

CHAPTER 179

AN ACT appropriating \$15,000,000 from the "Garden State Farmland Preservation Trust Fund" for farmland preservation purposes in the Highlands Region.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. a. There is appropriated from the "Garden State Farmland Preservation Trust Fund," established pursuant to section 20 of P.L.1999, c.152 (C.13:8C-20), to the State Agriculture Development Committee the sum of \$15,000,000 for the purpose of preserving farmland in the counties and municipalities listed in subsection b. of this section and constituting the Highlands Region, as defined pursuant to section 7 of P.L.2004, c.120 (C.13:20-7), by:

(1) Providing grants to counties and municipalities for (a) up to 80% of the cost of acquisition of development easements on farmland, or (b) up to 80% of the cost of acquisition of fee simple titles to farmland from willing sellers only, which shall be offered for resale or lease with agricultural deed restrictions approved by the State Agriculture Development Committee;

(2) Providing planning incentive grants to counties and municipalities pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1999, c.180 (C.4:1C-43.1 et seq.);

(3) Providing grants to qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organizations for (a) up to 50% of the cost of acquisition of development easements on farmland, or (b) up to 50% of the cost of acquisition of fee simple titles to farmland from willing sellers only, which shall be offered for resale or lease with agricultural deed restrictions approved by the State Agriculture Development Committee;

(4) Paying the cost of acquisition by the State of development easements on farmland; and

(5) Paying the cost of acquisition by the State of fee simple titles to farmland from willing sellers only, which shall be offered for resale or lease with agricultural deed restrictions approved by the State Agriculture Development Committee.

b. Projects approved by the State Agriculture Development Committee for acquisition in the following project areas in the Highlands Region are eligible for funding with the monies appropriated pursuant to subsection a. of this section:

County

Municipality

Bergen
Hunterdon

Mahwah and Oakland
Alexandria, Bethlehem,
Bloomsbury, Califon, Clinton
Town, Clinton Township, Glen
Gardner, Hampton, High Bridge,
Holland, Lebanon Boro, Lebanon
Township, Milford, Tewksbury,
and Union

Morris

Boonton Town, Boonton
Township, Butler, Chester Boro,
Chester Township, Denville,
Dover, Hanover, Harding,
Jefferson, Kinnelon, Mendham
Boro, Mendham Township, Mine
Hill, Montville, Morris Plains,
Morris Township, Morristown,
Mount Arlington, Mount Olive,
Mountain Lakes, Netcong,
Parsippany-Troy Hills,
Pequannock, Randolph, Riverdale,
Rockaway Boro, Rockaway
Township, Roxbury, Victory
Gardens, Washington, and
Wharton

Passaic

Bloomington, Pompton Lakes,

	Ringwood, Wanaque, and West Milford
Somerset	Bedminster, Bernards, Bernardsville, Far Hills, and Peapack-Gladstone
Sussex	Byram, Franklin, Green, Hamburg, Hardyston, Hopatcong, Ogdensburg, Sparta, Stanhope, and Vernon
Warren	Allamuchy, Alpha, Belvidere, Franklin, Frelinghuysen, Greenwich, Hackettstown, Harmony, Hope, Independence, Liberty, Lopatcong, Mansfield, Oxford, Phillipsburg, Pohatcong, Washington Boro, Washington Township, and White.

c. The expenditure of the sum appropriated by subsection a. of this section, and the receipt of any funds or proceeds from the transfer, resale, or lease of preserved farmland, are subject to the provisions and conditions of P.L.1999, c.152 (C.13:8C-1 et seq.), P.L.1983, c.32 (C.4:1C-11 et seq.), and P.L.1999, c.180 (C.4:1C-43.1 et seq.), as appropriate.

d. The State Agriculture Development Committee shall prepare and issue at least annually a report listing the farms preserved using the monies appropriated pursuant to this section until such time as all of the monies have been expended. The report shall identify each farm by name and provide the county and municipality in which it is located.

Each report shall be transmitted within 15 business days after its issuance to: (1) the President of the Senate, (2) the Speaker of the General Assembly, (3) the chairpersons of the Senate Economic Growth Committee and the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, or their successors as designated by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly, respectively, (4) the Garden State Preservation Trust established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.1999, c.152 (C.13:8C-4), and (5) the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.2004, c.120 (C.13:20-4). Copies of each report shall also be made available to the public upon request and on the Internet website maintained by the State Agriculture Development Committee.

2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005 or on the date of enactment, whichever is later.

Approved August 8, 2005.