Share
From \$0.00 to \$1,000	= 80% above \$0.00
From > \$1,000 to \$3,000	= \$800 + 70% above \$1,000
From > \$3,000 to \$5,000	= \$2,200 + 60% above \$3,000
From > \$5,000 to \$9,000	= \$3,400 + 50% above \$5,000
From > \$9,000 to \$50,000	= 60%
From > \$50,000 to \$75,000	= \$30,000 + 55% above \$50,000
From > \$75,000 to \$85,000	= \$43,750 + 50% above \$75,000
From > \$85,000 to \$95,000	= \$48,750 + 40% above \$85,000
From > \$95,000 to \$105,000	= \$52,750 + 30% above \$95,000
From > \$105,000 to \$115,000	= \$55,750 + 20% above \$105,000
From > \$115,000	= \$57,750 + 10% above \$115,000

### ***Description of Municipal Funding Sources***

The Blairstown Township Municipal Open Space, Recreation and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund was approved in 2000, and has collected from \$0.02 to \$0.04 per \$100 of assessed valuation per year since 2001. The rate currently stands at \$0.035, after a Township-wide property revaluation, and the name of the Fund was changed in 2004 to the Municipal Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. The Fund generated approximately \$320,000 in 2008 and had a balance of \$169,070 in August 2009. For a fuller discussion of the history of this funding source, see *Farmland Preservation Program Funding Expended to Date by Source* in Chapter 4.

A reevaluation is planned for 2011, with valuations expected to be reduced approximately 20-30%. An increase in the Open Space tax rate is not expected due to residents' resistance to an increasing tax burden in current economic times as of the writing of this Plan. Allocations of funds from the Trust is under the purview of the Township Committee, which evaluates each initiative on its merits. Historically, the Committee has tended to give priority to farmland, followed by open space, recreation development, then historic preservation. Overall, land preservation is expected to remain at an 80-90% allocation of funding in the near future, with farmland and open space evenly split. A possible exception would be active development of the lands purchased for recreational purposes on Route 94. Discussions regarding funding mechanisms for this initiative continue. *(Joel McGreen)*

Blairstown Township has also bonded to finance farmland preservation. This has accelerated the Township's ability to proactively preserve farmland. Bonding has helped in the funding of several of the farmland and open space preservation projects since 2002. The Township's bond obligation stood at \$709,733 as of July 15, 2008, including principal and interest, to be paid annually over a 15 year period. For each of the farms the municipality purchased through the bond, the Township also sought state and county cost share funding.

**Cost Projections and Funding Plan Associated with Preservation Goals**

The Blirstown Township Municipal Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund generated \$320,005 in 2008. As of August 2009, there are 24 parcels preserved in Blirstown Township, protecting 1,290 acres. Including all of these acquisitions, the average cost was \$4,677 per acre to purchase a development easement on the farms. However, the cost of land has risen since the earliest acquisitions were made, affecting the cost per acre for future acquisitions. (see *Program History* table in *Chapter 4*).

Currently, the Township pays the debt service for bond repayment from the Municipal Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund per Ordinance No. 2004-01. The ten-year financial analysis is based on the assumption that municipal money available to the Township for future preservation would equal the annual Trust Fund dollars, less the annual bond debt payment. The table below details the bond repayment schedule over the next twenty years:

Open Space Bond Payments				
Date	Principal	Interest	Date	Yearly Paym't
7/15/2009	\$ 35,504	\$ 10,388	1/15/2009	\$ 45,892
7/15/2010	\$ 35,036	\$ 10,036	1/15/2010	\$ 45,071
7/15/2011	\$ 39,567	\$ 9,567	1/15/2011	\$ 49,134
7/15/2012	\$ 38,967	\$ 8,967	1/15/2012	\$ 47,934
7/15/2013	\$ 38,367	\$ 8,367	1/15/2013	\$ 46,734
7/15/2014	\$ 42,767	\$ 7,767	1/15/2014	\$ 50,534
7/15/2015	\$ 42,067	\$ 7,067	1/15/2015	\$ 49,134
7/15/2016	\$ 41,367	\$ 6,367	1/15/2016	\$ 47,734
7/15/2017	\$ 40,667	\$ 5,667	1/15/2017	\$ 46,334
7/15/2018	\$ 39,367	\$ 4,967	1/15/2018	\$ 44,334
7/15/2019	\$ 39,267	\$ 4,267	1/15/2019	\$ 43,534
7/15/2020	\$ 38,567	\$ 3,567	1/15/2020	\$ 42,134
7/15/2021	\$ 47,867	\$ 2,867	1/15/2021	\$ 50,734
7/15/2022	\$ 46,939	\$ 1,939	1/15/2022	\$ 48,878
7/15/2023	\$ 50,011	\$ 1,011	1/15/2023	\$ 51,021
total:	\$ 616,325	\$ 92,808		\$ 709,133

To complete the cost projections the following additional assumptions were made for the Township:

- 1) The Trust Fund allocation is \$320,000 in 2010
- 2) The Trust Fund grows by 3% annually
- 3) The Trust Fund is reduced by 5% for due diligence (administrative costs) each year
- 4) The Township spends the annual allocation in the Trust Fund and does not carry a balance from one year to the next
- 5) The Trust Fund is encumbered by prior acquisitions (thus deducting annual bond repayment each year)
- 6) Average price per acre is \$7,000 in 2010
- 7) The average price per acre will increase 5% annually

- 8) The Township is purchasing land in partnership with County and State (no direct purchase by Township)
- 9) The municipal cost share is on average 15%, but for this analysis a variety of cost shares are calculated, using 15% as the minimum participation
- 10) The balance in the Trust Fund as of August 2009 is \$169,070

Based upon the above assumptions, the following analysis was completed to calculate the funding available to Blirstown for farmland preservation:

Year	Annual OS Trust Funding	OS Funding Available Less Administrative Costs	OS Funding Available Less Administrative Costs and Debt Costs
1	\$ 320,000.00	\$ 304,000.00	\$ 258,928.74
2	\$ 329,600.00	\$ 313,120.00	\$ 263,986.24
3	\$ 339,488.00	\$ 322,513.60	\$ 274,580.04
4	\$ 349,672.64	\$ 332,189.01	\$ 285,455.25
5	\$ 360,162.82	\$ 342,154.68	\$ 291,620.92
6	\$ 370,967.70	\$ 352,419.32	\$ 303,285.56
7	\$ 382,096.73	\$ 362,991.90	\$ 315,258.14
8	\$ 393,559.64	\$ 373,881.66	\$ 327,547.90
9	\$ 405,366.43	\$ 385,098.10	\$ 340,764.34
10	\$ 417,527.42	\$ 396,651.05	\$ 353,117.29

Using the above funding matrix, and the average cost per acre in Blirstown Township, an analysis was completed to calculate the amount of land that could be purchased in Blirstown. The analysis was run at 5% intervals. At a 15% municipal cost share with the county and state, the Township could preserve 247 acres in the first year, 1,187 acres within five years, and 2,295 acres after ten years.

Year	15% Township Cost Share (acres preserved)	20% Township Cost Share (acres preserved)	25% Township Cost Share (acres preserved)	30% Township Cost Share (acres preserved)	35% Township Cost Share (acres preserved)	40% Township Cost Share (acres preserved)	45% Township Cost Share (acres preserved)
1	247	185	148	123	106	92	82
2	239	180	144	120	103	90	80
3	237	178	142	119	102	89	79
4	235	176	141	117	101	88	78
5	228	171	137	114	98	86	76
6	226	170	136	113	97	85	75
7	224	168	134	112	96	84	75
8	222	166	133	111	95	83	74
9	220	165	132	110	94	82	73
10	217	163	130	108	93	81	72
Total	2,295	1,721	1,377	1,148	984	861	765

**Cost Projections Associated with Preservation Goals**

An estimate was also completed to determine the cost share funding from the County and State. Based upon the average easement values and the SADC sliding scale, it is assumed that the Township’s cost share will be between 15% and 20%. Using this as a basis, and assuming the available funding from the Township is limited as determined above, the following analyses were completed:

Year	Average Cost per Acre	Acres Preserved at 15% Township Cost Share	15% Township Cost Share	15% County Cost Share	70% State Cost Share	Total Project Cost
1	\$ 7,000.00	<b>247</b>	\$ 258,928.74	\$ 258,928.74	\$ 1,208,334.12	<b>\$ 1,726,191.60</b>
2	\$ 7,350.00	<b>239</b>	\$ 263,986.24	\$ 263,986.24	\$ 1,231,935.79	<b>\$ 1,759,908.27</b>
3	\$ 7,717.50	<b>237</b>	\$ 274,580.04	\$ 274,580.04	\$ 1,281,373.52	<b>\$ 1,830,533.60</b>
4	\$ 8,103.38	<b>235</b>	\$ 285,455.25	\$ 285,455.25	\$ 1,332,124.49	<b>\$ 1,903,034.99</b>
5	\$ 8,508.54	<b>228</b>	\$ 291,620.92	\$ 291,620.92	\$ 1,360,897.62	<b>\$ 1,944,139.45</b>
6	\$ 8,933.97	<b>226</b>	\$ 303,285.56	\$ 303,285.56	\$ 1,415,332.61	<b>\$ 2,021,903.72</b>
7	\$ 9,380.67	<b>224</b>	\$ 315,258.14	\$ 315,258.14	\$ 1,471,204.64	<b>\$ 2,101,720.92</b>
8	\$ 9,849.70	<b>222</b>	\$ 327,547.90	\$ 327,547.90	\$ 1,528,556.84	<b>\$ 2,183,652.63</b>
9	\$ 10,342.19	<b>220</b>	\$ 340,764.34	\$ 340,764.34	\$ 1,590,233.61	<b>\$ 2,271,762.30</b>
10	\$ 10,859.30	<b>217</b>	\$ 353,117.29	\$ 353,117.29	\$ 1,647,880.68	<b>\$ 2,354,115.25</b>
	total acres:	<b>2,295</b>	\$ 3,014,544.41	\$ 3,014,544.41	\$ 14,067,873.92	<b>\$ 20,096,962.74</b>

Year	Average Cost per Acre	Acres Preserved at 20% Township Cost Share	20% Township Cost Share	20% County Cost Share	60% State Cost Share	Total Project Cost
1	\$ 7,000.00	<b>185</b>	\$ 258,928.74	\$ 258,928.74	\$ 776,786.22	<b>\$ 1,294,643.70</b>
2	\$ 7,350.00	<b>180</b>	\$ 263,986.24	\$ 263,986.24	\$ 791,958.72	<b>\$ 1,319,931.20</b>
3	\$ 7,717.50	<b>178</b>	\$ 274,580.04	\$ 274,580.04	\$ 823,740.12	<b>\$ 1,372,900.20</b>
4	\$ 8,103.38	<b>176</b>	\$ 285,455.25	\$ 285,455.25	\$ 856,365.74	<b>\$ 1,427,276.24</b>
5	\$ 8,508.54	<b>171</b>	\$ 291,620.92	\$ 291,620.92	\$ 874,862.75	<b>\$ 1,458,104.59</b>
6	\$ 8,933.97	<b>170</b>	\$ 303,285.56	\$ 303,285.56	\$ 909,856.68	<b>\$ 1,516,427.79</b>
7	\$ 9,380.67	<b>168</b>	\$ 315,258.14	\$ 315,258.14	\$ 945,774.41	<b>\$ 1,576,290.69</b>
8	\$ 9,849.70	<b>166</b>	\$ 327,547.90	\$ 327,547.90	\$ 982,643.69	<b>\$ 1,637,739.48</b>
9	\$ 10,342.19	<b>165</b>	\$ 340,764.34	\$ 340,764.34	\$ 1,022,293.03	<b>\$ 1,703,821.72</b>
10	\$ 10,859.30	<b>163</b>	\$ 353,117.29	\$ 353,117.29	\$ 1,059,351.86	<b>\$ 1,765,586.44</b>
	total acres:	<b>1,721</b>	\$ 3,014,544.41	\$ 3,014,544.41	\$ 9,043,633.23	<b>\$ 15,072,722.05</b>

In summary, the total estimated project costs and partnership costs (Township, County and State) to achieve the 1, 5, and 10 year goals for the Blirstown Township farmland preservation program are as follows at 15% and 20% of municipal funding:

	Acres Preserved at 15% Township Cost Share	15% Township Cost Share	15% County Cost Share	70% State Cost Share	Total Project Cost
Year 1	247	\$ 258,928.74	\$ 258,928.74	\$1,208,334.12	\$ 1,726,191.60
Years 1-5	1,187	\$ 1,374,571.19	\$ 1,374,571.19	\$6,414,665.54	\$ 9,163,807.91
Years 1-10	2,295	\$ 3,014,544.41	\$ 3,014,544.41	\$14,067,873.92	\$ 20,096,962.74

	Acres Preserved at 20% Township Cost Share	20% Township Cost Share	20% County Cost Share	60% State Cost Share	Total Project Cost
Year 1	185	258,929	258,929	776,786	1,294,644
Years 1-5	890	1,374,571	1,374,571	4,123,714	6,872,856
Years 1-10	1,721	3,014,544	3,014,544	9,043,633	15,072,722

Utilizing the SADC sliding scale for cost-sharing, and the estimated per acre value of the purchase of a farmland easement in Blairstown 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%) once land values increase above \$9,000 an acre.

***Green Acres, Water Supply and Floodplain Protection, and Farmland and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2009***

On November 3, 2009, the voters of the State of New Jersey approved a referendum on the Green Acres, Water Supply and Floodplain Protection, and Farmland and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2009, or “Public Question #1” on the election ballot. This referendum authorizes the state to spend \$400 million in bonds to fund New Jersey’s preservation programs. Of the total sum authorized: (1) \$218 million will be used for Green Acres; (2) \$146 million will be used for farmland preservation purposes; (3) \$24 million will be used for the “Blue Acres” program by which the State may purchase from willing sellers, for open space preservation purposes, properties that are prone to or have incurred flood or storm damage; and (4) \$12 million will be used for historic preservation purposes.

**Farmland Preservation Program Administrative Resources**

***Staff resources***

The Township of Blairstown has an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) that meets as needed. Joel McGreen is the chairman for this Committee. With the Open Space Committee, the AAC developed the Township’s 2002 Farmland Preservation Plan and 2003 Planning Incentive Grant.

### ***Legal support***

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

### ***Database Development and Geographic Information System Resources***

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey has provided Geographic Information System mapping services for Blirstown Township for the *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update* and Planning Incentive Grant Application.

## **Factors Limiting Farmland Preservation Implementation**

Blirstown Township has a strong commitment to preserve its farmland. This is evidenced by the support for the bond ordinance used to preserve farmland in the Township. Bonding for land preservation and proactively working with local landowners to protect their farms, has led the way for preserving additional land in the future. The high rate of farmland preservation in Blirstown Township has been attributable to the willingness and the ability of the Township to leverage its own funding to protect farmland. Blirstown Township strongly supports the municipal PIG program and would like to see it grow and funding from the state is critical to the integrity of the municipal PIG program. Due to the uncertainty in state funding for farmland preservation after 2009, Blirstown Township's program faces financial challenges as it moves forward in purchasing and preserving land during the next ten years.

In addition, there is concern among farmland owners in Blirstown Township that there will be inadequate state funding to purchase and preserve land, if they chose to preserve their land in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Personal Communication with Robert Baumley, Deputy Executive Director, State Agriculture Development Committee, August 8, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Blirstown Code. 19-601. ecode360.com. Accessed November 2010.

<sup>3</sup> State Agriculture Development Committee, New Jersey Farmland Preservation Program Appraiser Handbook. May 24, 2007. [www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/appraiserhandbook.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/appraiserhandbook.pdf)

## CHAPTER 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



With 7,745 acres in farmland assessment devoted to active agricultural use, equine operations and woodland use, Blairstown ranked sixth in farm operations of the 22 municipalities in Warren County in 2007. Hay, corn and soybeans form the economic base of the farming industry in Blairstown, with increasing attention to equine, nursery and vegetable operations. Building upon this are the ancillary businesses and infrastructure that support the Township’s farmers. Throughout the state, the marketing and profitability of the agricultural industry has gained renewed focus. The farmland preservation program is a critical component of the farming industry, and the success of the farmland preservation program in Blairstown is measured not just by acres preserved but also by the programs put in place to support the farmers and their businesses. The Township understands that a farmland preservation program constitutes much more than the act of preserving land. In order to be a full partner in a successful farmland preservation program, agriculture as an industry must be vibrant, self-sustaining, and innovative.

New Jersey offers Blairstown farmers a number of support agencies and programs ranging from technical advice to farm loans. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) *Smart Growth Tool Kit* provides information to support municipal and county government, businesses, nonprofit 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*. (*Agricultural Smart Growth Tool Kit*)<sup>1</sup> (*2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*)<sup>2</sup> 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.

As part of this emphasis on the business of agriculture, the NJDA annually sets “Economic Development Strategies” to expand and strengthen various sectors of the agriculture industry in New Jersey, including produce, horticulture, dairy, livestock and poultry, field crops, organic, equine, wine, and agri-tourism. 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 for those markets has become tougher. New Jersey’s produce industry must continually work to rediscover its competitive advantages improving access to nearby markets and strengthening consumer loyalty.*” (*2009 Economic Development Strategies*)<sup>3</sup> Blairstown farmers continue to look for ways to explore new markets, promote their products, and increase the profitability of their agricultural operations, including increasing direct marketing operations and promoting visibility through attendance at farmers’ markets, such as the weekly market in Blairstown, regional events such as the Warren County Farmers’ Fair and websites such as the Jersey Fresh website.

## ***Future of Agriculture***

The future of agriculture in Blairstown Township is being shaped by market forces and social trends that are occurring throughout New Jersey. These trends have already begun to redefine the traditional agricultural industry in Blairstown Township. Among the most substantial trends shaping local agriculture has been the extended decline in the dairy market. Dairy is the foundation of the region's agricultural industry, and its continued decline impacts dairy farmers and their support businesses as they transition towards other forms of agriculture. Consequently, grain and hay farms that support them may move toward different agricultural activities as well. Fortunately, the feed market in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, continues to seek supplies of hay and corn from Blairstown farmers. Additionally, nursery and equine operations, and livestock operations other than beef and dairy cattle, appear to be growing in Blairstown. These may be niches for Blairstown farmers to continue to explore.

Another challenge facing the area's farmers is increasing land prices and property taxes. This trend indicates that farmers will show a greater preference for renting rather than owning land, that farm operations will take up less space and utilize more intensive practices on their land, and that more and more farmers no longer make farming their primary occupation. Increasing land prices also threaten to replace many of Blairstown and Warren County's farmlands and open space areas with residential and commercial developments that are less compatible with agricultural production. Blairstown Township government is aware of this potential pressure and has established methods to limit development through its planning initiatives and zoning regulations.

The combination of traditional agricultural markets declining and land costs increasing will likely promote innovation in the ways farmers supplement their incomes. Farmers are currently trying to meet these challenges by producing goods with higher rates of return, such as nursery goods and sod, farm stand merchandise, and equine services. Agritourism facilities, such as farm stands, pick-your-owns, and petting zoos, may become more numerous as the County's residential population grows, expanding the market for these types of services.

Returns from "direct" sales of agricultural products to consumers have increased in recent years. This indicates that the anticipated trends towards more innovative farming practices have already begun to influence agriculture in Warren County. Direct agricultural sales generated \$1.28 million on 162 Warren County farms in 1997 – a figure which, despite unfavorable (drought) growing conditions, grew to \$1.55 million on 174 farms in 2002 and to \$1.95 million on 221 farms in 2007. Niche products such as packaged and organic goods that generate "value added" revenue streams are likely to increase as well. Between 2000 and 2007, the number of farms in Warren County reporting organic production rose from 4 to 22, with sales increasing from \$5,000 to \$564,000. For the Blairstown/Hardwick area, there were 5 operations reporting sales of organic products in 2007. (*Census of Agriculture*)

In discussions with the Agricultural Advisory Committee and Open Space Committee, and with the public and the Blairstown Township Committee at the August 12, 2009, public meeting for the Draft Plan, the following were indicated to be of special concern for the Blairstown Township agricultural community relative to long-term agriculture operations:

- One or two young farmers aside, the aging of farmers is of concern. As farmers become older, there are too few young farmers interested to take their place. This is exacerbated by the high cost of land, inhibiting purchase of farms by young farmers;
- The updated NRCS official soil survey (May 2009) drastically shrinks the amount of land classified as of agricultural quality, possibly adversely affecting the ranking of certain farms Blairstown seeks to preserve;
- Possible changes in farmland assessment eligibility rules may cause loss of farmland;
- Increasing crop damage by bears; and
- Open space that is not farmed or maintained becomes host to noxious weeds and invasive species that are then carried to farmlands by geese, resulting in increased need for use of herbicides on cropland to control these weeds.

## **2009 NJDA Economic Development Strategies**

One of the major efforts undertaken by the NJDA is to identify products grown in New Jersey through branding, agri-tourism, farm direct sales programs, and farm markets. The NJDA *Economic Development Strategies* for 2009 support the promotion of Jersey products through a variety of markets and mechanisms. (*2009 Economic Development Strategies*) NJDA is committed to promoting local products and agri-tourism through the New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism, the Jersey Fresh website, marketing to supermarkets and restaurants, media advertising, the distribution of printed materials, and other forms of promotion. Blairstown farmers benefit from this state-wide effort.

The NJDA's efforts have benefited from the passage of the 2008 federal Farm Bill, which increased Specialty Crop research and marketing funds, expanded the School Snack program offering a daily fresh fruit or vegetable, and included fruits and vegetables as eligible purchases by the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. This federal support for school and community nutrition programs combined with state-level directives that food purchases come from local sources to the extent practicable help the NJDA's efforts to promote the Jersey Fresh campaign. Strategies for 2009 include continuing efforts to open new community farmers markets (there were 111 in 2008), integrating WIC, Senior Farmers Market coupons and food stamps into the purchasing options at farmers markets, and continuing to manage the Emergency Food Assistance Program to food pantries, soup kitchens and the like. To address the issues of quality assurance and safety in promoting local products, the NJDA will continue providing grower accreditation for third party safety certification as well as the voluntary quality and grade inspections under the *Jersey Fresh* Quality Grading Program. In addition, in 2008 the NJDA helped publish "Chapter 24 and You: A Practical Guide to Selling Safely at Farmers Markets." (*2009 Economic Development Strategies*)

The following is a brief discussion of each of the sectors of Blairstown's agriculture industry as they relate to the 2009 "Economics Development Strategies" report. For each of the sectors, the 2009 report indicates that farmers should continually seek new local, state, and interstate markets to strengthen market share.

**Produce**, which includes vegetables, such as pumpkins, tomatoes, sweet corn, and squash, and fruit, such as apples and peaches, covered 118 acres in Blairstown Township in 2006. (*Farmland Assessment*)<sup>4</sup> These acres support the thriving vegetable industry in Warren County, which increased in market value from \$4.4 million in 2002 to \$7.1 million in 2007, and a smaller but growing market in fruits and (figures for fruit sales were not disclosed but the number of farms with fruit production increased in 2007). Vegetables in particular are an important component of the County's farm stand and farmers market industry, ranking third in the county for agricultural commodity value in 2007. (*2007 Census of Agriculture*)<sup>5</sup> Since vegetables do not require as much land to grow, Township farmers should consider expanding the produce sector of the agricultural economy as opportunities arise. Some strategies Blairstown Township and its farmers could follow are:

- Promote the *Jersey Fresh* brand, with signage on farm stands, such as The Homeland Farm currently does;
- Attend farmer and buyer meetings held by the NJDA;
- Promote farm markets, direct sales and pick-your-own operations; and,
- With the County, explore various additional products and markets for produce, including local restaurants, grocery markets, and institutions such as schools, hospitals and prisons. One example of a ready made market may be the Blair Academy, whose sustainability initiative encourages the consumption of more locally-grown and nutritious foods.<sup>6</sup>

**Ornamental horticulture (nursery, greenhouses, sod and floriculture)**, which includes trees and shrubs, Christmas trees, and bedding plants, covered 104 acres in Blairstown in 2006. This was the number one crop category (41%) in Warren County in 2007, with sales of \$22.1 million, almost triple the 2002 figure of \$7.6 million. Sales figures for this sector of the crop industry have risen dramatically since 1987, when it was at \$1.1 million. According to the 2009 Economic Development Strategies, ornamental horticulture is the leading agricultural sector in New Jersey. One likely and major reason this sector of the crop industry has become important is due to the continued non-agriculture population growth in the county and region, providing a ready market for these products. Blairstown can continue to strengthen and expand this sector of the agriculture economy as opportunities arise. Some strategies to follow are:

- Support efforts by NJDA to ensure plant health and disease-free material;
- Participate in the *Jersey Grown* program and increase local consumer awareness of the *Jersey Grown* brand through use of the *Jersey Grown* banner and other point of sale materials;
- Promote local nursery products through listings on the interactive *Jersey Grown* website as well as on local and regional and organizational websites; and

- Promote more “drive up” operations, such as Triple Creek Farm and Nursery and the Township’s Christmas tree farms, where consumers can buy directly from the nursery or greenhouse.

**Dairy** had historically been one of the dominant agricultural sectors in Blairstown Township but is now down to one or two farms with small herds. As of 2006, Blairstown had approximately 228 head of dairy cattle, in comparison with approximately 1,832 head in 1983. (*Farmland Assessment*) This decrease in dairy production reflects the larger trend seen throughout Warren County, which produced only 35 million pounds of milk in 2005, an all-time low for the County. A combination of high input costs (land prices and taxes) and low milk prices have driven this trend. While milk prices rebounded in 2007, they were offset by record-high feed, fuel and fertilizer costs. Still, Warren County ranks among the top five counties in the State that together supply 85% of New Jersey’s milk. (*Economic Development Strategies*) To sustain and augment the county dairy industry, some strategies Blairstown could follow are:

- Support the NJDA’s efforts to seek federal legislation to ensure more stable short-term on-farm milk price programs
- Promote *Jersey Fresh* dairy products;
- Explore various additional products and markets for dairy, including local restaurants and grocery markets;
- Work with the County and State to ensure the health of the dairy industry, and the quality of raw and processed milk;
- Work with the County to bring a local processing creamery back to the area;
- Help to bring more livestock veterinarians back to the area; and,
- Market value-added dairy products, such as cheeses, which can be sold through local community farmers markets and specialty stores.

**Corn** for grain and silage covered approximately 348 acres in Blairstown for 2006, the second largest field crop next to hay. With the decline of the dairy industry, the amount of corn grown for silage has declined to just 52 acres, dropping from 8% of the County’s total production in 1983 to under 2% in 2006. Corn for grain is down by about a third in the same period, but has consistently represented about 2% of the County’s production. (*Farmland Assessment*) Although corn for grain has historically been the dominant field crop throughout Warren County, accounting for 27% of agricultural lands, hay surpasses it as the dominant crop in Blairstown. Corn requires relatively less labor and cost inputs than produce, nurseries and greenhouses, and livestock, making it more profitable. It is also grown on livestock farms as feed for animals; however, with the decline in dairy and beef cattle, most corn grown in Blairstown is now sold out of state. Blairstown can strengthen and expand this sector of the agriculture economy as opportunities arise. Some strategies to follow are:

- Support State efforts to protect the health of field crops against the immediate threat of damaging plant pests and diseases;
- Support efforts by the County and State to produce renewable fuels, thus adding a ready market for corn; and,
- Support the livestock industry, which uses corn as feed.

**Hay** accounts for a large portion of Blaiirstown's agriculture activity. It covered approximately 1,550 acres within the Township in 2006, providing almost 10% of the County's production. (*Farmland Assessment*) Warren County ranks third in the state in acres devoted to hay and other forage crops. (*2007 Census of Agriculture*) Hay produced by Blaiirstown farmers is largely marketed out of state as feed. To continue and expand this strong sector of the agriculture economy, Blaiirstown could employ some of the following strategies:

- Support State efforts to protect the health of field crops against the immediate threat of damaging plant pests and diseases;
- Explore new markets, and also ways to expand existing markets; and,
- Support the livestock industry, which uses hay as feed.

**Soybeans** covered approximately 143 acres in Blaiirstown Township in 2006. (*Farmland Assessment*) These acres are part of the overall production of soybeans in Warren County, with the County having the third highest state yield for soybeans in 2005, producing approximately 236,000 bushels. To sustain and enhance soybean production, Blaiirstown Township could consider some of the following strategies:

- Encourage the production of certified organic soybeans to increase the value of these crops; and
- Support efforts to construct bio-diesel production and soybean crusher facilities in the state to create new markets for soybean growers and potentially elevate the price of locally produced soybeans.

**Livestock and poultry** operations include beef cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, and poultry. The statewide trend in this area is away from large commercial beef operations and toward "alternative livestock and production methods." (*Economic Development Strategies*) While Warren County ranked number one in the state in inventory and sales of cattle and calves, inventory numbers are declining. This is especially true in Blaiirstown, where beef cattle inventory has declined by more than two-thirds since 1983 to just 162 head. Hog farming also is in decline, but inventories of sheep, goats and other livestock are rising. In 2007, Warren County ranked second in the state in inventories of sheep and lambs and fifth in the state for sales of sheep, goats and their products, totaling \$163,000. (*Farmland Assessment, Census of Agriculture*)

Poultry, which includes egg production, turkeys and ducks, is another livestock industry in Blaiirstown. There are no large commercial operations in the Township for either meat chickens or laying chickens, and there has been a steep decline in the number of meat chickens to just 62 in 2006 versus 996 laying chickens. The duck, geese and turkey populations vary from year to year, apparently as farmers try out different livestock alternatives. (*Farmland Assessment*) Other livestock is a growing category and includes at least one farm in Blaiirstown where llamas are raised and one farm with alpacas.

To strengthen and expand its place in the county economy, livestock strategies Blairstown could follow are:

- Continue to explore alternative livestock;
- Adopt the NJDA encouraged practice of raising grass-fed and organic grass-fed livestock;
- Help ensure animal health and promote awareness of the numerous disease control programs administered by the NJDA;
- Explore the benefits and possibilities of direct marketing of livestock and their value-added products, such as fresh meat, cheeses and milk from alternative livestock;
- Explore various products and markets, including local restaurants and grocery markets;
- Work expand the inventory and promotion of *Jersey Bred* 4H raised lambs and the New Jersey Junior Breeder's goat purchasing program;
- Consider the NJDA's recommendations for farm management practices for goats to reduce costs associated with feeding and aid in maintaining open space benefits of rougher grassland;
- Support sales of livestock through additional local or regional annual markets;
- Explore developing value-added products;
- Work with the County to bring more livestock veterinarians back to the area; and,
- Assist farmers with farming techniques, regulatory requirements and the latest research for livestock and poultry.

**Equine** is a growing agriculture sector in Blairstown. In 2006, there were 227 equine in the Township, with 129 acres devoted to rehabilitation, boarding and training. (*Farmland Assessment*) To continue and expand the Township's market share in the county and state equine industry, especially with its abundant supply of hay, Blairstown farmers can:

- Explore the State's new breeder programs for standardbreds and thoroughbreds;
- Support horse health through the State's disease control programs;
- Consider promoting opportunities for equine-related recreation in and around Blairstown through State, regional and local websites;
- Support local 4-H club equine-related activities;
- Ensure Right to Farm Protection for Equine Operations per the Equine Agricultural Management Practices (AMP) adopted by the SADC in 2008;
- Create a Blairstown Township Equine Directory; and
- Create a Blairstown Township Equine Advisory Board.

