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THE IMPACT OF A SELECTED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
ON AGRICULTURE IN CRANBURY TOWNSHIP

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Prepared for:

Cranbury Land Company

June, 1985

THE IMPACT OF A  
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON AGRICULTURE IN CRANBURY TOWNSHIP

1. Purpose: The purpose of this consultant report has been to develop an opinion, as an expert in farm management and agricultural policy, on the impact of a 137 acre residential development proposed by the Cranbury Land Company (CLC) on agriculture in Cranbury Township. The expertise of the consultant and his ability to render the opinions expressed herein are substantiated in the attached resume.

Professor Hunter returned in 1984 after 27 years on the faculty of Rutgers University. He has a B.Sc. in Agriculture from Rutgers University and a M.Sc. in Agricultural Economics from North Carolina State University. At Rutgers, he conducted educational and research activities in the areas of farm management and agricultural policy as a member of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Marketing. He is knowledgeable about the agriculture of New Jersey and the physical, economic, policy, social and political forces which effect New Jersey's agriculture. He has served on national committees as an agricultural representative and has a broad understanding of national policy issues and their roles in agricultural matters. His ideas have been accepted as recently as 1984 for publication in the United States Senate Committee Report Farm Policy Perspectives: Setting the Stage for 1985 Agricultural Legislation. Professor Hunter served as staff for Governor Cahill's "Blueprint Commission on the Future of New Jersey Agriculture", 1971-73, and on the more recent program which produced the "Grassroots" report. He has conducted numerous research studies which are pertinent to this report.

2. Opinion: It is the opinion of this expert that the transition of the subject 137 acre property from agricultural to residential development would have no perceivable effect or negative impact on the present farming situation in Cranbury Township nor would it have any future impacts. The property, located on the fringe of the agricultural zone and the suggested agricultural development area, would pose no threat to the remaining lands that continue in agriculture.\*

This expert opinion is based on an analysis of the site, and an analysis of existing land uses in and around agricultural uses in Cranbury Township and New Jersey, an historic analysis of agriculture in Cranbury Township and the expert's opinion as to the future of agriculture in Cranbury Township. While, as will be shown below, the future of agriculture currently carried out on the CLC site and in Cranbury Township indicates marginal potential for survival, the impact of the proposed development would have negligible effects on agriculture in Cranbury Township whether or not that local agricultural economy is viewed as having an independent likelihood of success. The fundamental point is that whether or not this 137 acre site remains in agricultural use or is developed, as proposed, for residential purposes, it will have no impact whatsoever on the ability of agriculture to be sustained in Cranbury Township. The two issues (the use of the site and the success of agriculture) are totally unconnected.

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\* In fact, as will be established below, such development may well be an enhancement to the remaining lands continuing in agriculture by providing a market for locally-produced farm products on the lands which will be continued in agricultural uses. This would be enhanced by the developer providing an opportunity for agricultural distribution within or adjacent to the development.

3. The Site: The site in question is in the southern portion of the township bordering on East Windsor.\* The site has frontage on Old Trenton Road and straddles Ancil Davison Road. It is on the southermost fringe of an active agricultural area. It is bordered by a new, luxury, single-family development known as Shadow Oaks on the north along Old Trenton Road and by a recreational club on the southwest just before Old Trenton Road crosses the border into East Windsor Township. All of the vacant property across Old Trenton Road from the site is presently being developed for large-lot, single-family uses. Immediately across the Millstone River, in East Windsor Township, Mercer County, there is extensive office and high-density residential development. The tract, itself, is divided by a intermittent stream which runs southerly into the Millstone River.

