

COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
WARREN COUNTY

OCTOBER 2022



**COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND
PRESERVATION PLAN
for
Township of Washington
County of Warren**

Prepared October 4, 2022 by:
The Land Conservancy of New Jersey
An accredited land trust
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Township Committee

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Cover Photograph: Schnetzer Farm

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- Chapter 3: Riverine Ranch
- Chapter 4: Anema Farm
- Chapter 5: Anema Farm
- Chapter 6: County Fresh Farmers Market
- Chapter 7: Anema Farm
- Chapter 8: Rymon Farm



Executive Summary

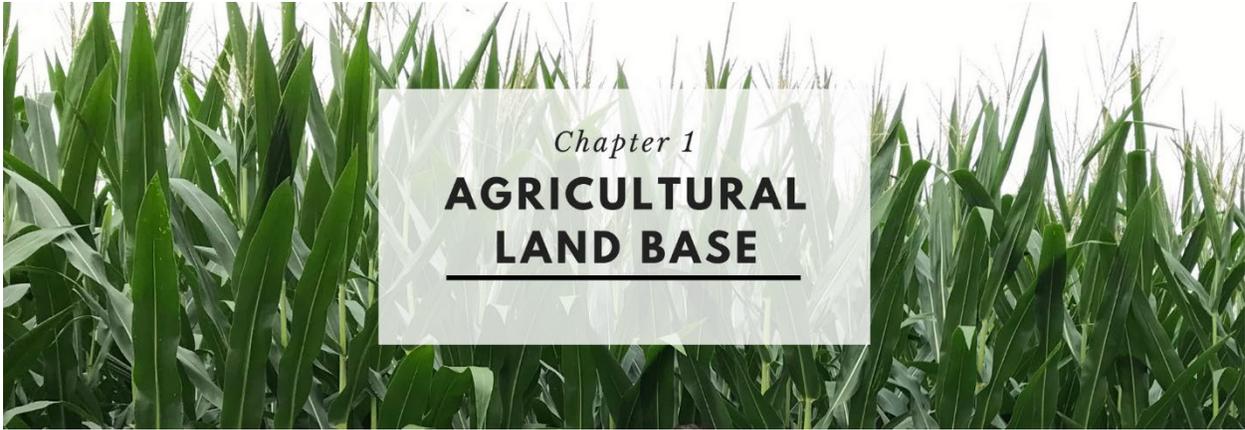
Washington Township is home to rolling hills and rich valleys of agricultural land that has been farmed for multiple generations. Settling near the Musconetcong River, homes and local industries began to appear in the early to mid-1700s. By 1804, roads were formalized, connecting Morristown to Phillipsburg, and trolley service followed into the 19th century. As rail access, the Morris Canal, and hospitality grew, the town evolved into a farming community with thriving residential neighborhoods – aided by the construction of new highways in the 1960s.¹

The town is home to 4,895 acres of active farmland. Nineteen farms are preserved in the municipality, totaling 1,395 acres. The State of New Jersey has contributed \$5.9 million in funds to preserve farmland and Warren County has provided \$2.4 million. Washington Township, through its Open Space Trust Fund has contributed \$1.5 million, 14% of the total cost share. Residents approved the establishment of the local trust fund in 1997 and it raised \$137,317 in 2021.

Based on the state criteria for farmland preservation, 40 farms (1,985 acres) are potentially eligible for preservation. Completing this *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan* will allow the municipality eligibility into the state’s Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) program for farmland preservation funding. Incentivizing farmland grants allows the town greater flexibility and access to state and county funds to help farmers preserve their land.

As part of the planning process the town held two public meetings on the plan. The first was held on September 21, 2021 by the Township Committee and the second was hosted by the Land Use Board on July 28, 2022 to review the draft plan and solicit comments from the public.

Washington Township is proud of its agricultural legacy and supports the completion and implementation of the *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan* to ensure the farming heritage of the town is preserved for its farmers, its residents, and its future.



Chapter 1. Agricultural Land Base

A. Agricultural Landscape

The Township of Washington ranks twelfth in Warren County, with 4,895 acres of farm assessed land devoted to agricultural or horticultural use, including cropland, pasture, woodland, and equine operations in 2018.^a (Map 1). Preserved and public lands in Washington Township are shown on Map 2.

Due to the nature of the topography, 27% (1,328 acres) of Washington’s farm-assessed acreage is woodland/wetland; with 3,556 acres designated active agriculture (cropland and pasture), and 11 acres designated as equine.² (Figure 1)

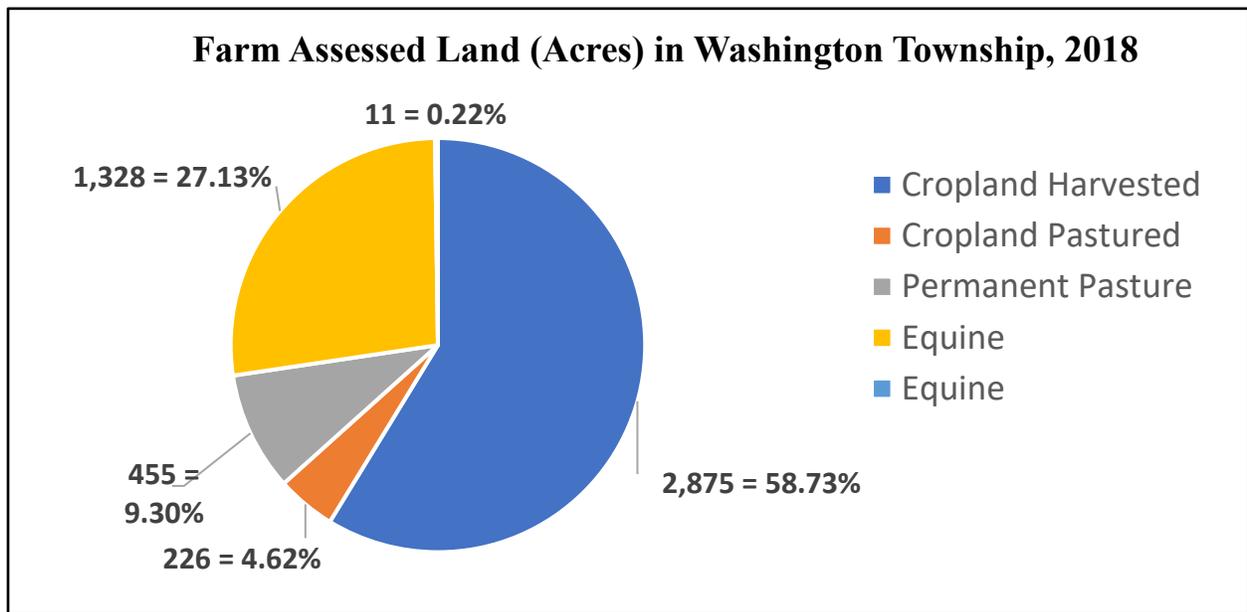


Figure 1. Farm Assessed Land in Washington (2018 Tax Assessment)

^a Farm assessed acreage from the 2018 and 2017 Tax Assessment data provided by the SADC.

State Highway 57 (NJ-57) runs north-to-south in the Township, parallel to the Pohatcong Creek. West of NJ-57 sits Roaring Rock Park, which contains forested land that supports wildlife habitat for threatened and endangered species.³ East of NJ-57, farmland soils are supported by a broad, unbroken belt of farmland. (**Map 3**)

According to 2015 Land Use/Land Cover (LU/LC) data from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), 30% (3,468 acres) of the Township is dedicated to land in agricultural use. Washington has a higher percentage of urban land (30.5%) than the County wide figure of 18%, but a higher percentage of its land cover is in agriculture versus the county (**Figure 2, Figure 3, and Table 1**)

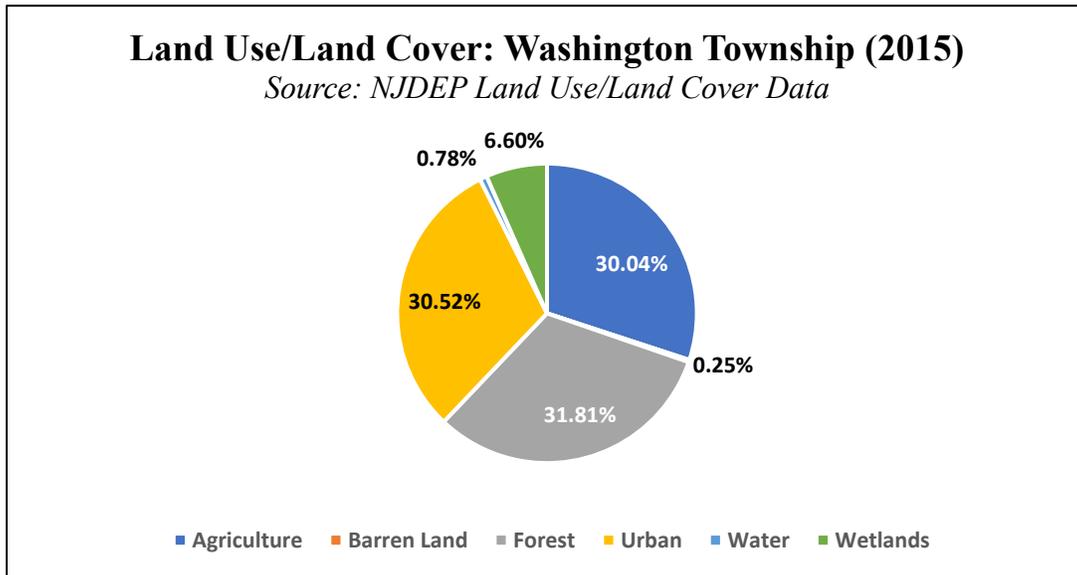
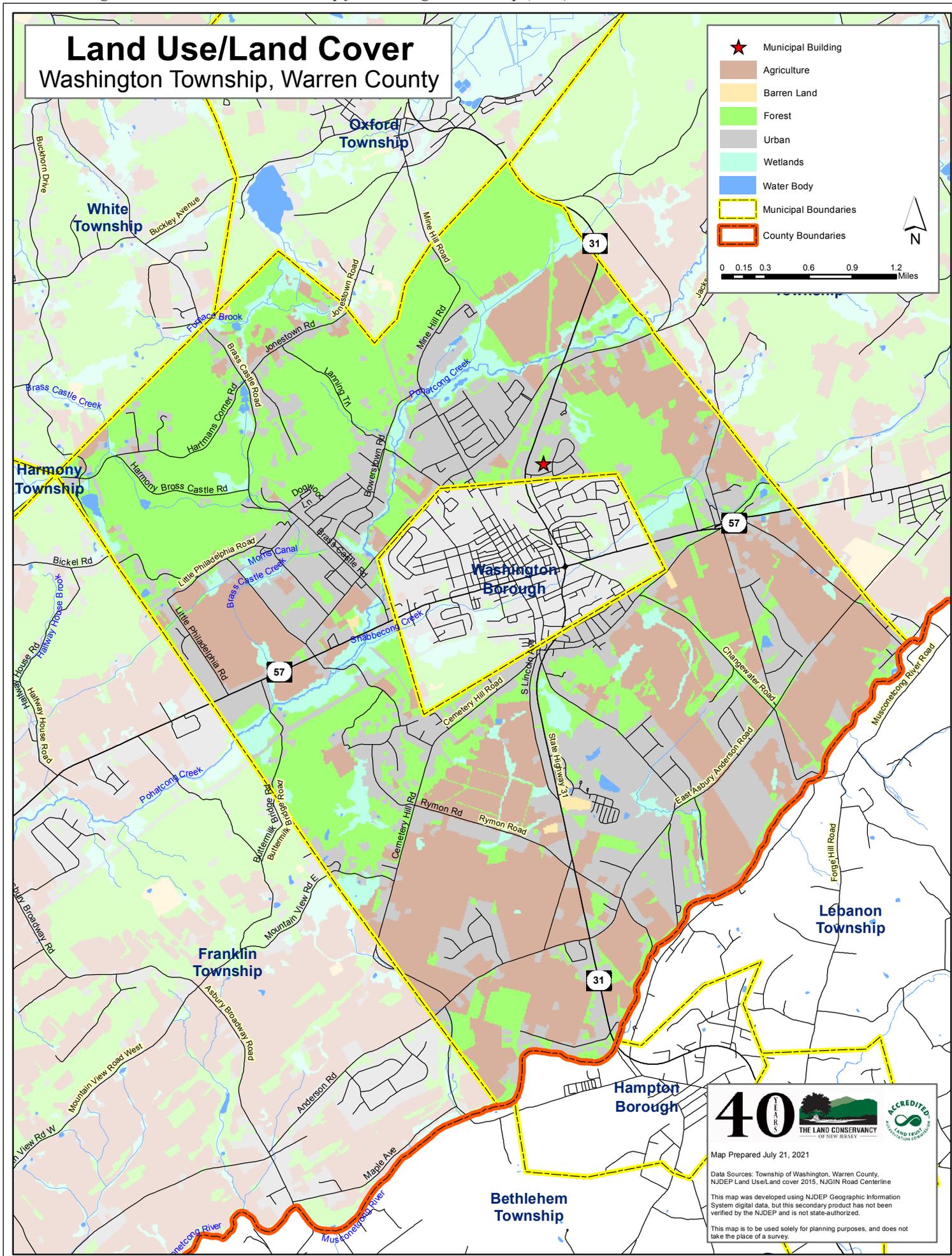


Figure 2. Land Use/Land Cover for Washington

Table 1. 2015 Land Use/Land Cover for Washington and Warren County				
	Washington		Warren County	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	3,468.55	30.04%	53,590.13	23.09%
Barren	29.16	0.25%	1,450.88	0.63%
Forest	3,673.34	31.81%	108,685.87	46.83%
Urban	3,524.65	30.52%	41,001.00	17.67%
Water	90.15	0.78%	5,852.96	2.52%
Wetland	761.69	6.60%	21,480.52	9.26%

Source: NJDEP 2015 Land Use/Land Cover

Figure 3. Land Use/ Land Cover Map for Washington Township (2015)



B. 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.⁴ The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) classifies certain soils as prime, of statewide importance, or unique based on their potential for agricultural productivity.

- *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 5,777 acres of prime farmland soils in Washington Township, of which 2,954 are in active agricultural use. 83% of all active agriculture in the Township is located on prime farmland soil. Accounting for 54% of the total soils in the Township, the majority of these soils belong to the *Washington* (Waf) and *Bartley* (Bab) series, which can be used for vegetables general farming, and pasture.
- *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 1,797 acres of soils of statewide importance in Washington Township, of which 96 acres are in agricultural use. 11% of all active agriculture in the Township is located on prime farmland soil. Accounting for 14% of Washington's soils, most of the soils of statewide importance belong to the *Anndale* (Ano) and *Washington* (Waf) series and are generally adjacent to the prime farmland soils but on land with more slope. These soils can support hay, corn, grains, wheat, and general farming.
- *Unique soils or soils of local importance* exhibit specific qualities that may be favorable to the production of specialized crops. There are no identified soils of unique importance in Washington Township.

The following major soil series (non-farmland) are also found in Washington Township:

- Cokesbury (Coad) – 544 acres, or 4.7%
- Parker-Rock (PawF) – 647 acres, or 5.6%

Table 2 identifies the major soils in Washington Township, grouped by the NRCS classifications for agricultural soils and **Map 3** illustrates their location. Of the total land in Washington, 3,350 acres of the agricultural soils identified by the NRCS are mapped as land in active agricultural use.