**Organic Farming**, including crops and animals, is a potentially important market for Blairstown Township and Warren County. While numbers are not available for Blairstown alone, there were five operations with organic sales reported in 2007 for ZIP code 07825, which covers both Blairstown and Hardwick. Sales county wide increased from \$5,000 to \$564,000 between 2002 and 2007. (*Census of Agriculture*) With the increased consumer awareness in food production, organic products and the markets that support them will continue to gain a stronghold on the agricultural economy and become more "mainstream"

as people demand high quality, readily accessible, and affordable, organic products. Certification of organic farms is regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture via the Organic Food Production Act of 1990, 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. Warren County and Blirstown can:

- Improve marketing of organic and natural produce;
- Explore various additional markets, including local restaurants and grocery markets;
- Promote agri-tourism for organic and natural farms stands;
- Work with NJDA to expand the “Jersey Organic” Brand as a way to promote and market organic products;
- Educate growers about organic and natural regulatory and certification requirements; and,
- Explore ways to support organic food growing and processing.

**Wine** is a small but viable piece of the Warren County agricultural industry. In 2006, Blirstown had just one acre devoted to grapes, and the county 77. (*Farmland Assessment*) New Jersey ranks fifth in the nation in wine production, and of its 35 wineries, two are in Warren County. To encourage the growth of this small, but potentially important market, Warren County and Blirstown can:

- Encourage increased wine production;
- Support licensing for distilled fruit-based spirits, which could expand the market for the Township’s and County’s fruit crops;
- Support the sale of wine at community farmers markets;
- Encourage county wine festivals and participation in New Jersey annual wine festivals and tours;
- Coordinate with wineries from other New Jersey counties, and New York and Pennsylvania, to grow a regional wine industry;
- Encourage additional cultural and agricultural events in association with wine festivals; and,
- Market wines to local restaurants and retail stores.

**Agri-tourism** is one potential link in the long term sustainability of the agriculture industry in Blirstown and Warren County. According to the 2009 “Economic Development Strategies,” “... *agri-tourism offers an important opportunity to generate additional farm income and keep farms economically viable. Agri-tourism presents opportunities for New Jersey growers seeking to add value to their crops and/or capture more of the market price of their products by directly accessing consumers. Many residents consider agriculture a*

*novelty and something to be explored and enjoyed. They desire to share the agricultural experience while increasing farm income at the same time.” (2009 Economic Development Strategies)* In Warren County, sales attributed to this sector grew from \$73,000 in 2002 to \$1.3 million in 2007. (*Census of Agriculture*) Agri-tourism can draw people not only from throughout Warren County, but also from the neighboring states of New York and Pennsylvania.

Blairstown currently supports agri-tourism through its weekly farmers market; several roadside farm stands, including Race’s Farm Market, a seasonal roadside stand on Route 94, with fruits, vegetables, annuals and perennials; pick-your-own operations; and direct sales of Christmas trees and nursery products. (See *Blairstown Farmers* list below.)

On a County level, Warren County has a successful agri-tourism program, as evidenced by the many farm stands, pick-your-own operations, and also three weekly farmers market, including Blairstown. Also, the Warren County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) can investigate the possibility of establishing a permanent, three season farmer’s market, which would greatly assist local farmers in selling farm and value-added products, thus strengthening the business of agriculture within the county. Local business centers such as Belvidere, Washington Borough, Hackettstown and Phillipsburg might be viable locations for such a farmers market. The CADB can also consider establishing a permanent signage program to alert and direct tourists, and local residents, to farm stands and nursery establishments. Signage could help increase business, and thus income. Blairstown Township displays vinyl banners at various locations on Route 94 and Route 521 promoting its weekly farmers market. The Township also invites farmers to purchase road signs put up by the Township to direct visitors to their farms.

A highly successful example of agri-tourism is the seven-day Warren County Farmers’ Fair held yearly at the County Fairgrounds in Harmony Township. The Farmers’ Fair highlights the past and present agriculture heritage of Warren County, has been operating since 1937, and is extremely popular with area residents, drawing thousands of visitors each year. (*Warren County Farmers’ Fair*)<sup>7</sup> The 2009 Warren County Farmers’ Fair was held July 26–August 1.

The annual Foodshed Alliance Farm & Food Open House, scheduled for September 12, 2009, features five farms; three are in Blairstown or nearby: Big Little Farm, Race Farm and Genesis Farms. The Cupcake Factory from Blairstown is participating in the Harvest Dinner at Donaldson Farms in Hackettstown, capping off the event.

For a list of Blairstown farmers participating in Direct Sales or Agri-Tourism see *Chapter 2*.

## **Agricultural Industry Retention, Expansion and Recruitment**

By providing key strategies and techniques, the NJDA 2009 “Economic Development Strategies” endorses as critical the expansion and strengthening of all areas of the agricultural industry. (*2009 Economic Development Strategies*) There are many techniques to support the economic expansion, development, and solidification of Blairstown’s agricultural industry. Certainly, 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. In general, the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) and the Township stand behind the local agricultural industry. Some key items that the Blairstown agriculture community can consider for economic development and sustainability are discussed below; however, with recent municipal funding issues, economic times and existing tax burdens, little if any financial support is expected. The AAC is supportive of agriculture initiatives, but the volunteer nature of the organization and the existing obligations hinder any increased efforts. (*Joel McGreen*)

**“Sell” agriculture as part of the Blairstown “landscape.”** The Blairstown Township farmland preservation program has protected 1,258 acres since 2000 (see list of preserved farms in *Chapter 4*). As more Township farmland becomes preserved, and support for agriculture is woven into various sectors of the Township’s economy, farming will indeed become a permanent facet of life in Blairstown, diminishing any perceived agriculture impermanence the general public may have. A coordinated effort to “sell” agriculture as a way of life that is enduring and significant to the Township and its economy will ensure area residents are aware of the many benefits of farmland, thus solidifying public economic support for agricultural industries. Signage on preserved farms and other outreach mechanisms, such as adult and youth farmer education, the Warren County Farmers’ Fair in Harmony Township, farm stands and pick-your-own operations, and Community Supported Agriculture will work to enhance farming throughout the Township.

**Supply products including farming equipment such as tractors and diskers, seeds, fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, pesticides, etc.** Large scale agriculture suppliers, which supply medium to large size agriculture operations, no longer exist near Blairstown Township, although a new small supplier began an operation in the Township in February 2009, joining another supplier along the Route 94 corridor, and is reportedly drawing customers even from Pennsylvania. Without an adequate amount of suppliers within reasonable driving distances of farms, the business of farming can become so expensive and time consuming, so as to not be profitable. The county agricultural community can pursue options, which may include tax incentives, to entice other suppliers to return to the area. As agriculture in Blairstown becomes more “permanent” through increased preservation efforts, former suppliers who have left the area may return if they sense that a profitable supply business can be operated in the area. The Township welcomes agriculture-related businesses within the confines of its existing zoning. See *Chapter 2* for a list of suppliers serving Blairstown and Warren County.

***Farmers need to be adaptable to farm for, and supply, emerging markets in and out of the Township.*** Farms in Blirstown have decreased in size during the last few decades, due in large part to the decline of large acreage dairy farms. Subsequently, farms are being subdivided to facilitate the increase in nursery and greenhouse, equine and sheep farms (in Blirstown and surrounding municipalities), which require less acreage. As an example of adaptability, the Township's larger farms grow hay and corn for sale as feed as far away as Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In addition, smaller farms mean more opportunity to focus on specialized farm products for designated customers. Since agriculture is indeed a business, farmers must continue to be adaptable to change with the needs and wants of its customer base. Support from the Warren County Agriculture Development Board, Board of Agriculture, N.J. Farm Bureau, Food Shed Alliance, and other local and regional associations is vital to help the agriculture community be adaptable, and stay profitable.

***Market Research*** – Blirstown may want to consider coordinating with Warren County to partner with Rutgers University's Food Policy Institute, and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County to identify and integrate market research on agriculture and economic trends. The Food Policy Institute can be reached at (732) 932-1966.

***Promote permanent markets*** – The agriculture community in Blirstown can seek contracts with area schools, such as Blair Academy and North Warren Regional High School, to supply healthy, fresh farm products for use in their cafeterias. As such, Blirstown supports the Blair Academy's sustainability initiative that seeks to accomplish this very goal.<sup>8</sup> 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 Blirstown agriculture community.

An example of this is the "Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program," sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is a program whereby participating school districts purchase locally grown produce for use in the school. Other criteria are accessibility of the produce to all students, and nutrition education. The only Warren County school enrolled in this program for the 2009/2010 school year is the Early Childhood Learning Center in Phillipsburg. (NJDA)<sup>9</sup>

***Capitalize on Growing Population Centers*** – The nearness of large population centers in the area point to a need to expand food production and support the growing preferences for "eating locally" and organically. Blirstown farmers can consider taking advantage of these needs trends and adapt their farming as practicable for potential increased profitability and viability.

***Flexible regulatory programs with various agencies*** – The 2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan for New Jersey, prepared by the NJDA, identified flexibility in government regulation as an important component relative to farm viability. (2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan) The Blirstown agricultural community can work with the NJDA, and advocacy groups such as the New Jersey Farm Bureau and Warren County Board of Agriculture, to ensure regulatory flexibility to the greatest extent possible. Examples

where regulatory flexibility is important are the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules" (N.J.A.C. 7:7A-et. seq.), which grant exemptions for agricultural activities, and also the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:13). The latter was recently readopted, and includes numerous agricultural permits-by rule and general permits, which allow the continuation of agriculture activities in otherwise regulated areas.

***Blairstown can continue to incorporate agriculture into its economic development plans, municipal master plans, and local zoning.*** 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, Blairstown passed a Right to Farm ordinance in 2000 to ensure farmers have the ability to practice accepted agricultural operations. More than 90% of Blairstown is zoned as R-5 (single-family residential with single-family conservation cluster option), which is where most of the Township's farmland is located. In addition, Blairstown supports farms, farm stands, agricultural support services and housing for seasonal agricultural workers as principal, accessory or conditional uses in various of its zoning districts. As such, the Township's zoning is supportive of agriculture. The Township is willing to support economic development initiatives put forth by the County, but does not foresee financial resources available in the near term to develop such initiatives at the municipal level.

***Minimum wage impact on farm businesses*** – The State minimum wage was raised to \$6.15 per hour in October 2005, followed by a second increase to \$7.15, effective October 2006, and a third increase to \$7.25 in July 2009. This minimum wage applies to farm workers and matches the federal minimum wage, as does neighboring New York State. Pennsylvania, however, still has an exception for farm workers, particularly seasonal workers, giving it a competitive advantage in operations that are hired-labor intensive.

Generally, the production of vegetables and fruits (produce) requires the highest amount of hired farm labor, mainly at harvest time, to pick and process the vegetables and fruits. Blairstown farms, specifically orchards and dairy farms, employ some farm labor to assist with their operations. Other products that are prevalent in Blairstown 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 Blairstown farmers as they are for farmers in parts of the County or State that have major produce agriculture industries.

***The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Warren County and the Rutgers University Agricultural Experiment Station*** are vital to the long-term economic sustainability of agriculture in Blairstown, Warren County, and the State of New Jersey. Farmer education programs keep the Warren County agriculture industry apprised of the most recent farm research and techniques, which helps Warren County farmers to remain competitive. The Future Farmers of America (FFA) organization trains young people in agriculture practices, preparing them to be future Warren County farmers. Both the RCE and FFA are discussed in detail in *Chapter 8*.

***Location and emerging opportunities*** -- The Township is located just a few miles from Interstate Route 80, and State Route 94 generally follows the course of the Paulins Kill through the heart of the Township. At the eastern end of the Township, the two are connected by County Route 521. At the western end, Route 94 passes through Knowlton Township before reaching its intersection with Route 80. Blairstown farmers may seek to derive as great an advantage as possible to access consumer markets located in New York, Pennsylvania, and northern New Jersey. Maximizing the use of these highways can increase the number and type of consumer markets to be reached by Blairstown farmers. At least one local 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 June–October. (*Race Farm*)<sup>10</sup>

Blairstown Township supports the representation of agricultural interests on regional and local industry boards, business organizations, and economic development associations. Farmers are represented on both the Blairstown Business Association and the Rotary Club. The Township does not have the resources to initiate local programs and sees its greatest success in supporting and partnering with local and regional organizations (county, state, and national), and to encourage farmers to enroll and actively participate in programs to stimulate and encourage agricultural economic development.

## **Economic Development Programs**

Blairstown benefits from the economic development program provided by Warren County to help the county’s agricultural community stay strong and profitable. The following is a listing and brief discussion:

***Livestock Cooperative Auction*** – This is a co-op run by the Auction Market Association of North Jersey, composed mostly of farmers, and has been operating since 1941. Farmers, as well as restaurants and private individuals sell, buy, and trade livestock, eggs and crops. Most of the sheep, lambs, goats, hogs, and cattle are sold to slaughterhouses, which use the animals in food products. Dairy cows are bought and sold by farmers. Private individuals and restaurants buy mostly eggs. (*The Daily Record*)<sup>11</sup> Blairstown 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 one of only two remaining livestock auctions in the state, and is a staple of the Warren County agriculture industry. (*The Daily Record*)

***Farmer’s Market*** – In 2009, three community farmers’ markets were operating in Warren County. It is suggested that the County consider establishing a three-season market:

- Blairstown Farmers’ Market, Givens Belet Memorial Hall, Route 521, Saturdays 10 am–pm, July 11–October 31;
- Hackettstown Farmers Market, Livestock Auction Cooperative, 225 W. Stiger St., Saturdays 10 am–2 pm, June–November;
- Washington Borough Weekly Farmers Market, United Methodist Church parking lot, Route 57, Fridays 3 pm–7 p.m., June–September.

***Community Supported Agriculture*** – Economic support of the Blairstown agricultural community also comes from local grass roots groups. This support is embodied in Community Supported Agriculture, 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.

*(National Agricultural Library)*<sup>12</sup>

Genesis Farms offers a Community Supported Agriculture program of single and farm shares of its produce output. It is located on Silver Lake Road just outside the Blairstown Township border, but with a Blairstown mailing address.

The Foodshed Alliance is a grassroots group that is located 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, 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 Foodshed Alliance occasionally holds a Farmer Forum to educate farmers on the economic benefits of sustainable agriculture and locally grown food, and its importance to healthy communities and nutritious living. *(Foodshed Alliance of the Ridge and Valley)*<sup>13</sup> *(Jen Wright)*<sup>14</sup>

An extension of the Foodshed Alliance’s work is the Northwest Jersey “Buy Fresh, Buy Local” Campaign. This is an effort by the Foodshed Alliance, local farmers, and community leaders to build connections between farmers and consumers through food guides, food and farming events, and community outreach, and therefore encourage local residents to buy fresh, local produce. The Foodshed Alliance also sponsors an annual Farm & Food Open House every September, which offers tours of selected farms and a harvest dinner featuring local products. *(Buy Fresh, Buy Local)*<sup>15</sup>

### ***Additional Resources***

There are numerous other resources that can be used by the Blirstown agriculture industry to assist it in expanding and solidifying its economic base in the county and region. Several are listed below.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture lists various informational Agriculture Economic Development Services on its website. These include:

- Agriculture credit and finance;
  - Business development for agriculture, food manufacturing and related industries;
  - Farm building construction;
  - Farmland assessment;
  - Motor vehicle regulations for agriculture;
  - Real property appraisal manual, farm building section;
  - Recycling for agriculture;
  - Risk management and crop insurance;
  - Sales and use tax on farmer's purchases; and
  - Trespass, vandalism, and liability on farms.
- (Agricultural Economic Development Services)*<sup>16</sup>

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is a “*United States Department of Agriculture competitive grants program with regional programs and regional leadership. SARE supports research and education that helps build the future economic viability of agriculture in the United States. SARE funding is authorized under Subtitle B of Title XVI of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act (FACTA) of 1990.*” (SARE)<sup>17</sup>  
SARE funds are used for:

- *Farmer/Grower 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 and must be conducted with at least one farmer.
  - *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.
- (SARE)*

As defined in FACTA of 1990, sustainable agriculture is an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term:

- Satisfy human food and fiber needs;

- Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends;
  - Make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls;
  - Sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and,
  - Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.
- (SARE)

The Agricultural Marketing Resource Center (AgMRC) is a project of Iowa State and Kansas State Universities, and formerly the University of California, funded in part by a USDA Rural Development grant. AgMRC provides information to help farmers “*assess value-added market opportunities, investigate processing options and understand business and production issues*” for agricultural commodities and products such as agri-tourism, renewable energy, livestock, specialty crops, and numerous others. In general, the goals of AgMRC are to:

- Provide an electronic, Web-based library ([www.agmrc.org](http://www.agmrc.org)) with powerful search capabilities to make such value-added information available to producers.
  - Provide value-added business and economic analysis tools, including information on business principles, legal, financial and logistical issues as an aid to business development.
  - Conduct research and analysis on economic issues facing producers involved in value-added business ventures.
  - Conduct outreach activities such as workshops, seminars, newsletters to disseminate this research and information to producers, businesses and others involved in value-added agriculture.
- (*Agricultural Marketing Resource Center*)<sup>18</sup>

The AgMRC website offers numerous business development information links, as well as links to other government and non-government sources for business development. This website can be used by the Blainstown agricultural community as a resource as they consider the development and implementation of value-added products.

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- <sup>1</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Agricultural Smart Growth Tool Kit “Planning for Agriculture”. <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/toolkit.htm>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>2</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, 2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan. <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/pdf/smartgrowthplan.pdf>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>3</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, 2009 Economic Development Strategies. <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/conventions/2009/strategies.html>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>4</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Agriculture Development Committee. New Jersey Farmland Assessment data. 2006 (Tax Year 2007). Warren County – Blairstown Township.
- <sup>5</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov). Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> Blair Academy. “Sustainability at Blair.” [http://www.blair.edu/About\\_Blair/ab\\_sustainability.shtm](http://www.blair.edu/About_Blair/ab_sustainability.shtm). Accessed October 26, 2010.
- <sup>7</sup> Warren County Farmers’ Fair. <http://www.warrencountyfarmersfair.org/>. Accessed August 22, 2009.
- <sup>8</sup> Blair Academy. “Sustainability at Blair.” [http://www.blair.edu/About\\_Blair/ab\\_sustainability.shtm](http://www.blair.edu/About_Blair/ab_sustainability.shtm). Accessed October 26, 2010.
- <sup>9</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/fn/childadult/fruitandvegetable.html>. 2009-2010 Participating New Jersey Schools, <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/fn/pdf/2009-10FFVSchools.pdf>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>10</sup> Race Farm LLC. <http://www.racefarmllc.com/>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>11</sup> The Daily Record, Hackettstown: A Day in the Life - April 2002. <http://www.dailyrecord.com/news/dayinthelife/hackettstown/bidders.htm>. Accessed July 2007.
- <sup>12</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Library, Alternative Farming Systems Information Center, Community Supported Agriculture. <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/csa.shtml>. Accessed June 2007.
- <sup>13</sup> Foodshed Alliance of the Ridge and Valley. <http://www.foodshedalliance.org/> Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>14</sup> Personal Communication with Jen Reich, Foodshed Alliance. September 2009.
- <sup>15</sup> Buy Fresh, Buy Local. <http://www.foodshedalliance.org/bfblhome.asp> Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>16</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Economic Development Services. <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/md/prog/agricultureconomic.html#top>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>17</sup> New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/grants/sare.html>. Accessed August 2009.
- <sup>18</sup> Agricultural Marketing Resource Center. About Us. Quarterly Reports. <http://www.agmrc.org/>. Accessed August 2009.

# CHAPTER 7: NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION



Preservation of farmland is the cornerstone of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA)'s *Agricultural Smart Growth Plan* and the Farmland Preservation Program. However, there is more to farmland preservation than retirement of development rights or outright purchase of farms. One of the cornerstones to a successful, long term farmland preservation program is the conservation of natural resources on farms, without which the long term sustainability and viability of New Jersey's preserved farmland would be in doubt.

## Natural Resource Protection Agencies

There are numerous entities, both public and private, which administer, fund, and provide technical guidance for Blirstown farmers relative to natural resource conservation. These entities are in place to assist farmers with natural resource conservation issues, and should be called upon by farmers for appropriate assistance.

### *Natural Resources Conservation Service*

An important partner in support of natural resource conservation for the agricultural community is the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS "*provides assistance to private land owners [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 opportunity for cost shares and financial incentives. (*Information for Farmers*)<sup>1</sup>

The local NRCS office serving Blirstown Township is located at Building 1, 101 Bilby Road, in Hackettstown Commerce Park.<sup>2</sup> Blirstown farmers may utilize this local NRCS office for assistance. NRCS also will reach out directly to landowners if they know of a farmer who is in need of technical assistance, or could use the guidance of the NRCS staff.

The local NRCS office helps to prepare Conservation Plans for farmers. These Conservation Plans nearly always include strategies to conserve soil and water, but may also include conservation practices for flora, fauna and clean air. If all five elements are included, they are referred to as Resource Management Plans. Within one year of selling their development easement, owners of preserved farms are required to develop a

Conservation Plan. These Plans are also required in order to apply for natural resource conservation programs such as the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the State Cost Share Program (Eight-Year Program). The local NRCS office administers these conservation program grants, which offer financial incentives to support conservation projects. For more information, contact the NRCS office at 908-852-2576, ext. 3, or visit the website at [www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov).<sup>3</sup> (*Maria Collazo, NRCS*)

Discussions with the local NRCS office personnel indicate the following strategies would strengthen natural resource conservation efforts for farms in Warren County and its municipalities, including Blairstown:

- As previously stated, owners of preserved farms are required to develop a Conservation Plan within one year of selling their development easement. However, implementation of this requirement is inconsistent. 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 under way.
- Owners of preserved farms have an obligation to conserve natural resources on their farms. Implementation of a Conservation Plan is a good first step towards fulfilling this obligation.

(*Maria Collazo*)

The District Conservationist is Maria Collazo. She can be reached at 908-852-2576, ext. 114 or [Maria.Collazo@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Maria.Collazo@nj.usda.gov). Ms. Collazo and her staff (listed below) can be contacted by Blirstown farmers for assistance or for more information on the availability of NRCS programs in the Township.

- Madeline Dean – Program Assistant (ext. 101)
- Jim Kleindienst – Civil Engineering Technician (ext. 105)
- Jillian Jaworski – Agricultural Resource Specialist (CAP) (ext. 115)
- Beaa Sabouathone – Soil Conservationist (ext. 117)
- David Schaaf – Soil Conservationist (ext. 113)
- Jim Wick – Resource Conservationist (ext. 116)

(*Maria Collazo*)

An additional resource available from the NRCS is the “Field Office Technical Guide.”<sup>4</sup> It contains information about the development and implementation of soil, water, air, flora, and fauna resource conservation practices, and is used to develop Conservation Plans. Conservation practices discussed in the Guide that are pertinent for Blairstown 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.

(*Maria Collazo*)

### ***Warren County Soil Conservation District***

Another partner in the conservation of agricultural resources is the NJDA Division of Agricultural and Natural Resources. Among its responsibilities, the Division implements the natural resource conservation programs, administered by the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC). These programs “*provide engineering services and regulatory guidance to soil conservation districts, homeowners, engineers, planners, and virtually all development activities. The Division provides technical standards applicable to construction and mining sites regulated by the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act program...and administers programs that provide financial cost-share assistance to farmers for soil and water conservation projects.*” (Agricultural and Natural Resources)<sup>5</sup>

The SSCC coordinates and supports the work of the state’s 15 local soil conservation districts (SCDs), one of which is the Warren County SCD. The Warren County SCD is charged with reviewing and approving conservation plans, implementing agricultural conservation planning assistance, agricultural conservation state 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 survey information. (Agricultural and Natural Resources)

The Warren County SCD office is located at 224 West Stiger Street in Hackettstown. Blairstown farmers may approach this local SCD office with a Conservation Agreement Request to apply for technical assistance with the NRCS. If approved, the Conservation Agreement Request is forwarded to the local NRCS office in Hackettstown for processing. The administration of the Request includes preparation of a Conservation Plan. The Warren County SCD is involved in review of conservation plans and must give final approval. (Maria Collazo)

The phone number for the Warren County SCD office is 908-852-2579, and the District Manager is Sandra Myers. She can also be reached [atmscd@verizon.net](mailto:atmscd@verizon.net). Ms. Myers and her staff (listed below) can be contacted by Blairstown farmers for assistance. (Warren County SCD)<sup>6</sup>

- Mary Baldwin – Erosion and Sediment Control Program Coordinator
- Cathie LaBar – Inspector
- Mike Fee – District Forester
- Eileen Greason – Administrative Assistant

### ***Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County***

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Warren County provides both field and technical research focused on best management practices for farmers to ensure the long term viability of both the agricultural economy and the natural resources upon which it is based.

Relative to natural resource conservation, the RCE of Warren County offers the Agriculture and Natural Resource Management program. This educational program serves

farmers, turf, nursery and landscape professionals and home gardeners. Services offered by extension personnel include soil testing; plant, weed and insect identification; plant disease and insect diagnosis; pest management recommendations for agricultural operations; and educational publications coverage a range of agricultural topics. The RCE helps clients “develop and implement production, management and marketing practices that are profitable, environmentally sound and socially acceptable.” (*Agricultural Experiment Station*)<sup>7</sup> An example of this service is helping to prepare animal waste management plans, so as to reduce impacts to watersheds from farm animal manure.

The RCE of Warren County is located in the Warren County Administration Building, Suite 102, 165 County Route 519 South in White Township (mailing address of Belvidere). Bill Tietjen is the Department Head and an Agricultural Extension Agent specializing in plant pathology for ornamentals, Christmas trees, fruits, vegetables, and greenhouse nurseries. Extension agent Everett Chamberlain specializes in field crops and livestock. (*Bill Tietjen*)<sup>8</sup> They may be contacted with any questions or for information on education programs or services. Mr. Tietjen can be contacted via e-mail at tietjen@njaes.rutgers.edu and Mr. Chamberlain at chamberlain@njaes.rutgers.edu. Both can be contacted via phone at 908-475-6503.

The SSCC, NRCS, Warren County SCD, and RCE of Warren County, are part of the New Jersey Conservation Partnership. This partnership of agencies strives to further soil and natural resource conservation efforts. (*Agricultural and Natural Resources*)

### ***New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection***

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)’s Division of Parks and Forestry oversees the ***Private Lands Management Program***. One aim of this program is to foster wise stewardship and management on 1.54 million acres of forest lands owned by 88,700 private landowners (*Division of Parks and Forestry*)<sup>9</sup> This includes the private woodlands currently under Farmland Assessment, which totaled 388,004 acres statewide in 2007. (*Farmland Assessment*)<sup>10</sup> Many properties in Blairstown that are farmland assessed include extensive woodland tracts, especially in the northern portion of the Township. Such tracts were added as “farm products” in the 1970’s, but there are two classifications: appurtenant (or attached) woodlands and non-appurtenant (or unattached) woodlands. 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. (*Jim Barresi*)<sup>11</sup>

The NJDEP’s 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 for this purpose. Once a WMP is in place, a “Woodland Data Form” must be submitted with the farmland assessment application yearly to certify that the WMP is being complied with. However, the NJDEP, BFM, also inspects each site once every three years to verify compliance. (*Jim Barresi*) Since reduced local property taxes are often critical in keeping active agricultural lands

economically viable, the NJDEP is an important partner for Blaiirstown's farmland preservation efforts.

Non-appurtenant woodlands are woodland acreage on a farm over and above total farmed acreage (tilled and pasture). So, 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 Blaiirstown for 2007, there were 3,058 acres of non-appurtenant (or unattached) woodland acres in farmland assessment, down only minimally from 2000 when there were 3,076 acres. In 1990 there were 1,690 non-appurtenant acres in farmland assessment in Blaiirstown. (*New Jersey Farmland Assessment*)<sup>12</sup>

Appurtenant woodlands are woodland acreage on a farm, less than or equal to, farmed acreage. So, in the preceding example, 50 of the 125 woodland acres would be appurtenant. Appurtenant woodland acres do not require a WMP to qualify for farmland assessment. (*Jim Barresi*) In Blaiirstown for 2007 there were 882 acres of appurtenant (or attached) woodland acres in farmland assessment, down from 2000 when there were 1,011 acres. In 1990, there were 994 appurtenant acres in farmland assessment in Blaiirstown. (*Farmland Assessment*)

The NJDEP's Nongame and Endangered Species Program also administers the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP). LIP works to improve habitat, habitat management, and habitat protection for threatened and endangered species on private lands, some of which are agricultural lands. Project durations must be for a minimum of five years, and the property owner contributes a minimum 25% cost share. Some grain farmers have expressed concern over the use of LIP. This is because it provides habitat not only for threatened and endangered species but also for nuisance wildlife such as deer and turkey, which are known to cause severe loss to corn and other farm products.

LIP has been in existence in New Jersey since 2005. While no new funding is available, proposals may be requested in late 2009 if there are funds remaining from previous years. In Blaiirstown, no farm acres are enrolled in LIP. (*Kim Korth*)<sup>13</sup>

### ***USDA, Forest Service's Forest Stewardship Program***

The United States Forest Service sponsors the Forest Stewardship Program. This program supports landowners whose property has a woodland management plan that recognizes and manages the wetlands, wildlife, aesthetics, soil, and water in addition to the commercial woodlands on the property. This program, when fully funded, offers landowners cost-share initiatives to allow the landowners to fully follow the guidelines in their woodland management plan. In New Jersey, the state farmland tax program and the U.S. Forest Service program have merged to allow one planning document for the landowner where the stewardship plan meets the state tax code and eliminates conflicts between the two. Increasing enrollment of landowners in this merged state-federal program will ensure increased protection of the natural resources for an extended period. The minimum is a ten-year management plan. This does not ensure preservation of the land in perpetuity, but it

does allow recognition of the importance of the land value and stewardship of the property for a longer period of time. (*Forest Stewardship Program*)<sup>14</sup>

In Blairstown, there are 262 acres of farmland on five different properties enrolled in the Forest Stewardship Program. (*Vicky Young*)<sup>15</sup>

### ***North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council***

The North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council's main mission is to “*facilitate the transition to sustainable use and protection of the region's human and natural resources,*” including agricultural management for water quality and agricultural sustainability. This is accomplished by working with communities and regional partnerships to deliver coordinated resource conservation and rural development assistance. Among other programs, the North Jersey RC&D offers a River-Friendly Farm Certification, which is a voluntary certification program designed to provide technical assistance and recognize farms that protect our shared natural resources through responsible management. Considering that the Paulins Kill flows through the Township past agricultural lands, the Agricultural Advisory Committee and other Township officials may suggest to the RC&D that it consider expanding the geographic focus of its River Friendly Certification Program, which is currently limited to farms in the Raritan River Basin.

With support from the USDA, NRCS, each RC&D area usually consists of several counties, and has a council composed of local citizens and government representatives who serve on a voluntary basis. The North Jersey RC&D Council includes the counties of Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren. The office is located at 54 Old Highway 22, Suite 201, in Clinton, Hunterdon County, and the phone number is 908-735-0733. Warren County government representatives include David K. Dech, Director, Warren County Planning Department, and Sandra Myers, District Manager of the Warren County SCD. Blairstown farmers can contact the North Jersey RC&D Council for assistance with issues related to natural resource conservation and sustainable farming. (*North Jersey RC&D Council website and personal communication with David Dech*)<sup>16</sup>

### ***Private nonprofit groups and private citizens***

The preservation of agriculture and agricultural resources needs not only the broad support of state, county, and local governments but also the help of private nonprofit groups and citizens. Without this help, government programs and support for agriculture would fall short of what is needed to protect the natural resource base of the agricultural landscape. Nonprofit groups and individual citizens spend countless hours providing and sharing their expertise, as well as raising and contributing money. They are invaluable in assisting with all phases of farmland preservation for Blairstown, including natural resource conservation and stewardship.

The Blairstown agriculture community has the support of a variety of committees and organizations, including the Blairstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee

(AAC), Blairstown Township Open Space Committee (which makes recommendations concerning expenditures from the Open Space, Recreation and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund), Warren County Board of Agriculture, Warren County Agriculture Development Board (CADB), New Jersey Farm Bureau, 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and the Warren County Farmers Fair.