The tracts are undeveloped except to the extent the soils are being farmed. The farmlands on the tract are owned by non-farmers and are now rented to local farmers. They are being used for grains, soy beans, and/or potatoes. Not all of the 137 acres is utilized for farming. Approximately 30 to 40 acres are in the streamway and floodplains of the Millstone River and its tributary. The farming that is now taking place on the site represents the traditional and marginal agriculture which will be described later in this report. This type of farming now on the site will remain only so long as there

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\* The consultant reviewed the site and agriculture in Cranbury Township as recently as May of 1985 and has a prior long-term familiarity with agriculture in the area and the State.

is farm equipment to depreciate, an operator not ready to retire, and land available at a nominal rent. It is not the type of agriculture that should be the future for Cranbury Township. Its survival is not a function of competing land uses which are unrelated to farming. The problem with its survival has to do with the history of the agricultural industry itself and the competition within the national agricultural industry which is making production of this type of farming in Cranbury non-competitive.\*

4. The Proposed Development: The proposed development, as previously indicated, can be realized with minimal, if any, impact on the preservation of existing farming throughout Cranbury. The development proposal contains adequate buffers to generally separate the two uses if necessary. The buffering, as will be established below, is similar to and even greater than that which exists between other types of development and agricultural uses in and around Cranbury and throughout the State. If the Shadow Oaks development is adequately buffered from the agricultural area, then so can the CLC development with the same economic results. If Old Trenton Road serves as an adequate buffer between residential development on one side and agricultural use on the other, then so is this development adequately buffered. In fact, the Cranbury Village itself, which contains a substantial number of residential units, has agricultural uses virtually adjacent to non-agricultural and residential uses. This is occurring harmoniously

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\* The future of the extensive agriculture of Cranbury lies either in the large agricultural area in southern New Jersey or, more likely, in the mid-West farming region of the USA.

despite the fact that the Village, in effect, is no longer an agricultural center and is populated predominantly by families which are totally unrelated to agriculture. If one considers the enormous non-residential and residential growth planned by Cranbury for its agricultural area "east" of the Village, similar developments in surrounding municipalities, the impact of the CLC development can be perceived as miniscule, if any impact will occur at all.

It is the opinion of this consultant, as has been established throughout New Jersey, that where extensive agriculture is viable, it can easily exist adjacent to non-agricultural uses so long as adequate measures are provided to buffer the two. As will be discussed below, this is true whether the buffers are roads, rivers or natural open space.

It is also significant that the transition of this property to non-agricultural uses will have no effect on existing farmsteads or farm operations other than the actual utilization of the land, per se, for agricultural purposes. The most critical problem facing farming in this area of New Jersey is a lack of farmers, farm operations and fundamental changes in regional agricultural economics. It makes absolutely no sense to prioritize the preservation of farmland over the preservation of farmsteads and farming operations. Wherever possible, the existing farmstead and farming operations (that is, the infrastructure of the farm operation itself) should be preserved as a priority over the preservation of farmlands where that choice can be

made. When an active farmstead or farm operation is saved for the future, the capital assets in machinery, farm work areas, buildings and shops are saved. To the degree that farmers of Cranbury can adjust to future changes in agriculture, the preservation of active farmsteads will be far more important than saving of land. The farm economy of today in Cranbury can barely pay to rent farmland, cannot pay to buy farmland and certainly cannot reasonably be expected to create new farmsteads and buildings.

5. Past and Present Agriculture in Cranbury Township: Agriculture in Cranbury Township, as is true of most of New Jersey, dates back to colonial origins. The large, attractive farmsteads and villages with fine old homes testify to the productivity and prosperity of the farms of yesteryear. Up through World War II, land abandonment from agriculture, as happened in parts of the State generally, did not occur in Cranbury Township. The fields (level or gently sloping) were not subject to serious erosion. Continual cropping with a sound rotation have not greatly depleted productive capacity. The forces then impacting on farming in Cranbury were, essentially, agricultural. Farming was predominantly "extensive" with white potatoes and wheat the principal products raised, with a lesser emphasis on extensive vegetables and fruits and some production of dairy, poultry and livestock products. Wholesale, as opposed to retail, sales were the usual market target for local farmers.