Table 2. Soil Categories – Washington Township

Soil Abbr	Name	Acreage
AnoB	Annandale gravelly loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	328.12
BabA	Bartley loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	297.05
BabB	Bartley loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	750.86
HdXPAb	Hazen-Paulins Kill complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, very stony	65.73
NetBb	Netcong loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	63.26
HdXPBb	Hazen-Paulins Kill complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	33.45
WafA	Washington silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	420.66
WafB	Washington silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	3,821.22
	Prime Farmland Total	5,780.35
AnoC	Annandale gravelly loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	955.30
BekB	Berks channery silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	108.96
NetCb	Netcong loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	45.42
WafC	Washington silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	687.04
	Farmland of Statewide Importance Total	1,796.72
AnnBb	Annandale loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	9.49
AnnCb	Annandale loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	22.12
AnnDb	Annandale loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, very stony	266.00
BekE	Berks channery silt loam, 25 to 45 percent slopes	57.34
CaoBb	Califon loam, somewhat poorly drained, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	303.41
CaoCb	Califon loam, somewhat poorly drained, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	183.57
CoadBb	Cokesbury loam, dark surface, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	544.48
FrdAb	Fredon-Halsey complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, very stony	47.49
GkanBc	Gladstone loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	38.14
GkanCc	Gladstone loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	231.74
GkanDc	Gladstone loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, extremely stony	103.61
HhmBc	Hibernia loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	33.41
PawE	Parker-Rock outcrop complex, 25 to 45 percent slopes	17.43
PawF	Parker-Rock outcrop complex, 45 to 65 percent slopes	647.01
PaoD	Parker gravelly sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	549.87
RnfC	Rock outcrop-Farmington-Galway complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	26.56
RnfD	Rock outcrop-Farmington-Galway complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes	18.29
RoefDc	Rockaway loam, thin fragipan, 15 to 35% slopes, extremely stony	9.27
RokC	Rockaway-Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	8.39
UdaB	Udorthents, 0 to 8 percent slopes, smoothed	58.07
UdauB	Udorthents-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	345.60
USWAFa	Urban land-Washington complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	84.27

Table 2. Soil Categories – Washington Township		
Soil Abbr	Name	Acreage
USWAFB	Urban land-Washington complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	290.55
USW AFC	Urban land-Washington complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	40.56
WATER	Water	31.62
	Not Prime farmland Total	3,968.29
	Grand Total	11,545.36

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Data Access website

The total land in active agricultural use (3,548 acres) represents 31% of Washington. (Table 3) Active agriculture includes the following LU/LC types: agricultural wetlands, cropland and pastureland, former agricultural wetland, orchards/vineyards/nurseries, and other agriculture.

Table 3. Agricultural Soils and Land in Active Agriculture			
Soil Classification	Total Acres	Ag Acres	Ag % of Total
Prime Farmland Soil	5,777	2,954	83%
Soils with Statewide Importance	1,797	396	11%
Soils with Unique Importance	0	0	0%
Not Prime Farmland	3,968	198	6%
Total:	11,542	3,548	100%

Source: NRCS Soil Data Access; 2015 NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover data

Over 14% of Township land (1,660 acres) is located on slopes steeper than 15%.⁵ These soils tend to have a high risk of erosion, require management to control runoff and erosion, and have some equipment limitations.

C. Irrigated Land & Water Sources

Groundwater provides the water for irrigation in most of Washington Township. Groundwater is generally preferred to surface waters because it contains less sediment and particulates that may clog irrigation pipes and damage crops. 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. The Township had 68 acres of vegetables in 2018, with two acres in irrigation. More notably, 19 acres of vegetables were irrigated in 2017, up from zero in 2000.⁶ (Table 4 and Table 5)

Table 4. Irrigated Land (acres) in Washington						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2017	2018
Field Crops	0	0	0	2	2	0
Fruit	1	0	0	0	2	0
Ornamental	4	0	0	0	0	0
Vegetables	0	0	12	0	19	2
Total	5	0	12	2	23	2
<i>Source: Farmland Assessments</i>						

Table 5. Irrigated Land in Washington and Warren County (acres)						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2017	2018
Washington	5	0	12	2	23	2
Warren County	335	379	283	867	618	146
Percent of County	1.5%	0%	4.2%	0.2%	3.7%	1.4%
<i>Source: Farmland Assessments</i>						

The *Net Water Availability Map* shows that the Delaware Valley in Washington Township runs a water deficiency of nearly one million gallons per day in the central, eastern, and western regions ⁷. (**Figure 4**) Of the seven Highlands subwatersheds within the Township, four are calculated to be in deficit.⁸ Where net water availability is negative, existing uses are exceeding sustainable supplies and the subwatershed is deemed to be a current deficit area. Maintenance of stream flows within any of the subwatersheds upstream of a current deficit area is necessary without further impairing the ecological health of the stream.

The Township of Washington contains 2,484 acres of prime groundwater recharge areas (1,457 acres in the Planning Area and 1,027 acres in the Preservation Area).

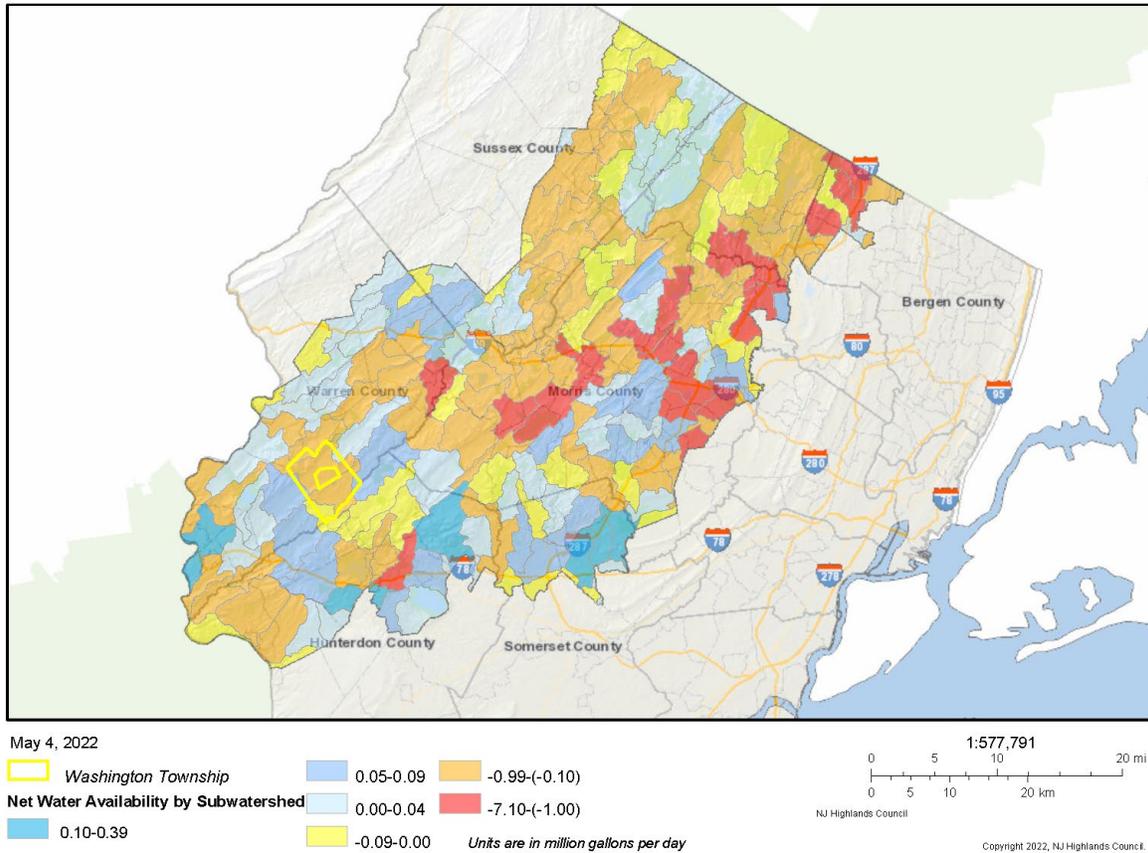


Figure 4. New Jersey Highlands Council Net Water Availability Map

D. Farmland Trends and Statistics

The amount of farm assessed land base in Washington Township decreased from 2000 (5,213 acres) to 2018 (4,895 acres), a 6% decrease. **(Figure 5)** Warren County farm assessed land base decreased 10% in the same period, from 115,545 to 103,535 acres. The composition of the Township’s farm assessed land has also changed from 2000 to 2018, with the biggest decrease seen in pastured cropland:

- Harvested cropland decreased 4.5%
- Pastured cropland decreased 38.4%
- Permanent pasture increased 4.6%
- Woodland fell by 4.9%

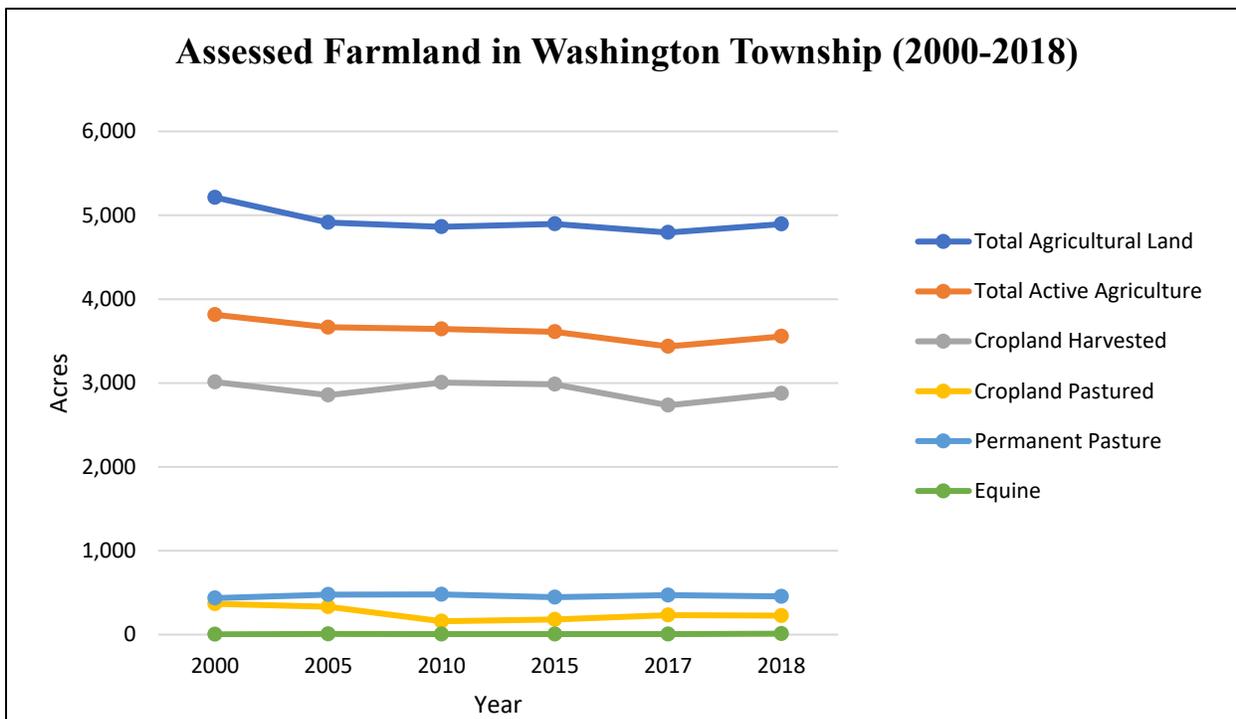


Figure 5. Assessed Farmland in Washington Township

Harvested cropland, the largest category of active agricultural land in Washington, declined 4.5% between 2000 and 2018, from 3,012 to 2,875 acres. Among the dominant crops in this category, hay, corn, and soybeans, the biggest losses occurred in alfalfa hay, which declined 75% between 2000 and 2018. This can most likely be explained by the loss of dairy farms in Washington, with dairy cattle showing a significant drop in numbers from 640 head in 2000 to 311 head in 2018. Corn production fell 9% in the same period, from 1,098 to 996 acres. Soybeans are steadily rising, from 374 acres in 2000 to 551 acres in 2018. Other crops such as rye have stayed consistent while sorghum, not seen in 2000, covered 14 acres in 2018. Fruit and nursery crops, while representing a small portion of Washington’s cropland, have risen steadily since 2000, while vegetable crops have moderately fell. Together, vegetables, nursery, and fruit crops represent 263 acres, or 9% of total harvested cropland in 2018.

Pastured cropland decreased by 38% and permanent pasture decreased by 5% in the same period. This loss tracks with the decline in dairy cattle operations. Beef cattle numbers have increased, from 205 head in 2000 to 249 head in 2018. Equine operations nearly doubled, with ponies and horses increasing from 35 to 67, a 91% increase. Sheep and fur animals have declined since 2000, while goats and ducks are on the rise.

The acreage of farm assessed woodlands in Washington has decreased slightly from 1,396 acres in 2000 to 1,328 acres in 2018.

Between 2000 and 2018, all farmland assessed categories experienced some loss except for equine and permanent pasture. The drop in woodland was substantial enough that the result was an overall loss in the farmland assessed agricultural land base in Washington of 6%, from 5,213 acres in 2000 to 4,895 acres in 2018.

In cropland pastured, Washington has lost active agricultural land at a faster rate than County-wide, whereas cropland harvested decreased at a slower rate than that for the County. Between 2000 and 2018, land in active agriculture land decreased 7% in Washington and declined 18% for Warren County. (Table 6)

		2000	2005	2010	2015	2017	2018	% Change
Cropland Harvested	Washington Township	3,012	2,856	3,006	2,985	2,734	2,875	-4.5%
	Warren County	51,147	46,756	44,362	43,646	42,904	43,404	-15.1%
Cropland Pastured	Washington Township	367	332	159	180	232	226	-38.4%
	Warren County	5,240	4,468	3,900	3,562	3,327	3,476	-33.7%
Permanent Pasture	Washington Township	435	477	479	446	470	455	+4.6%
	Warren County	12,891	12,112	11,133	10,026	9,753	9,751	-24.4%
Total Active Agriculture	Washington Township	3,814	3,665	3,644	3,611	3,436	3,556	-6.8%
	Warren County	69,278	63,336	59,395	57,234	55,984	56,631	-18.3%
Woodand	Washington Township	1,396	1,242	1,213	1,377	1,362	1,328	-4.9%
	Warren County	45,864	43,904	44,051	46,640	47,456	46,485	+1.4%
Equine	Washington Township	3	7	6	6	6	11	+266.7%
	Warren County	403	368	402	358	366	399	-1.0%
Total Farm Assessed Land	Washington Township	5,213	4,914	4,863	4,897	4,794	4,895	-6.1%
	Warren County	115,545	107,608	103,848	104,245	103,821	103,535	-10.4%

Source: NJ Farmland Assessment Data

The trend towards smaller average and median farm sizes has been prominent throughout New Jersey and Warren County over the past forty years. In contrast to the county-wide 15% decrease in acreage since 1982, there has been a 51% increase in the number of farms, up from 608 to 918 in 2017. Following a continuing trend, the average farm size dropped from 144 to 80 acres.^{9 10} The 2017 *Census of Agriculture* indicates that for ZIP code 07882, which includes Washington Township, 54 of 77 farm operations were under 50 acres and 23 were 50 acres or greater (with one farm over 1000 acres). The ZIP code tabulations also indicated that of these 94 operations, 70 farmers operated only land they owned, 5 farmers worked both land they owned and land they

rented from others, and 2 farmers were tenant farmers, operating land rented from others or worked for shares.¹¹