Local and regional nonprofit organizations also contribute to the permanent protection of farmland. These groups include the Ridge and Valley Conservancy, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey, The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Conservation Foundation and New Jersey Audubon Society.

The Blairstown Township agricultural community, via the Blairstown AAC and Warren CADB, can work with nonprofit organizations and private citizens in a coordinated fashion to further the farmland preservation program in the Township.

## **Resource Protection Programs and Funding**

### ***2002 and 2008 Farm Bills***

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. Conservation provisions were designed to assist farmers in being good stewards of the land through grants and technical assistance. 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), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). (*Conservation Programs*)<sup>17</sup> These programs are continued under the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill), which provides for “*the continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2012.*”<sup>18</sup> Applications for EQIP, WHIP and the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program, providing financial assistance for adopting conservation measures were due in August 2009 for 2010 funding. (*NRCS*)<sup>19</sup> As in the past, the programs are administered by the local NRCS office in Hackettstown, and the Warren County SCD, as discussed in this section.

The Mid-Atlantic region, of which New Jersey is part, is generally underserved by federal farm programs. The Northeast/Mid-Atlantic region receives on average less than two cents in commodity payments for every dollar in farm sales, in stark contrast to over fifteen cents in some Midwest and Western states. With smaller than average farms, lower profit margins, varied crops, and development pressure, New Jersey has unique farm and food policy needs, which do not match other, larger agricultural states who receive the bulk of commodity payments. (*American Farmland Trust*)<sup>20</sup> The 2008 Farm Bill created the new Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program. This is a revenue guarantee program based on “*five-year state average yield and the two-year national average price.*” The program is voluntary, but participants would receive payments when their revenue falls

below established levels. (*Farm Bureau Update newsletter*)<sup>21</sup> Such a revenue support system may well have a positive effect for Warren County farmers, since it would help specialty crops and niche markets receive their fair share of payment support.

Some of the most significant gains in the 2008 Farm Bill were made in the area of conservation. New funding increased by over \$4 billion, which should translate into increased stewardship practices, and a healthier environment via cleaner water, reduced erosion and enhanced wildlife habitat. However, many of the programs require annual appropriations from Congress, which often can mean a shortfall in full implementation of these critical conservation programs. Some highlights of the 2008 Farm Bill include:

- Improvement of the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) to allow for greater flexibility at the local level. Nationally, authorized funding rises from \$97 million to \$200 million a year by 2012.
- Expansion of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to allow for innovative approaches that generate public benefits such as water and soil quality improvements, renewable energy production, and wildlife and open space protection. Nationally, authorized funding rises from \$1.2 billion to \$1.75 billion in 2012. New Jersey has set aside 12% of EQIP funds for applicants with an approved organic transition plan and for certified organic operations to implement improved practices.
- Establishment of a conservation loan guarantee program to help producers secure low interest loans in order to implement often costly conservation and environmental practices.
- Creation of a cooperative conservation initiative as a way for producers and community groups to work together on common natural resource concerns.
- Greater flexibility with third party technical assistance providers to identify and implement the most effective conservation practices appropriate for the land.
- Continuation of the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) to protect water resources and expand wildlife habitat.

(*American Farmland Trust website*)<sup>22</sup>

The following is a synopsis of the natural resource conservation programs funded by the 2008 Farm Bill. They will be implemented by NRCS and the Warren County SCD, and to a minor degree the Farm Service Agency, which is also part of USDA. These programs are the backbone of natural resource conservation efforts in Warren County and its municipalities, including Blainstown.

### ***Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)***

Through CREP and CRP, agricultural producers voluntarily retire land to protect environmentally sensitive areas, decrease soil erosion, provide and restore wildlife habitat, and protect ground and surface water. (*NRCS Conservation Programs*)<sup>23</sup> Examples of conservation practices include riparian buffers and filter strips for water quality, and contour buffer strips to reduce soil erosion. With incentive payments for farmers to fully implement a CREP contract, payment for this program may be fully funded by NRCS and

NJDA. CREP is used mostly along streams and rivers, to protect water resources. (*Maria Collazo*)

### ***Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)***

The aim of the CIG program is to stimulate the development and adoption of conservation approaches and technologies that are innovative, in conjunction with agricultural production. Funds are awarded as competitive 50-50 match grants to non-governmental organizations, tribes, or individuals. CIG is authorized under and funded through EQIP (see below), and administered by the NRCS. In 2009, the CIG program offered both national and state components. (*NRCS Conservation Programs*) At the state level, four CIGs have been chosen for 2009, providing about \$200,000 in funding for innovative projects. (*Tim Dunne*)<sup>24</sup>

### ***Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)***

EQIP is a conservation program in which farmers receive financial and technical assistance with structural and management conservation practices that address soil, water, and grazing land concerns. (*NRCS Conservation Programs*) EQIP is the most popular and widely used conservation program in Warren County, and is the most well funded of all the programs, receiving approximately \$4 million statewide on an annual basis. In Warren County, there are 3,418 contracted acres, with 36 active contracts. While some farms in Blirstown may be assisted through EQIP, the number of farms enrolled is not tracked on a municipal level. (*Maria Collazo*)<sup>25</sup>

### ***Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP)***

FRPP provides up to 50% matching funds to purchase development rights and conservation easements to keep farm and ranchland in agricultural use. The USDA partners with state, tribal, or local governments, and non-governmental organizations. (*NRCS Conservation Programs*) Farmers accepting funds through this program must adhere to strict impervious surface limitations. In New Jersey, this program receives approximately \$500,000 to \$1 million annually, most of which goes to the State Agriculture Development Committee or private conservation groups. (*Maria Collazo*)

### ***Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)***

WRP offers farmers payments for restoring and protecting wetlands on their property that had been previously drained for agricultural use. Wetlands help reduce flooding, filter pollutants from water, provide critical wildlife habitat, and protect open space. (*NRCS Conservation Programs*) Payment by NRCS is based upon appraised agricultural land value. With appraised values from \$100 to \$2,000 per acre, many farmers are not willing to create wetlands on otherwise productive agricultural lands. As a result, the WRP is not widely used in Warren County. (*Tim Dunne*)

### ***Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)***

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary USDA program for improving or developing fish and wildlife habitat on private lands. The program provides both technical and financial assistance to establish and enhance habitat for priority species and habitat types.

NRCS and their wildlife partners in the state developed a state plan to direct WHIP financial and technical assistance in several areas. Applications are accepted year-round for individual projects that meet one of these objectives: Pollinator Habitat, Grasslands Habitat, Disturbance-dependent Habitat, Bog Turtle Priority Species, Wetland Habitat and Delaware Bay Priority Area. For more information visit the NRCS website at: <http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip> or contact the Hackettstown Service Center at: 908-852-2576 x 3

Since its inception in 1998, WHIP has been a popular program for non-federal landowners interested in wildlife habitat management in New Jersey. This is second only to EQIP in use in Warren County, with 1,246 contracted acres and 31 active contracts since 2004. While some farms in Blairstown may be assisted through WHIP, the number of farms enrolled is not tracked on a municipal level. (*Maria Collazo*)

### ***SADC Soil and Water Conservation Grants***

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) has in the past provided grants to farms that are permanently preserved, or are enrolled in the eight year preservation program, with priority for preserved farms. (*Sandra Myers*)<sup>26</sup> The purpose of the grants and program is to provide funding for soil and water conservation practices.

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. (*Soil and Water Conservation Grants*)<sup>27</sup>

These grants fund soil and water conservation projects approved by the Warren County Soil Conservation District (District), with the program administered by both the District and the local NRCS office in Hackettstown. Both the District and the local NRCS office also provide technical assistance for eight year program projects. Once the District deems the conservation project necessary and feasible, applications are forwarded to the New Jersey State Soil Conservation Committee (SCC), which recommends projects to the SADC for funding approvals. (*Soil and Water Conservation Grants*) Traditionally, 50% of the costs of approved soil and water conservation projects are paid with grant funds, but

up to 75% have also been approved in the past. As of August 2009, \$500,000 in grant money for the 2009 year remained available. (*Sandra Myers*)

## **Water Resources**

### ***The Importance of the Water Resource***

The protection of the water resource as it relates to agriculture and farmland preservation in Blairstown cannot be overstated. Quite simply, without a consistent, plentiful, adequate and clean water source, agriculture cannot exist. In addition, farms are critical as open space areas to provide aquifer water recharge. To a certain extent, some aspects of ensuring clean and plentiful water can be controlled at the individual farm level. These include:

- Minimizing the use of synthetic chemicals such as fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides so as to lessen impacts to groundwater;
- Providing riparian buffers along watercourses, so as to protect streams from the aforementioned synthetic chemicals;
- When possible, practicing organic farming methods;
- Practicing appropriate timing of chemical application, so as to minimize its use; and
- Practicing water conservation techniques, such as drip irrigation and water reuse for certain types of farming where feasible, such as smaller scale vegetable and fruit operations.

The necessity of clean and plentiful water, and its precariousness, is clearly stated in the *2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*. The Plan indicates that “*Groundwater and surface water quality in Warren County is generally good. Groundwater accounts for all drinking water in the county. While groundwater quality is good, there are some areas identified for actual or potential well contamination.*” (*2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)<sup>28</sup> Some potential contamination sources are pesticides, which are used in agriculture and at private residences, and underground storage tanks for various substances such as gasoline and diesel fuel. Underground storage tanks are sometimes used on farms as fuel sources for equipment. (*2005 Warren County Strategic Growth Plan*)

In addition, the *2008 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.*” (*2008 Warren County Open Space Plan*)<sup>29</sup>

The *State Development and Redevelopment Plan* also discusses the importance of the water resource. The May 15, 2009 draft Policy Map indicates that Blirstown's farmland is found in areas mapped as Rural Planning Area, Rural/Environmentally Sensitive sub-Planning Area, or Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area. In all three of these areas, the Plan's intent is to confine future/programmed sewer and public water service areas to centers or center-based developments. (*Draft Final New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan*)<sup>30</sup>

Finally, emphasis is also given to the importance of the water resource, via the New Jersey Department of Agriculture which "... is working with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, the Natural Resources Conservation Services, the United States Geological Survey, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the farm community to assess the water needs of agriculture and to assist in the development of essential rules, policies and guidelines to ensure an adequate water supply to meet the current and future needs of the agricultural industry." (2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan)<sup>31</sup>

### ***Physical Features and Water Aquifer Supply Characteristics***

As indicated in the 2006 *Blirstown Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)*, the Township is one of a number of rural municipalities in New Jersey that fall within the Valley and Ridge Physiographic Province. The Valley and Ridge Province contains a series of northeast-to-southwest running sandstone ridgelines with limestone valleys in-between. In Blirstown, the land undulates, with numerous steep ridgelines both south and north of the Paulins Kill Valley.

The physiographic and geologic layout of Blirstown dictates water supply, availability and recharge, as well as location of agriculture. As discussed in the Warren CADB's 1998 Long Range Plan:

*"The physical nature of the county consists of valleys and ridges oriented roughly northeast to southwest. The farmlands are located predominantly in the valleys along the streams and rivers, except in the areas of broad ridges, which also support considerable acreage of excellent farmland. Early settlers cleared the broad expanses along the rivers where the soils were rich and loamy and there were ample supplies of water. Unfortunately, river valleys are also the primary corridors used for travel and commerce and almost all of our towns are situated in those areas where the soils will support an agricultural industry. The result has placed many of the "growth" areas within the county next to, or surrounded by, some of the county's best soils." (Long Range Plan)<sup>32</sup>*

Blirstown is no exception to this statement, with commercial and recreation areas edging out farmland along the Route 94/Paulins Kill corridor, where the Township's concentration of agricultural soils identified as prime or of statewide importance is located. Soils of unique importance, the third category of identified agricultural soils in Blirstown, are found throughout the Township in pockets near ponds and the headwaters of streams. However, many farms in Blirstown have been successfully tilled in areas outside the belt

of agricultural soils identified by the current official soil survey and only one acre of unique soils, which come from the Catden series of mucky peat, is currently in agricultural use.

While the Township predominantly relies on individual wells and septic, the Village area at the eastern end of the Township along Route 94 and adjacent to Blair Academy depends on public water supply from two wells. This area also has a subsurface stormwater system that appears substandard according to the Township's *Environmental Resource Inventory*, as well as septic systems and cesspools, some of which have failed over time, potentially jeopardizing water quality. (*ERI*)

The Martinsburg Formation, which underlies 70% of the Township, has been rated by the New Jersey Geological Survey as a poor aquifer. Despite this rating, the two public water supply wells in the village area tap this formation and have reported yields of 70 and 135 gpm. The Allentown Dolomite and Beekmantown Group (members of the Kittatinny Supergroup) and the Jacksonburg Limestone formations have greater permeability and are considered fair aquifers. The bedrock aquifers of the Martinsburg Formation are generally situated in the northern and southern reaches of the Township, with the Jacksonburg Limestone, Kittatinny Supergroup and Hardyston Quartzite bedrock aquifers flanking the Paulins Kill and Route 94. Surface aquifers consisting of sand and gravel are found south of Route 94 and north of the Paulins Kill, and surface aquifers formed from belts of till can be found in the north of the Township. (*ERI*)

Surface aquifers are more prone to contamination since they don't benefit from the percolation that filters water reaching bedrock aquifers. This puts the aquifers along the Paulins Kill at risk. Those to the north of town would be less affected since much of the area is forested, rather than cropland or commercial development, so is less apt to suffer contamination from runoff carrying agricultural waste and pesticides.

The northern glacial till aquifers are considered unimportant as aquifers in the area, while the sand and gravel along the Paulins Kill are sufficiently thick and permeable to form a significant potential aquifer. (*ERI*)

### ***Water Conservation Strategies***

An adequate water supply is important to successful agriculture operations in Blaiirstown. 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.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, through its *Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*, encourages farmers to:

*"...work to accelerate the use of efficient water conservation technologies, such as drip irrigation. Identify and promote new and efficient methods to conduct water distribution on farms, utilizing farm ponds and water reuse options."* (2006 *Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*)

The dominant crops in Blirstown are hay, corn and soybeans. These crops rely on rain and some groundwater for water needs, making water conservation strategies difficult to implement (see the “Irrigated Land & Water Sources” section in Chapter One of this plan, pages 1-7-1-8, for more discussion on this subject). 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. At least one farm in the Township employs drip irrigation. However, since vegetable, fruit, and nursery agriculture are minor to hay, corn, and soybeans, the positive effects of water conservation efforts for the Township are minimal. Water intensive agriculture and processes may become more prevalent in the future, if the perceived trend toward increased vegetable, fruit and nursery operations solidifies. For example, acres in irrigation in Blirstown rose from 25 acres in 2000 to 55 acres in 2007. (*Farmland Assessment*) As such, water conservation strategies may become more important, and should be maximized where possible.

Seasonal differences in water demand combined with such occurrences as drought, changes in land cover and other natural or manmade circumstances can have an effect on water supply from which an ecosystem cannot easily recover. Although falling outside the scope of the Highlands Act, Blirstown can benefit by being aware of the water resource analysis done for neighboring communities within the Highlands, such as Hope and Frelinghuysen Townships, and the use of monitoring stream base flows 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.<sup>33</sup> (*Highlands Regional Master Plan*)

The NJDA encourages farmers to implement water-management practices as a routine part of their conservationist approach to agriculture and has asked the NJDEP “to explore the establishment of an Agricultural Water Allocation Credit Program, whereby farmers who employ water conservation practices that utilize water at a rate that is below their permit allocations at certain times, be permitted to correspondingly increase water use at other times. Such a program would encourage the implementation of water conservation measures within the agricultural community and improve the viability of the agricultural industry by allowing water usage to be tailored to fit the needs of each agricultural operation.” The NJDA also supports the efforts of the Department and Rutgers Cooperative Extension, “who are working with the New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) in developing a draft Ag Water Conservation Plan that will outline specific best management practices.”<sup>34</sup>

## **Waste Management and Recycling**

Management of livestock waste has important implications for the quality of ground and surface waters. Unchecked, or poorly managed, these wastes can cause serious water quality problems by the introduction of unwanted microorganisms into natural systems. Poor management of animal waste can also cause disease among farm animals. Proper animal waste management not only is required but is environmentally responsible, as is

recycling of farm by-products whenever feasible. In general, Blairstown Township looks to the County and State for leadership, direction and help in these areas.

### ***Waste Management in Blairstown***

Discussions with the local NRCS office in Hackettstown and the Warren County Land Preservation Department indicate the following regarding animal and crop waste management in Warren County and its municipalities, including Blairstown:

- Many farmers have Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) to manage the manure generated on their farms. (*Maria Collazo*)
- Relative to disease, cattle manure is not as serious a problem as horse manure. This is due in part to the relatively large land area of dairy farms, making it easier to safely and effectively distribute the manure on fields. This helps to control the spread of disease. (*Maria Collazo*)
- At present there is no initiative at the county level to better manage animal waste. The agricultural community of Warren County may attempt to initiate better livestock waste management. (*Bob Resker*)<sup>35</sup>
- Ag Choice LLC in Green Township, Sussex County, is operated by Jay and Jill Fisher. Ag Choice picks up or accepts and then composts horse waste. They also accept other animal waste, such as goat, ostrich, and sheep.<sup>36</sup> The composted waste is then available as bulk pickup, is sold to landscapers, garden centers, or is bagged and sold at retail outlets. This type of operation not only helps control the problem of horse and other waste on farms, but also is a good revenue source for the Fishers. Blairstown farmers can review the Ag Choice operation to ascertain if such operations might be beneficial to them. The Ag Choice website is <http://www.ag-choice.com/>.

### ***Animal Waste***

Animal feeding operations have the potential to cause water pollution since mismanagement of the animal waste has the potential to cause soil and groundwater contamination via introduction of organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorus, and bacterial pathogens into nearby surface waters. Proper management is essential. The NJDEP has outlined a statewide strategy to manage and regulate these operations. The strategy calls for NJDEP to administer permits for the few, large Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in the state, and the NJDA to administer appropriate measures for other farms with animals, using the Criteria and Standards for Animal Waste Management, adopted March 16, 2009. This strategy emphasizes the use of cost-effective voluntary measures, limiting the need for permits. (*Michael Westendorf*)<sup>37</sup>

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. All existing farms must implement the General Requirements of the rule within 12 months of the effective date, and new farms within

12 months of meeting the 1 to 7 Animal Unit (AU) Threshold. All producers, regardless of size, must meet the general requirements, which are:

- 1) *“Agricultural animal operations shall not allow animals in confined areas to have uncontrolled access to the water of the state;*
- 2) *Manure storage areas shall be located at least 100 linear feet from surface waters of the state.*
- 3) *The land application of animal waste shall be performed in accordance with the principles of the NJDA Best Management Practices Manual.*
- 4) *Dead animals and related animal waste resulting from a reportable contagious disease or an act of bio-terrorism shall not be disposed of without first contacting the State Veterinarian.*
- 5) *Any person entering a farm to conduct official business related to these rules shall follow bio-security protocol.” (Criteria and Standards for Animal Waste Management)<sup>38</sup>*

Additional requirements are either voluntary or mandatory, depending on the number and density of animals. Generally:

- Operations with 7 or fewer animal units (AU=1,000 pounds) or receiving or applying less than 142 tons of animal waste per year are encouraged, but not required, to develop a self-certified AWMP
- Operations with 8 to 299 AUs with densities of less than 1 AU per acre are required to complete a self-certified AWMP;
- Operations with 8 to 299 AUs at densities greater than 1 AU per acre are required to complete an AWMP, which must be reviewed by a conservation professional;
- Operations receiving or applying 142 or more tons of animal waste per year are required to develop a self-certified AWMP; and
- Operations with 300 or more AUs are required to have a CNMP developed, which must be certified by the NJDA. (*Criteria and Standards*)

In, general self-certified waste management plans will be coordinated through the RCE, which is holding training sessions on the new rules throughout 2009 to help farmers learn how to write and file AWMP plans. Farmers can apply for funding through 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) or waste storage facility must have a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP). (*Michael Westendorf and Maria Collazo*)

### ***Recycling***

Recycling should be an important part of natural resource conservation for the agriculture industry. Recycling saves natural resources, and can save farmers money through creative reuse, such as using leaves and grass clippings to mulch and fertilize farm fields, and saving on solid waste disposal costs. Recycling reduces the amount of refuse finding its way to limited landfill space. Hay, corn and soybeans, the dominant farm products by acreage in Blairstown, use limited products that can be recycled, and as such limit recycling opportunities. Although nursery and produce make up a small part of

Blairstown's agricultural operations, there still is a need to provide outlets for recyclable waste from these operations.

The Township accepts rinsed plastics #1 and #2 at its facility on Lambert Road, which may apply to certain horticultural pots. On a county level, the county sponsored a tire amnesty program for farmers in 2007 and is seeking funding to offer another one. (*Victor Camporine*)<sup>39</sup> In addition, the NJDA website lists resources for agricultural recycling, including the Lyons Veterans Medical Center, which will pick up horticultural pots at no cost to the farmer, and Universal Commodity Services in Brooklyn, which accepts pots and plug trays and nursery/greenhouse film. There are also agricultural plastics collection sites in southern Jersey that accept mulch film and drip irrigation tape along with other agricultural plastics and which will truck the recyclables for a fee. Three New Jersey counties (Atlantic, Cumberland and Salem) also have seasonal pesticide container collection sites that are open to anyone with an NJDEP pesticide license. (*NJDA*)<sup>40</sup>

## Energy Conservation

In general, Blairstown Township looks to the County and the State for leadership, direction and help in the areas of energy management. Energy conservation makes economic sense for Blairstown agriculture businesses. The less energy a farmer uses, the less money spent on energy, and the more money that can be invested elsewhere, or realized as profit. However, energy conservation and the use of alternate technologies also make environmental sense. They help keep the air, water and soil clean, and minimize or eliminate further pollution to these critical agricultural resources. Also, with the impending threat of global warming due to excessive carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere, energy conservation and the use of alternate energy sources can help to slow this warming trend.

This goal of reducing greenhouse gases is indicated in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a compact signed by the Governors of ten states, including New Jersey. As part of RGGI, the potential trading of carbon credits between energy companies and farmers can offer financial incentives for farmers to utilize processes that minimize carbon dioxide production. (*David Dech*)<sup>41</sup>

In its 2006 *Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*, the NJDA emphasizes the importance of energy conservation and alternative energy use. The Plan indicates that it is important to:

*“Promote the use of innovative technologies, recycling, energy conservation and renewable energy systems on New Jersey’s farms” and to “Promote, provide technical assistance for and inform the agricultural community about new and existing energy conservation and renewable energy programs by promoting the financial and environmental benefits of implementing these programs.”* Also, the NJDA indicates that *“Through (these) numerous efforts coordinated between the state and federal levels, New Jersey’s agricultural community is proving itself to be an important player in protecting our state’s natural resources. Clearly, there is more work to be done, and the agricultural community has shown initiative in pursuing alternative energy sources, such as solar, wind and bio-gas in running*

*farm operations, and by being a leader in the pursuit of ethanol and bio-diesel fuel markets.” (2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan)*

Additionally, a law was enacted in January 2010 (P.L. 2009, c.213) that 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, etc. (P.L. 2009, c. 213)<sup>42</sup>

There is only minimal effort to initiate energy conservation in Warren County municipalities, including Blairstown Township. 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. Farmers should check the NRCS website regarding this program since requirements may change from year to year. (Maria Collazo) The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities offers rebates for solar electric, wind and sustainable biomass systems as long as funding is available.

### ***Solar Energy***

Solar energy can be harnessed via the installation of solar panels. This harnessed or stored energy can then be used to create electricity and provide heat. If excess electricity is generated, it can be sold back to the electric grid for a profit. The overall use of solar panels has greatly increased in New Jersey over the last decade, and indeed, solar panels can be seen at a few businesses along Route 94 in Blairstown. (*Agriculture and Green Energy*)<sup>43</sup> The increase in use is due in large part to a federal investment tax credit, which has been extended through 2016, and a rebate program sponsored by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU).<sup>44</sup> Recently, the BPU has altered its rebate program to support fewer solar power rebates, converting the program, in part, to “solar renewable energy certificates” (SRECs) earned by the electricity a system generates and sold or traded to the public utilities under a long term contract. The market value of these certificates is not determined. This uncertainty has caused a slowdown in the interest of farmers to pursue solar energy on their farms. However, the non-residential rebate will remain in effect as long as funding is available and is set at \$1/watt for all applications after February 2, 2009.<sup>45</sup> (*New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program*)

EQIP provides some funding for solar livestock watering facility as part of a grazing system, and Blairstown Township farmers interested in using this alternate energy source can contact the local NRCS office in Hackettstown for more information.

Other programs available to help agricultural producers take advantage of this technology include U.S. Department of Energy, “Solar Energy Technology Program,” <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/solar/> and the “Solar Energy for New Jersey Agriculture” work and information sheet at <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/pdf/solarenergyguide.pdf>.

Solar energy is one of the fastest growing sectors in the alternative energy market, and Blirstown farmers can take advantage of this money and energy saving technology.

### ***Wind Energy***

The power of a strong wind can be captured by turbines or windmills, turning such power into electricity. Expanding and evolving technology is making this option more attractive to farmers as a way to cut energy costs. 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. (*2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*) According to a map published on the Rowan University Clean Energy website, wind probably would not be an efficient alternative energy source for Blirstown farms since research shows wind speeds in the Township are less than 5 miles per hour. However, the website also indicates that small wind resources can vary significantly in very localized areas. (Rowan College)<sup>46</sup>

New Jersey's Clean Energy Program (NJCEP) provides a model ordinance that municipalities can adopt to create a friendly environmental for wind installations. The NJCEP Small Wind Model Ordinance has been adopted in Hillsborough Township (Somerset County's leading municipality in terms of agricultural land) and in eight other municipalities statewide. As of August 2009, no municipality in Warren County had adopted such an ordinance.

In Blirstown, a wind turbine would be deemed an accessory use under current zoning regulations and thus would require a height variance. There has been some consideration given to addressing this issue, which, along with the solar energy requirements that already have been included in the Township's regulations, indicates Blirstown's willingness to consider alternative energy source. (*David Diehl*)<sup>47</sup>

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 NJ 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 Blirstown as Hackettstown and Long Valley. REIP rebates are set for 2009 at \$3.20/kWh for production levels up to 16,000 kWh and \$0.50/kWh above that.<sup>48</sup>

### ***Biopower***

According to NJCEP, biopower “uses a renewable supply of organic material, such as wood, agricultural waste and/or methane gases from landfills, to spin a turbine that produces electricity.” This organic material, known as biomass, reduces our dependence on fossil fuels while promoting local businesses and farming. Biomass also can be used to

produce transportation fuels, or chemicals. Using biomass helps reduce the amount of materials going into landfills and reduces methane, a greenhouse gas.<sup>49</sup> (NJCEP)

Sustainable biomass facilities incorporating the following methods of electricity generation, and complying with all NJDEP air pollution control regulations, are eligible for an incentive from REIP:

- Biogas, including captured methane from animal waste or sewage treatment
- Digestion or sewage sludge
- Combustion, as long as all matter used directly as biomass fuel was cultivated and harvested in a sustainable manner in accordance with the state environmental or agriculture agency in the state in which the plan was grown
- Landfill gas (facilities of up to \$MW-dc are eligible, pending review of the incremental value of the project's environmental benefit) (NJCEP)

REIP rebates for biomass facilities in 2009 range from \$4 per watt for facilities producing up to 10,000 watts to \$.15 per watt for facilities producing greater than 500,000 watts. (NJCEP)

### ***Ethanol and Pelletized Switchgrass***

Ethanol is a renewable fuel “made by distilling the starch and sugar in a variety of plants.” (Agriculture and Green Energy) It can then be blended into gasoline as an “oxygenate,” reducing air pollution. Its use also reduces dependence on foreign oil, and the harmful environmental effects of oil drilling. Also, unlike the gasoline additive MTBE, ethanol will not contaminate groundwater. (Agriculture and Green Energy) Corn, the second most dominant field crop in Blirstown, could position the Township’s farmers to financially capitalize on the spreading movement towards ethanol-blended fuels. More study would need to be done on whether this would be profitable for farmers, and how it would affect other local agriculture industries. In addition, interest has been shown in utilizing switchgrass to make energy producing pellets. This could add another market for Blirstown farmers, and another source of clean energy.

### ***Renewable Energy Grant Programs***

The NJDA provides the following information on renewable energy grant programs, which can help encourage the use of these energy sources:

*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. Additional information is at [www.njcep.com/](http://www.njcep.com/). A funding level for all renewable energy projects has been established at \$53.25 million for rebates for the period of 2009–2012. Funding cycles have been implemented to ensure that financing is available through 2012. (NJCEP)

As mentioned above, funding for solar electric, wind and sustainable biomass installations is available for 2009 through the *Renewable Energy Incentive Program (REIP)*, which provides incentives to residential and business customers to help reduce the initial cost of installing a renewable generation system. These incentives – which defray the costs of installation, equipment, and interconnection – are paid incrementally based on the size of the system. In addition the *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. (*NJCEP*)

*Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Program:* As part of the 2008 Farm Bill, this program “funds grants and loan guarantees to agricultural producers for assistance with purchasing renewable energy systems and making energy efficiency improvements.” Final rules for loans and grants were adopted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in July 2005. Additional information can be found at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmland/index.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmland/index.html).

*Biomass Research and Development Initiative Grants:* The United States Departments of Agriculture and Energy support development of biomass energy. Grants are available for research, development and demonstrations on bio-based products, bio-energy, bio-fuels, bio-power and additional related processes. In the recent past, grants have focused on development and demonstration projects that lead to greater commercialization. Additional information is available at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/news/hottopics/topics060222.html>.

(*Agriculture and Green Energy*)

## **Outreach and Incentives**

The Township’s Agricultural Advisory Committee (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. Blairstown Township looks to the County, State and regional agencies for leadership, direction and help. The Blairstown AAC will continue to work with the Warren CADB to implement programs to aid in natural resource conservation on farms in the Township.

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# CHAPTER 8: AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY, RETENTION AND PROMOTION



## Existing Agricultural Industry Support

### *Right to Farm*

To ensure farmers have the ability to practice accepted agricultural operations, the Right to Farm Act (RFA) was enacted by the State Legislature in 1983 and amended in 1998. The Act provides “protection of commercial farm operations from nuisance action, where recognized methods and techniques of agricultural production are applied, while, at the same time, acknowledging the need to provide a proper balance among the varied and conflicting interests of all lawful activities in New Jersey.” (*SADC Right to Farm Program*)<sup>1</sup> Another critical piece of legislation to support agriculture was the 1983 Agriculture Retention and Development Act. This Act created the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), and eighteen County Agriculture Development Boards (CADB’s). Both the SADC and CADB implement the RFA on the State and local levels. (*New Jersey’s Great Northwest Skylands*)<sup>2</sup>

The SADC works to maximize protection for commercial farmers under the RFA by developing Agricultural Management Practices, 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. In order 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; comply with agricultural management practices recommended by the SADC, or site specific agricultural management practices; must not be a direct threat to public health and safety; and, must be located in an area where agriculture was a permitted use under municipal zoning ordinances as of December 31, 1997, or thereafter; or, must have been an operating farm as of December 31, 1997. (*Eligibility Criteria for RTF Act Protection*)<sup>3</sup>

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 falls within the parameters established by the RFA for

right to farm protection. Once the complaint is returned to the Warren CADB from the SADC, additional fact finding and technical review occurs and the issue is given a public, quasi-judicial hearing at the county level. After all information has been considered, the Warren CADB will make a determination as to whether the agricultural activity is protected by the RFA or whether changes to the operation will be required. If the issue is not resolved by the Warren CADB determination, either party in the dispute may take the matter for a subsequent appeal and determination to the New Jersey Office of Administrative Law. (*Resolving Agricultural-Related Conflicts*)<sup>4</sup>

Right to Farm Ordinances are a necessary item if a municipality, or property owner, wishes to enter into the farmland preservation program. A strong Right to Farm Ordinance exists in Blirstown Township, showing its commitment to safeguarding and strengthening agricultural activities. Blirstown adopted its Right-to-Farm Ordinance (Ord. No. 2000-11) on October 11, 2000 and a copy can be found in the *Appendix*.