The national economic change following World War II set in motion forces destined to shape the future for Cranbury's agriculture. Expanding population, better transportation and communication, new agricultural areas, changing consumer tastes, new agricultural technology, labor developments, and changes in social consciousness are some of the changes to which Cranbury and New Jersey have had to adjust.

White potatoes, the mainstay cash crop of Cranbury farmers and which was once regionally dominant, now had to compete with potatoes of a greater consumer acceptance and which were sold through national outlets. The traditional labor force, based principally on southern migrants and local farm laborers, gradually withdrew. Labor costs increased proportionately, as better migrant labor standards were legislated. The local farm labor supply increasingly found better employment in other sections of the regional economy. Competition, cost and changes in the national marketing pattern contributed to the decline of the white potato acreage. Wheat, the partner to potatoes in the crop rotation, experienced similar decline, generally in proportion to the decline in potato acreage. It also suffered economically from competitive forces nationally in grain production.\* Table 1 demonstrates how this decline persisted through the last decade with acreage dedicated to wheat and white potatoes virtually being cut in half.

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\* In terms of the state-wide or national significance or importance of the crops in Cranbury, one must realize that it is of minimal significance and sales in comparison to the wheat belt of the midwest.

Seeking new crop alternatives to potatoes and wheat, most Cranbury farmers turned first to field corn for grain and later, and most recently, to soybeans. These new crops were not raised for on-farm use, as feed to livestock or poultry, but to be sold as cash grains in the marketplace. Far less money can be made on a crop which leaves the farm for use elsewhere. Consequently, profitability has to decline. As farming became less profitable and economical as a business in its own right, older farmers began to sell their land to investors, who were anticipating population growth trends and rising land values. Perhaps the best test of the profitability of Cranbury agriculture is the sale of land to non-farm investors. If farming was profitable, the sale of farm land would not have occurred. Rather, such land would have passed on to a relative or sold to another farmer. Long before actual urbanization pressures were actually experienced in Cranbury, much of the land was being conveyed to non-farmers. Frequently, after a farmer sold, he rented back the farm from the new owner and continued crop farming so long as the rent was cheap and he was not ready to retire.

With the deemphasis of white potatoes and wheat, field crop agriculture, such as cash corn and soybeans, were selected since they fit the farming tradition and viewpoint of Cranbury farmers. They did not choose, in most cases, dairy, fruits and vegetables or livestock. New farmers with these new interests also did not

materialize to take the place of the Cranbury field crop farmer. Labor, climate, land values, cost of entry, market conditions and expectations are some of the reasons no such transition took place. Therefore, we see in Cranbury an old agriculture which is oriented to the wholesale market and which has retrenched but basically not changed. Some established farmers successfully continue in the old way, while others rent back the farm they had sold and continue with field crops and others retire from the business.

The average age of the farm operator has been increasing. In 1974, it was 52 years of age, and in 1984, was 58 years of age, a six-year increase in one decade. Had not 25% of the local farmers left agriculture, today's average farmer age would be in the 60's. This indicates that the Cranbury area is not experiencing a new generation of farmers comparable to what had existed in the past. The future of farming in the area may be more a function of the life-span of the existing farmers than anything else.

A review of farmland assessment acreage over the past ten years is shown in Table 2 for the years 1984 and 1974. It is readily apparent from the Table that little change has taken place in the acreage under farmland assessment in the past ten years, insofar as the acreage available. Cranbury generally has been considered to have had tough zoning from the standpoint of development, and only relatively small parcels in the past have tended to go into non-farm use. As urbanization has hit Cranbury, the farmland assessment act

has made it economically reasonable for non-farmer landowners to rent farmland cheaply as they await reuse for non-farm development. The land could not be purchased for farm purposes because the investment would be uneconomical. While the impact of urbanization may help to hasten the declining of farming in the area, it should be kept in mind that the basic economic problems being experienced by the farmers predated and are essentially unrelated to the process of urbanization.