The average size of Warren County farms was 80 acres in 2017, down from 144 acres in 1982. Additionally, the acreage within medium size farms (50 to 499 acres) is decreasing, indicating that many of these farms are breaking up into smaller operations. (Figure 6)

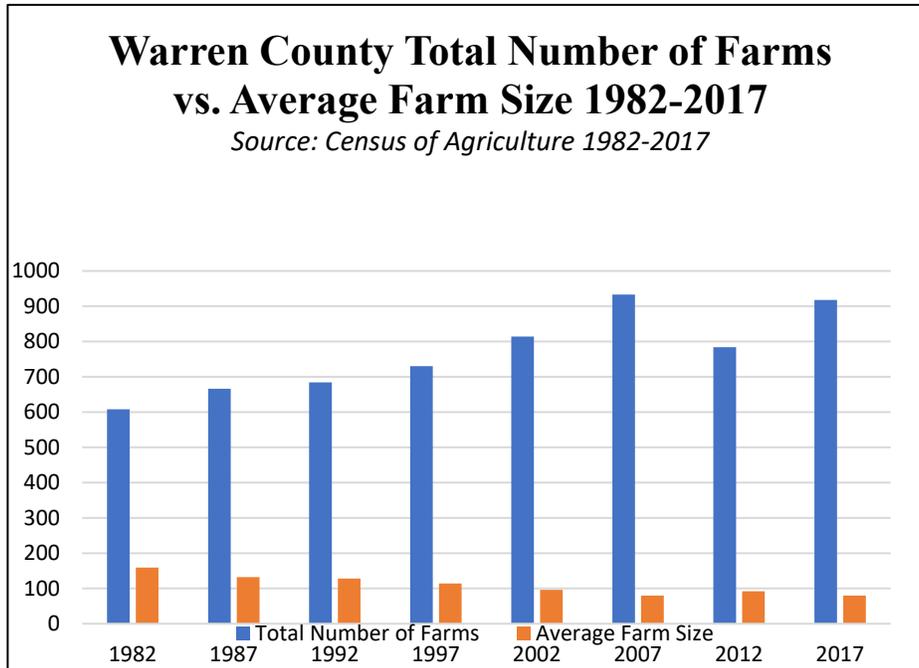
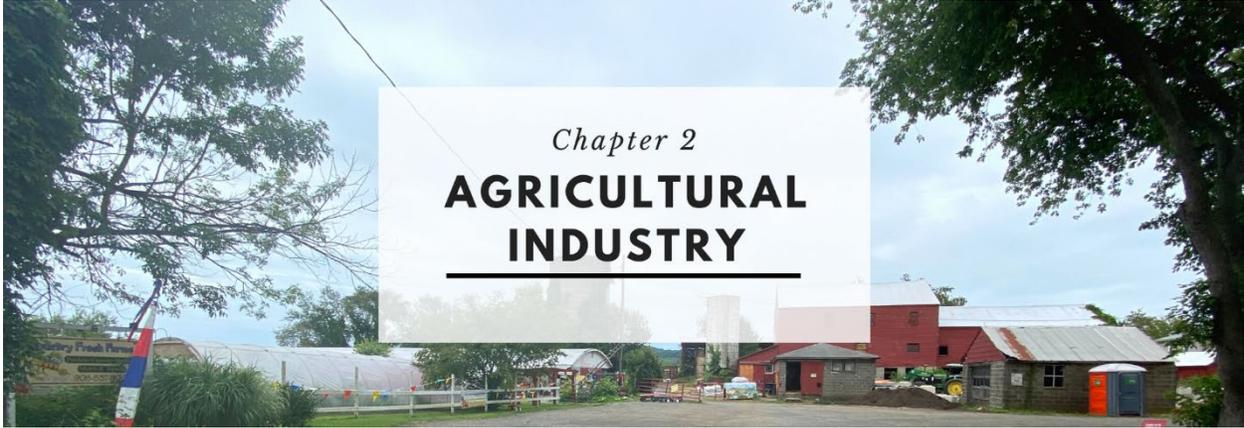


Figure 6. Average Farm Size in Warren County (1982-2017)



Chapter 2. Agricultural Industry

A. Trends in Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold

Agriculture in Washington Township is oriented to livestock and conventional field crops.

Livestock sales in Warren County produced \$26.1 million in sales in 2017, an 18% decrease from \$31.8 million in 2007, but a 22% increase from 2002. Crop sales, including nursery and greenhouse products, rose 54% from \$43.6 million in 2007 to \$67 million in 2017. In total, agricultural sales gained 23% from \$75.4 million in 2007 to \$93.2 million in 2017.¹² (Figure 7)

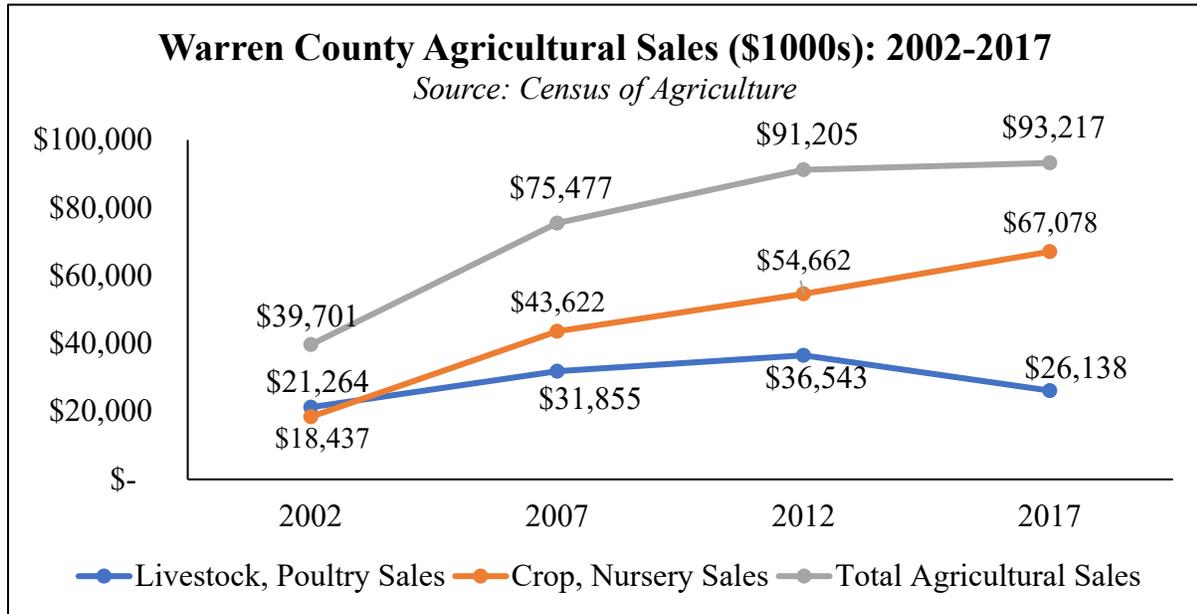


Figure 7. Agricultural Sales in Warren County

As of 2017, Warren County ranked sixth in the state in total agricultural sales. (Table 7) Warren County lost 12.7% in average sales by farm from 2012 to 2017, the sixth-fastest rate of decline in New Jersey. (Table 8)

County	Sales
Cumberland	\$ 212,649
Atlantic	\$ 120,673
Gloucester	\$ 102,454
Salem	\$ 102,342
Burlington	\$ 98,580
Warren	\$ 93,217
Hunterdon	\$ 92,246
Monmouth	\$ 80,633
Middlesex	\$ 38,359
Mercer	\$ 24,981
Morris	\$ 24,824
Ocean	\$ 24,640
Camden	\$ 22,893
Somerset	\$ 20,118
Sussex	\$ 18,226
Cape May	\$ 9,838
Passaic	\$ 2,863

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2017

Rank	County	2012	2017	% Change
1	Ocean	\$ 64,885	\$ 94,769	46.06%
2	Cumberland	\$ 292,216	\$ 379,730	29.95%
3	Camden	\$ 91,528	\$ 116,210	26.97%
4	Hunterdon	\$ 46,445	\$ 57,510	23.82%
5	Middlesex	\$ 147,733	\$ 176,772	19.66%
6	Gloucester	\$ 150,154	\$ 176,644	17.64%
7	Cape May	\$ 52,810	\$ 59,988	13.59%
8	Mercer	\$ 72,534	\$ 77,341	6.63%
9	Salem	\$ 135,749	\$ 131,040	-3.47%
10	Monmouth	\$ 102,565	\$ 96,221	-6.19%
11	Burlington	\$ 120,390	\$ 107,738	-10.51%
12	Warren	\$ 116,333	\$ 101,543	-12.71%
13	Atlantic	\$ 312,040	\$ 268,163	-14.06%
14	Sussex	\$ 21,078	\$ 18,081	-14.22%
15	Somerset	\$ 58,016	\$ 44,508	-23.28%
16	Morris	\$ 77,560	\$ 59,389	-23.43%
17	Passaic	\$ 44,045	\$ 32,168	-26.97%

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture 2012, 2017

In 2002, Warren County had the second largest concentration of dairy and livestock operations in New Jersey (236 farms). The County now has 182 farms and is ranked third in the state.

Dairy sales have declined by 64% from over \$9.0 million in 1997 to \$3.2 million in 2017. This is accompanied by a 74% decline of dairy farms in Warren County, from 63 in 1997 to 16 in 2017.

As of 2017, cattle and calves (2,346) are the most common livestock in Warren County, with beef cows (1,450 head) more prominent than dairy cows (896 head). Sheep (1,691 head) represent the second highest livestock animal, with meat chickens as third highest (842 count).

Crops in Warren County sold for a total of \$66.3 million in 2017, a 22% increase from 2012. (

Figure 8 and Table 9) One crop subsector, nursery and greenhouse operations, continues to exceed other crop types in Warren County. In 2017, Warren County had 26,364 acres of nursery stock crops, under glass or other protection.¹³ Annual sales comprised for about 41% of total agricultural revenue in 2007 (\$22.0 million) but increased to 61% of revenue by 2017 (\$40.7 million).

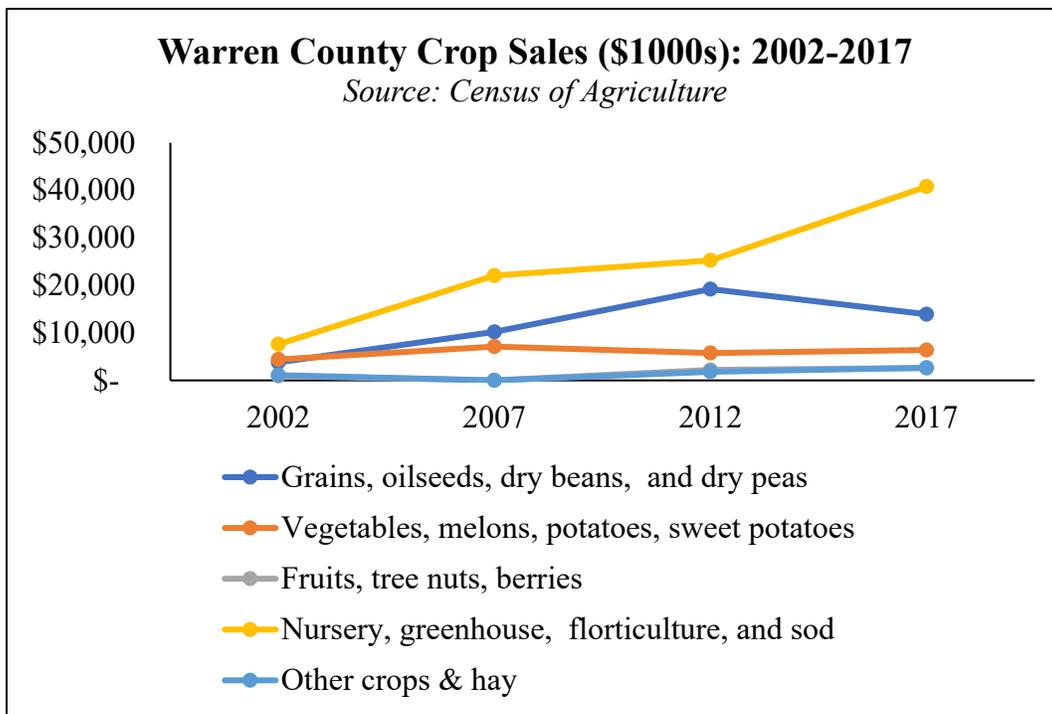


Figure 8. Crop Sales in Warren County

Table 9. Warren County Crop Sales (\$1000s)

	2002	2007	2012	2017
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	\$3,802	\$10,205	\$19,209	\$13,922
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes	\$4,406	\$7,114	\$5,769	\$6,388
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	\$918	N/A	\$2,198	\$2,601
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	\$7,601	\$22,053	\$25,248	\$40,793
Other crops & hay	\$1,114	N/A	\$1,808	\$2,656
Total	\$17,841	\$39,372	\$54,232	\$66,360

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture (2002-2017)

Vegetables were the third highest-grossing crop in 2017, generating more than \$6.3 million in sales. Since 2002, vegetables sales have risen 44%.

Grains, which include corn and soybeans, have grown revenue by 36% since 2007. Grains will most likely remain one of the top-grossing field crops, ranking second to vegetables in 2017.

A small but significant portion of Warren County’s agricultural sales come from other crops, including hay. Sales revenues for this category increased by 138% between 2002 and 2017.

Warren County is home to many fruit farms. Farm sales began growing rapidly during the mid-2000s, going from \$0.91 million in 2002 to \$2.6 million in 2017. Much of this revenue derives from peach and grape sales. Despite acreage falling by 49%, peach farms increased by over 29%.