The Ordinance states that its intent is to “assure the continuation and expansion of commercial and home agricultural pursuits by encouraging a positive agricultural business climate and protecting the farmer against inappropriate municipal regulations where best management practices are applied and are consistent with relevant federal and state law and nonthreatening to the public health and safety.”

To protect its farmers the Blirstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance requires for all zoning districts where agriculture is a permitted principal use:

- That all purchasers of real estate be provided with a copy of the Township Code’s Right to Farm chapter;
- That the following language to be included in the deed of any newly subdivided lot: “Grantee is hereby given notice that there is, or may in the future be, farm use near the premises described in this deed, from which may emanate noise, odors, dust and fumes associated with agricultural practices permitted under the ‘Blirstown Township Right-to-Farm Ordinance’”; and
- That reasonable steps will be taken to make it possible for real estate salespersons to provide similar notification to prospective purchasers of land.

The Ordinance recognizes the right to engage in agriculture “as permitted by zoning and other land use regulations and as permitted by state law” and that such uses “shall not constitute a public or private nuisance, provided that the operation conforms to agricultural management practices recommended by the State Agricultural Development Committee and adopted to the provisions of the Administrative Procedures 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.” It allows commercial farm owners or operators to engage in “all agricultural activities permitted by N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9.” Chapter 19-607 of Blirstown’s code enumerates certain specific rights dealing with equipment; methods; acceptable practices; times (including holidays, Sundays, weekends and at night); noise, odors, dust and fumes; and the recognition that any inconveniences to the public from any of the above are “more than

compensated by the inherent benefits of farming,” such as wholesome, fresh food; income and employment; and preservation of open space.

Blairstown’s Right to Farm Ordinance does not specifically list some of the suggested activity rights in the SADC Model Right to Farm Ordinance. These include: housing and employment of farm laborers; erection of essential agricultural buildings; construction of fences; conduction of education and recreation activities related to farming; and, operation and transportation of large, slow moving farm equipment over municipal roads. Nor does it include mention of the Agricultural Mediation Program. However, in other parts of the Land Development Chapter of its municipal code, Blairstown does provide exceptions for agricultural uses in the areas of height restrictions, fences and walls, signage and off-street parking. It also allows housing for seasonal agricultural workers as a conditional use in its Single-Family Residential and Village Residential zones, which account for more than 95% of the Township. Blairstown may wish to consider addressing transportation of large, slow moving farm equipment as an amendment either to its Right to Farm ordinance. The transportation issue is discussed in the section *Agriculture vehicle movement*, found later in this *Chapter*.

Blairstown Township’s Agricultural Advisory Committee (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. Although Township officials feel the current RTF Ordinance and other Township code meets their needs, the AAC take advantage of opportunities in the Township’s planning process to promote strengthening of the RTF ordinance, as appropriate.

### ***Farmland Assessment***

The Farmland Assessment program is a tax incentive that reduces property taxes on active commercial farmed land, thereby assisting farmers with a critical financial aspect in helping to keep land in farms. This tax incentive is made possible by the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964, N.J.S.A. 54:4-23.1 et seq.

Basic eligibility requirements include:

- The applicant must own the land;
- The property owner must apply annually for Farmland Assessment on Form FA-1 with the municipal tax assessor on or before August 1 of the year immediately preceding the tax year;
- 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;

- Gross sales of products from the land must average at least \$500 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 \$.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 of time; and,
- The property owner must represent that the land will continue in agricultural or horticultural use to the end of the tax year.  
(*New Jersey's Farmland Assessment Act*)<sup>5</sup>

The Farmland Assessment program does not, however, apply to farm structures, such as barns and storage facilities. It has been proposed that additional tax incentives which encourage farmers to maintain their buildings in good working order as part of active farm operations, and which do not financially penalize them for renovating or replacing old or unsafe structures, are necessary. Maintained buildings not only are critical to the farmer but also add to farm “aesthetics” for the larger community, helping to support Agritourism, an element that could help agricultural sustainability in Blirstown.

Blirstown Township is 31.8 square miles, with a small percentage being water. There are 20,149 acres of land in the municipality (*NJDEP Growth in Developed Use Areas*), of which 7,745 acres (or approximately 38% percent of the Township) are devoted to agricultural or horticultural use. Within these 7,745 acres, 3,676 are in active agricultural use as either cropland or pasture. The remaining 4,069 acres are woodland/wetland or equine boarding/rehabilitation or training operations. (*NJ Farmland Data Report*)<sup>6</sup> According to the New Jersey Farmland Assessment data from 1983 to 2007, general trends indicate:

- Total farmland assessed acreage increased 31 percent from 1983 to 2007, due primarily to an increase in woodland acres;
- Harvested cropland showed a steady decrease of 14% from 1983 (2,835 acres) to 2007 (2,400 acres);
- Pastured cropland decreased from 560 acres in 1983 to 342 acres in 2000, with a negligible gain to 346 acres in 2007, an overall 38% decrease;
- Permanent pasture acreage rose slightly in 1990 but has dropped 17% overall, from 1,066 acres in 1983 to 890 acres in 2007;
- Total acreage in active agricultural use (cropland harvested, cropland pastured and permanent pasture) has decreased 18%, from 4,461 acres in 1983 to 3,676 acres in 2007.
- Woodland acreage rose significantly between 1983 and 200, from 1,445 acres to 4,087, but declined to 3,940 acres in 2007, resulting in an overall 1983–2007 increase of +173%;
- Equine acreage rose by 50% between 2000 (the first year reported) and 2007, from 89 to 129 acres.  
(*NJDA Farmland Assessment*)<sup>7</sup>

It is important to sustain and expand tax incentives such as Farmland Assessment to keep land in farms, and to encourage the development or extension of other tax incentives for the agricultural industry. 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. Farmland assessment in Blairstown recently has been reviewed and evaluated to insure compliance. At the public meeting on August 12, 2009, one Township official expressed concern that proposed new farmland assessment eligibility requirements may cause a number of farm parcels to no longer qualify for farmland assessment, potentially having a negative impact on the farming industry in Blairstown Township. It is the Township's option that increasing rollback taxes would be a disincentive to farmers and probably would reduce their lands' value. (*Joel McGreen*)

## **Additional Strategies to Sustain, Retain, and Promote Agriculture in Blairstown**

### ***Regulatory Flexibility***

Municipalities play a key role in the preservation of farming as an industry. In municipalities with a sizable acreage of assessed farmland, zoning powers can be utilized to require buffers between agriculture and other uses to minimize conflict. The Right to Farm Ordinances are an active example of municipalities' support for agriculture. Such actions create an atmosphere favorable to agriculture, its economics and profitability.

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 Blairstown's strong agricultural base requires support on many fronts, one of which is flexibility in government regulation. (*2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*)<sup>8</sup> It is essential that the Blairstown Agricultural Advisory Committee; Warren CADB, Department of Land Preservation, Board of Agriculture, County Freeholders, Soil Conservation District; Natural Resources Conservation Service; the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County; private farm preservation groups; and other interested entities and individuals work together to present a united front in issues regarding government regulation and permits as they relate to agriculture. Some specific areas relative to regulatory flexibility and priority, which can help support continued agricultural viability in Blairstown Township, are identified in the *2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan* for New Jersey identified, as follows:

- *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). These need to be strengthened and modified if, and when, necessary;
- *Exemptions*: State, county, and municipal regulations must be responsive to the needs of farmers. Minor changes to, or exemptions from, certain local and state

regulations, rules, and ordinances help to buffer agricultural operations from burdensome costs, creating a farmer-friendly environment. Blairstown's strong Right to Farm Ordinance stands as one example of such regulations. At a state level, the Department of Environmental Protection's "Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules" (N.J.A.C. 7:7A-et. seq.) and the "Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules" (N.J.A.C. 7:13) grant exemptions, permits by rule, or general permits for agricultural activities. In addition, for the Department of Environmental Protection's "Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Rules" (N.J.A.C. 7:38), exemptions are allowed for activities conducted in accordance with an approved Woodland Management Plan issued pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act. The Blairstown agriculture community must work to ensure that exemptions are adequate and reasonable;

- *Flexibility*: State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation, Department of Community Affairs, Department of Labor, and New Jersey Commerce Commission, should consider the NJDA Agricultural Smart Growth Plan when making important 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 Blairstown Township farmers;
- *Agriculture-Friendly Zoning*: This refers to a comprehensive land use practice that coordinates zoning and land use policy in a proactive way. The desired result is that it encourages agribusiness, while at the same time reducing the incidence of farmer-homeowner nuisance issues. In other words, it seeks to harmonize potentially conflicting land use policies. This strategy would be done mostly at the local and county levels.

*(2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan)*

### ***Farm Labor***

An adequate labor supply is integral to harvesting vegetables, fruits, and berries. Measured in farmed acreage, Blairstown 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. *(Kent Hardmeyer)*<sup>9</sup> As of 2006, 118 acres were devoted to fruits, berries, and vegetables, while 3,780 acres were devoted to field crops and nursery products. *(NJDA Farmland Assessment)* Since the overall acreage devoted to labor intensive farming is small in Blairstown, 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.

Rising farm labor costs in Warren County are not currently impacting agriculture sustainability, which is due at least in part to the continued strong trend of mechanized, non-labor intensive crop farming in the county. However, because this trend may change over time, a brief discussion of the topic is warranted.

The New Jersey Department of Labor recommends the following to address farm labor issues at the state and local levels:

- Work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development program to reexamine program criteria to enable New Jersey’s rural communities to qualify for more programs related to farm labor. The current focus of the program, such as rural area infrastructure, is not applicable to Warren County (and New Jersey).
- Link neighborhood revitalization efforts with housing opportunities for farm workers and, where appropriate, establish on-site housing, to ensure a safe and stable workforce.
- Develop and promote comprehensive and ongoing training opportunities for farm workers.
- Work with the New Jersey Department of Labor, Rutgers Cooperative Extension and others to provide farm safety training.
- Join other agricultural stakeholders in supporting ongoing efforts at the federal level to streamline and modernize the immigration process.

*(2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan)*

In January 2006, the “Agriculture Transition Policy Group” (Group), composed of government and agriculture industry representatives, submitted a report to then Governor-elect Jon Corzine, with recommendations to keep agriculture strong and viable in the Garden State. The Group reported many serious problems facing New Jersey farm employers. Two of these are the impacts of the rise in the state minimum wage (which has risen again, to \$7.25 per hour, effective July 24, 2009), and the ongoing issue before the U.S. Congress regarding immigration and undocumented workers. *(Agriculture Transition Policy Group, Final Report)*<sup>10</sup> The State Department of Agriculture passed resolutions in 2007 and 2008, urging that the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, New Jersey Farm Bureau and New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station “work cooperatively with the Governor and the Legislature to develop an agricultural assistance program” that would “offset the economic impact of increases in farm labor costs.”<sup>11</sup> The cost of labor in New Jersey is a critical issue for some farming sectors such as produce, and one that needs further consideration for its effect on agriculture in Warren County and New Jersey. This is because as labor costs increase, so does the cost to farmers producing commodities. Though a farmer may wish to raise his/her prices to cover increased production costs, this is many times not feasible due to competition from neighboring states with lower production (i.e. labor) costs. The result is lower profits for Warren County and Blainstown Township farmers, making the business of farming less profitable, and therefore more difficult.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture has specified the identification and posting of new markets as a specific strategy in its 2007 Economic Development Strategies report. This effort is a necessary outgrowth of the report’s finding that due to the State’s high labor rates (in addition to high land values and property taxes) production costs in New Jersey are higher than in most other areas. With commodity prices based on national production costs, yields and demand, it is less profitable to produce commodity items in New Jersey than elsewhere. *(2007 Economic Development Strategies)*<sup>12</sup>

### ***Farmer Education***

To sustain a modern, diverse and stable food and agricultural industry, education and progressive ongoing training for farmers will promote a more efficient and productive business environment. This includes programs covering “farmer risk management education, agricultural leadership training, secondary school and college agricultural education.” (2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan)

One educational link for Blirstown agricultural land owners and operators is to collaborate with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Warren County (associated with the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences [formerly Cook College], Rutgers University). During the growing season, 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, vegetables, greenhouse nurseries and ornamentals, and also for field crops. Similar farm animal consultation is provided on a year round basis. During the growing season, RCE of Warren County also conducts “twilight meetings” for fruits and vegetables at local farms, to discuss a wide range of issues relative to these agricultural products. In late summer, a twilight meeting is held at the Rutgers University Snyder Research and Extension Farm in Pittstown, highlighting the ongoing sustainable research in vegetables, herbs and fruit. (Bill Tietjen)<sup>13</sup>

RCE of Warren County also provides practical assistance to farmers. Examples are assistance in obtaining pesticide application licenses (necessary to buy and apply pesticides), and also to obtain water certification and registration permits from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, for groundwater and/or surface water allocations. Finally, the RCE of Warren County performs applied research on area farms to further knowledge on a wide range of issues pertaining to agricultural plants and animals. Results of any research are used to advise local farmers on an as needed basis. (Bill Tietjen) All of the aforementioned available programs and assistance offer an individual farm operator the opportunity to gain the latest information on numerous and pertinent agriculture topics, which are important to agricultural sustainability. Blirstown farmers may take advantage of these resources on an ongoing, and as needed basis.

Through its Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Natural Resource Conservation Program, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture offers technical, financial, and regulatory assistance, and provides educational outreach to landowners throughout the state. The Department also offers, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, farm risk management and crop insurance education programs to assist farmers in understanding what assistance is available to reduce agricultural risks. (2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan)

Hired farm workers continue to be one of the most economically disadvantaged groups in the United States due to low wages, seasonal employment and limited participation in the non-farm labor market. Therefore, as an important statewide resource to the agricultural industry, the New Jersey Department of Labor recommends that more must be done to

ensure a well-trained, educated farm labor workforce, that has adequate living and working conditions, and is trained in worker safety. (*2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*)

Agriculture labor education and training funding may be available through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development programs. These programs can help to assist in upgrading the skills and productivity of the agricultural workforce. (*NJDA, Training*)<sup>14</sup> Some of the programs which may be applicable include Customized Training Initiative, Basic Skills Program, and Occupational Safety and Health Training Program.

Finally, as a form of “education,” government agencies at the state and county level can provide continuous outreach information to farmers, to ensure they take full advantage of all federal and state loan, grant, education, and technical assistance programs. This is especially important since these programs are meant to aid the farming business to thrive and survive. Due to the complexity and vast array of the programs, they may be unknown to many farmers.

### ***Youth Farmer Education Programs***

According to the Census of Agriculture, the farmer population in Warren County is getting older, with an average age of 57.2 in 2007 versus 54.9 in 1997. However, nationwide, the average age of operators on new farms is lower than for all farms (48 versus 57). (*Census of Agriculture*)<sup>15</sup> Anecdotally, this holds true in Blairstown as well, with the new farmers tending to be younger. 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 be prepared to enter the industry. Educational programs in agriculture offered as an optional and viable opportunity for the youth of Blairstown will assist those who are interested in pursuing such careers. Creating new opportunities via secondary and post secondary education programs in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources will reassure students that opportunities exist for them in Blairstown, and wider Warren County. (*2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*)

The National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Organization “operates under a Federal Charter granted by the 81st Congress of the United States, and is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture.” (*National FFA Organization*)<sup>16</sup> The National FFA Organization was founded in 1928, and currently has 7,358 chapters and nearly 500,000 members. (*National FFA Organization*) In 2008, there were 37 chapters in New Jersey with more than 1,950 members.<sup>17</sup> Through the local FFA and New Jersey Department of Agriculture’s Office of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education, Warren County offers youth agriculture education at Belvidere High School for Agriculture Business Management and Horticulture; at Hackettstown Regional High School for Floriculture and Floristry Operation and Management and Horticulture; at North Warren Regional High School for Horticulture; at Phillipsburg High School for Agriculture Business Management, Horticulture, and Landscaping & Groundskeeping; and, at Warren Hills Regional High School for Horticulture. (*Office of Agriculture*)<sup>18</sup> These same high schools also have local FFA chapters. Erin Noble is the local FFA representative and can be contacted at 1-877-243-3332 for further information.

In addition to classes in horticulture (as noted above), North Warren Regional High School in Blirstown also offers courses in animal science/wildlife management. Based on student interest, the school would consider offering other related courses such as environmental science or agriculture business management. (*Jennifeur Wilson*)<sup>19</sup> The Blirstown Agricultural Advisory Committee supports the continuation, and expansion, of these courses.

Youth agriculture education classes or programs are not offered at any elementary schools within the County, but are an opportunity to cultivate young people's interest in the field of agriculture.

The national Agriculture in the Classroom program helps K-12 students become aware of the importance of agriculture. 4-H is an informal, practical educational program for youth, which assists young people interested in farm animals through livestock projects; the Warren County chapter is overseen Warren County 4-H Agent Alayne Torretta and a staff of two. In 2009, four members of the Warren 4H Teen Council journeyed to Russia to share their knowledge as ambassadors.<sup>20</sup> The New Jersey Agricultural Society's Agriculture Leadership Program provides young professionals in agriculture with leadership development skills and opportunities. (*2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*)

In addition, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture offers an "Agricultural Education" program. This is "a systematic program of instruction available to students desiring to learn about the science, business, and technology of plant and animal production and/or about the environmental and natural resources systems. A complete Agricultural Education program is composed of three components: class/lab instruction, experiential learning, i.e., supervised agricultural experience (SAE), and leadership development through membership in FFA and/or the National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization (PAS), which provide a well-rounded and practical approach to student learning." (*NJDA, Agricultural Education*)<sup>21</sup>

### ***Public outreach***

Over the last 50 years, New Jersey has transformed away from a largely rural and agricultural landscape, to a more urban and suburban landscape. However, farming remains strong and viable in many portions of the state, including Warren County and Blirstown Township. If the Township's many remaining agricultural areas are to survive and prosper, the non-farming public needs to be aware of the continuing financial, cultural, scenic and agricultural contributions made by Blirstown. Currently, Blirstown advertises its weekly farmers market with banners placed on-site and along Route 94, the major traffic route. At the farmer's request and cost, the Township mounts wooden signs at intersections, alerting drivers to the presence of a farm in the vicinity, such as the signs for Sunset Christmas Tree Farm (preserved) and Baran Brook Farms on the corner of Mt. Hermon and Frontage roads. Methods that would expand public outreach efforts in Blirstown are through increased signage, events, the Township website and opportunities

for “on the ground” solicitation of farming operations including pick-your-own operations and local farm stands.

### ***Management of nuisance and crop damaging wildlife***

Management of nuisance and crop damaging wildlife is critical to the short and long term sustainability of Blairstown’s agriculture industry. Crop damage from wildlife leads to economic loss for the farmer and/or land owner, and is an extremely serious problem throughout Warren County, causing 75% or more crop loss in certain instances. Most damage is caused by a multitude of insects, as well as deer, bear, turkey, and other wildlife. It is important to not only control and manage damage to crops, but to also do it in a manner which causes the least amount of collateral natural resource damage; that is, limit pesticide use to the greatest extent possible, using natural pest control.

One key way for Blairstown farmers to control damage from deer, bear, and turkey is through hunting of crop damaging animals. This hunting is allowed through depredation permits, issued by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)’s Fish and Wildlife Program. In many instances, this is the only short term solution to control crop damage by what is widely considered a serious bear issue in Blairstown Township, where the major crop damage is caused by bear and crows (*Bob DeBlock*).

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture’s Division of Plant Industry works to safeguard New Jersey’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. (*Division of Plant Industry*)<sup>22</sup> In addition, “the Division oversees programs that certify plant stock for interstate and international shipments, protects forested communities from tree loss caused by the gypsy moth and Asian longhorned beetle, inspects honeybees for harmful bee diseases and pests, regulates the quality of plant seeds, and produces and releases beneficial insects to reduce crop and environmental damage, and decrease dependence on chemical pesticides.” (*Division of Plant Industry*)

Protection of forest resources is important to Blairstown farmers who harvest wood as part of Woodland Management Plans on their farmland assessed properties. The gypsy moth problem was much less severe in northern Warren County in 2009 than in 2008, when it blanketed a continuous swath of forest stretching into Sussex County. While there were isolated pockets of moderate to heavy gypsy moth defoliation reported for Blairstown for 2009, no aerial spraying to control the moth’s caterpillar stage occurred in either the Township or the County. (*NJ Gypsy Moth Aerial Defoliation Survey 2009*)<sup>23</sup>

### ***Agriculture vehicle movement***

In recent years, as many portions of the rural landscape have become developed with residential subdivisions, the sometimes conflicting lifestyles of farmers and residents clash. Blairstown farmers need to move heavy, slow moving agricultural equipment over local, county and sometimes state roads to access unconnected fields and barns. Local 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 paces can, and do, cause conflict between Blirstown's farmers and other residents, while creating unsafe road conditions as residents and farmers "compete" for road space.

Since many farm vehicles travel over local municipal roads, Blirstown should actively support local agricultural business' right to do so. The current Right to Farm Ordinance in Blirstown does not specifically protect the right to transport large, slow moving farm equipment over roads within the Township. The Township can consider amending its Right to Farm Ordinance, to specifically protect the right to transport farm equipment over its roads.

Signage alerting fast moving cars as to the 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 life in Blirstown. The Township may want to consider the posting of such signage, where appropriate.

If local non-agriculture residents are to enjoy the scenic vistas, fresh produce, clean air and limited traffic congestion that Warren County's agriculture provides, they must be more tolerant of the farming community. Local, county and state government can advertise the contributions of the farming community via public outreach at local schools and various community activities. The annual Farmers Fair, held yearly in Harmony Township, is a prime example of advertising the importance and permanence of agriculture in Warren County and Blirstown Township. This fair has been held annually since 1937, bearing witness to the importance of agriculture in Warren County.

## **Federal Programs**

The federal government is an important partner in supporting Warren County and Blirstown Township agriculture. There are several federal programs that support, or could support, the agricultural industry in the Township.

### ***USDA Rural Development Program***

Known as the Rural Development Program, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has an extensive array of loans and grants 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. Through the program, the USDA offers technical assistance and information to agricultural cooperatives, as well as to communities for empowerment programs. With a multi-billion dollar portfolio of loans, loan guarantees, and grants, the USDA can be an effective partner to assist with agriculture sustainability. (*Rural Development*)<sup>24</sup>

Grants and loans are available in three key areas: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Rural Housing Service, and Rural Utilities Service. To qualify for many of the program's loans and grants, municipalities must have less than 10,000 residents. (*2006 Agricultural Smart Growth Plan*) At a population of approximately 5,747 as of the 2000 Census, Blirstown may qualify for these loans and grants.

### ***Income Averaging for Farmers***

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. (*United States Department of the Treasury*)<sup>25</sup>

In the New Jersey Legislature, New Jersey Senate Bill 1409 is presently being considered by the Senate Economic Growth Committee, while Assembly Bill 1406 is being considered by the Assembly's Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Appropriations Committees. (*New Jersey State Legislature*)<sup>26</sup> These bills would provide income averaging similar to the federal program described above. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Agriculture Development Committee, Warren County Freeholders, and Warren County Agriculture Development Board can work with, and encourage, the New Jersey Legislature to adopt income averaging legislation. This would greatly assist Warren County farmers, and farmers statewide, to remain economically viable.

### ***USDA Farm Service Agriculture Program***

Farming is a business which can be extremely cyclical and unpredictable, with factors, such as weather and market conditions, out of the farmer's control. As such, farmers often need assistance to make ends meet, to stay profitable, and to stay in business. Many times federal government programs are available. Blirstown farmers can take advantage of these loans as a tool in running their farm businesses.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes "...*guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans to (beginning farmers), family-size farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank, Farm Credit System institution, or other lender*", often due to financial setbacks from natural disasters, or whose resources are too limited to maintain profitable farming operations. FSA loans can be used for most agriculture necessities such as purchasing land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, supplies, and also for construction of buildings, or to make farm improvements. (*Farm Service Agency*)<sup>27</sup> In 2008, one guaranteed loan was made in Warren County, in Harmony Township. As of August 2009, three guaranteed loans have been made in Warren County, with an average cost of \$254,000; one of these loans was to a Blirstown Township farmer. (*Virginia Brophy*)<sup>28</sup>

The FSA also makes “Direct” farm loans. These loans include supervision and credit counseling for farmers so they have a better chance for success. Under this program, farm ownership, operating, emergency and youth loans are the main types of loans available, but there are also minority applicant and beginning farmer loans. (*Farm Service Agency*) These farm loans have/have not been made in Blairstown in recent years. However, in Warren County farm loans have been as follows:

- Fiscal year 2009 (through August) had three loans, with an average loan amount of \$52,500. They were used for operating and equipment. One loan was to a Blairstown farmer.
- Fiscal year 2008 had two loans made to young, beginning farmers, both in Blairstown, with an average loan amount of \$42,500. They were used for operating and equipment.
- Fiscal year 2007 had three loans, with an average loan of \$300,000. They were used to buy farms and livestock, and to refinance debt.
- Fiscal year 2006 had four loans, with an average loan of \$140,000. They were used to buy equipment and cows, and to refinance operating debt.
- Fiscal year 2005 had seven loans, with an average loan of \$120,000. They were used to buy cows and equipment, and to refinance debt.

(*Virginia Brophy*)<sup>29</sup>

The FSA office for Warren County is located at 101 Bilby Road, Suite 1H in Hackettstown, at the same location as the NRCS office discussed in Chapter 7. The County Executive Agent is Lindsay Spagnoli, and she may be reached at (908) 852-2576, ext. 109, or at [Kenneth.Bingham@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Kenneth.Bingham@nj.usda.gov). Mr. Bingham should be contacted by Blairstown farmers for assistance in determining whether they qualify for these loans, and assistance in applying. This FSA office also administers the financial aspect of the CREP program, which was discussed in *Chapter 7*.

## **Township of Blairstown: Vision for Farmland Preservation**

### ***The Mission Statement of the Blairstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee:***

The Township’s Agricultural Advisory Committee together with the Township’s governing body is committed to preserving our productive agricultural lands, the local agriculture industry, and our rural heritage. The AAC supports innovative approaches to maintaining the sustainability and economic integrity of our farming community as well as the availability of fresh, locally grown farm products.

### ***Goals of the Blairstown Agricultural Advisory Committee***

Our goal is the continued viability of agriculture through the preservation of productive farms to the maximum extent possible. To date, more than 1,200 acres have been preserved for agriculture. We are committed to adding an additional 2,200 acres over the next 10 years.

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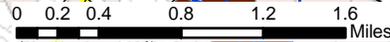
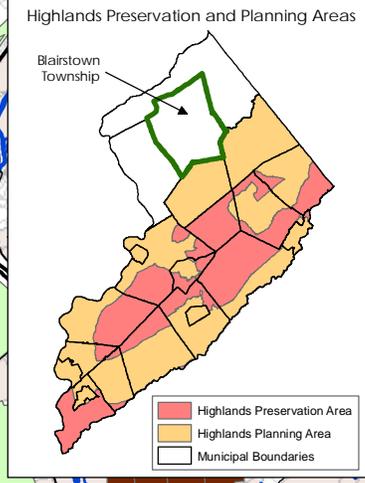
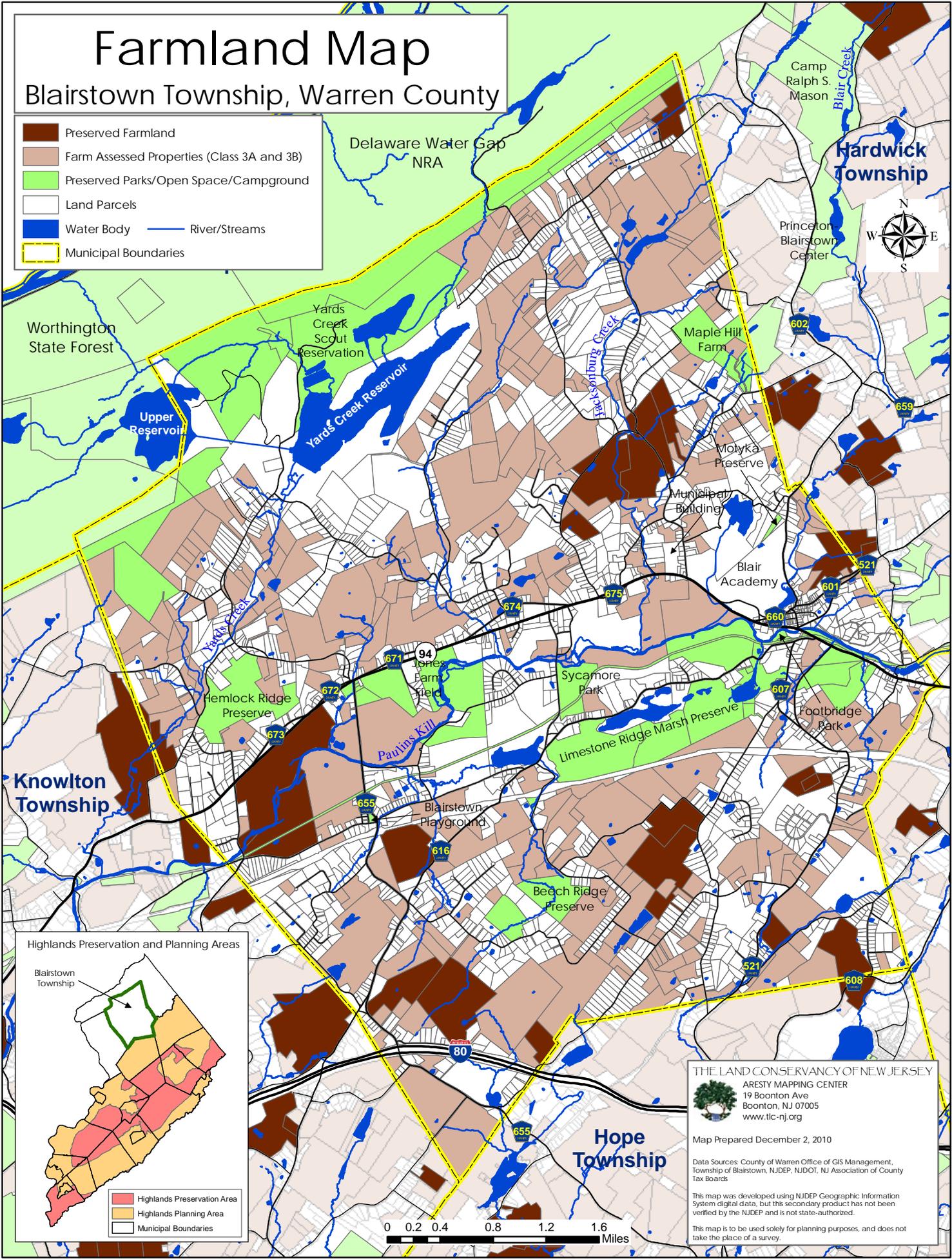
# Maps

- a. Farmland Map
- b. Preserved Lands Map
- c. Warren County Agricultural Development Area  
Map
- d. Warren County Project Area Map
- e. Agricultural Soils Categories
- f. Project Area Map
- g. Farm Parcels that meet SADC Criteria for  
Agricultural Soils
- h. Farm Parcels that meet SADC Criteria for  
Tillable Land
- i. Farm Parcels that meet SADC Criteria for both  
Agricultural Soils and Tillable Land
- j. Targeted Farms

# Farmland Map

## Blairstown Township, Warren County

- Preserved Farmland
- Farm Assessed Properties (Class 3A and 3B)
- Preserved Parks/Open Space/Campground
- Land Parcels
- Water Body
- River/Streams
- Municipal Boundaries



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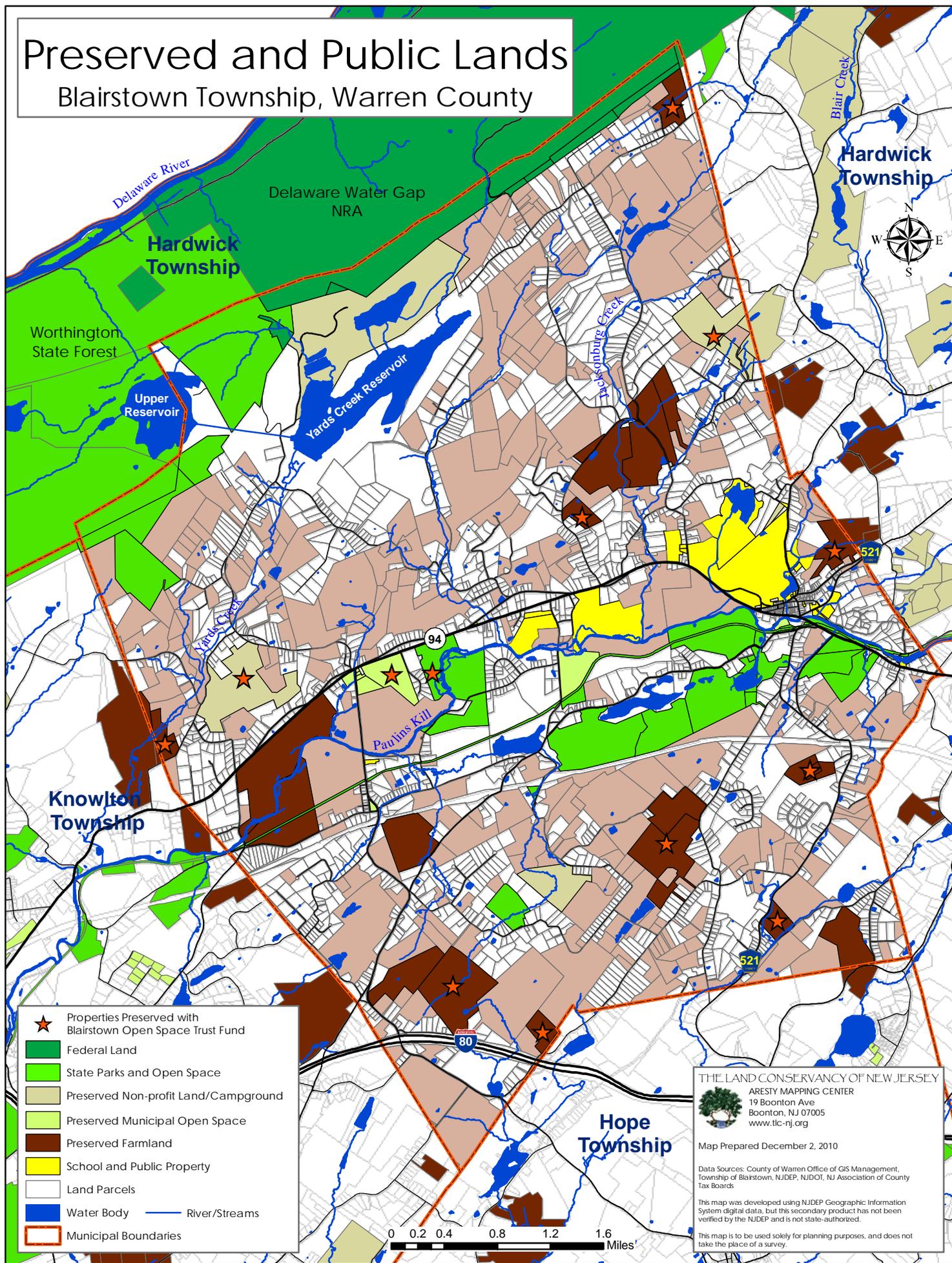
Map Prepared December 2, 2010

Data Sources: County of Warren Office of GIS Management, Township of Blairstown, NJDEP, NJDOT, NJ Association of County Tax Boards

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 This map is to be used solely for planning purposes, and does not take the place of a survey.