Another set of farm use data, complementary to the farmland assessment information, is also available. These data are developed annually at Cook College in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Marketing. They are derived from applications for farmer vehicle license plates, which most farm operators use in their business. These data compile the annual acreage used by the farmer on the land that he owns and the land that he rents. The data is rendered by townships and is somewhat unique for this reason. New Jersey is perhaps the only state in the nation that has such data available. Table 1 summarizes selected crops in Cranbury Township from these data over the ten-year period 1974-1984. Although crop plantings will vary each year, these should be a reasonable representation of changes which have taken place over this time span, and it is a trend rather than the absolute acreage differences which are important. The shift to soybeans and corn at the expense of wheat and potatoes may be observed. Also the lesser amount of irrigated acres as a

result of fewer potato acres being irrigated is notable. This lesser acreage of irrigation would also reflect the growing of fewer vegetables which has taken place over this same time period.\*

Ranking the principal crops grown in Cranbury, by the acreage of use, gives a clearer picture of the aggregate farming land use in the Township. Table 3 ranks the acreage by crops and by percent. Soybeans and corn make up 50% of the acreage. These are the crops which are more nearly marginal, low return cash crops, which do not hold much long-range future for an urban area such as New Jersey, particularly when they are grown for cash sales and not part of a dairy or livestock feeding program.

The cash crops such as soybeans and the grains (corn, wheat and barley) are now and have been in trouble nationally, and regionally, as the sole basis for a farming operation. They are most profitable as feed grains used on the farm itself. The profits from them, year in and year out, are, from conversion to a more valuable farm product, such as milk, eggs and meat. But for Cranbury Township farmers, these crops are "exported". As such, they realize a relatively low economic return per acre for local farm operators.

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\* The spinach acreage is interesting, as it represents an extensive vegetable crop, "extensive" in the sense of a low labor requirement. Machine planted, irrigated and machine harvested, it has been able to hold its niche in Cranbury consistently by growers who have worked it out in the marketplace in a manner somewhat similar to the remaining white potato growers.

There is little prospect that these economic facts will change in the future. These extensive agricultural crops will only be farmed in Cranbury so long as land rents are low (among other factors previously mentioned). The marginality of these crops is shown in the data in Table 4. This table indicates the cost per bushel (or break-even cost) with low yields and high yields for soybeans, wheat and corn. The growers with high yields would have just about broken even at the farm price generally experienced, while growers with low yields would have lost substantially. No growers would have made any serious profit. Table 5 shows that the prices of soybeans, wheat and corn have remained generally marginal year after year. It can be seen, however, that in one year soybean prices were up for that one year, and it would appear to be a profitable year, but that year also had to carry other years. The prospects of many of those high price years in sequence is very slim.

How do they stay in business? First, they don't all stay in business. The agricultural history of Cranbury is one of constant decline in the number of farmers and a pervasive conveyance of farmlands to non-farmers. Those that do stay in business may not cover all of their costs. Unlike other types of business, people in farming can carry on for a number of years while others are losing money. Many supplement incomes from other jobs. These predominant crops in Cranbury do not represent the crops for the long term in the

most urbanized state-in the union. They do not serve the urban population well, nor do they develop a strong agriculture for New Jersey or Cranbury Township.

The salient considerations for Cranbury Township are that although in 1984 66% of Cranbury was under farmland assessment, with 4,788 acres being cropped, agriculture as a whole was not bouyant, not expanding, and not generally viable. It is really in a holding pattern going nowhere. As indicated previously, the average age of the farm operator has increased by six years in the past decade. Indications also are that over half of the land farmed, is not farmed by the owner. In my opinion, this is probably a low estimate.

In this setting, agriculture retention planning has been advocated by some to save the remaining agriculture from demise. The chief tool of the retention planning, when stripped to bare bones, has been zoning, usually agricultural-residential large lot zoning. With the inception of the "grassroots" legislation, the device of the "agricultural district" also has become part of the zoning concept.