B. Agricultural Production Trends

Corn for grain dropped by 37% from 2005 to 2017 in Washington Township. Soybeans remained steady during the same time period with some moderate growth. Acreage in hay dropped by 144 acres (18%). The largest decline was in mature dairy, from 268 head of cattle in 2005 to 22 in 2017. Beef cattle had a corresponding increase by 223 head (more than doubling the head of cattle). Meat chickens saw the largest increase from 40 chickens in 2005 to 5,000 in 2017. **(Figure 9)**¹⁴

In 2018, field crops were among the most acre-dominant crops in Washington Township. **Table 10** shows the top 10 dominant crops in Washington in 2018 and their trends since 2005. Of the top dominant crops in Washington, field crops comprised 91% (seen in orange), nursery crops contributed to 7% (seen in green), and vegetables were 2% (seen in blue). Notably, cut flowers and pumpkins grew the most from 2005, while corn for silage and wheat saw the largest decreases. Washington’s 10 most dominant crops accounted for 72% of all land used in active agriculture in 2018. **(Table 10)**

The variation in milk sales has contributed to a reduction in dairy output. From 2002 to 2017, mature dairy decreased by 71%, with an average five year-loss of 33%. The biggest drop occurred between 2007 and 2012, when dairy production fell by 45%. There are two local creameries: Tranquility Farms in Andover, and Mackey’s Orchard in Belvidere.¹⁵

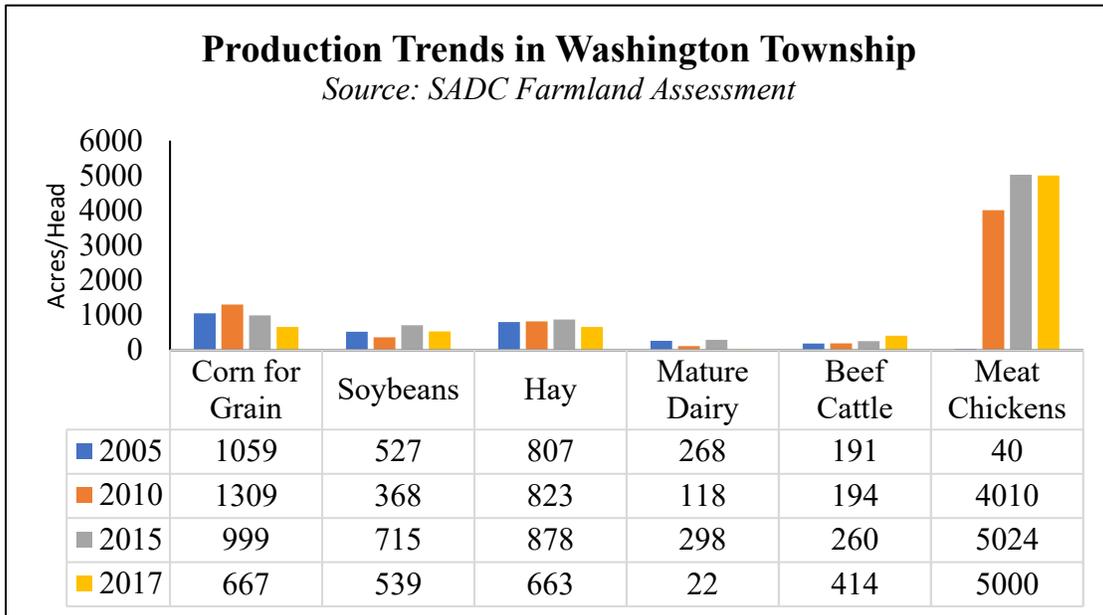


Figure 9 Production Trends in Washington Township (2005-2017)

Table 10. Top 10 Dominant Crops in Washington			
Top 10 Dominant Crops	2005	2018	% Change
Corn for Grain	1,059	996	-5.5%
Hay	807	648	-19.6%
Soybean	527	551	+4.6%
Corn for Silage	262	98	-62.6%
Cut Flowers	0	80	+100%
Christmas Trees	95	75	-21.1%
Pumpkins	13	45	+246.2%
Trees & Shrubs	14	24	+71.4%
Wheat	92	22	-76.1%
Sorghum	25	14	-44.0%
			% of Total
Field Crops	2,772	2,329	91.2%
Nursery	109	179	7.0%
Vegetables	13	45	1.8%
	Total	2,553	

Source: Warren County Farmland Assessment data

In Warren County, livestock production, including beef cattle and meat chickens, have either had slight growth or remained stable since 2002. Chicken production grew by 2% from 2002 to 2007 but dipped 9% by 2017. Beef cattle rose by 8% in 2007, then rose again by 20% by 2017, netting a 31% growth rate through the 2000s. (Figure 10)

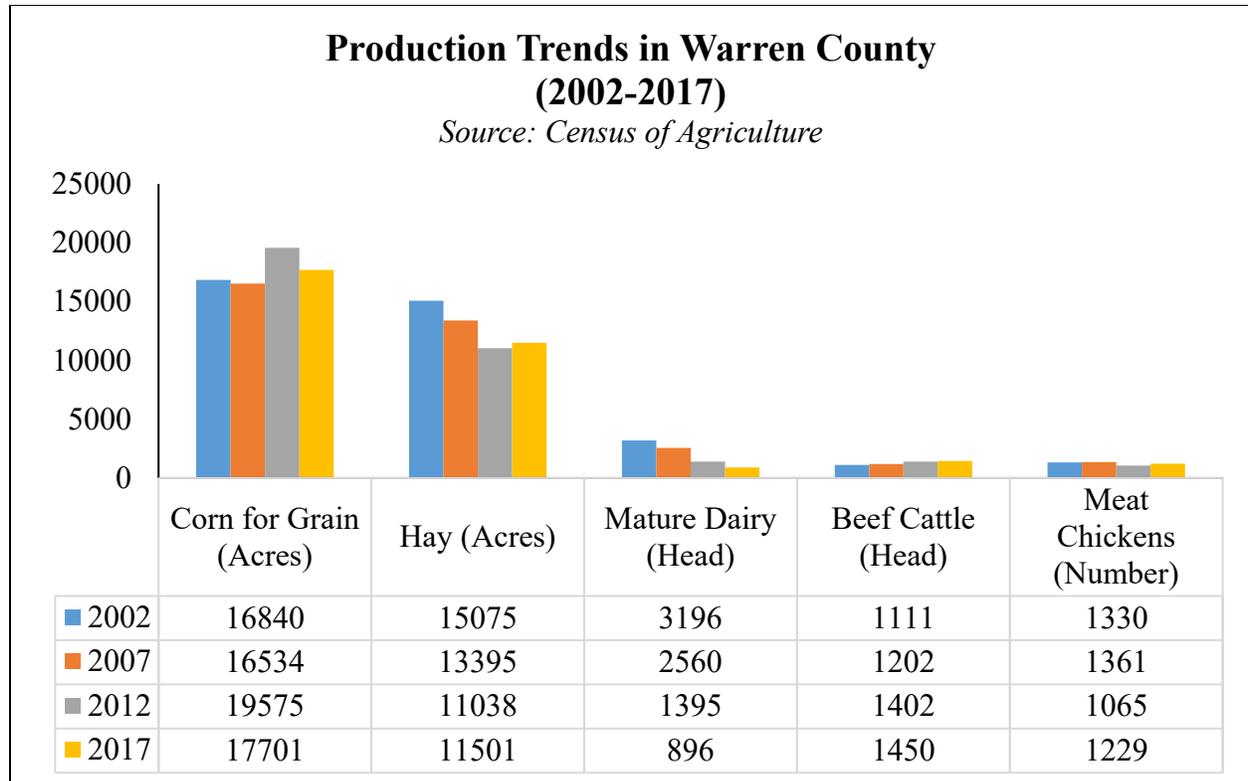


Figure 10. Production Trends in Warren County (2002-2017)

C. Agricultural Support Services and Related Industries

Agricultural support services in Warren County and Washington Township include tractor sales and supply stores, feed vendors, and hardware/equipment retailers. Retailers include Frank Rymon and Sons, Tractor Supply Co, and Growmark in Bloomsbury. Major feed vendors include Ace Hardware. In Hackettstown, the Livestock Auction operates as an independently funded co-operative.¹⁶ As the last remaining auction in the state, it gives farmers and farm suppliers the opportunity to trade and sell products.

Butcher and meat processing services in Washington Borough are available to cattle and livestock farmers. For commercial processing, farmers can use the USDA-licensed Arctic Foods on Route 57. Butchering services for individual and small orders can be processed at various shops in Lebanon Borough and Readington Township. There is not a local a USDA-inspected slaughterhouse; if this type of facility was established within the area, it would help livestock farmers in Washington. Reliance upon out-of-state suppliers and processing facilities imposes transportation costs that cut deeply into their operations profitability.

Local supporting businesses may be insufficient to meet all the needs of the Township’s agricultural community. Often, local farmers minimize repair services by fixing a variety of mechanical problems themselves. If needed, Smith Tractor, on Route 31 in Washington Borough offers retail sales of farm equipment, replacement parts for farm equipment, and will perform many equipment repairs.

Despite the loss of support businesses from the region, local farms take advantage of retailers, large animal veterinarians, and feed supplies located outside of the county and in eastern Pennsylvania. A comprehensive list of farm related businesses, organizations, and services in New Jersey is available through the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Salem County Green Pages.¹⁷ **(Appendix B)**



Chapter 3. Land Use Planning

A. State Development and Redevelopment Plan

The *State Development and Redevelopment Plan* (SDRP) outlines general policy objectives concerning land use and future development in the State.¹⁸ The combination of Planning Areas and Designated Centers establishes a comprehensive framework for pursuing land use and development regulation throughout New Jersey. Land in Washington Township is included within the Rural Planning Area (PA4), the Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B), the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA5), and the State Park Planning Areas (PA8). **(Figure 11)**

- Rural Planning Areas (PA4): Clustered around the central and eastern sections of the Township, the Rural Planning Area also encompasses a large portion of Washington Borough.
- Rural-Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B): Throughout most of the Township, this Planning Area encompasses land in central Washington as well as most of the southern half of the Township.
- Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (PA5): This Planning Area is situated in the central-west section of the Township. It is bounded on both sides by the Township’s border with Washington Borough and Franklin Township.
- State Park Planning Areas (PA8): These lands are located in the eastern and southernmost corners of the Township, near the Lebanon Township and Franklin Township borders.

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.” The designated Town of Washington Borough does include portion of Washington Township, though the town has requested at the state level the de-designation of land within the Township to protect environmental and water resources.¹⁹

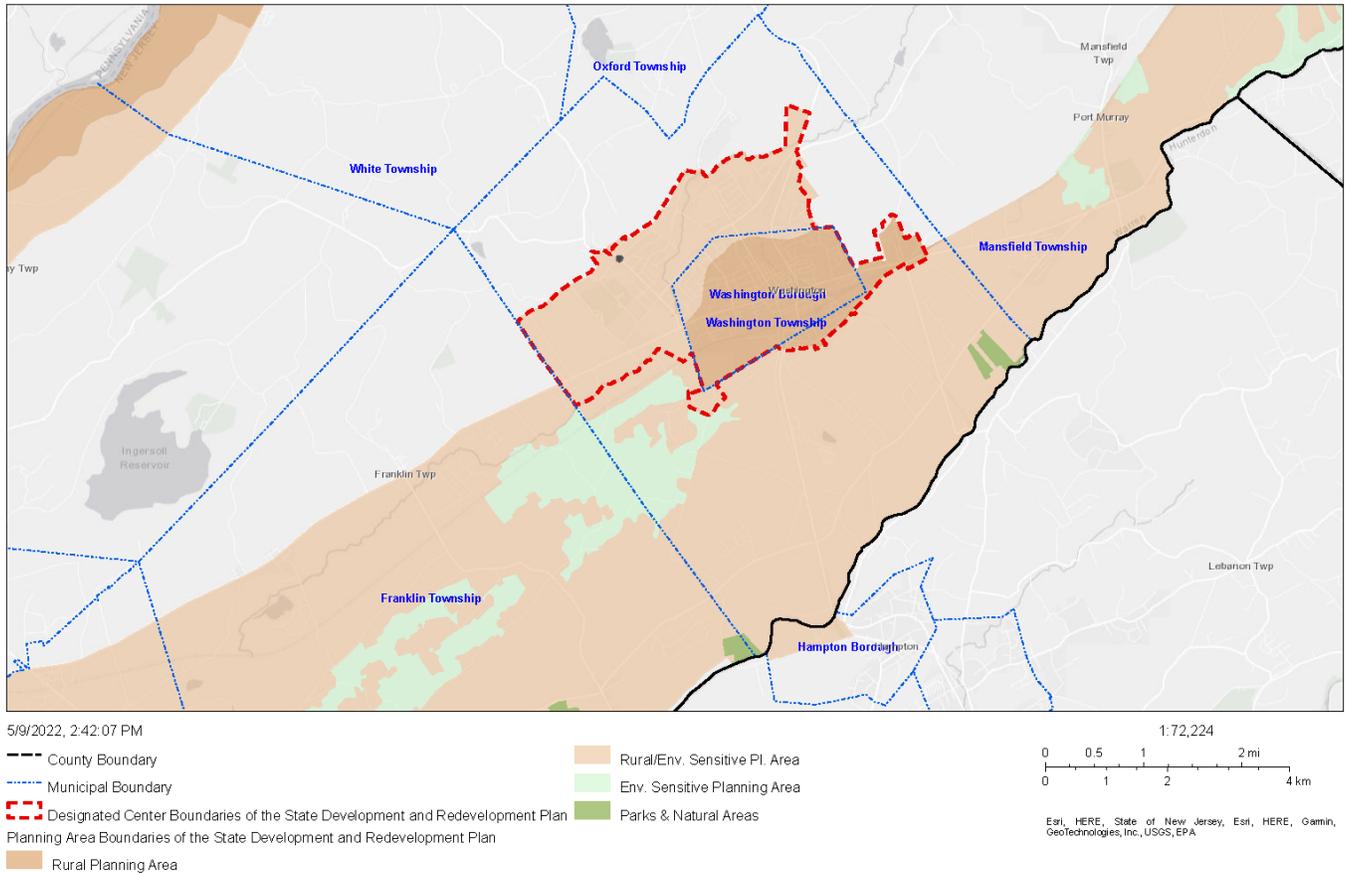


Figure 11. State Development and Redevelopment Plan: Washington Township

B. Special Resource Area: Highlands Region

The New Jersey State Legislature enacted the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (HWPPA) on August 10, 2004. The Highlands Act imposes strict land use controls over large parts of the 88-municipality region, where lands are subject to heightened restrictions to protect water quality and environmentally sensitive lands. Washington Township is located within the Highlands Region. Roughly 3,595 acres (31% of the Township) north and east of the town’s border with Washington Borough, fall within the Highlands Preservation Area which incorporates Brass Castle Creek and Pohatcong Creek. The Preservation Area also encompasses 41% of the Township’s farm assessed land. Approximately 7,953 acres (69% of the Township) falls within the Planning Area.^{20 21} (Figure 12)

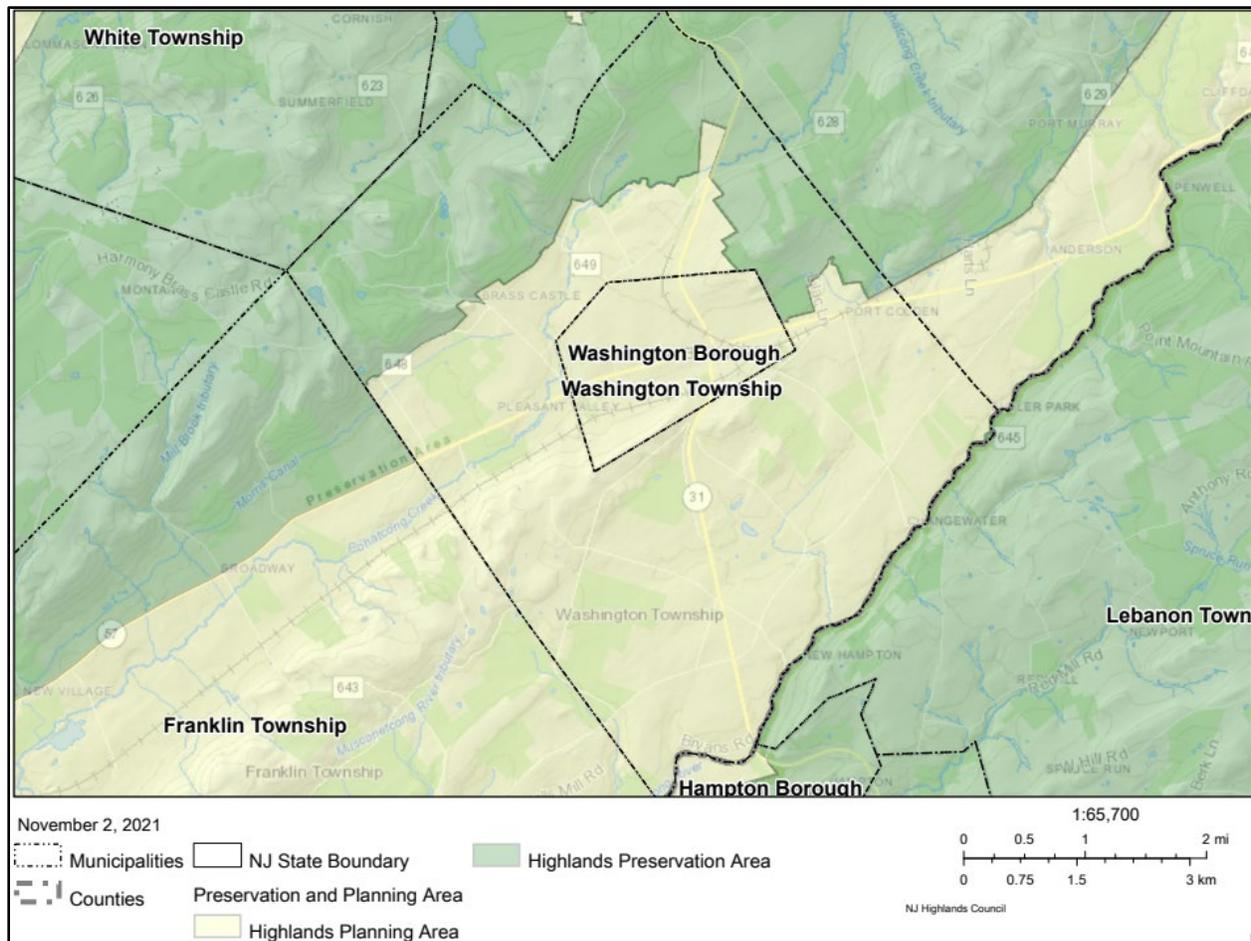


Figure 12. Highlands Preservation and Planning Area in Washington Township

The Highlands Council – the regional planning body charged with implementing the Highlands Act – has established the preservation of farmland and the industry of farming as one of its principal objectives. To this end, the *Highlands Regional Master Plan* identifies an Agricultural Resource Area that will receive the bulk of future funding and institutional support from the Highlands Council. The Agricultural Resource Area encompasses areas that contain contiguous farmbelts and quality agricultural soils. Nearly all of Washington Township falls within the Agricultural Resource Area. (Figure 13)