# Preserved and Public Lands

## Blairstown Township, Warren County



-  Properties Preserved with Blairstown Open Space Trust Fund
-  Federal Land
-  State Parks and Open Space
-  Preserved Non-profit Land/Campground
-  Preserved Municipal Open Space
-  Preserved Farmland
-  School and Public Property
-  Land Parcels
-  Water Body
-  River/Streams
-  Municipal Boundaries

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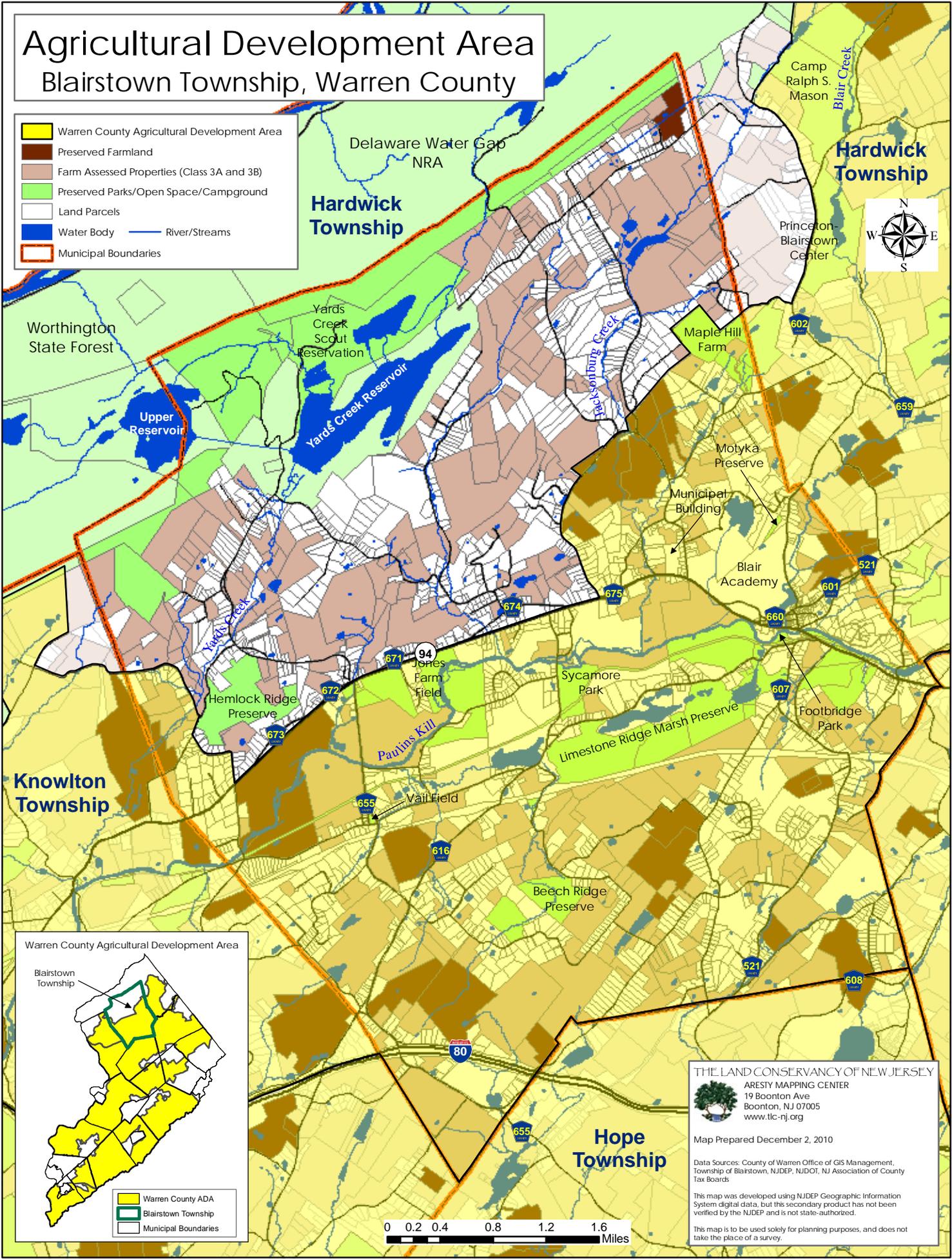
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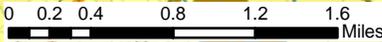
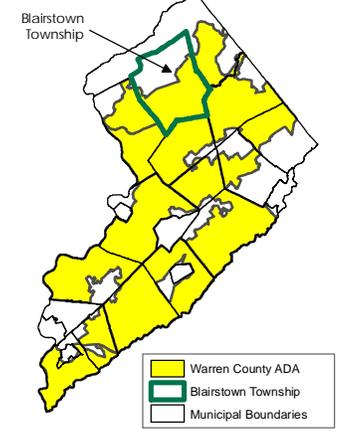
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# Agricultural Development Area Blairstown Township, Warren County

-  Warren County Agricultural Development Area
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Farm Assessed Properties (Class 3A and 3B)
-  Preserved Parks/Open Space/Campground
-  Land Parcels
-  Water Body
-  River/Streams
-  Municipal Boundaries



Warren County Agricultural Development Area



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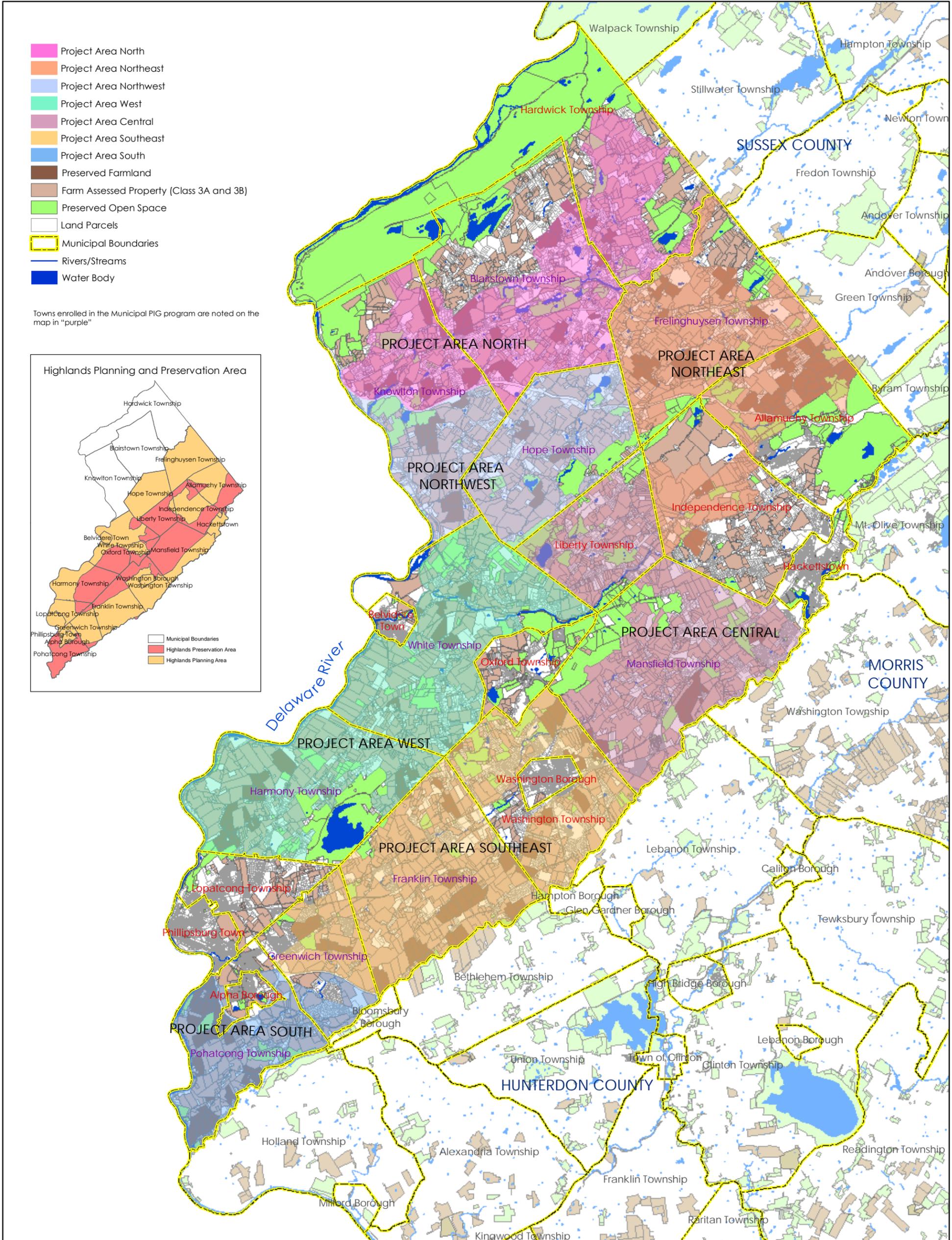
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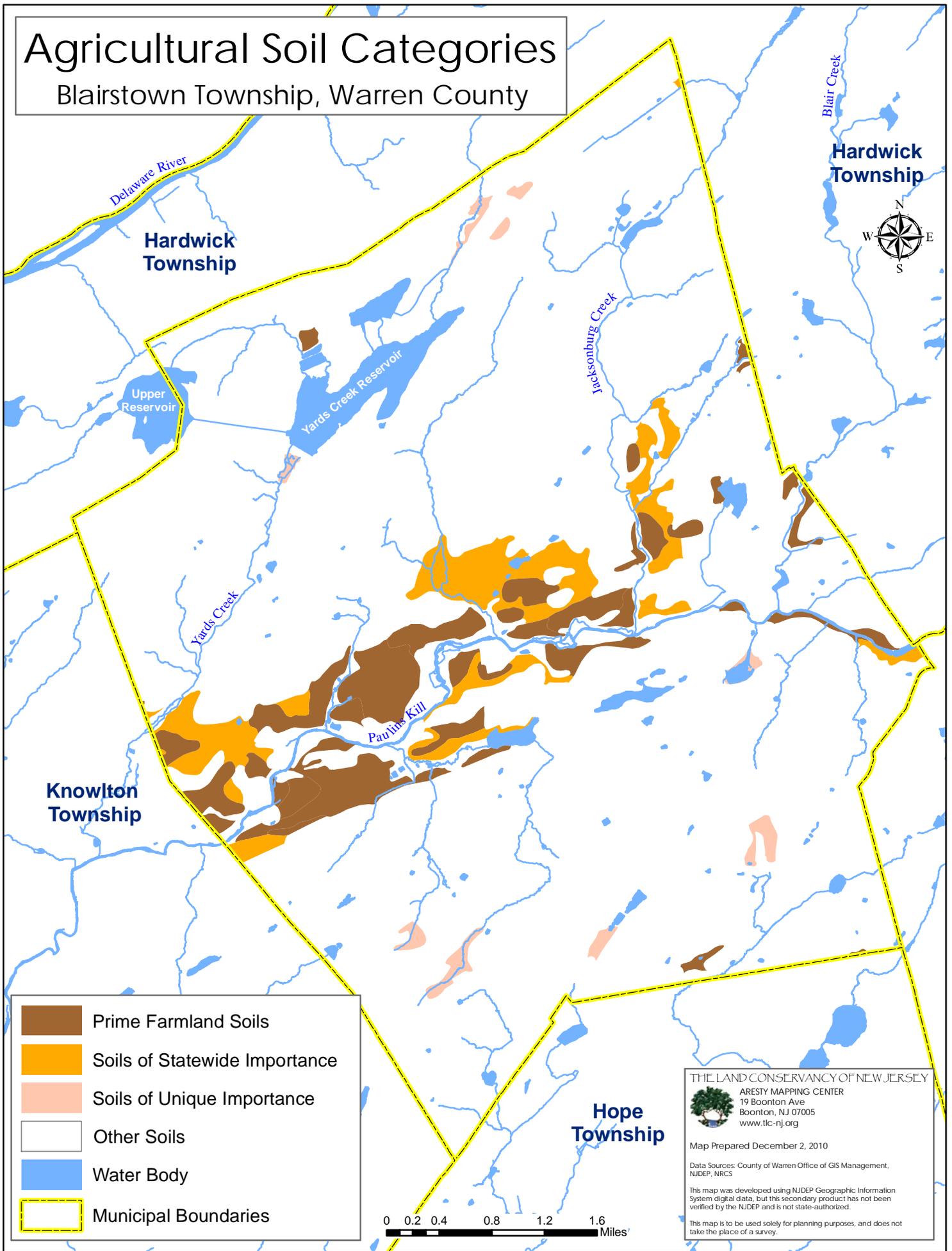
# Project Areas

## Warren County, New Jersey



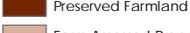
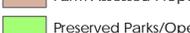
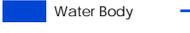
# Agricultural Soil Categories

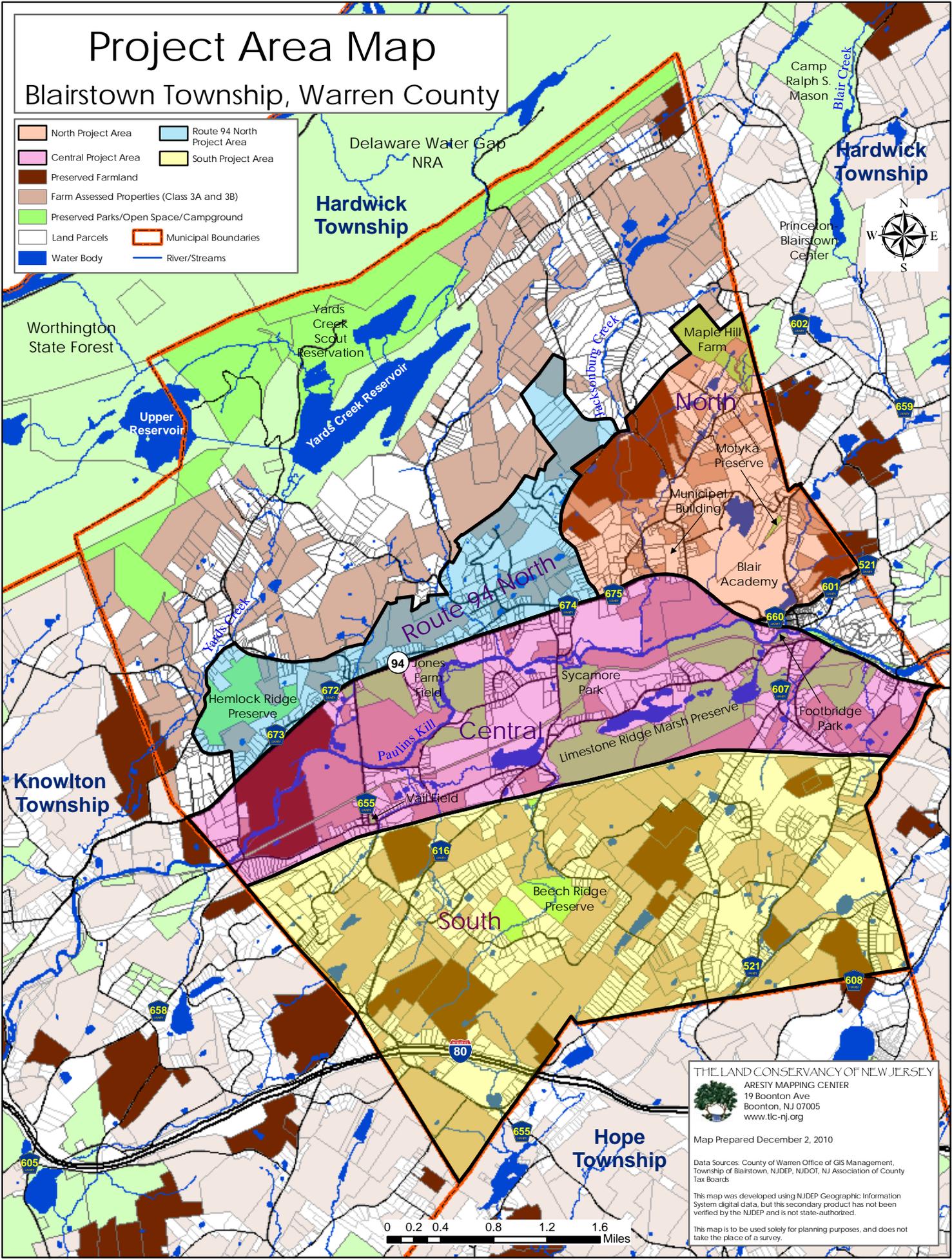
Blairstown Township, Warren County



# Project Area Map

## Blairstown Township, Warren County

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|  |  |
- North Project Area
  - Central Project Area
  - Preserved Farmland
  - Farm Assessed Properties (Class 3A and 3B)
  - Preserved Parks/Open Space/Campground
  - Land Parcels
  - Water Body
  - Route 94 North Project Area
  - South Project Area
  - Municipal Boundaries
  - River/Streams



Hardwick Township



Princeton Blairstown Center

Worthington State Forest

Hardwick Township

Delaware Water Gap NRA

Yards Creek Scout Reservation

Upper Reservoir

Yards Creek Reservoir

Maple Hill Farm

Molyka Preserve

Municipal Building

Blair Academy

Route 94 North

Hemlock Ridge Preserve

Jones Farm Field

Sycamore Park

Central

Limestone Ridge Marsh Preserve

Footbridge Park

Knowlton Township

South

Beech Ridge Preserve

Hope Township

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Map Prepared December 2, 2010

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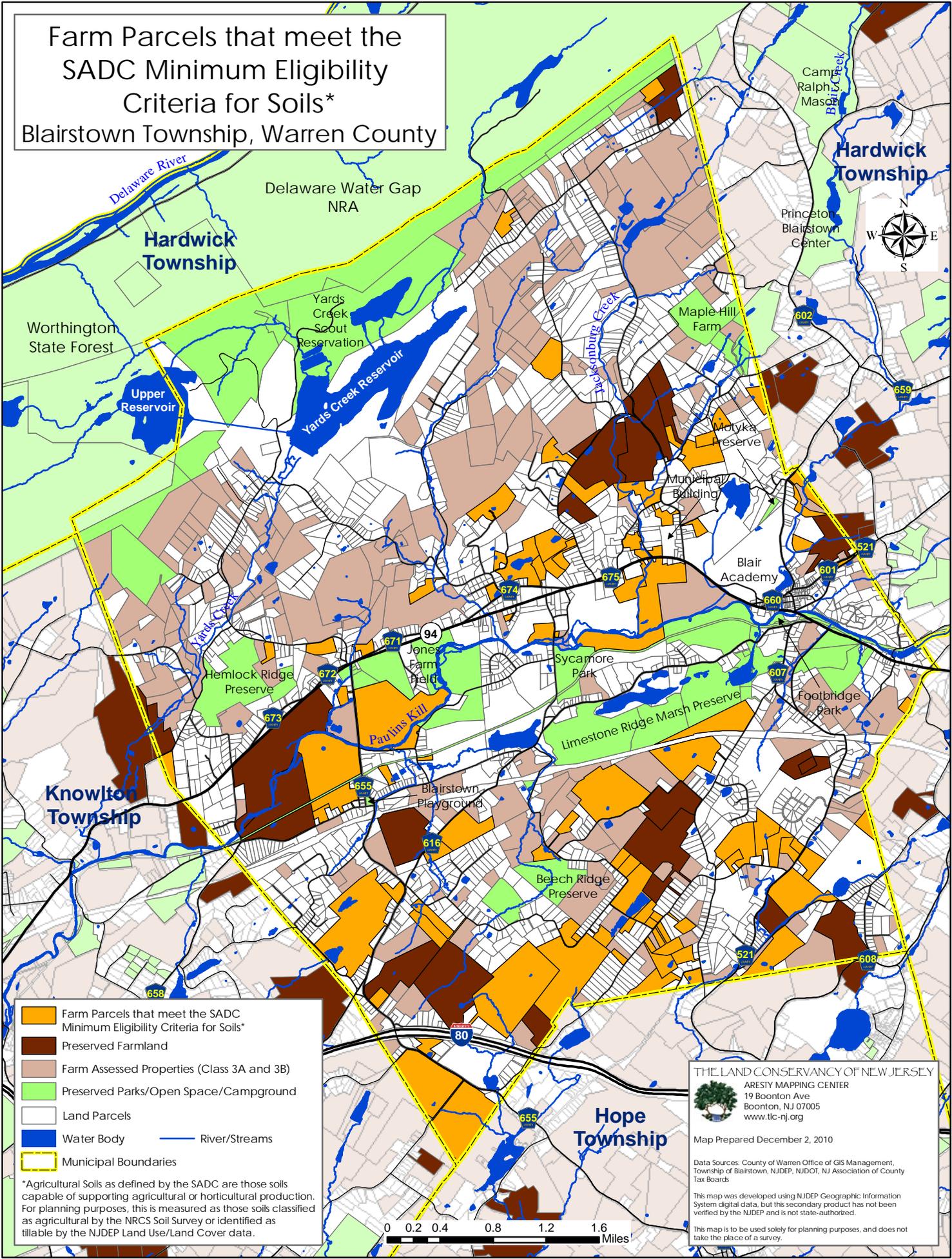
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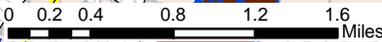
# Farm Parcels that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Soils\*

## Blairstown Township, Warren County



- Farm Parcels that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Soils\*
- Preserved Farmland
- Farm Assessed Properties (Class 3A and 3B)
- Preserved Parks/Open Space/Campground
- Land Parcels
- Water Body
- Municipal Boundaries
- River/Streams

\*Agricultural Soils as defined by the SADC are those soils capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production. For planning purposes, this is measured as those soils classified as agricultural by the NRCS Soil Survey or identified as tillable by the NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover data.



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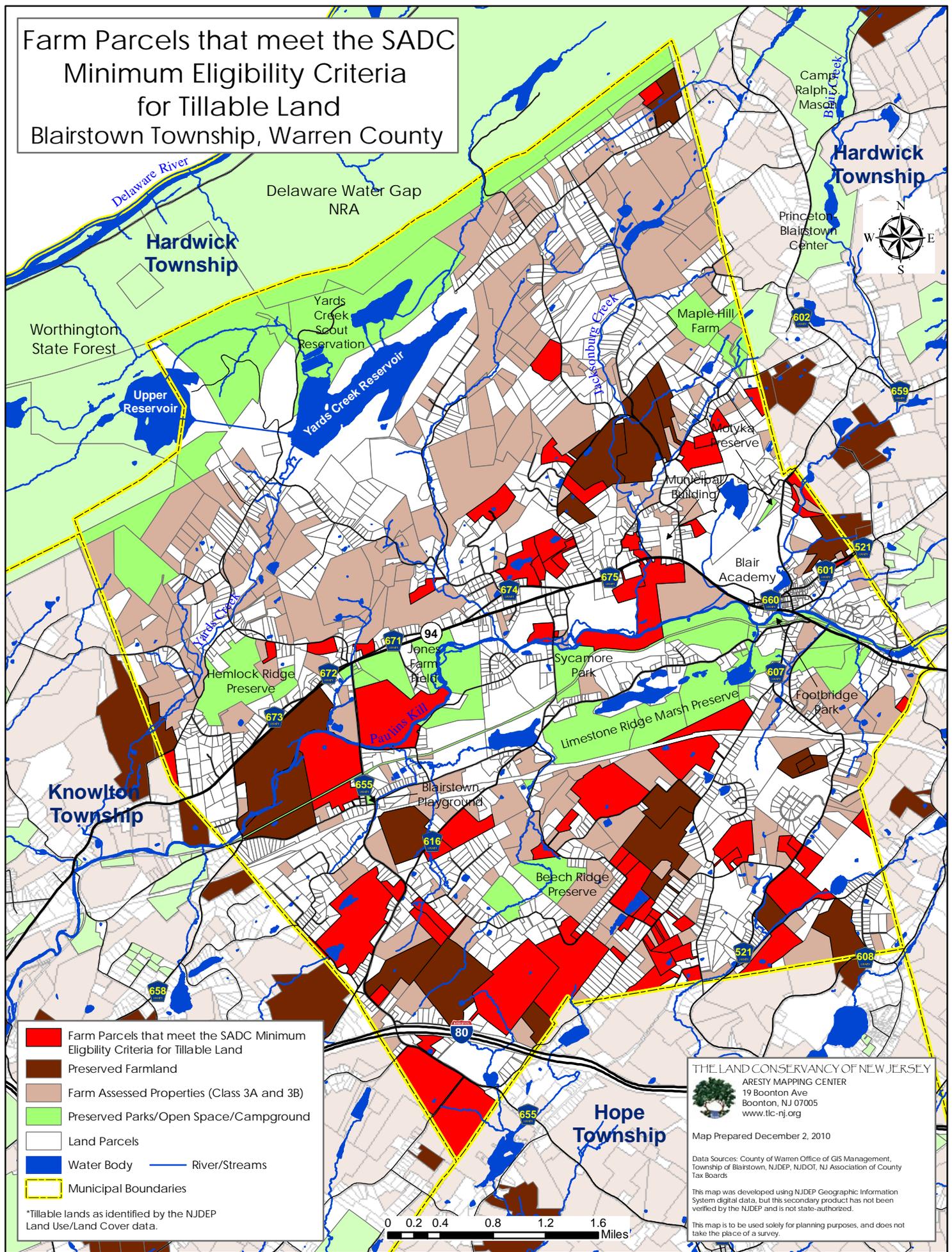
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# Farm Parcels that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Tillable Land Blairstown Township, Warren County



- Farm Parcels that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Tillable Land
- Preserved Farmland
- Farm Assessed Properties (Class 3A and 3B)
- Preserved Parks/Open Space/Campground
- Land Parcels
- Water Body
- River/Streams
- Municipal Boundaries

\*Tillable lands as identified by the NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover data.