Criteria have been suggested for the makeup of the "agricultural district". The viability of farming, which must be the foundation for agricultural planning, is not listed among these criteria but somehow is assumed. Thus, it is somehow assumed that if land is set aside for agriculture, this agriculture will be profitable and viable. These zones have been dropped like a net over land which is already too expensive to justify the extensive farming

operations that have been discussed earlier. To overcome this, the grassroots program suggests that the development value of the farmland be purchased by the public through a participation of local and state government. The funds available for the task are miniscule, and it is doubtful that great amounts will be forthcoming, leaving this approach as a hollow solution to part of the dilemma. Even if the purchase program were to be successful, it would not provide for the necessary economics, or for the entry of new farmers who are willing to operate and service to the urban needs.

6. Recent Planning Programs for Agriculture in Cranbury Township:

These include: Agriculture Retention in Cranbury, by the Middlesex-Somerset-Mercer Regional Study Council, Inc., 1982; Cranbury Township Land Use Plan, by the Cranbury Township Planning Board, 1982; Land Development Ordinance, Cranbury Township, by the Cranbury Township Planning Board and Township Committee, 1983. These three programs represent the guidance for agricultural development and retention in Cranbury Township. I will review briefly some aspects of these reports.

The MSM 1982 report on agricultural retention in Cranbury lists seven criteria for retention, none of which address directly economic viability for agricultural producers. The criteria are listed below, with comments by the consultant. These begin on page 13 of their 1982 report under the sub-title Planning Agricultural Areas.



They state, based on "the previous study in Cranbury and subject to work elsewhere, MSM developed the following criteria for aiding the identification of the agricultural areas which should be protected from development". I should like now to list the criteria and discuss their validity.

1. Soil Conditions. As large a proportion as possible of the best soil should be included in the retention areas, although non-prime soils may also be valuable for some types of agriculture.

Comment: Best farming soils are important, particularly where field cropping and field vegetable production is taking place. Also, good, well-drained soils are desirable for orchards. Much of our high-return agriculture, however, need not depend on the availability of a large amount of cropland and the best soils. Successful greenhouse operations and nursery operations using pre-mix soils do not exclusively require use of prime soils. For example, poultry and many confinement livestock operations potentially highly profitable do not depend on good local soil.

2. Protective Natural Buffers. Buffers such as stream corridors or wooded areas are good ways to protect agricultural land from intruding areas.

Comment: A nicety, but of little serious importance to agricultural production or agricultural viability. There are numerous examples throughout the State where highly viable, profitable farming operations are conducted side-by-side with non-agricultural land use. Such operations include poultry, nurseries, greenhouses, retail-oriented orchards, and farm markets, as well as dairy and field crop operations. In fact, in Cranbury and along its border, such farm operations coexist with other uses. Further, whether a buffer is "natural" is not as significant as to whether it is otherwise adequate. Man-made buffers can be as effective.

3. Traffic. Agriculture should be undivided by major roads or by railroads.

Comment: There can be some conflict between agriculture and others in highway use, but it is generally insignificant. Major roads are as important for visibility by the public to agriculture as they are for any other type of business. Some of our most viable farming operations in New Jersey are located on major roads and also depend on them for customer exposure. This is true in Cranbury as witnessed by the agricultural farmsteads and operations abutting Route 130. This criteria really is not very valid.

4. Contiguity of Fields. The area should be relatively free from intrusion of conflicting suburban land uses.

Comment: Large contiguous fields lend themselves to field crop farming as now exists in much of Cranbury Township, but in no way does it assure viability. Nor is it true that where adjoining uses are non-agricultural, farming operations must suffer. The suburban land uses may be one of the very aspects that make the nearby agriculture viable. This criteria only has partial validity, and may actually be a detriment to expanding higher return, more profitable agriculture in this suburban area.