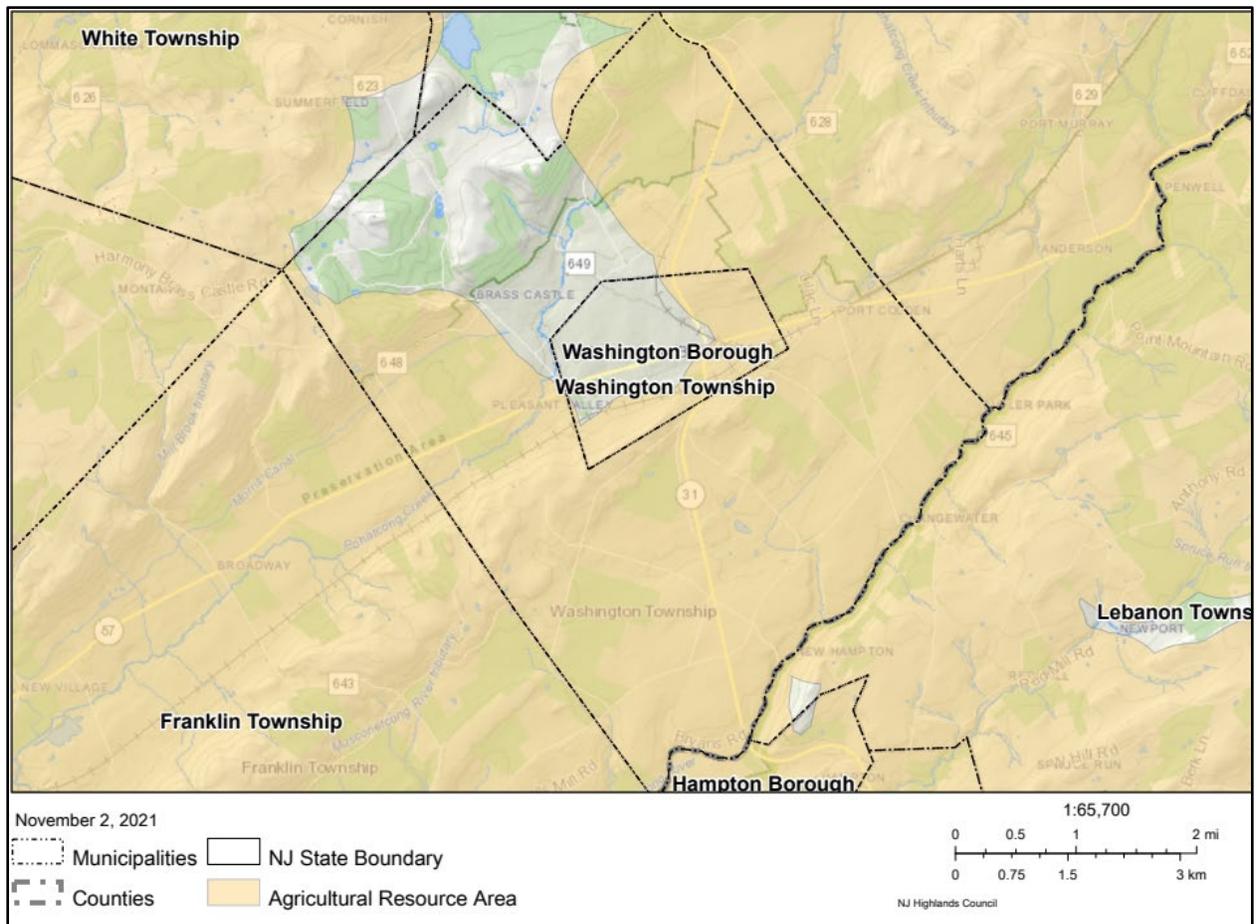
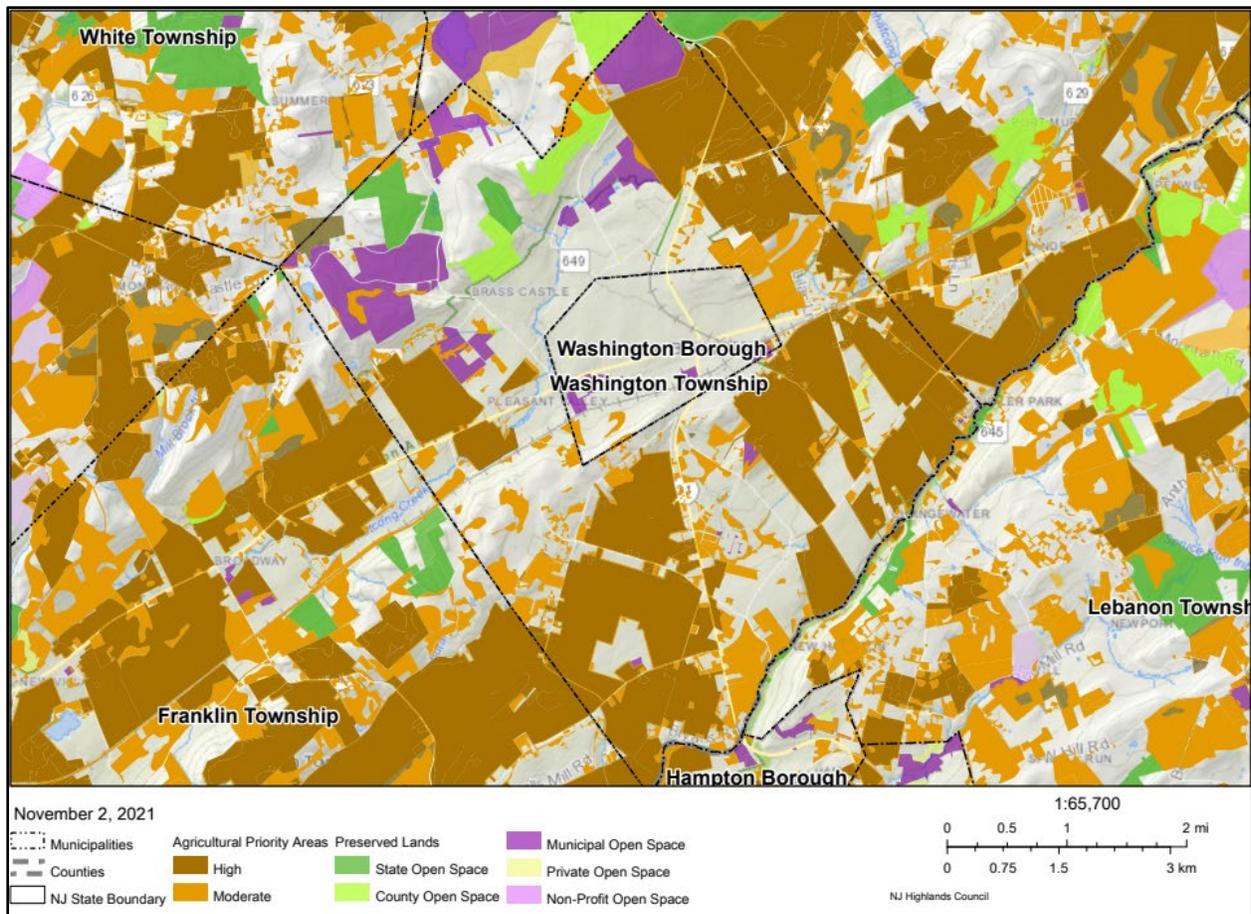


Figure 13. Agricultural Resource Areas identified by the Highlands Regional Master Plan in Washington Township

The Highlands Council also identifies Agricultural Priority Areas – subsets of the larger Agricultural Resource Area that are particularly well-suited to agricultural production. Criteria used by the Highlands Council to delineate these areas include soil quality, tillable acreage, buffers, development potential, local commitment, contiguity with other farm parcels and size.²² A few parcels in the northeast section of Washington Township are designated as High Priority Agricultural Areas. (Figure 14)



**Figure 14. Agricultural Priority Areas in Washington Township
(Highlands Regional Master Plan)**

C. Municipal Master Plan

The introduction to the 2007 *Master Plan Re-Examination Report* states Washington Township aims to “retain the rural atmosphere of the Township while allowing for appropriate levels of growth and development.” The Township’s Master Plan and its updates (1994, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2007²³, 2010, 2017²⁴) includes the following statements:

- “To encourage the preservation of farmland and open space while maintaining the equity of property owners.”
- “To protect the unique environmental features of the Township, including steep slopes, wetlands, stream courses, prime agricultural soils, aquifer recharge areas, ground water supply and threatened and endangered vegetation and wildlife habitat, and scenic vistas.”

There have been no additional changes to the land use zoning since 2009.²⁵

D. Land Use Trends

According to the 2015 NJDEP LU/LC data, forested areas make up the largest percent (32%), with urban and agricultural uses, second and third at 31% and 30% respectively. Washington has seen a slight reduction in agricultural use with a corresponding minor increase in urban land. Overall, there has been no meaningful change in land use since 2007 per the NJDEP data.

E. Public Infrastructure – Sewer and Water

Most of the town is on private septic systems, except for sewer for Hawk Pointe (120 homes, Shop Rite), Village townhomes (200 homes+), and the Community College. The water tower by Roaring Rock Park is owned by American Water, which provides water to a portion of the town. The town shares use of the water tower with the Borough. Washington was going to construct a second water tower on Washburn Avenue, but ultimately failed due to neighbors' concerns.

F. Municipal Zoning

1. Types, Lot Size, and Distribution in the Municipality

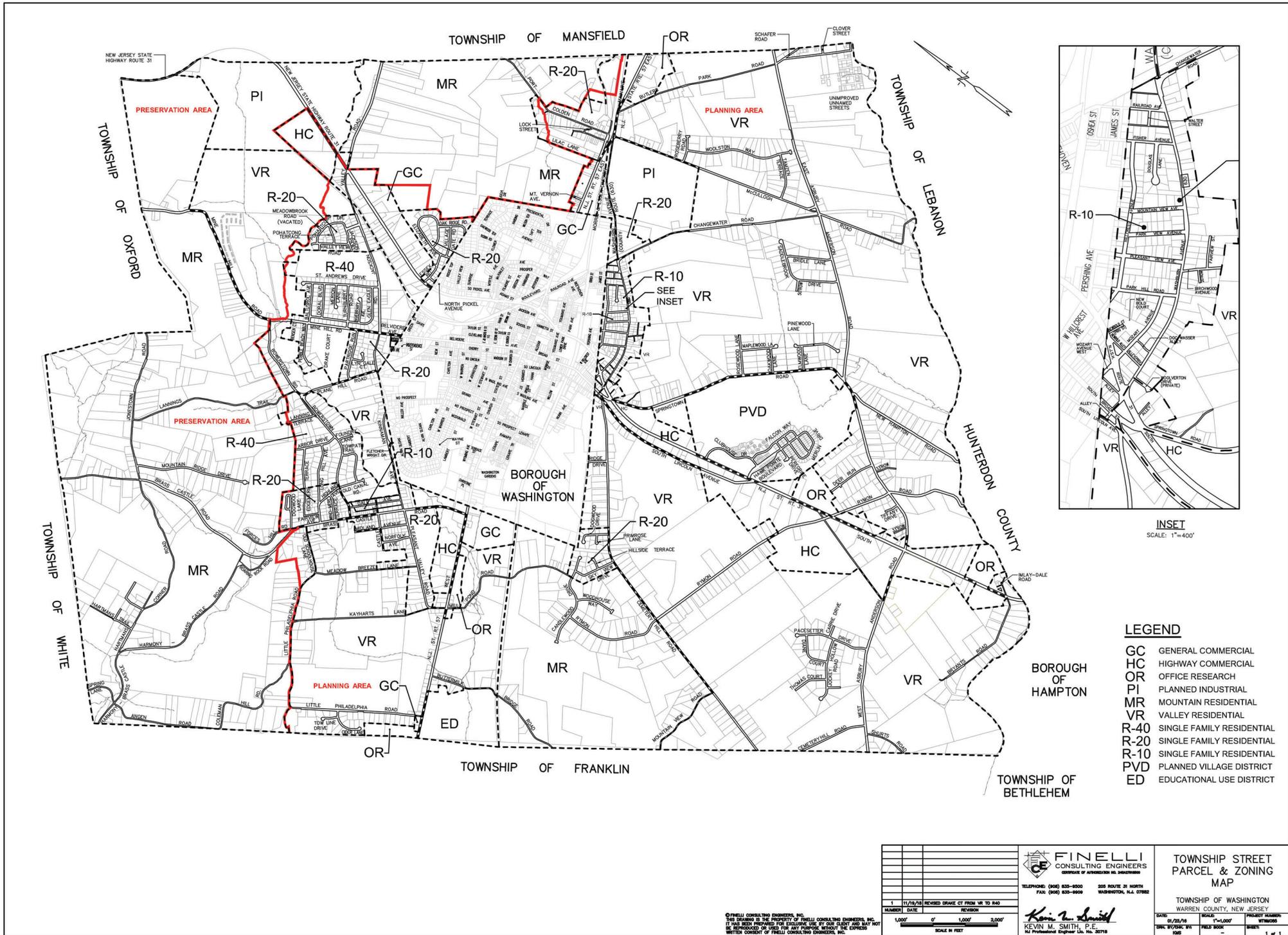
The VR (Valley Residential) and MR (Mountain Residential) zones comprise the two largest land areas, reflecting the agricultural priorities of the Township. As of 2009, 8% of the Township is zoned at <1 acre/unit, 88% is zoned as medium lots (1-5 acres/unit) and the remaining 3.6% as large lots (>5 acres/unit). (**Table 11** and **Figure 15**). All zones, other than the General Commercial (GC), Highway Commercial (HC), Office Research (OR), and Residential (R-10, R-20, R-40) allow farms/agriculture as principal permitted uses. As commercial and residential uses grow, the town will monitor its proximity to, and potential disturbance of, farmlands.

