



## Board of Chosen Freeholders

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 5, 2017

Contact: John E. Lanza, Freeholder Director

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### **Freeholders Act To Preserve Agricultural Use of Nearly 500 Acres of Hunterdon County Farmland**

The Hunterdon County Freeholder Board took action Tuesday evening to approve the preservation of seven county farms, totaling 494 acres, and to seek over \$3 million in farmland preservation funding from the State Agriculture Development Committee.

Freeholder Director John E. Lanza released the following statement, "As I have stated at previous Freeholder meetings, the preservation of farmland in our county is a priority focus of the Freeholder Board. Placing these acres beyond the reach of development is important to maintaining Hunterdon County's rural character, farmland preservation goals, and other key strategies to retain agriculture in the county."

The Freeholders' action included approving the purchase of development easements for an 84 acre farm in Franklin, a 316 acre property in Alexandria that will be divided into four farms, the 45 acre Livingston and Berry farm in Tewksbury, and a 49 acre farm property in Delaware Township.

The County and its funding partners purchase the development rights from the property owners on the condition that the properties continue to be farmed. Hunterdon County and the various municipalities contributed a combined \$2 million from open space funds toward the development rights purchases.

Lanza statement pointed out, "The final step in the process is to gain State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) approval of over \$3 million in funding towards the purchase of the development easements. These preservation projects could not be accomplished without partners like the SADC and our municipalities."

Lanza added, "Preserving 494 acres of farmland is a remarkable effort and our Planning Department deserves recognition for a job well done."

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