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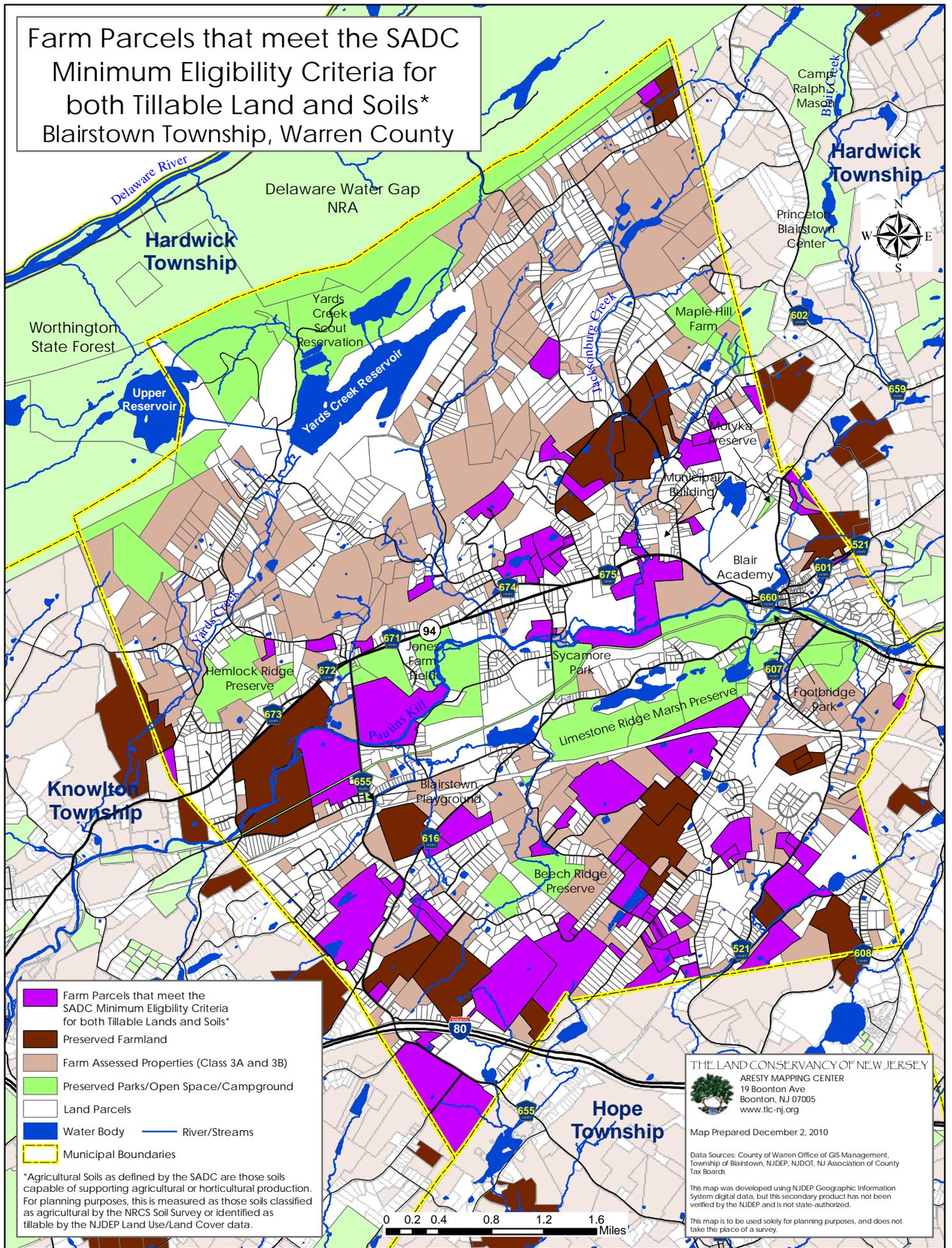
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# Farm Parcels that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for both Tillable Land and Soils\* Blairstown Township, Warren County



Farm Parcels that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for both Tillable Lands and Soils\*  
 Preserved Farmland  
 Farm Assessed Properties (Class 3A and 3B)  
 Preserved Parks/Open Space/Campground  
 Land Parcels  
 Water Body — River/Streams  
 Municipal Boundaries

\*Agricultural Soils as defined by the SADC are those soils capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production. For planning purposes, this is measured as those soils classified as agricultural by the NRCS Soil Survey or identified as tillable by the NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover data.

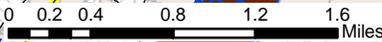
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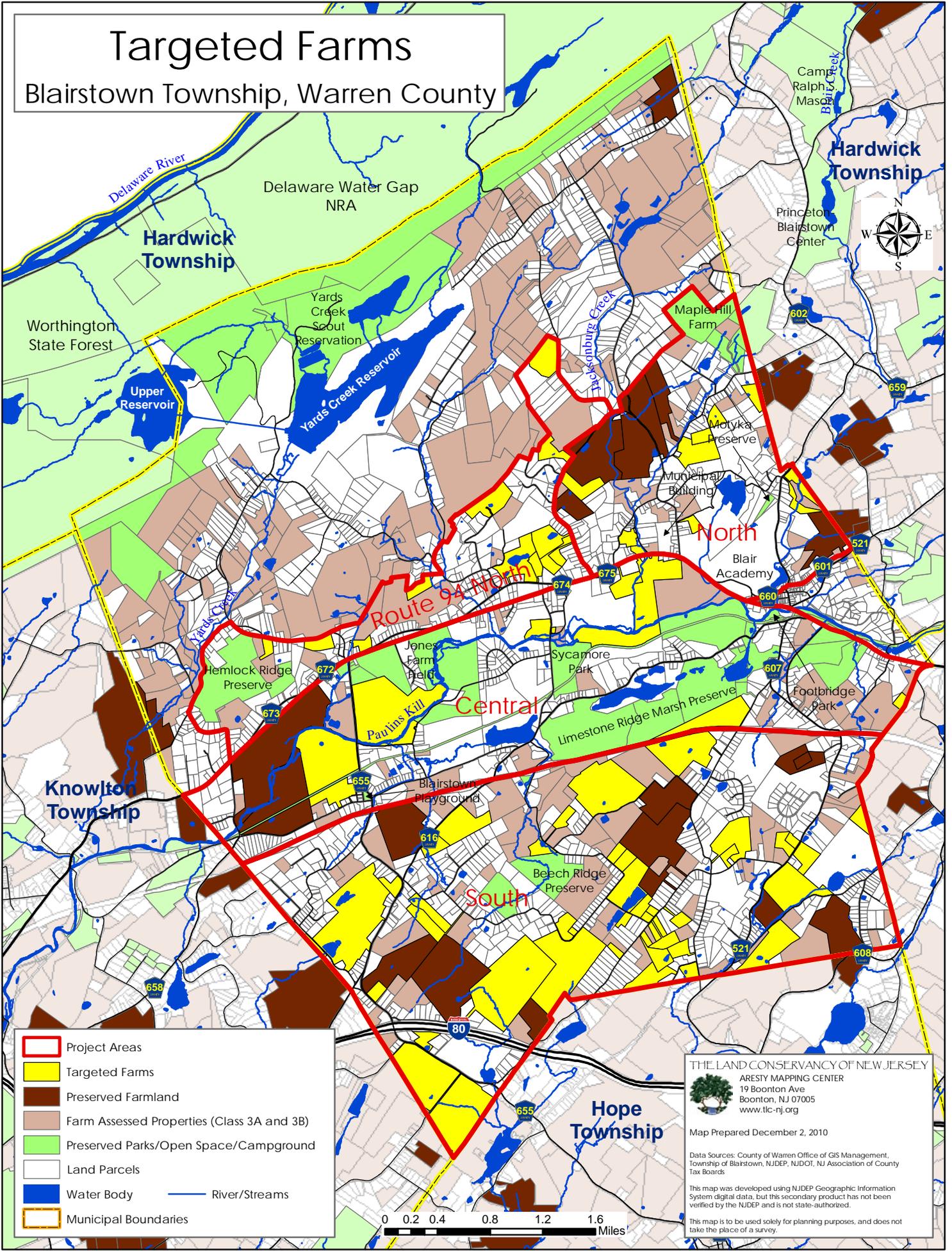
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# Targeted Farms

## Blairstown Township, Warren County



- Project Areas
- Targeted Farms
- Preserved Farmland
- Farm Assessed Properties (Class 3A and 3B)
- Preserved Parks/Open Space/Campground
- Land Parcels
- Water Body
- River/Streams
- Municipal Boundaries

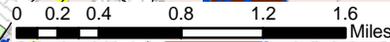
THE LAND CONSERVANCY OF NEW JERSEY  
 ARESTY MAPPING CENTER  
 19 Boonton Ave  
 Boonton, NJ 07005  
 www.tlc-nj.org

Map Prepared December 2, 2010

Data Sources: County of Warren Office of GIS Management, Township of Blairstown, NJDEP, NJDOT, NJ Association of County Tax Boards

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.



# Appendices

- a. Public Hearing #1- August 12, 2009– Notice and Agenda
- b. Public Hearing #2 – December 20, 2010 – Notice and Agenda
- c. Warren County FY2011 Minimum Score Report
- d. SADC Deed of Easement
- e. Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance
- f. Parcel Data Tables:
  - 1. Farm Parcels Meeting the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Agricultural Soils and Tillable Land
  - 2. Targeted Farms
- g. State Ranking Criteria

New Jersey Herald  
Notice for First Public Hearing

**BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP  
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

**TAKE NOTICE** that a Public Hearing will be held on the Draft Farmland Preservation Plan for Blairstown Township.

The hearing will take place during the Regular Meeting of the Blairstown Township Committee on August 12, 2009, 7:30 pm in the Municipal Building, 106 Route 94, Blairstown, NJ.

**Phyllis E. Pizzala, RMC  
Municipal Clerk**

July 23, '09 pfs\$7.00  
00260274 NJH

# Township of Blairstown

## Invites the Public to Provide Comment on the Draft Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan

Wednesday, August 12, 2009 - 7:30 pm  
Blairstown Township Municipal Building

### Agenda

- **Welcome and Introduction**  
*Richard A. Mach, Mayor*  
*Joel McGreen, Chair, Agricultural Advisory Committee*
  
  - **Framework of Farmland Planning Process**
    - Overview of the Farmland Plan
    - Presentation of the Farmland Maps
    - Identification of Project Areas and Farmland Preservation Goals  
*Barbara Heskins Davis, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey*  
*Kathleen Caccavale, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey*
  
  - **Public Comment on Draft Plan and Maps**
- 

### *Why draft an Updated Farmland Preservation Plan?*

The primary purpose of completing the Farmland Preservation Plan for the Township is to provide a vision and strategy for the preservation of agricultural resources. This Plan will prioritize farmland for preservation based upon input local farmland owners, residents, municipal officials, county board and committees. The Plan will conform to the updated State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) guidelines and can be used by the Township to apply for funding through the Planning Incentive Grant program from the SADC. The Plan is a requirement for eligibility into this Program.

For further information please contact:



The Land Conservancy of New Jersey  
19 Boonton Avenue, Boonton, NJ 07005  
(973) 541-1010  
www.tlc-nj.org email: info@tlc-nj.org

Township of Blairstown Agricultural Advisory Committee  
106 Route 94, Blairstown, NJ 07825  
(908) 362-6663  
www.blairstown-nj.org

Notice  
Blairstown Township Planning Board

Please take notice that the Blairstown Twp. Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Monday, December 20, 2010 at its regular meeting, on the Blairstown Twp. Farmland Preservation Plan. This hearing will commence at 7:30 pm and will take place at the Blairstown Twp. Municipal Bldg., 106 Rt. 94, Blairstown Twp., Warren County, N.J. A copy of the Blairstown Twp. Farmland Preservation Plan shall be available for public inspection at the Blairstown Twp. Municipal Bldg. during the normal business hours of the Municipal Clerk at least 10 days prior to the hearing. The public will be invited to participate and comment on the Blairstown Twp. Farmland Preservation Plan at the above meeting.

Marion Spriggs, Secretary  
Blairstown Twp. Planning Board

# Township of Blirstown

## Invites the Public to Provide Comment on the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update

Hosted by:  
Agricultural Advisory Committee and Planning Board

Monday, December 20, 2010 - 7:30 pm  
Blirstown Township Municipal Building

### Agenda

- **Welcome and Introduction**  
*Herman Shoemaker, Chair, Planning Board*  
*Joel McGreen, Chair, Agricultural Advisory Committee*
  - **Presentation: Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update**
    - Overview of the Farmland Plan and Maps
    - Identification of Project Areas and Farmland Preservation Goals  
*Barbara Heskins Davis, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey*  
*Kathleen Caccavale, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey*
  - **Public Comment on Plan and Maps**
- 

### *Why draft an Updated Farmland Preservation Plan?*

The primary purpose of completing the Farmland Preservation Plan for the Township is to provide a vision and strategy for the preservation of agricultural resources. This Plan will prioritize farmland for preservation based upon input local farmland owners, residents, municipal officials, county board and committees. The Plan will conform to the updated State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) guidelines and can be used by the Township to apply for funding through the Planning Incentive Grant program from the SADC. The Plan is a requirement for eligibility into this Program.

For further information please contact:



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19 Boonton Avenue, Boonton, NJ 07005  
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Township of Blirstown Agricultural Advisory Committee  
106 Route 94, Blirstown, NJ 07825  
(908) 362-6663  
www.blirstown-nj.org

SADC Minimum Standards for "Eligible" Farm			
	<u>*2011 Average Quality Score</u>	<u>70% of Average Quality Score</u>	<u>**70% of Average Quality Score</u>
Atlantic	52.61	36.83	36.00
Bergen			
Burlington	65.06	45.54	45.00
Camden			
Cape May	54.69	38.28	38.00
Cumberland	61.55	43.09	43.00
Gloucester	59.69	41.78	41.00
Hunterdon	62.64	43.85	43.00
Mercer	77.19	54.03	54.00
Middlesex	59.49	41.64	41.00
Monmouth	71.75	50.23	50.00
Morris	60.01	42.01	42.00
Ocean	56.69	39.68	39.00
Passaic			
Salem	69.77	48.84	48.00
Somerset	66.93	46.85	46.00
Sussex	51.24	35.87	35.00
Warren	57.51	40.26	40.00
* Based on preliminary or Green Light quality scores for County '08, '09, and '10 Rounds N.J.A.C. 2:76-17.9 (a) and 17.2 (County Planning Incentive Grant Program) Effective January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011			
** all numbers are rounded down to the nearest whole number			
S:\Minimum Standards for Programs\july2010\fy2011\Minimum Standards July 2010			

E3-E

# DEED OF EASEMENT

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY AGRICULTURE RETENTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This Deed is made \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_.

BETWEEN \_\_\_\_\_, whose address is \_\_\_\_\_ and is referred to as the Grantor;

AND \_\_\_\_\_, whose address is \_\_\_\_\_ and is referred to as the Grantee and/or Board.

The Grantor, Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns grants and conveys to the Grantee a development easement and all of the nonagricultural development rights and credits on the Premises, located in the Township of \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_, described in the attached Schedule A, and, for the limited purpose of the restrictions contained in Paragraph 13(b), the tract of land described in the attached Schedule C, which schedules are incorporated by reference in this Deed of Easement, for and in consideration of the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars.

Any reference in this Deed of Easement to "Premises" refers to the property described in Schedule A, and, for the limited purpose of the restrictions contained in Paragraph 13(b), to the tract of land described in Schedule C.

The tax map reference for the Premises is:

Township of \_\_\_\_\_  
Block \_\_\_\_\_, Lot \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, the legislature of the State of New Jersey has declared that the development of agriculture and the retention of farmlands are important to the present and future economy of the State and the welfare of the citizens of the State; and

WHEREAS, the Grantor is the sole and exclusive owner of the Premises; and

WHEREAS, the Grantee believes that the retention and preservation of agricultural lands is beneficial to the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of \_\_\_\_\_ County;

NOW THEREFORE, THE GRANTOR, GRANTOR'S HEIRS, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, PERSONAL OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES, SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS PROMISES that the Premises will be owned, used and conveyed subject to, and not in violation of the following restrictions:

1. Any development of the Premises for nonagricultural purposes is expressly prohibited.
2. The Premises shall be retained for agricultural use and production in compliance with N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32, and all other rules promulgated by the State Agriculture Development Committee, (hereinafter Committee). Agricultural use shall mean the use of the Premises for common farmsite activities including, but not limited to: production, harvesting, storage, grading, packaging, processing and the wholesale and retail marketing of crops, plants, animals and other related commodities and the use and application of techniques and methods of soil preparation and management, fertilization, weed, disease and pest control, disposal of farm waste, irrigation, drainage and water management and grazing.
3. Grantor certifies that at the time of the application to sell the development easement to the Grantee and at the time of the execution of this Deed of Easement the nonagricultural uses indicated on attached Schedule (B) existed on the Premises. All other nonagricultural uses are prohibited except as expressly provided in this Deed of Easement.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

4. All nonagricultural uses, if any, existing on the Premises at the time of the landowner's application to the Grantee as set forth in Section 3 above may be continued and any structure may be restored or repaired in the event of partial destruction thereof, subject to the following:

- i. No new structures or the expansion of pre-existing structures for nonagricultural use are permitted;
- ii. No change in the pre-existing nonagricultural use is permitted;
- iii. No expansion of the pre-existing nonagricultural use is permitted; and
- iv. In the event that the Grantor abandons the pre-existing nonagricultural use, the right of the Grantor to continue the use is extinguished.

5. No sand, gravel, loam, rock, or other minerals shall be deposited on or removed from the Premises excepting only those materials required for the agricultural purpose for which the land is being used.

6. No dumping or placing of trash or waste material shall be permitted on the Premises unless expressly recommended by the Committee as an agricultural management practice.

7. No activity shall be permitted on the Premises which would be detrimental to drainage, flood control, water conservation, erosion control, or soil conservation, nor shall any other activity be permitted which would be detrimental to the continued agricultural use of the Premises.

- i. Grantor shall obtain within one year of the date of this Deed of Easement, a farm conservation plan approved by the local soil conservation district.
- ii. Grantor's long term objectives shall conform with the provisions of the farm conservation plan.

8. Grantee and Committee and their agents shall be permitted access to, and to enter upon, the Premises at all reasonable times, but solely for the purpose of inspection in order to enforce and assure compliance with the terms and conditions of this Deed of Easement. Grantee agrees to give Grantor, at least 24 hours advance notice of its intention to enter the Premises, and further, to limit such times of entry to the daylight hours on regular business days of the week.

9. Grantor may use the Premises to derive income from certain recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, cross country skiing and ecological tours, only if such activities do not interfere with the actual use of the land for agricultural production and that the activities only utilize the Premises in its existing condition. Other recreational activities from which income is derived and which alter the Premises, such as golf courses and athletic fields, are prohibited.

10. Nothing shall be construed to convey a right to the public of access to or use of the Premises except as stated in this Deed of Easement or as otherwise provided by law.

11. Nothing shall impose upon the Grantor any duty to maintain the Premises in any particular state, or condition, except as provided for in this Deed of Easement.

12. Nothing in this Deed of Easement shall be deemed to restrict the right of Grantor, to maintain all roads and trails existing upon the Premises as of the date of this Deed of Easement. Grantor shall be permitted to construct, improve or reconstruct any roadway necessary to service crops, bogs, agricultural buildings, or reservoirs as may be necessary.

13(a). At the time of this conveyance, Grantor has existing single family residential buildings on the Premises and residential buildings used for agricultural labor purposes. Grantor may use, maintain, and improve existing buildings on the Premises subject to the following conditions:

- i. Improvements to agricultural buildings shall be consistent with agricultural uses;
- ii. Improvements to residential buildings shall be consistent with agricultural or single and extended family residential uses. Improvements to residential buildings for the purpose of housing agricultural labor are permitted only if the housed agricultural labor is employed on the Premises; and
- iii. Improvements to recreational buildings shall be consistent with agricultural or recreational uses.

13(b). Grantor, their heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns may use and maintain the Exception Area, as described in the attached Schedule C, conditions:

**sample conditions:**

- a. the Exception Area shall not be severed or subdivided from the Premises
- b. the Exception area may be severed and subdivided from the Premises
- c. the Exception Area shall be limited to one residential unit
- d. (Right to Farm Language if Exception is Non-Severable)

Grantors, grantor’s heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns or any person who is occupying or residing on the Exception Area as well as the heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns of all such persons are hereby notified and made aware that the Exception Area is adjacent to a parcel (“Premises”) permanently deed restricted under the Agriculture Retention and Development Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq. Such persons occupying or residing on the Exception Area are notified and made aware that agriculture is the accepted and preferred use of the adjacent Premises and that the adjacent Premises shall continue in agricultural use as defined in Section 2 of the Deed of Easement.

- e. (Right to Farm Language if Exception is Severable)

Grantors, grantor’s heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns or any person to whom title to the Exception Area is transferred as well as the heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns of all such persons are hereby notified and made aware that the Exception Area is adjacent to a parcel (“Premises”) permanently deed restricted under the Agriculture Retention and Development Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq. Such persons taking title to the Exception Area are notified and made aware that agriculture is the accepted and preferred use of the adjacent Premises and that the adjacent Premises shall continue in agricultural use as defined in Section 2 of the Deed of Easement.

14. Grantor may construct any new buildings for agricultural purposes. The construction of any new buildings for residential use, regardless of its purpose, shall be prohibited except as follows:

- i. To provide structures for housing of agricultural labor employed on the Premises but only with the approval of the Grantee and the Committee. If Grantee and the Committee grant approval for the construction of agricultural labor housing, such housing shall not be used as a residence for Grantor, Grantor's spouse, Grantor's parents, Grantor's lineal descendants, adopted or natural, Grantor’s spouse’s parents, Grantor’s spouse’s lineal descendants, adopted or natural; and
- ii. To construct a single family residential building anywhere on the Premises in order to replace any single family residential building in existence at the time of conveyance of this Deed of Easement but only with the approval of the Grantee and Committee.
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_ residual dwelling site opportunity(ies) have been allocated to the Premises pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17, "Residual Dwelling Site Opportunity". The Grantor's request to exercise a residual dwelling site opportunity shall comply with the rules promulgated by the Committee in effect at the time the request is initiated.

In the event a division of the Premises occurs in compliance with deed restriction No. 15 below, the Grantor shall prepare or cause to be prepared a Corrective Deed of Easement reflecting the reallocation of the residual dwelling site opportunities to the respective divided lots. The Corrective Deed shall be recorded with the County Clerk. A copy of the recorded Corrective Deed shall be provided to the Grantee and Committee.

In the event a residual dwelling site opportunity has been approved by the Grantee, the Grantor shall prepare or cause to be prepared a Corrective Deed of Easement at the time of Grantee's approval. The Corrective Deed of Easement shall reflect the reduction of residual dwelling site opportunities allocated to the Premises. The Corrective Deed shall be recorded with the

County Clerk. A copy of the recorded Corrective Deed shall be provided to the Grantee and Committee.

(OR)

- iii. No residual dwelling site opportunities have been allocated pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17. No residential buildings are permitted on the Premises except as provided in this Deed of Easement.

For the purpose of this Deed of Easement:

"Residual dwelling site opportunity" means the potential to construct a residential unit and other appurtenant structures on the Premises in accordance with N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17.

"Residual dwelling site" means the location of the residential unit and other appurtenant structures.

"Residential unit" means the residential building to be used for single family residential housing and its appurtenant uses. The construction and use of the residential unit shall be for agricultural purposes.

"Use for agricultural purposes" as related to the exercise of a residual dwelling site opportunity and the continued use of the residential unit constructed thereto, means at least one person residing in the residential unit shall be regularly engaged in common farmsite activities on the Premises including, but not limited to: production, harvesting, storage, grading, packaging, processing and the wholesale and retail marketing of crops, plants, animals and other related commodities and the use and application of techniques and methods of soil preparation and management, fertilization, weed, disease and pest control, disposal of farm waste, irrigation, drainage, water management and grazing.

15. The land and its buildings which are affected may be sold collectively or individually for continued agricultural use as defined in Section 2 of this Deed of Easement. However, no division of the land shall be permitted without the joint approval in writing of the Grantee and the Committee. In order for the Grantor to receive approval, the Grantee and Committee must find that the division shall be for an agricultural purpose and result in agriculturally viable parcels. Division means any division of the Premises, for any purpose, subsequent to the effective date of this Deed of Easement.

- i. For purposes of this Deed of Easement, "Agriculturally viable parcel" means that each parcel is capable of sustaining a variety of agricultural operations that yield a reasonable economic return under normal conditions, solely from each parcel's agricultural output.

16. In the event of any violation of the terms and conditions of this Deed of Easement, Grantee or the Committee may institute, in the name of the State of New Jersey, any proceedings to enforce these terms and conditions including the institution of suit to enjoin such violations and to require restoration of the Premises to its prior condition. Grantee or the Committee do not waive or forfeit the right to take any other legal action necessary to insure compliance with the terms, conditions, and purpose of this Deed of Easement by a prior failure to act.

17. This Deed of Easement imposes no obligation or restriction on the Grantor's use of the Premises except as specifically set forth in this Deed of Easement.

18. This Deed of Easement is binding upon the Grantor, the Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns and the Grantee; it shall be construed as a restriction running with the land and shall be binding upon any person to whom title to the Premises is transferred as well as upon the heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors, and assigns of all such persons.

19. Throughout this Deed of Easement, the singular shall include the plural, and the masculine shall include the feminine, unless the text indicates otherwise.

20. The word 'Grantor' shall mean any and all persons who lawfully succeed to the rights and responsibilities of the Grantor, including but not limited to the Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns.

21. Wherever in this Deed of Easement any party shall be designated or referred to by name or general reference, such designation shall have the same effect as if the words, 'heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns' have been inserted after each and every designation.

22. Grantor, Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns further transfers and conveys to Grantee all of the nonagricultural development rights and development credits appurtenant to the lands and Premises described herein. Nothing contained herein shall preclude the conveyance or retention of said rights by the Grantee as may be permitted by the laws of the State of New Jersey in the future. In the event that the law permits the conveyance of said development rights, Grantee agrees to reimburse the Committee ( ) percent of the value of the development rights as determined at the time of the subsequent conveyance.

23. That portion of the net proceeds, representing the value of the land only (and not the value of the improvements), of a condemnation award or other disposition of the Premises following termination of this Deed of Easement, as permitted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32, shall be distributed among the Grantor and the Grantee in shares in proportion to the fair market value of their interests in the Premises on the date of execution of this Deed of Easement. For this purpose, the Grantee's allocable share of the proceeds shall be the net proceeds multiplied by a fraction, the numerator of which is the fair market value of the development easement as certified by the Committee at the time of the initial acquisition and the denominator of which is the full fair market value of the unrestricted Premises as certified by the Committee at the time of the initial acquisition, which is identified as ( / ).

Furthermore, the Grantee's proceeds shall be distributed among the Grantee and the Committee in shares in proportion to their respective cost share grants on the date of execution of this Deed of Easement. The Grantee shall use its share of the proceeds in a manner consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32.

24. No historic building or structure located on the Premises may be demolished by the grantor or any other person without the prior approval of the State Agriculture Development Committee. Historic building or structure is a building or structure that, as of the date of this Deed of Easement, has been included in the New Jersey Register of Historic Places established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:1B-15.128 et seq.

The Grantor signs this Deed of Easement as of the date of the top of the first page. If the Grantor is a corporation, this Deed of Easement is signed and attested to by its proper corporate officers, and its corporate seal, if any, is affixed.

\_\_\_\_\_(L.S.)

\_\_\_\_\_(L.S.)

\_\_\_\_\_(Corporate Seal)

Secretary  
(For use by corporations only)

**(INDIVIDUAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT)**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ SS.:

I CERTIFY that on \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ personally came before me and acknowledged under oath, to my satisfaction, this that person (or if more than one, each person):

- (a) is named in and personally signed this DEED OF EASEMENT;
- (b) signed, sealed and delivered this DEED OF EASEMENT as his or her act and deed;
- (c) made this DEED OF EASEMENT for and in consideration of mutual obligations and benefits to each party; and
- (d) the actual and true consideration paid for this instrument is \$\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name and title below signature

**(CORPORATE ACKNOWLEDGMENT)**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ SS.:

I CERTIFY that on \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_, the subscriber

\_\_\_\_\_, personally appeared before me, who, being by me duly sworn on his or her oath, deposes and makes proof to my satisfaction, that he or she is the Secretary of

\_\_\_\_\_, the Corporation named in the within Instrument; that \_\_\_\_\_ is the President of said Corporation; that the execution, as well as the making of this Instrument, has been duly authorized by a proper resolution of the Board of Directors of the said Corporation, that deponent well knows the corporate seal of said Corporation; and that the seal affixed to said Instrument is the proper corporate seal and was thereto affixed and said Instrument signed and delivered by said President as and for the voluntary act and deed of said Corporation, in presence of deponent, who thereupon subscribed his or her name thereto as attesting witness; and that the full and actual consideration paid to purchase a development easement as evidenced by the DEED OF EASEMENT is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and the mutual obligations and benefits contained herein.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, the date aforesaid

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name and title below signature

**(COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD)**

THE UNDERSIGNED, being Chairperson of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Agriculture Development Board, hereby accepts and approves the foregoing restrictions, benefits and covenants.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson  
\_\_\_\_\_ County Agriculture Development Board

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ SS.:

I CERTIFY that on \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ personally came before me and acknowledged under oath, to my satisfaction that this person: (a) is named in and personally signed this DEED OF EASEMENT, (b) signed, sealed and delivered this DEED OF EASEMENT as the Board's act and deed; and (c) is the Chairperson of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Agriculture Development Board.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name and title below signature

**(STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE)**

The State Agriculture Development Committee has approved the purchase of the development easement on the Premises pursuant to the Agriculture Retention and Development Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32, and has authorized a grant of \_\_\_\_\_% of the purchase price of the development easement to \_\_\_\_\_ County in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory Romano, Executive Director  
State Agriculture Development Committee  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ SS.:

I CERTIFY that on \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ personally came before me and acknowledged under oath, to my satisfaction, that this person:

- (a) is named in and personally signed this DEED OF EASEMENT,
- (b) signed, sealed and delivered this DEED OF EASEMENT as the Committee's act and deed, and
- (c) is the Executive Director of the State Agriculture Development Committee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name and title below signature

# Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code

## Chapter 153. Right to Farm

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Blairstown 10-11-2000 by Ord. No. 2000-11. Amendments noted where applicable.]

### GENERAL REFERENCES

Land development — See Ch. 19, § 19-607.

§ 153-1

#### Title.

This chapter may be known and cited as the "Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance."

§ 153-2

#### Intent.

The intent of this chapter is to recognize state law regarding the right to farm, such as the Right to Farm Act (N.J.S.A. 4:1C-1 et seq.), and to assure the continuation and expansion of commercial and home agricultural pursuits by encouraging a positive agricultural business climate and protecting the farmer against inappropriate municipal regulations where best management practices are applied and are consistent with relevant federal and state law and nonthreatening to the public health and safety.

§ 153-3

#### Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated.

#### AGRICULTURE

Production for sale of plants and animals useful to man, including but not limited to: forages and sod crops; grains and feed crops; dairy animals and dairy products; livestock, including beef cattle, sheep, swine, horses, ponies, mules or goats, including the breeding, boarding, raising, rehabilitating, training or grazing of any or all of such animals, except that "livestock" shall not include dogs, bees and apiary products; fur animals, trees and forest products (subject to the limitations under N.J.S.A. 54:4-23.3); or when devoted to and meeting the requirements and qualifications for payment and other compensation pursuant to a soil conservation program under an agreement with an agency of the federal government.

#### COMMERCIAL FARM

A. A farm management unit of no less than five acres producing agricultural or horticultural products worth \$2,500 or more annually and satisfying the eligibility criteria for differential property taxation pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964 [N.J.S.A. 54:4-23-1 et seq.]; or

B. A farm management unit less than five acres producing agricultural or horticultural products worth \$50,000 or more annually and otherwise satisfying the eligibility criteria for differential property taxation pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964.

#### FARM MANAGEMENT UNIT

A parcel or parcels of land, whether contiguous or noncontiguous, together with agricultural or horticultural buildings, structures and facilities, producing agricultural or horticultural products and operated as a single enterprise.

§ 153-4

#### Permissible activities under agricultural uses.

A. The right to engage in agriculture, as defined herein, shall be permitted in Blairstown Township as permitted by zoning and other land use regulations and as permitted by state law, and it shall be presumed that such uses and activities, and structures in connection therewith, shall not constitute a public or private nuisance, provided that the operation conforms to agricultural

## **Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code**

management practices recommended by the State Agricultural Development Committee and adopted to the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act [N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq.] or whose specific operation or practice has been determined by Warren County Agricultural Development Board to constitute a generally accepted agricultural operation or practice.

B. The owner and operator of a commercial farm, qualifying under N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9 (of the State Right to Farm Act) may engage in all agricultural activities permitted by N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9.

### **§ 153-5**

#### **Notice of farm use.**

A. The purchaser of any real estate in Blairstown Township in any zoning district where agriculture is a permitted principal use shall be notified of the importance of our farming community and be provided with a copy of this chapter.

B. The following language shall be included in the deed of any newly subdivided lot in the Township, any part of which is located in any zoning district where agriculture is a permitted principal use:

Grantee is hereby given notice that there is, or may in the future be, farm use near the premises described in this deed, from which may emanate noise, odors, dust and fumes associated with agricultural practices permitted under the "Blairstown Township Right-to-Farm Ordinance."