Table 11. Washington Township Zoning Districts by Lot Size, Acres, and Share of Land

Zone	Acres	% of Land	Min. Lot Area
ED: Educational Use District	87.86	0.76%	50 acres
GC: General Commercial District	203.88	1.76%	1 acre
HC: Highway Commercial District	449.61	3.88%	3 acres
MR: Mountain Residential District	3724.50	32.18%	5 acres
OR: Office Research District	156.49	1.35%	2 acres
PI: Planned Industrial District	408.92	3.53%	3 acres
PVD: Planned Village District	326.39	2.82%	250 acres
R-10: Single-Family Residential District	105.22	0.91%	10,000 sq. ft.
R-20: Single-Family Residential District	490.78	4.24%	20,000 sq. ft.
R-40: Single-Family Residential District	353.64	3.06%	40,000 sq. ft.
VR: Valley Residential District	5,266.72	45.50%	4 acres
Total	11,574.01	100%	

Source: Warren County Department of Planning, Washington Municipal Code

Figure 15. Zoning Map (2016)



- LEGEND**
- GC GENERAL COMMERCIAL
 - HC HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
 - OR OFFICE RESEARCH
 - PI PLANNED INDUSTRIAL
 - MR MOUNTAIN RESIDENTIAL
 - VR VALLEY RESIDENTIAL
 - R-40 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
 - R-20 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
 - R-10 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
 - PVD PLANNED VILLAGE DISTRICT
 - ED EDUCATIONAL USE DISTRICT

<p>1 11/19/16 REVISED ORANGE CT FROM VR TO R40</p> <p>NUMBER DATE REVISION</p>		<p>FINELLI CONSULTING ENGINEERS CORPORATE OFFICE TELEPHONE: (908) 835-8900 305 ROUTE 31 NORTH FAX: (908) 835-8900 WASHINGTON, N.J. 07082</p> <p><i>Kevin M. Smith</i> KEVIN M. SMITH, P.E. NJ Professional Engineer No. 36716</p>	<p>TOWNSHIP STREET PARCEL & ZONING MAP</p> <p>TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY</p> <p>DATE: 01/25/16 SCALE: 1"=1,000' SHEET NUMBER: 1 of 1 DRAWN BY: JMS</p>
<p>1,000' of 1,000' 3,000'</p> <p>SCALE IN FEET</p>			

L:\Washington Township\WTW085\Twp SPZ Map - 2016 R0.Dwg

2. Adopted Redevelopment Areas

On August 16, 2016, the Washington Township Committee adopted a resolution declaring that Block 65 Lots 1, 3.03, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 2 and 4; and Block 65.01 Lots 1, IC0001 (condo unit 4) and IC0002 (condo unit 3); and Block 65.02 Lot I (approximately 65.63 acres) were an “area in need of redevelopment.” The area is located within the Hawk Pointe community and includes a Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT) consisting of a total of approximately 629 dwelling units and 90,000 square feet of commercial/retail space in phases.²⁶

On March 15, 2022, the Washington Township Committee adopted a resolution declaring that Block 75 Lots 1, 1.04 and 1.05; Block 76, Lots 1, 1.01, 1.02, 1.03 and 4; and Block 66, Lot 20.03 (approximately 125.59 acres) were designated as an “area in need of redevelopment.” Furthermore, the Township of Washington received an approval letter for this Area in Need of Redevelopment dated April 11, 2022, from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA). This redevelopment area is located nearby to the Hawk Pointe Redevelopment Area and the final plan is currently under consideration by the Township Committee and the redeveloper for dwelling units, commercial/retail space and/or other considerations including a PILOT²⁷.

3. Innovative Planning Techniques

There are mandatory and volunteer options for a municipality to use to set aside land for farmland and/or open space. Voluntary options are ones a town can use when determining maximum lot sizes and mandatory set asides for resource protection. If the municipality turns to mandatory cluster provisions or a mandatory transfer of development rights (TDR) program, the Agricultural Advisory Committee will work with the Planning Board to ensure agriculture resources and land are set aside in a manner to ensure viability of the farm in the future.

Cluster zoning allows development to occur on a smaller percentage of a site while retaining the net development density permitted by local zoning. A common cluster zoning provision would allow (or require) 50% of a site to be preserved in its natural or agricultural state and would permit the other half of the site to be developed at twice the allowable zoning density. Some clustering ordinances require that certain sensitive natural areas or prime farmlands on a development site be preserved. Cluster zoning provides both the ability to develop a site to its full extent based on zoning and the preservation of contiguous agricultural lands.²⁸

This option is often attractive to builders because there tends to be fewer infrastructure costs associated with roadway construction, power lines, and sewage connections in more compact developments. Clustering is attractive to residents and farmers because it retains some agricultural areas and the rural character they create. Additionally, the undeveloped portions of clustered developments are permanently deed restricted, which helps to ensure the permanence of local farming. Clustering has added effectiveness when open space set-asides on adjacent properties are linked in a coordinated fashion. This requires pre-planning on the part of the municipality. Cluster zoning may be used where there is minimal opportunity for new development in the higher density zones that accommodate residential development.

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 to accommodate affordable housing units, neighborhood commercial stores, or “village” development densities, while other lots can be very large to encompass active farms or natural areas.

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 developer 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.

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

4. Buffer Requirements

In accordance with state and county regulations, there are multiple mechanisms through which agricultural uses are separated from other uses. At the municipal level, the education use district (ED) and planned industrial (PI) have minimum 100-foot and 150-foot buffers for abutting a residential district or residential use, respectively. At the state level, both the NJDEP and the NJDA offer guidelines. NJDEP’s Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules provide permit and other administrative exemptions for a range of farming activities, which helps to protect inland water resources. Similarly, NJDEP’s Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules, most recently amended in February 2015, now include numerous agricultural permits-by-rule. The following agricultural activities are included:

- Continuing ongoing agricultural activities that result in no fill,
- Commencing new agricultural activities that result in no fill,
- Undertaking soil conservation practices outside a floodway, and
- Constructing an agricultural building of no more than 1,000 square feet outside a floodway.

There are seven general permits which allow the continuation of agriculture activities, including soil erosion control, bank stabilization or bank restoration, channel cleaning, constructing a roadway across a water body, filling a manmade water body for freshwater wetlands restoration, creating a ford across a water body to manage livestock, constructing a fence across or along a

water body to manage livestock, and constructing a pump or water intake for livestock, in otherwise regulated areas.

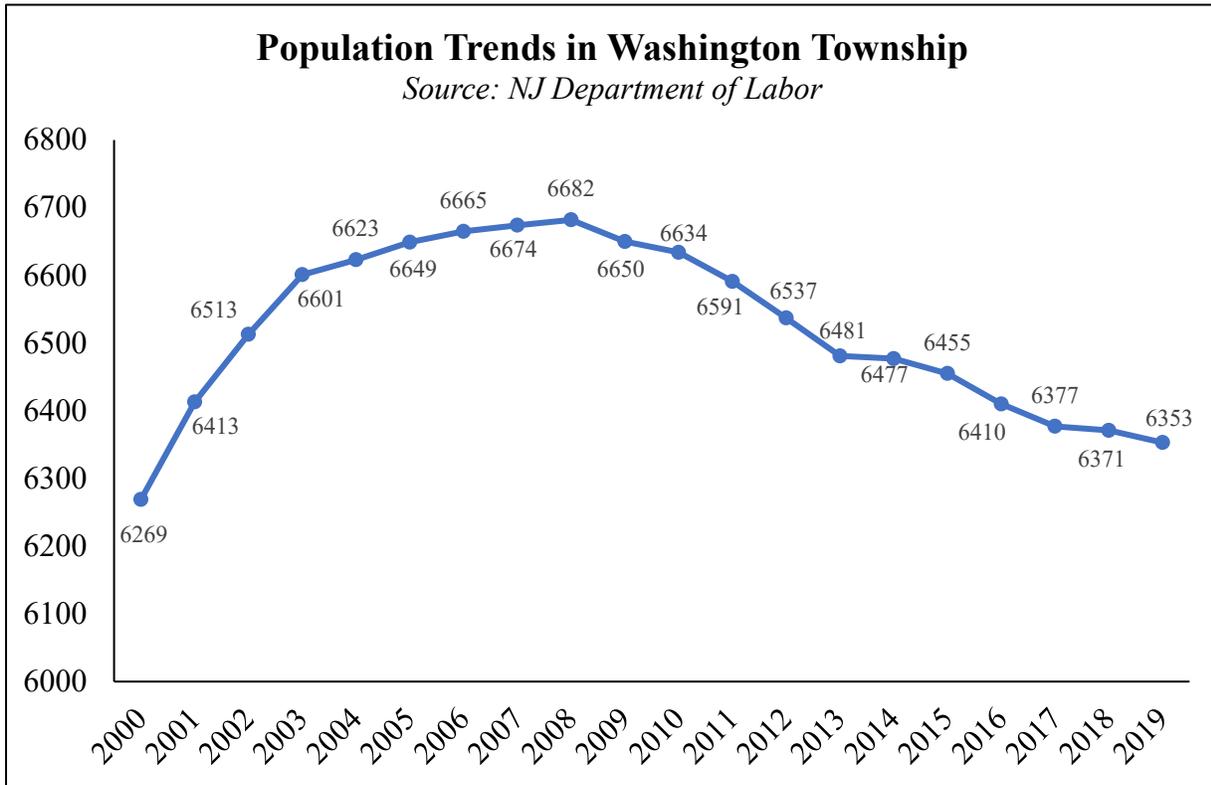


Figure 16. Population Trends in Washington Township

5. Development Pressure and Land Value

Washington’s current population, based on New Jersey Department of Labor figures, was 6,353 individuals in 2019.²⁹ This is a 4% decrease from 2010, consistent with what has been occurring county-wide with individuals leaving or not resettling back into rural sections of northwestern New Jersey (both Sussex and Warren Counties). (**Figure 16** and **Table 12**)

In the period between 2009 and 2019, growth slowed, due to the 2008 economic recession. Both historically and up to 2019, building permits in Washington were exclusively for single family homes, and represent about 5.7% of total county permits. (**Figure 17**)³⁰

The residential permits approved in 2019 were 11% of the amount issued in 2002 (12 permits versus 105 in 2002), when permit numbers peaked. Approved permits in 2019 are nearing their 2007 levels, when approved permits stood at 13. Warren County has experienced a similar trend only issuing 12% of permits in 2018 compared to its numbers in 2000. As of June 2022, there have been 92 new residential permits filed since 2020.

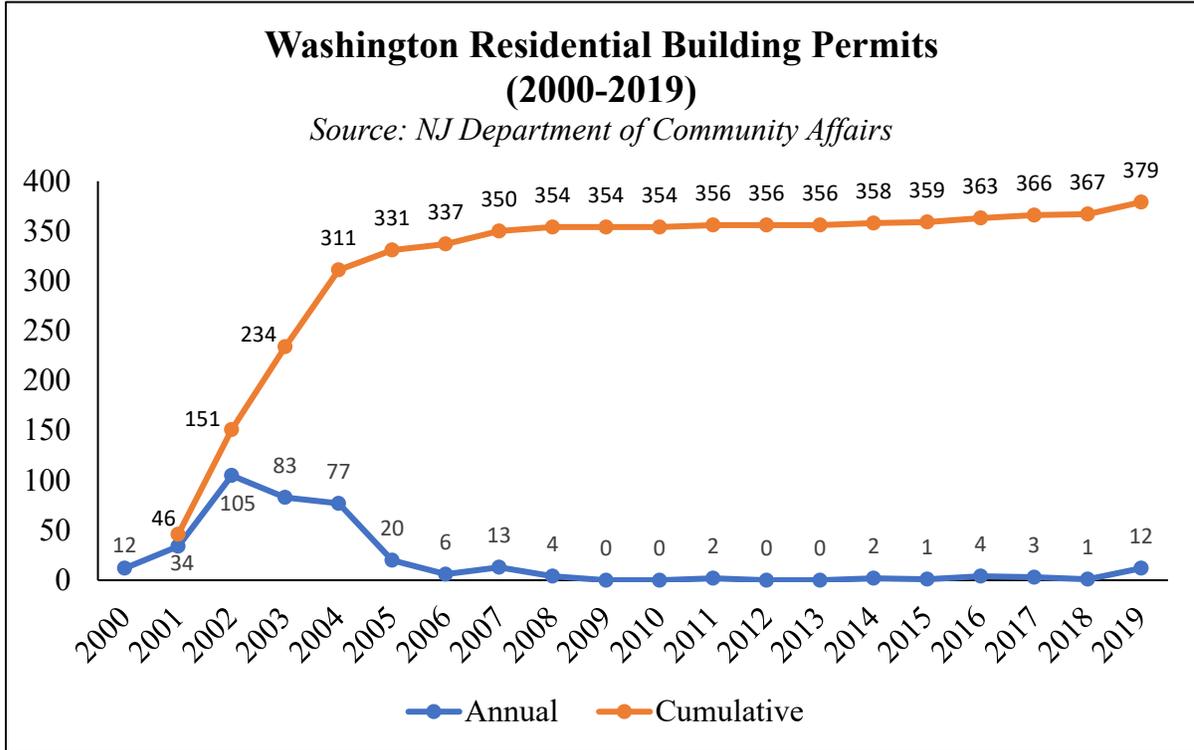


Figure 17. Residential Building Permits in White Township

Table 12. Population Trends in Warren County (2000-2019)		
Year	% Change	Population
2000	-	102,902
2001	2.23%	105,201
2002	1.50%	106,774
2003	1.30%	108,163
2004	0.30%	108,491
2005	0.34%	108,855
2006	0.19%	109,059
2007	0.11%	109,179
2008	0.66%	109,897
2009	-0.24%	109,638
2010	-0.94%	108,605
2011	-0.36%	108,218
2012	-0.45%	107,733
2013	-0.53%	107,157

Year	% Change	Population
2014	0.19%	107,358
2015	-0.07%	107,282
2016	-0.41%	106,845
2017	-0.04%	106,798
2018	-0.47%	106,293
2019	-0.97%	105,267

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

As the Township transitions into a post-recession world, development pressures may intensify in Washington, due to the relative scarcity of land for new residential development in the northwestern part of the state coupled with potential restrictions on future development in the Highlands Preservation Area within the Township.

G. Density Transfer Opportunities

An *intra-municipal* TDR is one 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. The New Jersey TDR Bank and the Office of Planning Advocacy (Smart Growth) 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. Washington Township may benefit from participating in a TDR program, primarily as a municipality with sending areas.

Non-contiguous cluster zoning is a planning technique that allows one parcel to be preserved while its density is transferred and developed instead on a different, noncontiguous parcel. This technique, first authorized in 1996, allows a municipality to approve “planned developments” consisting of two different parcels, where the “sending area” parcel is preserved, for example, as farmland or open space, and the “receiving area” parcel is developed at a higher than otherwise normally permitted density. Non-contiguous cluster zoning is not currently used in Washington Township, where there is minimal opportunity for new development in the higher density zones that accommodate residential development.

The general sentiment in Washington regarding density transfer programs is that management of such a program on the local level is beyond the capacity of the municipal government.



Chapter 4. Farmland Preservation Program

There are **5,098 acres** of farm-assessed land in Washington Township.^b (**Inventory Table 1 and Map 1**) Farms in the Township have been preserved using a variety of programs, and the town remains firmly committed to farmland protection.

A. Warren County Agricultural Development Area (ADAs)

1. Statutory and County Criteria

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

- 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.
- Suburban and/or commercial development must be reasonably non-existent in the proposed ADA area.
- The land must comprise of 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 *Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan*³¹, the CADB updated their ADA using the following 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.

^b *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.

- Agriculture is a use permitted by current municipal zoning ordinance or is allowed as a non-conforming use.