5. Urban Infrastructure. The area should not be served by water or sewer and there should be no current plans for same.

Comment: The availability of water and sewer helps the developer, but can also help the farmer operating near a suburban location. There are farmers in New Jersey who use urban water sources for their production in the conduct of the nursery and greenhouse operations. For dairy farm operations, public sewerage would probably not be suitable, but there are no dairies in Cranbury Township.

6. Regional Plans. State and county plans should be supportive of agricultural use.

Comment. This is a somewhat nebulous criteria which does not address very seriously the profitability or viability of a farming operation. Again, some of our most viable operations in the State are, and have been, interlaced with suburbia, but would probably be excluded from a state or county plan as being atypical, yet they survive. As to the subject site, it is of interest that the State has designated most of it for growth and, in any event, it is only marginally within the State's Limited Growth Area or County's recommended agricultural area.

7. Water Supply. Water should be available where necessary for agricultural operations.

Comment. True. Probably the most valid of the criteria.

8. Other Criteria. As recommended by the Town's citizens and professional farmers should be considered.

Comment: This is a bit of a catch-all and tends to represent the broad-brush aspect of all of the previous criteria.

These criteria have all tended to avoid the economic considerations, such as: present market and potential market for products to be grown; what products might be best grown in the changing setting of population growth in Cranbury Township; what is the make-up of land ownership of the land in Cranbury Township now being farmed; will land ownership patterns be compatible to farming in the future; is there financing available to bring about the changes desirable to meet current and future needs for agriculture in Cranbury Township; and are there and will there be the farm operators with the interest, skill and financing to operate the farms in Cranbury's future?

The second planning document for Cranbury Township was the Cranbury Township Land Use Plan, also 1982. In this report, the preservation of agriculture section reflects pretty much the MSM report. It is quite broad in its discussion and really provides no plan or scheme for economic viability of the remaining agriculture or new agriculture in Cranbury Township. They do set forth a land use plan which suggests agricultural areas which also permit one dwelling unit per 15 acres: the large lot approach to keeping these agriculture lands free of urban development. We know from experience what happens eventually. Even if the zoning does not change, but agriculture is still not viable, housing on very large lots will be developed, interspersed in the agricultural areas of the Township. The Master Plan does recommend the preservation technique or transfer of development credits (or TDC). Although this concept has been around for a long time, it has not been adequately implemented on a

municipal basis to become effective in carrying out the purposes that are envisioned.

The final planning document to be discussed in this report is the Land Development Ordinance of Cranbury Township revised in 1983. Of particular concern is the agricultural aspects of the ordinance or at least on how it will impact on agriculture. The sections on agriculture are not very extensive, being found in the definition section and then under the agricultural zone.

The Zoning Ordinance is relatively traditional in its reliance on exclusionary (large lot) zoning to preserve agriculture. Also relied upon is the TDC approach. The difficulty with TDC's on a municipal level has been discussed. Its application in Cranbury has apparently ended as the compliance package does not utilize it.

The Ordinance and compliance package is noteworthy in its total abandonment of farming for future use east of Route 130. All of this land is zoned for commercial and residential uses. Some of Cranbury's most solid farmsteads and farming operations (as well as prime agricultural lands) are now slated for development. Thousands of acres of prime agricultural soils now being farmed are planned to be removed from agricultural use by action by this Township. In this context, it is difficult to understand the disputes as to the subject site. Its development is certainly far less significant (if at all) as to the future of farming in Cranbury than the loss of these acres, farming operations and farms.

There are numerous technical objections which could be made to the ordinance as to its impact on farming. However, the point is that neither TDC's, nor restrictive zoning will preserve farming. Zoning controls (such as buffering) can aid an otherwise successful farming operation, but it will not make it agriculturally profitable or otherwise desirable to continue. In any event, whatever the merits may be to the Township's approach, the development of the subject site will not be a hindrance to its success.