C. The township will take reasonable steps to make it possible for real estate salespersons to provide notification to prospective purchasers of land in this township, using language similar to the deed notification described just above.

### **§ 153-6**

#### **Construal.**

Nothing in this chapter, however, despite any other wording hereof, shall be construed to permit any use of land or structure in any manner contrary to Chapter **19**, Land Development, of the Code of the Township of Blairstown, as amended, or any future zoning ordinance or regulation of this township, or to permit any use of land or structure, or any activity or conduct, which is contrary to any other ordinance or regulation of the township, including those of its Board of Health, or which is contrary to any other local, county, state or federal statute, law or regulation.

# Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code

## Chapter 19. Land Development

### § 19-607. Right to farm.

*Editor's Note: See also Ch. 153, Right to Farm.*

A. Recognition of right. The Township of Blairstown recognizes that the industry of farming is a natural right and that this industry has been the main source of income and occupation since the founding of our republic and state.

B. Where applicable. This right to farm exists throughout the Township of Blairstown where farms are permitted by the provisions of this chapter.

C. Equipment. This right to farm includes all manner and means of physical labor and mechanical equipment now available, including but not limited to irrigation pumps and equipment, aerial and ground seeding and spraying tractors and their attachments, use and application of recognized fertilizers, approved pesticides and approved herbicides.

D. Methods. Farming shall include all recognized methods and types as pertains to the growing of crops and the raising of animals or fowl, throughout the country as a whole.

E. Acceptable practices. The right to farm includes the uses, methods and activities that have been proven effective in the past, that are acceptable in the present and that are considered reasonable and necessary in the industry throughout the country as a whole and which are conducted in accordance with generally accepted agricultural practices.

F. Times. The right to farm and the acceptable practices theretobefore set forth may have to occur on holidays, Sundays, weekends, at night as well as during normal working hours, and such working conditions are recognized as incident to farming.

G. Noise, odors, dust and fumes. It is also recognized that reasonably incident to farming is the creation of noise, odors, dust and fumes, and it is recognized that these incidents of farming are specifically permitted as a part of the right to farm.

H. Inconveniences to public. It is specifically recognized that any inconveniences to the public caused by the above mentioned incidents to farming is more than compensated by the inherent benefits derived from farming, benefits to the public at large by providing wholesome and fresh foods and farm products, to the community as a source of legitimate income and employment, to future generations by the preservation of open space and the benefits to be derived therefrom.

## ARTICLE 19-400. Zoning District Regulations

### § 19-402. Exceptions to zoning district regulations.

B. Christmas tree sales. The annual sale of Christmas trees is permitted in all zoning districts between November 15 and December 25, inclusive, provided that all cut trees and other perishables shall be removed and the premises cleared no later than January 16, and provided further that these time restrictions shall not apply to farms which shall be permitted to sell Christmas trees throughout the year.

C. Height limits.

(2) Silos, barns and similar structures on farms are not bound by the height restrictions of this chapter.

### § 19-405. R-5 Single-Family Residential.

**[Amended 8-9-2000 by Ord. No. 2000-06; 4-4-2001 by Ord. No. 2001-03]**

A. Principal permitted uses on the land and in buildings.

## **Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code**

(2) Farms, provided that the farm use itself shall have a minimum lot size of five (5) acres and provided further that a farm may have a single-family detached dwelling situated thereon only if the farm is at least six (6) acres in size. Moreover, any single-family dwelling situated on a farm shall be subject to the requirements specified for detached dwellings within the R-5 Single-Family Residential Zoning District, except that the minimum lot size requirement of five (5) acres shall not apply to detached dwellings situated on farms.

### **B. Accessory uses permitted.**

(4) Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and packing, grading and storage buildings for produce raised on the premises; fences; buildings for the keeping of permitted poultry and livestock; and garages for the keeping and maintaining of trucks and other equipment used in farm operations are permitted when accessory to a permitted farm use, provided that any building which is accessory to a farm shall be set back from any property line at least twice the distance of the height of the accessory building or one hundred feet (100'), whichever is less.

(5) Farm stands in accordance with the definition of "farm stand" in § 19-203 of this chapter, provided that there shall be only one (1) stand per farm, provided that the stand is set back a minimum of fifty feet (50') from any street line and property line, and provided that minor site plan approval is obtained from the Planning Board.

(13) Housing for seasonal agricultural workers as conditional uses under N.J.S.A. 40:55D-67. (See § 19-601 for conditions and standards.)

### **E. Off-street parking**

(5) Parking of large vehicles on residential properties: In addition to other smaller vehicles, including both commercial and noncommercial vehicles, which are owned and/or used by a resident on the premises and which may be parked outside on a residential property, up to one (1) large vehicle may be regularly parked outdoors on any residential lot, except and in accordance with the following:

- (a) These provisions shall not be deemed to limit the number or size of vehicles used on a farm or to limit construction equipment which is used on a property for construction

### **§ 19-406. VR Village Residential.**

#### **A. Principal permitted uses on the land and in buildings.**

(3) Farms, provided that the farm use itself shall have a minimum lot size of five (5) acre and provided further that a farm may have a single-family detached dwelling situated thereon only if the farm is at least six (6) acres in size. Moreover, any single-family dwelling situated on a farm shall be subject to the requirements specified for detached dwellings within the VR Village Residential Zoning District, except that the minimum lot size requirements specified for the VR Zoning District shall not apply to detached dwellings situated on farms.

#### **B. Accessory uses permitted.**

(4) Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and packing, grading and storage buildings for produce raised on the premises; fences; buildings for the keeping of permitted poultry and livestock; and garages for the keeping and maintaining of trucks and other equipment used in farm operations are permitted when accessory to a permitted farm use, provided that any building which is accessory to a farm shall be set back from any property

## Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code

line at least twice the distance of the height of the accessory building or one hundred feet (100'), whichever is less.

(5) Farm stands in accordance with the definition of "farm stand" in § 19-203 of this chapter, provided that there shall be only one (1) stand per farm, provided that the stand is set back a minimum of fifty feet (50') from any street line and property line, and provided that minor site plan approval is obtained from the Planning Board.

9) Residential agriculture. (See § 19-203 for definition.)

(13) Housing for seasonal agricultural workers as conditional uses under N.J.S.A. 40:55D-67. (See § 19-601 for conditions and standards.)

### § 19-407. VN Village Neighborhood.

B. Accessory uses permitted.

(7) Residential agriculture. (See § 19-203 for definition).

### § 19-408. HC Highway Commercial.

A. Principal permitted uses on the land and in buildings in the HC-1 Zoning District.

15) Farms.

### § 19-409. PRO Professional and Research Office.

A. Principal permitted uses on the land and in buildings.

#### **[Amended 4-4-2001 by Ord. No. 2001-03; 10-19-2005 by Ord. No. 2005-16]**

(1) Farms, provided that the farm use itself shall have a minimum lot size of five (5) acres and provided further that a farm may have a single-family detached dwelling situated thereon only if the farm is at least six (6) acres in size. Moreover, any single-family dwelling situated on a farm shall be subject to the requirements specified for detached dwellings within the R-5 Single-Family Residential Zoning District, except that the minimum lot size requirement of five (5) acres shall not apply to detached dwellings situated on farms.

B. Accessory uses permitted.

(9) Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and packing, grading and storage buildings for produce raised on the premises; fences; buildings for the keeping of permitted poultry and livestock; and garages for the keeping and maintaining of trucks and other equipment used in farm operations are permitted when accessory to a permitted farm use, provided that any building which is accessory to a farm shall be set back from any property line at least twice the distance of the height of the accessory building or one hundred feet (100'), whichever is less.

## **Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code**

### **§ 19-410. GCI General Commercial and Industrial.**

A. Principal permitted uses on the land and in buildings.

**[Amended 12-30-1998 by Ord. No. 98-18; 4-4-2001 by Ord. No. 2001-03; 10-19-2005 by Ord. No. 2005-16]**

(1) Farms, provided that the farm use itself shall have a minimum lot size of five (5) acres and provided further that a farm may have a single-family detached dwelling situated thereon only if the farm is at least six (6) acres in size. Moreover, any single-family dwelling situated on a farm shall be subject to the requirements specified for detached dwellings within the R-5 Single-Family Residential Zoning District, except that the minimum lot size requirement of five (5) acres shall not apply to detached dwellings situated on farms.

(2) Agricultural support uses, including, but not limited to, feed and supply stores. Slaughterhouses, feed lots, and similar uses are specifically prohibited.

B. Accessory uses permitted.

(10) Structures incidental to a farm such as barns and packing, grading and storage buildings for produce raised on the premises; fences; buildings for the keeping of permitted poultry and livestock; and garages for the keeping and maintaining of trucks and other equipment used in farm operations are permitted when accessory to a permitted farm use, provided that any building which is accessory to a farm shall be set back from any property line at least twice the distance of the height of the accessory building or one hundred feet (100'), whichever is less.

### **§ 19-411. CC Community Commercial.**

**[Added 10-19-2005 by Ord. No. 2005-16]**

A. Principal permitted uses on the land and buildings.

(13) Farms as conditional uses under N.J.S.A. 40:55D-67. (See § 19-601 for conditions and standards.)

### **19-505. Fences and walls.**

These provisions specifically do not apply to farms, public purpose uses, and permitted public and private recreation areas within the Township of Blairstown [farm fences shall not require any permits, are exempt from height requirements]

### **19-516. Signs.**

A. General prohibitions.

(2) No billboards shall be erected or replaced, except that farms shall be permitted to erect unlighted wood signs off site from the farm to advertise the sale of seasonal agricultural products grown on the farm, provided that each such sign shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet in area;

# Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code

## § 19-601. Conditional uses.

I. Housing for seasonal agricultural workers. Housing for seasonal agricultural workers is permitted as a conditional accessory use on farms within the R-5 Single-Family Residential District in accordance with the following conditions and standards:

### **[Amended 4-4-2001 by Ord. No. 2001-03]**

(1) For the purposes of this chapter, and corresponding to the definition of "migrant agricultural worker" under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act of 1983, a "seasonal agricultural worker" means an individual who is employed in agricultural employment of a seasonal or other temporary nature, and who is required to be absent overnight from his or her permanent place of residence.

(2) The buildings housing seasonal agricultural workers shall be located only on farms at least seven (7) acres in size which meet the requirements of the New Jersey Farmland Assessment Law, Editor's Note: See N.J.S.A. 54:4-23.1 et seq. and the workers shall be for the farmer's own use only.

(3) The buildings housing seasonal agricultural workers shall be designed for temporary occupancy for the number of workers involved.

(a) The buildings may include dormitory space with common living facilities and should include heating for the working season only; and

(b) The buildings should include furnishings and equipment for temporary, rather than year-round use.

(4) The applicant must indicate to the Board's satisfaction how the number of workers to be housed relates to his/her farming operation and how the proposed living facilities will be utilized.

(5) After the initial occupancy of the building(s) housing the seasonal agricultural workers, the farmer shall report to the Township Zoning Officer each time a seasonal occupancy begins and each time it ends.

(6) Housing for seasonal agricultural workers shall not include housing regularly provided on a commercial basis to the general public, or housing which is provided to any seasonal worker which is of the same character and which is provided on the same or comparable terms as otherwise provided to the general public.

(7) Buildings housing seasonal agricultural workers shall meet all the bulk and setback requirements required for single-family detached dwellings in the R-5 Zoning District.

(8) Paved off-street parking facilities are not required for seasonal agricultural workers, but appropriate driveway and stable earth or gravel for parking facilities shall be provided for the worker's automobiles.

(9) The standards for the housing sites, including water supply; excreta and liquid waste disposal; housing; screening; heating; toilets; bathing; laundry, handwashing, cooking and

## Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code

eating facilities; garbage and other refuse disposal; insect and rodent control; sleeping facilities; and fire, safety and first aid all shall be as specified in Subpart E, Housing for Agricultural Workers, published by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 20 CFR Part 654, dated March 24, 1980, as may be amended from time to time.

### § 19-611. Solar energy systems.

#### **[Added 5-14-2008 by Ord. No. 2008-02]**

A. The purpose of this section is to provide an opportunity for solar energy systems to be a permitted conditional use in certain residential and nonresidential zones while substantially minimizing the adverse visual impact that solar energy systems may create on abutting properties.

B. Definitions. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

#### **SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM**

A system which converts solar energy to usable thermal, mechanical, or electrical energy to meet all or a significant portion of a dwelling or nonresidential energy requirements. The primary application of a solar energy system is the conversion of solar radiation to thermal energy to meet all or a part of a dwelling or nonresidential heating and hot water requirements. The conversion may be accomplished by solar radiation absorbed by a transport medium and distributed to a point of use. An auxiliary energy system may be employed to supplement the output provided by the solar energy system and to provide for the total energy demand should the solar energy system become inoperable.

C. Siting standards.

3) Agricultural.

(a) Roof line. Installation of solar energy collection systems shall be permitted on the roof lines of single-family residential units in the same manner as contained in Subsection C(1)(a) hereinbefore.

(b) Ground.

[1] Installation of solar energy collection systems on agricultural structures shall be permitted in a manner consistent with single-family residential units on agricultural lots as indicated in Subsection C3(a) above.

[2] Installation of solar energy collection systems on agricultural lots other than on farm structures shall be permitted. All installation shall be subject to an appropriate natural buffer that will block the view of said system from abutting property owners. All such installations shall be subject to the issuance of a zoning permit.

(c) Architectural considerations. Exposed hardware, frames, supporting structures, and piping shall be finished in nonreflective surfaces and consistent with the color scheme of the principal single-family residence or the nearest abutting agricultural building.

# Blairstown Township Right to Farm Ordinance and Other Agriculture-Related Code

## § 19-203. Definitions and descriptions.

### **FARM STAND**

An accessory building to a farm located on the farm property for the purpose of selling the products of the subject farm and which is open for business not more than nine (9) months of every year. If goods or produce are offered for sale other than the products of the subject farm, not more than fifty percent (50%) of the areas of the farm stand or an area equivalent to the space within the farm stand used for the sale of the products from the subject farm, whichever is less, shall be used for the sale of such other goods or produce.

### **RESIDENTIAL AGRICULTURE**

The growing and harvesting of plant life and the keeping of nonhousehold animals for the enjoyment of the residents on the property and not for commercial purposes, provided the following:

- A. A lot of at least two (2) acres in size is required for the keeping of one (1) nonhousehold animal;
- B. One (1) additional acre of land is required for each of up to three (3) additional nonhousehold animals; and
- C. One-half (1/2) additional acre of land is required for each additional nonhousehold animal thereafter.

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
1402	11	63 ROUTE 94	3B	BLAIR ACADEMY	89.71
301	8.02	107 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	BAUER, FREDERICK J	11.86
901	3.01	10 MAPLE LANE	3B	CIANCIA, JEREMIAH J & YOLANDA	31.31
701	7	42 MT VERNON ROAD	3B	KLOCKNER, DANIEL III & NANCY C	34.56
2003	19	10 HILLVIEW LANE	3B	HILL, NORMA	6.25
2003	13.02	116 HOPE ROAD	3B	KENT, JEAN	4.51
1301	1	68 MILLBROOK ROAD	3B	ENG, ROY Y & MARY J	13.67
702	15.04	3 GLIDER VIEW WAY	3A	OCCHIUZZO, JOHN III AND JANINE	5.90
702	24.19	11 FARM VALLEY LANE	3B	CHIARELLO, GENE P	8.63
202	5	63 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	ASCOLESE, SANTINI & BOWERS, P.A.	63.59
101	4.05	94 GAISLER ROAD	3B	PROVOST, RONALD G & DIANA	8.25
1802	7.01	23 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	LONG, SAMANTHA	7.08
506	3.01	8 VAIL ROAD	3B	ACKERMAN, MARTIN & BARBARA	6.28
2204	2.01	112 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	GRAMBERG, EDWARD	4.57
1802	13.05	72 BELCHER ROAD	3B	CARISTI, JOSEPH & ANNE	11.55
1701	2.07	30 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	SHAFFER, KENNETH	20.67
702	15.01	10 BUCHANAN ROAD	3B	RANGE EDWARD A. & GRACE, TRUSTEES	40.66
1701	9.01	81 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	DUKES, PHILLIP	64.72
1701	11.01	21 FRONTAGE ROAD	3B	RUH, ALBERT J.	134.70
2001	1	47 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	JANES, PATRICIA J	14.95
1901	33.02	53 BELCHER ROAD	3B	SMITH EDWARD R & BARBARA C	9.81
1705	1	1 DEAN ROAD	3B	LOCUST VALLEY C/O JOHN DENEUFVILLE	101.17
2003	9.04	20 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	PLUT, PETER	6.82
1001	11	9 JACKSONBURG ROAD	3B	READ ELIZABETH & HELEN R GLADD	9.05
901	2.03	2 CHERRY LANE	3B	GRANITO, FRANK & HELENA	6.92
103	6	67 GAISLER ROAD	3B	CASTONGUAY, JOHN & AGNES	14.67
2204	2.02	84 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	GRAMBERG, MICHAEL	6.76
2201	1.05	9 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	RILEY, LARRY & LORI ANNE	8.45
202	5.06	75 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	ULTIMO, ADOLFO & JILL K	31.43
2003	23	EDGE HILL ROAD	3B	THE LAST FRONTIER, INC	23.13
1803	11	61 DRY ROAD	3B	QUIRK, MICHAEL & JENGO, LUCI	17.80
1512	20.01	15 LAMBERT ROAD	3B	MOTT, HOWARD & IRENE	0.86
601	17.01	20 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	SCHARRER, KATHRYN MRS. ESTATE	63.27
102	7	78 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	CAMERLINGO, WILLIAM	7.76
2002	25.02	39B HOPE ROAD	3B	FINNERTY, WENDY H	5.77
2101	4.01	127 ROUTE 521	3B	WOHLERS, FRANK C & JANET	59.32

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
803	11.03	51 MAPLE LANE	3B	WALTHER, DEREK Z	10.05
101	3.07	6 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC,JONES,B.	4.46
401	9	17 SMITH ROAD	3B	DELL'ORTO VINCENT J.& CLAIRE C	19.06
401	10	5 SMITH ROAD	3B	STONE FREDERICK & MICHELLE W	15.38
201	4.27	5 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES,B.	1.06
801	5	31 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	VANDERSTERRE DIRK J & ADA	30.98
1803	10	41 DRY ROAD	3B	ARDIA, VINCENT H & ANITA D	36.54
902	4.01	40 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	CULLEN, MICHAEL E & LAURA J	4.37
803	9.12	8 CHERRY TREE LANE	3B	BENNETT, DAVID & MARGARET	7.28
1803	3.07	64 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	RACE, CARL S JR & JOYCE	3.02
202	21.14	19 DEER RUN	3B	DENNISON, FRANK & VIRGINIA	5.79
803	11.01	41 MAPLE LANE	3B	WALTHER ERIC	14.17
1601	13.02	148 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	SVENNINGSEN KENNETH & DIANE	20.28
803	7.02	5 MAPLE LANE	3B	CASTELLUCCI, STEVEN P & ROBERT S	5.64
1301	22.01	4 HIGH STREET	3B	KREGER, RICHARD E & MARY E	45.33
102	10	62 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	CAMERLINGO, WILLIAM & SYLVIA ZIKA	26.46
702	23.15	19 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	EGLOFF ROBERT	7.00
601	6.11	1 ARENA LANE	3B	ARENA FRANCIS P & ADELE	5.82
802	2	28 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	GOLDSMITH, BRETT & LORI	3.51
2102	5	2 MUD POND ROAD	3B	WINTER GEORGE B & SHIRLEY	5.37
1901	35.06	12 DRY ROAD	3B	SCHEER, HENRY C III & FLORENCE C	2.96
501	1	47 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	MCCONNELL, ELEANOR R.	11.14
1802	7.08	5 HICKORY RIDGE DRIVE	3B	CRUTS, ANNA M.	6.39
2203	3.04	71 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, THOMAS & ELIZABETH	3.24
1701	8.02	67 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	MARSHALL,SUZANNE LEE	39.10
2001	5	10 HOPE ROAD	3B	CASCELLI, PATRICIA K	8.01
1603	5.01	10 SHOTWELL ROAD	3B	SHOTWELL FAMILY PARTNERSHIP L.P.	156.16
2003	9.08	8 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	HARTUNIAN, PAUL	25.35
601	62	98 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	BRINK, JACK	15.62
802	13.02	77 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	COSTANZO, RALPH S & NANCY B	11.38
803	5	46 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MATTHEWS,SUSAN & MCCOLE,FRANCES,TR	50.98
1701	2.01	28 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	SALAS, LORI B CARNOT & CARNOT, GALE	20.03
1803	3.02	81 BELCHER ROAD	3B	RACE DOUGLAS L & VICTORIA B	7.26
101	3.04	8 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES,B.	3.11
1402	23	17 LAMBERT ROAD	3B	MOTT, HOWARD K & IRENE P	6.10
1601	13	154 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	MOWBRAY, MAURA L	77.94

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
2002	25	39 HOPE ROAD	3B	CHOUDHRY, JASON & ANNE	18.30
2002	31	6 ALEXANDER LANE	3B	CASTELLUCCI, ROBERT M & ARLENE	8.45
2204	2.03	102 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	GRAMBERG, EDWARD	15.40
1802	15	40 BELCHER ROAD	3B	DAVIS, GREGORY C & MELODY P	34.84
402	4.01	9 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	SANTINI, JANE M	28.30
2002	8.01	31 MINGLE ROAD	3B	SCOCOZZA, JOHN A	19.60
2203	3.06	69 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, THOMAS & ELIZABETH	3.88
201	2	17 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM, INC C/O JONES, B.	63.53
1803	4.01	38 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	HAWKSWELL, GLENN B & GEERTJE	8.31
1602	11.06	10 CHEROKEE TRAIL	3B	ESPOSITO HENRY P & JOAN F	5.59
906	9.01	18 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	STIRES, ROBERT M	6.74
1601	11	15 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	LABAN WILLIAM & SUSAN	23.80
202	3.01	57 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	DUKIN, ROBERT M & JULIA A	23.56
2101	9.01	120 CAMP WASIGAN ROAD	3B	MIDKIFF, ALAN H	0.19
802	3	FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	GOLDSMITH, BRETT & LORI	7.19
103	1.08	31 GAISLER ROAD	3B	FORTENBAUGH MICHAEL	24.25
601	54	69A MT VERNON ROAD	3B	RIGGS, BARBARA K	49.06
1402	21.01	7 ADAMS ROAD	3B	MARING, H. EST, J. & M. C/O MARING, F.	19.01
2003	13.03	2 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	KENT, JOHN & SUSAN	7.10
401	24	24 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	BAUDER, STEPHEN H & CAROL A	34.59
202	21.06	3 DEER RUN	3B	OCCHIUZZO JOHN JR & MARIELAINE	6.27
501	24.01	20 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	SCHARRER JAMES	12.97
1803	3.04	95 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	RACE CARL S JR & JOYCE E	8.85
1701	2.09	6 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	HOUSTON, JOSEPH G & RUTH A	16.64
601	11.02	12 ELM ROAD	3B	WYEROSKI, GLENN G & JANIS A	23.99
1901	30.01	37 BELCHER RD	3B	JOEST GEORGE & LAUREEN	18.42
401	7.13	5 KEKETAW LANE	3B	GERKHARDT, VIRGINIA	6.38
701	5	34 MT VERNON ROAD	3B	POWESKA, BARBARA	4.19
301	13	87 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	KIRCHGESSNER, BRIAN	22.89
801	3.02	37 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	KISE, WILLIAM A & SHARON	9.20
1803	9	17 DRY ROAD	3B	DEBLOCK, SIDNEY & PHEBE	54.46
901	1	56 MAPLE LANE	3B	BURKE, JOHN J & MARIA A	13.69
902	3	52-A COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	HANDEL, MARJORIE M. ET AL	89.09
401	23	WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	STITES GEO. C/O GM HOLDING CORP	9.51
1901	25	35 BELCHER ROAD	3B	JOEST, GEORGE H JR & LAUREEN M	15.53
1512	20.02	3 NOE ROAD	3B	MOTT, HOWARD & IRENE	1.34

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
904	8	110 RT 94	3B	KOSTENBADER, MARGARET	4.11
1901	31.02	41 BELCHER ROAD	3B	JOEST CHRISTIAN M & DIANE C	25.98
501	30.01	41 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	MCCONNELL, ROBERT & ANNETTE	6.37
501	30	39 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	MCCONNELL,ELEANOR R.	113.23
601	49.02	47 MT VERNON ROAD	3B	MANNEY, MARTIN & LAURA	25.76
701	5.02	MT VERNON ROAD	3B	POWESKA, FRANK & BARBARA	25.83
1802	4	173 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	CHRISTIAN, MARILYN & BRICE	43.42
1901	32	41 BELCHER ROAD;REAR	3B	JOEST, CHRISTIAN M & DIANE C	3.93
601	14.09	DOGWOOD ROAD	3B	COOK FRANK H. & SHARON A.	13.05
1503	8.15	54 SAND HILL ROAD	3B	MESSINA, JOSEPH & ANGELA	5.79
401	3	71 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	GERKHARDT, DENNIS E & CYNTHIA	11.21
402	11	42 FROG POND ROAD	3B	MANGINE,JAMES, CHERLYL, & MARY	28.23
401	7.09	16 SMITH ROAD	3B	GERKHARDT, DENNIS & MICHELLE LANDIS	4.27
101	5.01	1 LAUREL WOODS DRIVE	3B	LIGHTCAP, RICHARD JR & KRISTIANA	6.02
601	11	10 ELM ROAD	3B	JANN,ERIC & PATRICIA CUNEO	11.68
1402	15	107 ROUTE 94	3B	BASILE, CHARLES & CYNTHIA	70.22
402	4.13	7 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	SANTINI, DOMINICK C. & JANE M.	3.23
401	7	2 KEKETAW LANE	3B	GERKHARDT, DENNIS & LANDIS,MICHELLE	10.78
2203	7.12	55 HELLER HILL ROAD	3B	ROSZKOWSKI, JOSEPH & MARY	8.19
601	29	MT VERNON ROAD	3B	THEAS CORP C/O DR SHU YUAN HSIEH	93.78
2003	9.01	12 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	CULLEN, MICHAEL E & LAURA J	40.70
702	2	FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	KENNEDY, JOHN & PAT	18.52
601	29.06	19 MT VERNON ROAD	3B	PERRONE ANGELO & CAROL	11.76
901	2.21	3 CHERRY LANE	3B	WILLIAMS JAMES J. & GAIL A.	5.99
401	31	SMITH ROAD ABANDONED	3B	KNOWLTON ROD&GUN CLUB C/O LEWIS BUA	61.49
401	7.11	20 SMITH ROAD	3B	O'DOWD, JOHN & DOREEN	7.99
1704	2.02	DEAN ROAD	3B	ROGERS, RICHARD D JR	0.44
1704	2.01	DEAN ROAD	3B	ROGERS, RICHARD D JR	0.49
401	28	OLD SMITH ROAD	3B	BAIER,GEORGE C III & SUSAN J & JEFF	34.90
1802	4.01	169 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	O'HERN, DANIEL & CATHERINE	5.82
702	6.02	25 AMACKASSIN ROAD	3B	KENNEDY JOHN & PAT	31.12
401	12.02	3 SMITH ROAD	3B	YIU, PETER & IVY	7.72
601	15	32 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3A	LIOTTA, PATRICIA R	12.21
101	9	60 GAISLER ROAD	3B	CHIAPPINI, NANCY LYDIA	4.23
506	10	20 VAIL ROAD	3B	PLEMIC/GLICK, LTD, INC	34.38
1901	34	40 DRY ROAD	3B	ARDIA, VINCENT H & ANITA D	98.17

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
2203	3.01	65 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, GEORGE	11.71
1803	3.03	87 BELCHER ROAD	3B	RACE DOUGLAS L & VICTORIA LEE	9.54
2101	1.01	119 HOPE ROAD	3B	WASEK, ALEXANDER & GENEVIEVE	16.44
101	5.12	12 LAUREL WOODS DRIVE	3B	CHIAPPINI, NANCY LYDIA	5.17
601	20	4 BIRCH ROAD	3B	DELODZIA, MARK	28.60
904	1.01	21 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	STIRES, ROBERT M.	8.70
702	23	21 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	SULLIVAN MICHAEL J & BARBARA ANN	11.78
1301	7	2 GORDON LANE	3B	KREGER, RICHARD E.	9.08
702	23.05	23 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	MITCHELL, JOHN A. JR. & JOAN H.	25.03
1402	25	52 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	GINTER, WINFRED R & SUZANNE W	47.46
1803	4	32 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	DEBLOCK, SAMUEL & EUGENIA	111.76
1707	10.05	109 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	SMITH, ROGER & CLAIRE	10.03
402	4.12	35 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	LANGEVIN, MICHELE	9.60
803	9.09	2 CHERRY TREE LANE	3B	KERRIGAN WILLIAM S & BEVERLY A.	6.22
601	7	70 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	ARENA, FRANCES P.	18.23
2102	8	4 MUD POND ROAD	3B	WINTER GEORGE B & SHIRLEY	47.18
501	8	10 BENTON ROAD	3B	MCCONNELL,ELEANOR R.	21.95
501	17.01	6 DEMOCRACY ROAD	3B	BUTRYMOWICZ, JOHN J & ROBIN B	15.36
101	10.21	14 GLEN VIEW LANE	3B	DES CLERS, OLIVIER & SARAH MARY	11.25
101	10.22	2 GLEN VIEW LANE	3B	BLACK, GEORGE H III & HELEN	40.91
2101	1.09	91 HOPE ROAD	3B	ROSADO, RICHARD	7.76
2201	1.04	11 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	RILEY, LARRY & LORI ANNE	3.32
1501	5.01	167 ROUTE 94	3B	JONES,GEORGE W. C/O JONES, B.	1.58
2003	31	7 HELLER HILL ROADD	3B	AGENS, WALTER & DEBORAH	15.71
1301	1.01	60 MILLBROOK ROAD	3B	SERVOS, PETER, & MARIA	10.17
506	9	32 VAIL ROAD	3B	NONNENMACHER LOTHAR J, TRUSTEE	105.67
2001	10	22 HOPE ROAD	3B	CASCELLI, PATRICIA K	1.48
1501	16	2 SIPLEY ROAD	3B	JONES, GAYLE MARJORIE	10.89
902	1	45 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MATTHEWS,SUSAN & MCCOLE,FRANCES,TR	68.64
2203	7.15	75 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	FARA, REBECCA J	15.13
2203	3.03	73 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, THOMAS & ELIZABETH	3.11
902	4	32 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	MURRAY, PAUL & MICHELE M	23.06
104	2	MAINES LANE	3B	RAISCH, CLIFFORD G & MAUREEN T	2.91
2005	2.01	10 EAST CRISMAN ROAD	3B	DIBARTOLO, WILLIAM A & AMY C	1.49
903	1	114 ROUTE 94	3B	KOSTENBADER, MARGARET	3.96
601	49.03	51 MT VERNON ROAD	3B	PETERSEN, SHAUN & CANNATA, MICHELE	6.43