Using 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. Beginning in 2011, the Warren County Department of Land Preservation and the CADB amended the ADA to include farmland whose owners had expressed interest in preserving their property, but the land had not been included in the 2008 ADA. This was summarized in the *2017 Farmland Plan Update*. There are no changes in the designated ADA in Washington Township as part of the *2017 Update*³²

2. Agricultural Development Area – Washington Township

There are **5,098 acres** of farm assessed parcels in Washington Township. Of this, **4,580 acres** (90%) of farm assessed land in Washington is included within the Warren County ADA. All lands in Washington Township are included in the Warren County ADA except for a portion of land southwest of Washington Borough and north of the Borough between Jackson-Valley Road and Route 31.

Map 1 and Map 2 show the farm assessed lands in the Township, including all preserved farms. A map of the location of the ADA in Washington is included within **Map 4**. The Southeast Project Area, in which Washington Township is located, is shown on **Map 5**.

B. Farmland Preserved to Date by Program

As of April 2022, there are **19 farms** totaling **1,395 acres** preserved in Washington Township, at an average cost of \$7,800 per acre. (**Table 13**)

- The State of New Jersey, through the SADC, has provided \$5,908,631.31, or approximately 54% of the total cost share.
- The County has spent a total of \$2,419,496.52, or approximately 22% of the total cost share.
- Washington Township has spent a total of \$1,539,776.08, or approximately 14% of the total cost share.

As of April 2022, there are two farms pending preservation through the County PIG program in Washington.³³

Table 13. Preserved Farms in Washington Township

Farm	Program	Year	Acres	Total Cost	State Cost	County Cost	Municipal Cost	Other Cost	Cost per Acre
Caputo/ Tucker	County EP	1991	146.88	\$1,671,686.00	\$1,003,011.60	\$668,674.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,381.30
Schnetzer Farms*	County EP	1992	67.90	\$324,781.16	\$189,753.63	\$135,027.53	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,783.23
Jelliffe, Myrtle	County EP	1993	78.44	\$329,055.80	\$197,433.48	\$131,622.32	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,195.00
Schnetzer Estate*	County EP	1994	3.32	\$15,220.62	\$8,517.57	\$6,703.05	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,584.52
Schnetzer, Marie*	County EP	1995	3.10	\$11,780.00	\$0.00	\$11,780.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,800.00
Blazier*	SADC Fee	2000	51.72	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,733.95
McDonough	SADC Fee	2001	188.00	\$205,283.50	\$144,482.05	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$60,801.45	\$1,091.93
Marra	Muni PIG	2001	96.51	\$173,716.24	\$131,252.24	\$21,232.00	\$21,232.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00
Kingsbury	County EP	2001	134.80	\$471,810.50	\$320,831.14	\$150,979.36	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,500.00
Munniksma, George*	County EP	2003	60.83	\$320,015.60	\$212,310.76	\$107,704.84	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,260.82
Pineyhill Farm/ Sylstra	SADC Fee	2004	126.47	\$343,082.50	\$204,466.10	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$138,616.40	\$2,712.76
Enz, Kathleen*	County EP	2006	37.79	\$196,518.40	\$123,957.76	\$72,560.64	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,200.00
AJR Realty	SADC Fee	2006	150.60	\$4,098,000.00	\$2,458,800.00	\$409,800.00	\$1,299,400.00	\$0.00	\$27,211.34
Heath	County EP	2007	9.28	\$185,640.00	\$111,384.00	\$74,256.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00
Sigler, Anna (NJCF)*	NP PIG Fee	2008	60.79	\$1,252,253.40	\$278,361.73	\$219,144.08	\$219,144.08	\$535,603.51	\$20,600.00
McCullough Road Land Development, LLC	County Fee	2015	39.06	\$273,434.00	\$0.00	\$92,772.25	\$0.00	\$180,661.75	\$7,000.00

Table 13. Preserved Farms in Washington Township

Farm	Program	Year	Acres	Total Cost	State Cost	County Cost	Municipal Cost	Other Cost	Cost per Acre
Crouse, Jennie	County PIG/ Highlands Grant	2019	95.05	\$446,725.60	\$0.00	\$223,362.80	\$0.00	\$223,362.80	\$4,700.00
Anema	County PIG	2019	18.87	\$75,480.00	\$52,836.00	\$22,644.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,000.00
Pipers Hill Farm (Gibb) (TLC-NJ)	NP PIG	2021	25.90	\$142,466.50	\$71,233.25	\$71,233.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,500.00
Total (19):			1,395.32	\$10,936,949.82	\$5,908,631.31	\$2,419,496.52	\$1,539,776.08	\$1,139,045.91	\$7,838.33
				100%	54%	22%	14%	10%	

Sources: SADC and Warren County Department of Land Preservation

*Farm located in two municipalities – Acreage and cost share has been prorated to reflect the portion of the farm that is located in Washington Township.

- Muni PIG: Municipal Planning Incentive Grant (PIG)
- County PIG: County Planning Incentive Grant
- County Fee: County Fee
- SADC Fee: State Fee Simple
- NP PIG Fee: Non-Profit Planning Incentive Grant
- Highlands Grant: New Jersey Highlands Council Grant

Different programs have been used to preserve farmland in the Township:

- The County EP program has preserved 39% (542 acres) of farmland in Washington.
- The SADC Fee Simple program has preserved 37% (517 acres).
- The County and Municipal PIG programs have preserved 15% (210 acres).
- Non-profit organizations have helped preserve 6% of farmland (87 acres).
- The County Fee program supported the remaining 3% (39 acres) in Washington.

1. County Easement Purchase

County Easement Purchases (CEP) involve the sale of farmland development rights to the county by the landowner. To be eligible for the County Easement Purchase program, the land must be in the ADA and be eligible for farmland assessment. In Washington, nine farms have been preserved through the County Easement Purchase Program, protecting 542 acres of farmland.

2. County Planning Incentive Grants

The goal of County Planning Incentive Grants (PIGs) is to protect and preserve large pieces of contiguous farmland through the purchase of development easements. Warren County completed their *2008 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan* to bring it into compliance for the County Planning Incentive Grant program. In Washington Township, two farms have been preserved through the County PIG program, protecting 114 acres of farmland. One of these farms was preserved through both the County PIG program and a Highlands Grant, totaling 95 acres.

3. 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. To qualify for this program, the municipality must have an agricultural advisory board, a Right to Farm ordinance, a farmland preservation plan, and a source of funding for farmland preservation. Farms to be preserved through a municipal PIG need to be approved by the CADB. As part of a municipal PIG, the SADC funds 60% of the development easement purchase with the County and the municipality splitting the remaining cost.

Washington Township is not currently enrolled in the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant program. With the completion of the Farm Plan and the collection of the tax levy for farmland preservation, the town intends to enroll in the PIG program in the future. Washington has one farm totaling 96.51 acres that was preserved in 2001 through their municipal PIG program which was discontinued after 2008.

4. SADC 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. In Washington, no farms have been preserved through this program.

5. 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 property is then resold at auction, and the SADC does not retain ownership. To participate in this program, the farmland must be within an ADA, and be eligible for Farmland Assessment. In Washington

Township, four farms totaling 517 acres have been preserved through this program, with the State of New Jersey paying \$3,207,748.15.

6. Non-profit Grant Program

Grants from the SADC to non-profit organization fund up to 50% of the fee simple or development easement values on farms. Washington has two farms preserved through the non-profit planning incentive grant fee program, totaling 87 acres. These were done by the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and The Land Conservancy of New Jersey.

7. Transfer of Development Rights

TDR 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. To date, this program has not been used by Washington Township to preserve farmland.

8. Other Programs and Partnerships

Municipal Farmland Preservation Program. Through the Municipal Farmland Preservation Program, farms can be preserved directly by a municipality either using SADC grant funding or with the intention of later receiving cost share participation from the SADC. To date, no farms in Washington Township have been preserved using this program.

Highlands Development Credit Bank. The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act charged the Highlands Council with developing a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program for the Highlands Region. The Highlands Council adopted the TDR Program as part of the *Highlands Region Master Plan* and established the Highlands Development Credit Bank (HDC Bank) in June 2008 in support of the TDR Program. This program serves as one mechanism to address some of the equity concerns of property owners in the Preservation Area that have been affected by implementation of the Highlands Act.

The Highlands TDR Program allocates TDR credits called Highlands Development Credits or HDCs to sending zone property owners. HDCs may be sold to developers for use in appropriate voluntary receiving zones. Use of HDCs by developers in established receiving zones will permit developers to increase the density or intensity of proposed projects in those zones. Under the Highlands Act, participation as a receiving zone is voluntary.

Three properties in Washington Township have been preserved through the HDC program.³⁴ (Table 14)

HDC Certificate Number	Block	Lot(s)	HDC Easement Recorded	Acres
2017-0004	4	4	8/1/2017	13.83
2012-0001	40	33.01	2/24/2012	39.16
2013-0002	40	109	4/16/2013	4.59
Total:				57.58

C. Term Farmland Preservation Programs

The Term Farmland Preservation Programs are cost sharing programs for soil and water conservation projects, in which the farmer receives up to 50% of the costs for these projects, as well as 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 either eight years or sixteen years. For entrance into these programs and to qualify for benefits, a farm must be located within the county ADA. Technical assistance for the soil and water practices comes through the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

In Washington Township, no farms currently participate in the Term Farmland programs.

D. Coordination with Open Space Preservation Initiatives

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. Washington has a Municipal Open Space Trust Fund, which is used to preserve farmland and open space. The Township updated its *Open Space and Recreation Plan* in 2022 and identified the preservation of farmland as a priority for the municipality.

E. Farmland Preservation Program Funding Expended to Date by Source

The Washington Open Space Trust Fund was approved in 1997 by voter referendum. The fund created a tax that collects two cents (\$.02) per one hundred dollars (\$100) of assessed property value, and has been reauthorized at the same rate since that time. The levy raised \$137,317 in 2021 had an ending balance of \$2,197.³⁵

To date, the Township has expended \$2,423,135 in funds from their Open Space Trust Fund.

F. Monitoring the Easements

Warren County monitors the property to verify that compliance with the deed restrictions on the preserved property is taking place, and any easements preserved through the SADC Direct Easement and Fee Simple programs are monitored by the SADC. The Upper Delaware

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
- Presence of 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

G. Coordination with Transfer of Development Rights Programs

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, Washington Township is not currently enrolled in or developing a TDR program.



Chapter 5. Future Farmland Preservation

A. Preservation Goals

Washington Township is 18.04 square miles (11,547 acres) in size. Of this, **5,098 acres (44%)** are under farmland assessment, which includes croplands, woodlands, farm structures and wetlands/waterways that occur on an agricultural property.^{c36} Since 1991, Washington Township has preserved **1,395 acres** of farmland. (**Table 13**) Based upon the State’s Minimum Eligibility Criteria for productive soils and tillable land, **1,985 acres** are potentially eligible for farmland preservation in Washington Township and are located within the ADA.

In Washington, these are the “targeted” farms though the municipal Planning Incentive Grant program. This analysis was done on a farm unit (where a farm consists of a collection of individual lots) and a farm parcel (one lot) basis.

Based upon the available funding to purchase and preserve farmland, and the amount of farmland potentially eligible for preservation, the following preservation goals are identified for Washington Township:

One-year target:	100 acres, 1 farm
Five-year target:	500 acres, 6 farms
Ten-year target:	1,000 acres, 10 farms

B. Description of Project Areas

There are **5,098 acres** of farm assessed land in Washington Township. Of this, **4,580 acres** are included within the County’s ADA. Within the County’s ADA in Washington Township, **3,548 acres** are in active agriculture. In the *2017 Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan*, the Warren CADB identified seven project areas within the County’s ADA for farmland preservation. Washington Township falls within Southeast Project Area Southeast, which includes **4,580 acres** of farm assessed land in the municipality. (**Table 15**)

^c *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 2019 in the NJ Division of Taxation’s 2019 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*).

Table 15. Southeast Project Area in Washington			
(acres) ^d	Total Farm Assessed Properties	Unpreserved Farmland	Preserved Farmland
Washington	5,098	3,666	1,375
Project Area Southeast	4,580	3,209	1,372

C. Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Minimum Eligibility Criteria are based upon the SADC’s rules for farmland preservation and project eligibility.^e 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 municipal FPC and the Warren CADB that the parcels were not identified as targeted due to a specific mapping issue or other error.

^d These numbers are calculated using GIS data, and therefore may differ from Tax Assessment data.

^e Adopted by the SADC May 21, 2007, and July 25, 2019.

The Township may proceed without State funding on projects that do not meet these Minimum Eligibility Standards, but as a rule, the County and Washington will not cost share on applications that do not meet SADC minimum standards. In all cases, the Washington Township AAC will work closely with the Warren CADB to review and process applications from landowners for farmland preservation. The Washington AAC will follow all County and State procedures to ensure consistency in application review and processing.

Within the identified project area, candidate farms are identified which meet the tillable land and soils minimum eligibility standards. To determine farms that are potentially eligible for preservation, a series of queries were made utilizing the ArcGIS 10.8.1 digital mapping software for soils and tillable land. These are described in further detail below and shown on target farm analysis maps, **Map A** (meeting tillable criteria), **Map B** (meeting soils), **Map C** (farms meeting both criteria – target farms).

Farmland that meets the SADC Criteria for Tillable Land

Tillable acreage was determined using the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection 2015 Land Use/Land Cover mapping for agricultural lands. The land categories that are defined as the “tillable land” based on the 2015 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 by 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

Farms which meet the minimum eligibility criteria for tillable land in Washington are shown on **Map A**.

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 if 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
 - ✓ Amount and location of steep slopes on the farm
 - ✓ Number of stony/gravelly soils on the farm

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.³⁷

Farm parcels are sorted by size based upon the 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

Farms that meet the NRCS minimum eligibility criteria for soils are shown on **Map B**.

Farmland that meets SADC Criteria for both Tillable Land and Soils

Utilizing the tillable acreage determined from the NJDEP 2015 Land Use/Land Cover mapping for agricultural lands and soil acreage determined using the Soil Survey as prepared by the NRCS for prime farmland soils, soils of statewide importance and soils of unique importance, farm parcels were sorted by size based upon the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for tillable land and soils.

Farms in Washington that meet the minimum eligibility criteria are shown on **Map C** and listed in **Inventory Table 2**. In Washington, this analysis was run on both an individual farm parcel basis and for units of farms (which include a collection of parcels):

- ✓ Farm Parcel: Individual tax lot
- ✓ Farm Unit: Collection of parcels comprising one farm

Overall, there are **1,985 acres** of farm assessed land which meet the minimum eligibility criteria for the state’s farmland preservation program and are located within the ADA. Any farm that is located within the town’s designated redevelopment areas were excluded from the list of target farms.

The “target farms” for Washington Township are listed in **Error! Reference source not found.** More detailed information can be found in **Inventory Table 2**.