Summary and Conclusions. Agriculture, as it presently exists in Cranbury Township, is not on a sound economic basis. Selected farm operations with a good marketing strategy in potatoes, and in extensive vegetables, and the few farm markets oriented to fruit and vegetable growers, may be exceptions to this statement. However, the more than half of the township acreage in marginal grains and soybeans do not represent long-term viable prospects for continued agricultural production. Recognizing that many of these grain acres are on rented land, land which may not be intended by the present owner for long-term farming purposes, it presents a planning dilemma: the agricultural and ownership purposes are in conflict.

If any large portion of the remaining 66% of the Township now in agricultural use is to remain in agriculture, there must be a change in the type of agriculture which is conducted on these lands. By some means, the land must be shifted to more intensive types of agriculture which have a greater chance of viability economically.

To do this, the market target for the production on these farms must be more nearly retail oriented rather than wholesale oriented, to reap benefits from the nearby urban and suburban population. There are prototypes throughout the State of such successful farming operations, and they include market garden, with farm market retail outlet, greenhouses, nurseries, poultry, with direct off-farm marketing of eggs and birds as well as turkeys, Christmas trees, and the recognition that some of these will be run by part-time, rather than full-time, farmers.

This, by the way, is a national trend. To make this shift possible, there must be developed a marketing philosophy different from what now exists in Cranbury, and a greater tolerance to farm markets, road stands, pick-your-own, and even an agricultural marketing center where small operators could retail their seasonal production. Little of this philosophy is now evidenced in the present planning documents for Cranbury Township.

As to the subject site, its significance as to agricultural preservation - either in its present use or developed as planned - is not even marginal. This would be true even if nothing else was affecting agricultural preservation. However, given all of the other factors, this site's development is all the more insignificant. It cannot reasonably be contended that its development, as proposed, will have a perceivable impact on farming in Cranbury, let alone "tip" an otherwise viable program into disequilibrium.

TABLE 1

SELECTED CROP ACRE SUMMARIES  
MOTOR VEHICLE DATA  
1984 AND 1974

	1984	1974
Total Farm Acres	4,488	5,329
Cropland	4,175	5,327
Irrigated Acres	1,228	1,801
Apples	80	91*
Corn	601	330*
Nursery	113	77
Soybeans	1,517	1,305*
Spinach	300	208
Wheat	729	1,609
White Potatoes	621	880

\* 1975.

TABLE 2

FARMLAND ASSESSMENT SUMMARY  
1984 AND 1974

	1984	1974
Percent Township Under FLA	66.25	66.42
Total Acres Under FLA	5,555	5,474
Cropland Acres Under FLA	4,788	4,779



TABLE 3

PRINCIPLE CROPS BY ACREAGE IN CRANBURY, 1984\*

	Acres	Percent Ratio
Soybeans	1,517	36
Wheat	729	17
White Potatoes	621	15
Corn	601	14
Spinach	300	7
Barley	151	4
Nursery	131	3
Apples	80	2
Hay	52	1
Flowers	4	.1

SOURCE: Farmer Motor Vehicle Applications.

TABLE 4

ESTIMATED\* PRODUCTION COST PER BUSHEL VS. FARM PRICE  
FOR SOYBEANS, WHEAT AND CORN, 1984

	Low-Yield	High-Yield	Farm Price
Soybeans	\$6.97	\$5.50	\$5.98
Wheat	4.80	3.80	3.88
Corn	3.68	3.39	3.42

\* Cook College, Rutgers data.

TABLE 5

FARM PRICE OF SELECTED FIELD CROPS\*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Soybean</u>	<u>Wheat</u>	<u>Corn</u>
1981	\$5.96	\$3.27	\$2.61
1982	5.47	3.11	2.69
1983	7.75	3.35	3.75
1984	5.98	3.88	3.42

\* Agricultural Statistics: USDA.