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
1301	1.07	MILLBROOK ROAD	3B	SERVOS,VANE & ELENI REVOCABLE TRUST	10.12
202	23	71 STONY BROOK ROAD	3B	TUNIS, JOHN L	69.39
1901	38.01	14 DRY ROAD	3B	SCHEER, HENRY C 3RD & FLORENCE	65.37
1803	4.09	32 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	CHARNER, HERBERT & JOANN	11.38
202	22	70 STONY BROOK ROAD	3B	ERNST, EUGENE A JR & KATHLEEN S	29.14
1701	16.01	126 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	CROUCH,CONSTANCE M &,THOMAS	15.98
601	26.01	36 CLEVELAND ROAD	3B	TANIS, KENNETH	6.82
2203	1	10 TURPIN ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, MICHAEL A & SUSAN WEBER	23.74
2202	1	118 HELLER HILL ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, STEVE	8.94
2201	6.01	119 HELLER HILL ROAD	3B	WISNOWSKI, JOEL & MARILYN R	10.69
702	15.17	8 BUCHANAN ROAD	3B	RANGE EDWARD A & GRACE,TRUSTEES	8.06
1101	1	24 STILLWATER ROAD	3B	SPRAGUE, JUDITH	5.21
1301	16	10 MILLBROOK ROAD	3B	WHITFORD, DONALD R & JANET H	8.03
1302	1	1 HIGH STREET	3B	KREGER, RICHARD E & MARY E	1.83
801	2.02	OFF FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	SHOTWELL, DAVID J & MARY ANN ROPEK	7.93
1603	2	13 KISHPAUGH ROAD	3B	REIGER JAMES M & BARBARA J	5.18
1803	4.08	38A UNION BRICK ROAD	3A	MACDONALD, DANIEL & PATRICIA	4.50
2003	14.01	3 HILLVIEW LANE	3B	HILL, NORMA	25.59
101	3.03	10 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES,B.	8.05
702	3	FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	READ, ELIZABETH & HELEN R GLADD	39.14
101	3.06	106 GAISLER ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES,B.	2.93
103	1	37A GAISLER ROAD	3B	YOUNG, JOSEPH P & SON, INC.	80.98
506	4.31	9 W. CRISMAN ROAD	3B	FEENEY, PATRICK R & KRISTIN	6.06
101	10.19	1 GLEN VIEW LANE	3B	FARLEY, DEBRA & NARWID, TRACEY	5.99
1801	1.01	133 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	SWANEVELD, DIRK & KATHLEEN L	17.13
2204	2.07	88 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	LOVE,DONALD C & CLARK,TERRY P	9.41
2102	4.01	20 MUD POND ROAD	3B	WINTER GEORGE & JULIE	9.30
1802	1	147 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	BASILE THOMAS J & ELAINA M	37.97
1802	14	50 BELCHER ROAD	3B	KALAFUT JOHN S. JR. & VIRGINIA M	10.43
506	4	243 - 291 ROUTE 94	3B	PEHOWSKI, LINDA M & DAVID	177.58
601	61	79-A MT VERNON ROAD	3B	ANGELOU JAMES R & CAROL E	16.09
202	5.03	67 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	BACKER, DONALD C & ELOISE	13.97
601	29.09	35 MT VERNON ROAD	3A	UZBAY, DENIZ & LISA	10.03
201	4.01	7 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES,B.	11.96
803	4.12	12 ARTIST VIEW LANE	3A	JACOBSON, DONALD R / KLEIN, KAREN K	7.01
803	4.04	MOHICAN ROAD	3B	WALTHER, DEBORAH	76.64

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
103	3.02	61 GAISLER ROAD	3B	CASTONGUAY, JOHN & AGNES	10.34
101	6	78 GAISLER ROAD	3B	CASTONGUAY, JOHN & AGNES	8.24
101	8	66 GAISLER ROAD	3B	CASTONGUAY, JOHN & AGNES	16.38
2101	1.06	105 HOPE ROAD	3B	JABLON, JEFFREY & DIANE	10.33
506	5	20 POLKVILLE ROAD	3B	GOUGER, MARY B	73.14
2002	25.01	39A HOPE ROAD	3B	PICCOLO, MICHAEL D & KAREN S.	6.26
901	2.07	3 HALDIMAN LANE	3B	PETTERSON JUANITA	9.42
202	16	47 STONY BROOK ROAD	3B	MARING,H.EST,& M. C/O MARING,F.	22.43
601	47	41 MT VERNON ROAD	3B	LEMPICKI GENE & CAROL	11.11
1701	9.06	89 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	MERCHAN,JUAN	7.60
1701	10.12	95A MT HERMON ROAD	3B	LOMBARDI, DIANE A	25.55
1701	9.04	91 MT. HERMON ROAD	3B	MACH, RICHARD A & MARY SUSAN	8.55
1802	13	BELCHER ROAD	3B	CARISTI, JOSEPH & ANNE	50.79
202	24.01	73 STONY BROOK ROAD	3B	TUNIS, JOHN L	7.54
201	4.03	13 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES,B.	23.80
101	3.05	104 GAISLER ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES,B.	2.59
1701	13.01	27 FRONTAGE ROAD	3B	BARAN, FRANK & IRENE	156.58
702	15.07	9 GLIDER VIEW WAY	3B	FLYNN, JAMES C	17.01
103	5	47A GAISLER ROAD	3B	YOUNG, JOSEPH P & SON INC	98.87
103	2	51 GAISLER ROAD	3B	CHIAPPINI, NANCY LYDIA	0.34
902	26	29 JACKSONBURG ROAD	3B	JOHNSON, ALAN & JUDY	7.66
803	12.03	2 BIRCH HILL LANE	3B	SATTERTHWAITE, MARION L	9.94
101	3.01	110 GAISLER ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM,INC C/O JONES B.	8.91
102	8	76 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	CAMERLINGO, WILLIAM & SYLVIA ZIKA	5.53
102	1.06	6 SHANNON LANE	3B	VALEO, THOMAS & TRACI A	5.24
2101	1.03	97 HOPE ROAD	3B	ALBANO MARSHA K	7.77
1603	11	40 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	GERBER, HOWARD & KRAHENBUHL, LINDA	9.50
601	11.01	8 ELM ROAD	3B	APGAR, LAWRENCE & GLORIA	5.52
801	7	11 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	JONES, J WESLEY	62.99
802	10	71 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	MATTHEWS,SUSAN & MCCOLE,FRANCES,TR	5.15
801	10	69 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	HANDEL, MARJORIE M. ET AL	8.82
1502	7.01	71 GWINNUP ROAD	3A	DELLECHIAIE, JOANN	2.04
2203	3.02	104 HELLER HILL ROAD	3B	WULSTER, JERSEY	7.45
2203	7.01	77 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	WHITTLE, MICHAEL & DIANE	12.03
103	9	128 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN ROAD FARM ASSOCIATES, LLC	162.88
1708	4.01	102 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	DELORENZO, JAMES A	7.03

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
1703	3.01	94 MT HERMON ROAD	3B	DEROSA, JOHN N & TINEKE C	6.83
2102	2	SILVER LAKE ROAD	3B	DE PIETRO ANN	65.08
103	11	NEWMAN ROAD.	3B	RODMAN, N. B.	35.46
1101	23	35 EAST CRISMAN ROAD	3B	CULLEN, EUGENE M & CAMILLE F	13.63
804	1	12 MAINES LANE	3B	SATTERTHWAITE, MARION L	7.50
103	10	35 MAINES LANE	3B	MULHERN, JAMES A III	26.92
104	1	MAINES LANE	3B	RODMAN, N. B.	0.61
1901	35	20 DRY ROAD	3B	DEBLOCK SIDNEY & PHEBE M	48.14
2002	8.04	24 MINGLE ROAD	3B	ROSKO GABRIEL & SHEILA	36.70
202	1	45 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	MARTKA, WAYNE R	13.00
802	4	OFF FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	COSTANZO, RALPH S. & NANCY B.	1.55
802	11	73 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	COSTANZO RALPH & NANCY	5.36
803	7	7 MAPLE LANE	3B	KOLASA, ALBERT & LINDA J	36.11
601	38.01	3 JONES ROAD	3B	JACKES, RICHARD C & KATHLEEN E	5.89
401	21	8 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	MCCONNELL, GARY A & CAROLINE A	8.19
506	8.07	16A POLKVILLE ROAD	3B	REIGER, JAMES R. & SUSAN TURK	6.36
702	6.01	4 STONY BROOK ROAD	3B	KENNEDY JOHN & PAT	153.03
2204	2.14	86 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	GRAMBERG, MICHAEL	4.03
901	2.25	19 CHERRY LANE	3B	FRANK, DIETER ASSOCIATES	7.89
2203	7.14	63 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, GEORGE	4.19
402	12	ALONG TWP LINE	3B	FLITCROFT DAVID LEE & NATLIE C	9.86
2203	6.15	92 HELLER HILL ROAD	3B	BENNETT GARY & SUSAN	8.92
1501	15	15 VAIL ROAD	3B	CROUCHER, CALVIN R SR, ET ALS	145.84
803	11	47 MAPLE LANE	3B	WALTHER, ERIC & DEREK	10.91
803	11.04	43 MAPLE LANE	3B	WALTHER, DEREK Z	16.20
202	24.02	75 STONY BROOK ROAD	3B	TUNIS JOHN L	9.56
1803	1.01	75 BELCHER ROAD	3B	SAN GIACOMO, JOHN & MICHELLE	8.77
401	13.08	7 BEECHWOOD LANE	3B	EDGERTON, C MARK II & OLGA S	11.88
702	25	63 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	PEACHEY, LYNN M	16.12
1802	17	32 BELCHER ROAD	3B	FORREST, R G & DE POL, P G, TRUSTEES	22.69
1602	16	13 POLKVILLE ROAD	3B	FURFARO, PETER & CATHERINE	7.95
201	4.02	15 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM, INC C/O JONES, B.	7.51
1501	6	167 ROUTE 94	3B	JONES GEORGE W. C/O JONES, B.	6.28
202	5.01	61 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	THORNTON, JEFFREY W & ELIZABETH ANNE	8.20
102	4	86 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	KEHOE, CHRISTOPHER & BRENDA	11.26
201	4.26	3 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM, INC C/O JONES, B.	1.12

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
103	13	MAINES LANE	3B	RODMAN, N. B.	5.01
902	4.02	44 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	3B	CULLEN, MICHAEL E & LAURA J	20.04
601	20.01	6 BIRCH ROAD	3B	DEBENEDETTE, JOHN & GEORGE, URSULA	18.41
202	21.08	7 DEER RUN	3B	MALUCHNIK DOUGLAS & JOANNE	5.25
1701	18.01	UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	CAMPGAW CLUB, L.L.C. C/O SCHWARTZ	116.81
1802	12.03	81 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	YOUNG, GEORGE B & ARLENE S	1.87
1802	12	75 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	YOUNG GEORGE B & ARLENE S	12.76
801	2.03	OFF FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	DAVALOS, JOHN & DIANE	5.94
601	5.01	2 BAUER DRIVE	3B	BAUER, FREDERICK JR	16.40
801	3.01	35 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	KISE WILLIAM A & SHARON	6.97
1901	41	16 HELLER HILL ROAD	3B	SCHEER, HENRY C III & FLORENCE C	46.97
2003	13.04	4 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	KENT, JOHN A & SUSAN	16.68
1803	3.06	66 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	RACE, CARL S & JOYCE	2.98
1802	13.04	82 BELCHER ROAD	3B	RACE, VICTORIA L	6.32
2204	1.01	108 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	RENNSPIES ERICH & ELISABETH	5.56
2002	1	4 CAMP WASIGAN ROAD	3B	HOUGH, J ALLAN & CHERYL M	9.38
1604	2	13 SHOTWELL ROAD	3B	LONIE, RICHARD D.	4.27
103	10.01	33 MAINES LANE	3B	GULICK, KENNETH & ALISON	33.60
2101	1.04	93 HOPE ROAD	3B	NELSON, JOHN A	9.34
901	12.15	8 SKUNKTOWN LANE	3B	FRANK, DIETER & CATHERINE	2.52
401	7.15	9 KEKETAW LANE	3B	GERKHARDT, VIRGINIA	5.91
401	2	22 SMITH ROAD	3B	S.I.M. ROD & GUN C/O S. A. FERRETTI	75.56
301	10.11	1-A MOUNTAIN TERRACE	3B	BAUER, FREDERICK J	9.20
2203	3.07	112 HELLER HILL ROAD	3B	ZUKOSKI, JOHN	10.73
1901	33.09	51 BELCHER ROAD	3B	GRISKONIS, SIMON J.	9.21
2002	41	79-A HOPE ROAD	3B	SCHUCKER, ROBERT S & NOEMI	11.62
1701	17.01	120 UNION BRICK ROAD	3B	WOODCOCK, DONALD S.	25.24
401	26	40 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	SMITH GUN CLUB C/O ODENHEIMER, M.	3.95
902	30	29 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	WONG, VANESSA & BARONE, JOSEPH M	24.05
301	12	85 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	GEUEKE, EDWARD M & ROSEMARY M	27.17
601	49.01	8 BIRCH ROAD	3B	SLATER, ROBERT M, JENNIFER & ROBERT L	118.02
506	8.04	10A POLKVILLE ROAD	3B	NONNENMACHER, LOTHAR J, TRUSTEE	25.25
501	9	10 BENTON ROAD	3B	MCCONNELL ELEANOR R	54.82
1501	20.01	10 LAMBERT ROAD	3B	MOTT, HOWARD K & IRENE P	16.03
1802	5.05	5 HOAGLAND ROAD	3B	LUQUE, GREGORY A & DENISE GRECO	6.37
1803	3.01	93 BELCHER ROAD	3B	RACE CARL S JR & JOYCE	43.84

Block	Lot	Property Location	Class	Owner's Name	Acres
403	2	WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	3B	ARENA, FRANCIS P	1.00
2002	8.03	28 CAMP WASIGAN ROAD	3B	MEEHAN ALFRED	42.29
2103	2.25	2 GAYLE DRIVE	3B	ROBB, DOUGLAS & MELINDA	6.58
2002	8.06	28A CAMP WASIGAN ROAD	3B	MEEHAN, ALFRED	5.39
508	7	49 FROG POND ROAD	3B	KINNEY, MARY M	12.34
2002	41.06	79 HOPE ROAD	3B	SCHUCKER, ROBERT S& NOEMI	11.24
2101	9	MUD POND ROAD	3B	TUDOR, MICHAEL J	10.86
2102	9	SILVER LAKE ROAD	3B	DONOHUE, ELSIE	44.28
2102	7	179 HOPE ROAD	3B	WINTER GEORGE B & SHIRLEY L	1.75
1704	1.01	10 DEAN ROAD	3B	DEAN, IRVIN W & ADONIS A	87.19
401	7.14	7 KEKETAW LANE	3B	TRETOLA, CYNTHIA & GERARD	6.12
1301	22.03	4 - 6 HIGH STREET	3B	KREGER, RICHARD E & MARY E	2.02
402	5	30 FROG POND ROAD	3B	FANELLI FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	36.54
402	5.02	3 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	FANELLI FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	3.54
702	1	23A FOUR CORNERS ROAD	3B	ADLER, DEAN	44.92
401	19	18 FROG POND ROAD	3B	MCCONNELL, ELEANOR R.	21.05
1603	1.03	7 KISHPAUGH ROAD	3B	REIGER, JAMES M. & BARBARA J	17.47
803	12.02	4 BIRCH HILL LANE	3B	SATTERTHWAITE, MARION L	7.59
2101	4.02	141 HOPE ROAD	3B	MAINE, ERIC T	24.98
1601	5	21 SAND HILL ROAD	3B	PFEIFFER FRED & JUDY	32.17
1802	4.03	175 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	HEYMER, PAUL & MARIE	13.74
1402	33.14	84A CEDAR LAKE ROAD	3B	HARRIS, JAMES S & CHERYL A	14.82
901	2.08	4 HALDIMAN LANE	3B	O'TOOLE, JOHN V & SCHAEFER, SHERIE A	9.12
701	5.01	46 MT VERNON ROAD	3B	KLOCKNER, NANCY C	26.24
2003	13	118 HOPE ROAD	3B	JEAN KENT INCOME ONLY TRUST	9.62
101	3.08	4 CAMP MOHICAN ROAD	3B	MOHICAN TREE FARM, INC, JONES.B	3.21
102	13.08	111 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	DOUGLAS, YVONNE P	8.45
101	10.09	18 GLEN VIEW LANE	3B	DES CLERS, OLIVER & SARAH MARY	10.32
905	6.01	24 MOHICAN ROAD	3B	STIRES, ROBERT M	15.84
401	22	20 WISHING WELL ROAD	3B	KOONS, VIRGINIA A	9.70
803	7.03	9 MAPLE LANE	3B	CICCONE, NICK & JOYCE	6.54
506	7				42.41
803	12.10	21 MAINES LANE	3B	SATTERTHWAITE, MARION L	4.06
702	24.20	10 FARM VALLEY LANE	3B	CHIARELLO GENE	14.02
1901	33.10	49 BELCHER ROAD	3B	GRISKONIS, SIMON J.	3.16
803	10.10	12 BINGHAM LANE	3B	ZDRODOWSKI, PAUL & DIANE	17.24

<b>Block</b>	<b>Lot</b>	<b>Property Location</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Owner's Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>
601	6.10	2 ARENA LANE	3B	ARENA, FRANCIS P. & ADELE	5.06
101	10.20	11 GLEN VIEW LANE	3B	DES CLERS, OLIVIER & SARAH MARY	5.47
2103	2.30	5 GAYLE DRIVE	3B	SARTORI, JOHN J	4.90
				<b>Total:</b>	<b>8,026.87</b>

## Township of Blirstown

## Targeted Farms

Block	Lot	Property Location	Owner's Name	Acres	Tillable Acres	Tillable Percent	Project Area	Prime Soil Acres	Statewide Soil Acres	Unique Soil Acres
1001	11	9 JACKSONBURG ROAD	READ ELIZABETH & HELEN R GLADD	9.05	5.54	61.17	North	2.94	-	-
1301	1.07	MILLBROOK ROAD	SERVOS,VANE & ELENI REVOCABLE TRUST	10.12	5.55	54.80	North	2.04	-	-
1301	1	68 MILLBROOK ROAD	ENG, ROY Y & MARY J	13.67	9.68	70.86	North	9.09	-	-
1402	15	107 ROUTE 94	BASILE, CHARLES & CYNTHIA	70.22	25.33	36.08	Central	0.82	19.95	-
1402	21.01	7 ADAMS ROAD	MARING,H.EST,J. & M.C/O MARING,F.	19.01	14.82	77.95	Central	7.29	-	-
1402	25	52 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	GINTER, WINFRED R & SUZANNE W	47.46	31.11	65.55	Central	14.26	-	-
1501	15	15 VAIL ROAD	CROUCHER, CALVIN R SR, ET ALS	145.84	107.14	73.47	Central	69.28	-	-
1501	16	2 SIPLEY ROAD	JONES, GAYLE MARJORIE	10.89	7.31	67.16	Central	-	0.15	-
1501	20.01	10 LAMBERT ROAD	MOTT, HOWARD K & IRENE P	16.03	8.80	54.89	Central	11.10	-	-
1512	20.01	15 LAMBERT ROAD	MOTT, HOWARD & IRENE	0.86	0.80	94.00	Central	0.86	-	-
1603	11	40 MT HERMON ROAD	GERBER, HOWARD & KRAHENBUHL, LINDA	9.50	6.26	65.95	South	-	-	-
1603	5.01	10 SHOTWELL ROAD	SHOTWELL FAMILY PARTNERSHIP L.P.	156.16	122.03	78.14	South	-	-	-
1604	2	13 SHOTWELL ROAD	LONIE, RICHARD D.	4.27	3.64	85.35	South	-	-	-
1701	13.01	27 FRONTAGE ROAD	BARAN, FRANK & IRENE	156.58	80.55	51.44	South	-	-	-
1701	18.01	UNION BRICK ROAD	CAMPGAW CLUB, L.L.C. C/O SCHWARTZ	116.81	40.43	34.61	South	-	-	7.53
1701	2.01	28 HOAGLAND ROAD	SALAS, LORI B CARNOT & CARNOT, GALE	20.03	12.91	64.44	South	-	-	-
1701	2.09	6 HOAGLAND ROAD	HOUSTON, JOSEPH G & RUTH A	16.64	10.46	62.84	South	-	-	-
1701	9.06	89 MT HERMON ROAD	MERCHAN,JUAN	7.60	6.53	85.89	South	-	-	-
1704	1.01	10 DEAN ROAD	DEAN, IRVIN W & ADONIS A	87.19	63.65	72.99	South	-	-	-
1705	1	1 DEAN ROAD	LOCUST VALLEY C/O JOHN DENEUFVILLE	101.17	40.03	39.57	South	-	-	-
1707	10.05	109 MT HERMON ROAD	SMITH, ROGER & CLAIRE	10.03	6.88	68.57	South	-	-	-
1802	12.03	81 HOAGLAND ROAD	YOUNG, GEORGE B & ARLENE S	1.87	1.87	99.97	South	-	-	-
1802	12	75 HOAGLAND ROAD	YOUNG GEORGE B & ARLENE S	12.76	10.71	83.92	South	-	-	-
1802	14	50 BELCHER ROAD	KALAFUT JOHN S. JR. & VIRGINIA M	10.43	6.10	58.48	South	-	-	-
1802	4.03	175 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	HEYMER, PAUL & MARIE	13.74	7.30	53.14	South	-	-	-
1802	4	173 CEDAR LAKE ROAD	CHRISTIAN, MARILYN & BRICE	43.42	22.55	51.93	South	-	-	-
1803	3.01	93 BELCHER ROAD	RACE CARL S JR & JOYCE	43.84	30.36	69.25	South	-	-	-
1803	3.02	81 BELCHER ROAD	RACE DOUGLAS L & VICTORIA B	7.26	6.71	92.46	South	-	-	-
1803	3.03	87 BELCHER ROAD	RACE DOUGLAS L & VICTORIA LEE	9.54	8.66	90.73	South	-	-	-
1803	3.04	95 HOAGLAND ROAD	RACE CARL S JR & JOYCE E	8.85	8.71	98.42	South	-	-	-
1803	3.06	66 UNION BRICK ROAD	RACE, CARL S & JOYCE	2.98	2.98	100.00	South	-	-	-
1803	3.07	64 UNION BRICK ROAD	RACE, CARL S JR & JOYCE	3.02	2.92	96.67	South	-	-	-
1901	33.09	51 BELCHER ROAD	GRISKONIS, SIMON J.	9.21	8.59	93.20	South	-	-	-
1901	34	40 DRY ROAD	ARDIA, VINCENT H & ANITA D	98.17	35.40	36.06	South	-	-	-
1901	38.01	14 DRY ROAD	SCHEER, HENRY C 3RD & FLORENCE	65.37	34.59	52.91	South	-	-	-
1901	41	16 HELLER HILL ROAD	SCHEER, HENRY C III & FLORENCE C	46.97	42.66	90.84	Central	-	-	-
2002	8.06	28A CAMP WASIGAN ROAD	MEEHAN, ALFRED	5.39	4.26	78.99	Central	-	-	-
2003	13.02	116 HOPE ROAD	KENT, JEAN	4.51	3.55	78.78	South	-	-	-
2003	13	118 HOPE ROAD	JEAN KENT INCOME ONLY TRUST	9.62	9.58	99.54	South	-	-	-
2003	9.01	12 UNION BRICK ROAD	CULLEN, MICHAEL E & LAURA J	40.70	25.47	62.58	South	-	-	2.29
2003	9.04	20 UNION BRICK ROAD	PLUT, PETER	6.82	5.67	83.20	South	-	-	-
2101	1.01	119 HOPE ROAD	WASEK, ALEXANDER & GENEVIEVE	16.44	13.07	79.47	South	-	-	-
2101	4.01	127 ROUTE 521	WOHLERS, FRANK C & JANET	59.32	27.29	46.00	South	-	-	-

Township of Blirstown

Targeted Farms

Block	Lot	Property Location	Owner's Name	Acres	Tillable Acres	Tillable Percent	Project Area	Prime Soil Acres	Statewide Soil Acres	Unique Soil Acres
2101	9.01	120 CAMP WASIGAN ROAD	MIDKIFF, ALAN H	0.19	0.19	100.00	South	-	-	-
2101	9	MUD POND ROAD	TUDOR, MICHAEL J	10.86	7.02	64.64	South	-	-	-
2102	8	4 MUD POND ROAD	WINTER GEORGE B & SHIRLEY	47.18	31.83	67.46	South	-	-	-
2202	1	118 HELLER HILL ROAD	ZUKOSKI, STEVE	8.94	8.30	92.85	South	2.18	-	-
2203	1	10 TURPIN ROAD	ZUKOSKI, MICHAEL A & SUSAN WEBER	23.74	16.80	70.77	South	-	-	-
2203	3.01	65 UNION BRICK ROAD	ZUKOSKI, GEORGE	11.71	10.02	85.58	South	-	-	-
2203	3.03	73 UNION BRICK ROAD	ZUKOSKI, THOMAS & ELIZABETH	3.11	2.96	95.09	South	-	-	-
2203	3.06	69 UNION BRICK ROAD	ZUKOSKI, THOMAS & ELIZABETH	3.88	3.82	98.42	South	-	-	-
2203	3.07	112 HELLER HILL ROAD	ZUKOSKI, JOHN	10.73	9.02	84.02	South	-	-	-
2203	7.12	55 HELLER HILL ROAD	ROSZKOWSKI, JOSEPH & MARY	8.19	6.03	73.68	South	-	-	-
2203	7.14	63 UNION BRICK ROAD	ZUKOSKI, GEORGE	4.19	3.29	78.46	South	-	-	-
2203	7.15	75 UNION BRICK ROAD	FARA, REBECCA J	15.13	9.57	63.25	South	-	-	-
2204	2.01	112 HOAGLAND ROAD	GRAMBERG, EDWARD	4.57	3.67	80.36	South	-	-	0.05
2204	2.14	86 UNION BRICK ROAD	GRAMBERG, MICHAEL	4.03	3.86	95.89	South	-	-	-
501	24.01	20 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	SCHARRER JAMES	12.97	9.90	76.30	Route 94 North	-	-	-
501	30.01	41 WALNUT VALLEY ROAD	MCCONNELL, ROBERT & ANNETTE	6.37	6.06	95.16	Route 94 North	-	-	-
506	8.04	10A POLKVILLE ROAD	NONNENMACHER, LOTHAR J, TRUSTEE	25.25	22.27	88.20	Central	25.25	-	-
506	9	32 VAIL ROAD	NONNENMACHER LOTHAR J, TRUSTEE	105.67	50.21	47.51	Central	52.72	-	-
601	26.01	36 CLEVELAND ROAD	TANIS, KENNETH	6.82	5.58	81.85	Route 94 North	1.38	-	-
601	29.06	19 MT VERNON ROAD	PERRONE ANGELO & CAROL	11.76	8.69	73.92	Route 94 North	-	11.27	-
702	15.01	10 BUCHANAN ROAD	RANGE EDWARD A. & GRACE, TRUSTEES	40.66	32.85	80.77	Route 94 North	3.42	23.63	-
702	15.17	8 BUCHANAN ROAD	RANGE EDWARD A & GRACE, TRUSTEES	8.06	6.58	81.57	Route 94 North	0.33	7.72	-
702	23.05	23 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	MITCHELL, JOHN A. JR. & JOAN H.	25.03	13.54	54.09	Route 94 North	-	9.01	-
702	23.15	19 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	EGLOFF ROBERT	7.00	5.07	72.32	Route 94 North	-	6.46	-
702	23	21 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	SULLIVAN MICHAEL J & BARBARA ANN	11.78	7.31	62.06	Route 94 North	-	6.11	-
702	25	63 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	PEACHEY, LYNN M	16.12	11.00	68.23	Route 94 North	-	-	-
702	6.02	25 AMACKASSIN ROAD	KENNEDY JOHN & PAT	31.12	23.08	74.19	Route 94 North	-	-	-
801	5	31 FOUR CORNERS ROAD	VANDERSTERRE DIRK J & ADA	30.98	17.37	56.07	Route 94 North	-	-	-
901	1	56 MAPLE LANE	BURKE, JOHN J & MARIA A	13.69	9.52	69.54	North	-	-	-
901	2.07	3 HALDIMAN LANE	PETTERSON JUANITA	9.42	9.12	96.80	North	-	-	-
901	2.08	4 HALDIMAN LANE	O'TOOLE, JOHN V & SCHAEFER, SHERIE A	9.12	5.95	65.26	North	-	-	-
901	3.01	10 MAPLE LANE	CIANCIA, JEREMIAH J & YOLANDA	31.31	26.10	83.36	North	-	-	-
902	4.02	44 COBBLEWOOD ROAD	CULLEN, MICHAEL E & LAURA J	20.04	17.88	89.25	North	-	-	-
903	1	114 ROUTE 94	KOSTENBADER, MARGARET	3.96	3.55	89.74	North	2.89	-	-
906	9.01	18 MOHICAN ROAD	STIRES, ROBERT M	6.74	5.85	86.85	North	5.99	-	-
			total:	2,139.70	1,342.31			211.84	84.30	9.87

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

**RANKING CRITERIA**

**Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Block(s)/ Lot(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Municipality:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Density or Contiguous Properties (maximum of 10 points)**

Add 2 points for the subject farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Add 2 points for each permanently farm indicated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Add 1 point for each 8-Year farm indicated: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Boundaries and Buffers (multiply percentage as indicated)**

Deed Restricted Farmland (permanent) x .20: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Deed Restricted Wildlife Areas x .18: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Streams (perennial) and Wetlands x .18: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cemeteries x .16: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parks (limited public access) x .14: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Military Installations x .14: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Golf Course (public) x .14: \_\_\_\_\_  
 8 year programs/EP Applications x .13: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Highway (limited access) or Railroads x .10: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Farmland (unrestricted) x .06: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Woodlands x .06: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parks (high use) x .05: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Residential Development x .00: N/A  
 Residential (< 5 acres w/o infrastructure) x .00: N/A  
 Commercial x .00: N/A  
 Industrial x .00: N/A  
 Schools x .00: N/A  
**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tillable Acres (multiply percentage as indicated)**

Cropland Harvested x .15: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cropland Pastured x .15: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Permanent Pasture x .02: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Woodlands x .00: N/A  
 Wetlands x .00: N/A  
 Other x .00: N/A  
**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Soils (multiply percentage as indicated)**

Prime x .15: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Statewide x .10: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unique x .125: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Locals x .05: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other x .00: N/A  
**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Imminence of Change or Conversion**

If the premises is in an estate situation add 3 points: \_\_\_\_\_  
 If the owner has filed for bankruptcy add 4 points: \_\_\_\_\_  
 If subdivision approval has been granted add 2 points: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Commitment (maximum of 20 points)**

If any question 2a through 2e is "yes" add 5 points: \_\_\_\_\_

If there is **no** sewer/water indicated add 3 points: \_\_\_\_\_

If preservation is supported by State/local plans add 2 points: \_\_\_\_\_

If there is an active CADB liaison add 1 point: \_\_\_\_\_

If planning board actions support preservation add 1 point: \_\_\_\_\_

If municipal actions support preservation add 1 point: \_\_\_\_\_

If any 8-Year municipal programs exist add 1 point: \_\_\_\_\_

If any easements have been purchased in the town add 1 point: \_\_\_\_\_

If the town has a Right-to-Farm ordinance add 4 points: \_\_\_\_\_

If the RTF ordinance requires builder notification add 1 point: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**County Ranking**

If the property is the County's top ranked farm add 10 points: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**General Applicant Information**

Up to 10 points can be added to the ranking score depending on the net acres to be preserved in comparison to the average size of a farm in the county. The formula for determining point value for the Size Criterion is:

**10 x net acres to be preserved**

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**2 x average farm size in county**

**(73 acres - from the 2002 U.S. Census of Agriculture)**

Points based on above formula: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Exceptions**

If exception sum is more than 10% of farm subtract 1 point: \_\_\_\_\_

If the exception is severable subtract 2 points: \_\_\_\_\_

If the landowner does not agree to restrict the exception to one house, subtract the number of units in excess of the local zoning requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sub Total for this Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount of all Sub Totals:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Ranking**

**Amount of farms submitted in round:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ranking of property based on farms submitted in round:** \_\_\_\_\_