Table 16. Target Farms in Washington Township

<i>Farm Parcels which are not part of a Farm Unit</i>			
Block	Lot	Location	Acres (GIS Data)
3	5	255 BRASS CASTLE ROAD	10.74
17	6.01	39 MEADOW BREEZE LANE	8.27
27	11	44 KINNAMAN AVENUE	6.91
27	15	80 KINNAMAN AVENUE	13.59
40	33	158 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	28.62
43	3.02	150 PORT COLDEN ROAD	9.19
44	7	1059 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	52.33
45	14.03	9 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	6.76
45	14.04	33 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	7.17
45	14.05	1018 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	10.01
45	20.03	1078 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	15.23
47	7	30 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	131.30
47	9.08	80 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	8.38
48	69	30 CHANGEWATER ROAD	66.64
48	75	161 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	120.34
70	4	240 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	7.25
71	4	48 RYMON ROAD	14.65
71	4.04	44 RYMON ROAD	10.02
71	6	50 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	69.20
71	7.39	80 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	13.77
74	3	11 SHURTS ROAD	61.96
74	4	111 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	7.04
75	2.03	159 BRYANS ROAD	36.50
78	3.01	426 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	2.47
81	8	233 RYMON ROAD	34.92
82	15	196A CHANGEWATER ROAD	43.33
82	17	146 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	142.97
83	1.01	286 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	29.39
Total Farm Parcel Acreage (28 farm parcels):			968.94
<i>Farm Parcels that are part of a Farm Unit</i>			
79	1, 1.01, 1.02	E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD & RYMON RD	71.14
66	1, 1.10	RYMON RD & CEMETARY HILL RD	134.84
38; 39	5; 1	JACKSON VALLEY RD & ROUTE 31 N	296.13
74	6.01, 6.02	W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	12.61
74	6, 6.03	W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	21.22
40	30, 31.01	JACKSON VALLEY RD	46.78
75	2.01, 2.04, 2.05	BRYANS RD	58.82
83	2, 4, 4.01, 4.02	E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	110.34

Block	Lot	Location	Acres
83	16, 17	CHANGEWATER RD	19.93
45	20, 20.02	BUTLERS PARK RD	103.87
84; 85	1, 1.01, 1.02; 1, 9, 10.01	BUTLERS PARK RD	51.47
40	46, 47	PORT COLDEN RD	89.07
Total Farm Unit Acreage (12 farm units):			1,016.20
Total Target Farms (40 farms):			1,985.14

In addition to the target farms, there are seven properties totaling 175 acres that are potentially eligible for preservation and are located in zones that do not permit agricultural use. (Table 17) The Township may consider changing zoning in the future to allow agriculture.

Farm Parcels which are not part of a Farm Unit			
Block	Lot	Location	Acres (GIS Data)
38	8	311 ROUTE 31 NORTH	11.86
44	6	661 ROUTE 57 EAST	19.37
44	6.05	667 ROUTE 57 EAST	4.64
66	20.04	355 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	9.28
66	20.06	349 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	9.03
71	5	120 RYMON ROAD	99.16
79	7	496 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	21.81
Potentially Eligible Farms (7 parcels):			175.14

Based upon the available funding to purchase and preserve farmland, and the amount of farmland potentially eligible for preservation the town has identified the following goals:

- One-year target: 100 acres, 1 farm
- Five-year target: 500 acres, 6 farms
- Ten-year target: 1,000 acres, 10 farms

D. County and Municipal Ranking Criteria

The Warren CADB uses the SADC’s ranking criteria as the basis for qualifying farms for preservation. The County would consider cost sharing 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 plan for the County for farmland preservation.³⁸ 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.

Washington AAC and Township Committee are committed to preserving as much of the Township’s agricultural land base as possible and supports innovative funding mechanisms and preservation tools. The AAC follows the County and State criteria when prioritizing farms for preservation in the Township as part of the Municipal PIG program.

E. Municipal and County Policies Related to Farmland Preservation Applications

Washington Township follows the policies established by Warren County regarding housing opportunities, division of premises, and exception areas. These policies are documented in the *2017 Warren County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update*. The Warren CADB follows the SADC’s policies regarding these issues.

1. Approval of Housing Opportunities

Agricultural labor housing: Agricultural labor housing is not currently protected under the Right to Farm Act in the State of New Jersey and the SADC has not, to date, adopted an official policy for agricultural labor housing.³⁹ However, the SADC recognizes the need for this type of housing and does have guidelines that a landowner must refer to construct labor housing on preserved farms for work on the preserved farm.

The guidelines are:

- Agricultural labor housing must be permitted with approval of easement holder and the SADC.
- Must verify need for “production” aspects of farm.
- Must be full time employed on the premises (seasonal labor is permitted).
- Structure must be sized appropriately based on labor needs.
- Cannot be used for owner or any lineal descendant of owner.⁴⁰

House replacement: The policy of the SADC 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, to minimize the impact on the agricultural operation. This is supported by the CADB and AAC for Washington Township.

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.”⁴¹ 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 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.

2. Division of the Premises

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

3. Approval of Exception

Exceptions are defined by the SADC as “areas 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. The SADC discourages the preservation of farms that do not have at least one exception, 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 that 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.”⁴² Typically, there is “no requirement to subdivide a severable exception prior to or after the deed of easement is executed.”

Non-severable: Non-severable exceptions are defined by the SADC as “area that is part of an existing Block and Lot owned by the applicant, which will not be subject to the restrictions of the Deed of Easement but cannot be sold separately from the remaining premises.”⁴³

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 Washington 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.

F. Funding Plan

The *Preserve New Jersey Act 2014* established that a portion of the Corporate Business Tax was to be dedicated to preservation efforts. Of this revenue, 60% is allotted to Green Acres, 4% goes to Blue Acres (administered by Green Acres), 31% is set aside for farmland preservation (SADC), and the remaining 5% goes to Historic Preservation (New Jersey Historic Trust).

1. Municipal and County Funding Sources

The Warren County Land Preservation Department is responsible for administering Warren County's Farmland, Historic, and Open Space Preservation Programs. In 1993, Warren County voters approved a non-binding public referendum by a margin of 2-1 which allowed for the collection of an additional tax of up to 2 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. In November 1999 and again in November 2002, county voters approved non-binding open space referendums by large margins, each time recommending an increase in the open space tax of another 2 cents per \$100 of assessed property value.

The Open Space Trust Fund, which currently collects 2 cents per \$100 of assessed property value, has enabled Warren County to preserve over 20,000 acres of farmland, 1,700 acres of county parkland, and participate in numerous historical and open space preservation efforts with local non-profits and municipalities throughout the county.⁴⁴The funds are allocated as follows:

- 55% to the CADB for farmland preservation.
- 25% to the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee (MCCT) for non-profit and municipal sponsored open space and historic preservation projects.
- 20% to the Board of Recreation Commissioners (BORC) for acquisition of county parkland.

The Washington Open Space Trust Fund was approved in 1997 by voter referendum and set at two cents (\$.02) per one hundred dollars (\$100) of assessed property value. The Fund generates \$137,317 per year and had a balance of \$2,197 as of December 2021.

Allocations of funds from the Trust is under the purview of the Township Committee, with the input, as appropriate, of the Environmental Commission and Agricultural Advisory Committee.

2. Financial Policies – Cost-Share Requirements

Washington Township works with Warren County according to its current cost-share requirements for preserving farms. The Warren CADB will fund one-half of the difference between the amount

the SADC funds 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.

Washington Township is supportive of donation/bargain sales and would consider installment purchases, if requested by the landowner. These tools serve to leverage limited funding resources.

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

3. Cost Projections and Funding Plan Associated with Preservation Goals

The Washington Township Open Space Trust Fund generated \$137,317 in 2021 and has a current balance of \$2,197. The average cost was \$7,800 per acre to purchase a development easement on farms in the municipality. However, the cost of land has risen since the earliest acquisitions were made, affecting the cost per acre for future acquisitions. The Township looks to leverage the municipal funds with county and state cost-share grants on farmland projects. It is anticipated that the municipal cost share will average 15% (at a minimum). The following assumptions can be made:

- The Trust Fund generated \$137,317 in 2021.
- Average price per acre is \$7,800.
- The average price per acre will increase 5% over the next five to ten years.
- The Township is purchasing land in partnership with County and State (no direct purchase by Township).
- The municipal cost share is on average 15%.

Based upon the above assumptions and the AAC's goal of preservation ten farms (1,000 acres) in the next ten years, it is anticipated that the Township will have a total project cost of \$7,800,000 and contribute \$1,170,000 over the same time, if their percent contribution remains at 15%. If it increases to 30%, the municipal share will be \$2,340,000.

Utilizing the SADC sliding scale for cost-sharing, and the estimated per acre value of the purchase of a farmland easement in Washington 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%).

G. Administrative Resources

1. Staff/Consultant resources

The AAC meets as needed to discuss farmland projects and issues. The municipal attorney assists Washington Township with their farmland program.

2. Legal support

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

3. Database Development

The AAC maintains the database of farmland in the municipality and works with the Warren County Department of Land Preservation on projects and data issues, as needed.

4. Geographic Information System (GIS) Capacity

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey has provided Geographic Information System mapping services for Washington Township for the *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan*.

H. Factors Limiting Farmland Preservation Implementation

Washington Township has a strong commitment to preserve its farmland. The high rate of farmland preservation in Washington Township has been attributable to the willingness and the ability of the Township to leverage its own funding to protect farmland. Washington Township supports the municipal PIG program.

Landowner interest in the farmland preservation program is a challenge for the AAC in attracting new projects. Incentives for development on the Route 31 corridor may lead to difficulty for farmers with increased traffic and roadways, and monetary incentives for development have been higher than for preservation. In addition, the tax abatement in Washington Township lasts 30 years and are lower for residential or commercial development than for land preservation.

Washington Township does not have agriculture as a permitted use in highway/commercial zoning, leading to decreased support for funding land preservation in those zones.⁴⁵

In order to uphold the farming heritage of Washington Township, the AAC may consider hosting a public meeting with interested farmers to gain a better understanding of farming challenges within the industry. Specific strategies and effective solutions might be discussed with participating farmers to assure that farming is a sustainable career in the Township. Efforts to ensure that farmers can support their families will prevent losing the farming heritage of Washington Township to development.



Chapter 6. Economic Development

A. Economic Development Plans and Initiatives

Washington continues to be mainly agricultural, with **4,895 acres** devoted to agricultural or horticultural use.⁴⁶ The primary crops are hay, corn, and soybeans. 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 Washington is measured not by acres preserved but also by the programs put in place to support the farmers and their businesses.

The future of agriculture in Washington Township is being shaped by market forces and social trends that are occurring throughout New Jersey. Among the most substantial trends shaping local agriculture has been the decline in the dairy market. Dairy was the foundation of the region's agricultural industry, but the lack of support and demand, combined with the amount of labor involved, contributed to the decline of the commercial dairy industry in Washington. Corn, soybeans, and hay are the primary crops, and there are only two dairy farms remaining in Washington Township.

Land prices in Warren County have remained relatively stable for the past 5 to 10 years, though there has been recent development pressure from warehouse and solar projects. Development continues for commercial and light industrial purposes and can take land out of agricultural production.⁴⁷ The combination of declining traditional agricultural markets and increasing land pressure will likely promote innovation in the ways farmers supplement their incomes. Farmers in Warren County are meeting these challenges by producing goods with higher rates of return.

The NJDA *Smart Growth Tool Kit* provides information to support municipal and county government, businesses, non-profit 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*.^{48, 49} 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. Additionally, the NJDA released a *2011 Economic Development Strategies* report to expand and strengthen various sectors of the agriculture industry in New Jersey, including strategies for produce, horticulture, dairy, livestock and poultry, field crops, organic, equine, and agritourism.

The Warren CADB and its Department of Land Preservation are directly and administratively involved with the preservation and enhancement of farming in the County. This includes acquisition, monitoring, assisting with Right to Farm disputes, working with municipalities to create farm-friendly atmospheres where possible, and coordinating with the state, County, and other organizations to maximize the agricultural potential of the County, including an awareness of the need to support agriculture from an economic development perspective.⁵⁰

In 2017, 86 of Warren County’s 918 farms, or 9% of all farms, had sales of more than \$100,000, accounting for 92% of the total revenue. This leaves 91% of farms accounting for 8% of the remaining total sales, indicating a wide disparity in revenue between a large majority of smaller farms and a small minority of larger farms. From a profitability standpoint, Warren County farms had a net cash farm income of \$21,227 in 2017. The average farm market value of \$101,543, was lower than the statewide average of \$111,095.^f (Table 18)

Table 18. Warren County Agricultural Economic Overview			
	2007	2017	% Change to 2017
Market Value/Products Sold (\$1,000)	\$75,477	\$93,217	24%
Average/Farm (\$)	\$80,897	\$101,543	26%
Production Expenses (\$1,000)			
Production Expenses (\$1,000)	\$59,355	\$77,551	31%
Average/Farm (\$)	\$63,617	\$84,478	33%
Net Income (\$1,000)			
Net Income (\$1,000)	\$20,843	\$21,227	2%
Average/Farm (\$)	\$22,340	\$26,650	19%
Farms w/Net Gains			
Farms w/Net Gains	358	309	-14%
Average/Farms (\$)	76,983	101,820	32%
% of All of Farms	38%	34%	-11%
Farms w/Net Losses			
Farms w/Net Losses	575	609	6%
Average/Farm (\$)	11,682	16,807	44%
% of All of Farms	62%	66%	6%
Total Acres			
Total Acres	74,975	73,874	-1%
All Farms	933	918	-2%
Average Acres/Farm	80	80	0%
<i>Source: Census of Agriculture</i>			

^f *Census of Agriculture* data is available through the USDA NASS portal: <https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/index.php> or through specialized searches on the Quick Stats interface accessed here: <https://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/>. Citations throughout this document refer to information gathered from these sources for the indicated years.

Using the *Census of Agriculture*, crop sales climbed slowly from \$8.3 million in 1987 to \$18.4 million in 2002, before jumping to \$43.6 million in 2007 and continuing to climb to \$54.7 million in 2012 and to \$67.1 million in 2017. Within the crop sector, nursery/greenhouse was the largest sub-sector in 2017 with 61% of the market share, more than the 46% market share in 2012. The grains sub-sector came in second, with 21%, and vegetables, fruits, hay, and Christmas trees all lagged with 10%, 4%, 4%, and 1%, respectively. Over this same 30-year period (1987-2017), livestock sales went from \$27 million in sales in 1987 before slightly improving to \$31.9 million in 2007 then declining to \$26 million in 2017.

As part of this emphasis on the business of agriculture, the NJDA issued the *2011 Economic Development Strategies*, which identify and propose methods to expand and enhance various subsets of the agriculture industry in New Jersey, including produce, horticulture, aquaculture and seafood, dairy, field and forage crops, livestock and poultry, organic, wine, and agritourism. 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 has become tougher. New Jersey...must continually work to rediscover its competitive advantages, improving access to nearby markets and strengthening consumer loyalty.”⁵¹

Using recommendations outlined in the *2011 Economic Development Strategies* report, Warren County municipalities, including Washington Township, can investigate ways to expand and/or diversify into more profitable sectors to ensure sustainable agriculture practices and profitability. For each of the sectors, the 2011 report encourages farmers to continually seek new local, state, and interstate markets to strengthen market share. Washington Township has 147 Farmland Assessment forms for 2018.⁵² §

Produce

Major efforts by the NJDA are directed at increasing the demand for New Jersey grown produce through branding, agritourism, farm direct sales programs, and farm markets. The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* include all these activities. NJDA is committed to promoting agritourism through the *Jersey Fresh* website, the distribution of printed materials, and other forms of advertisement and promotion including collaborating with Rutgers University through the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, and promotion of the work of other organizations such as the New Jersey Farmers Direct Marketing Association. Washington farms with appropriate activities benefit from such promotion.

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* for produce focused on the *Jersey Fresh* program and food safety. NJDA’s *Jersey Fresh* labels program is promoted throughout the state, to strengthen the appeal of the *Jersey Fresh* brand to supermarket chains and other retailers. This has been largely successful, with major retailers such as Wegmans, ShopRite, Trader Joe’s, Target, ACME, and Foodtown (among others) carrying and promoting produce from the *Jersey Fresh* program.⁵³

§ Farmland Assessment data has been accessed from datasets shared by the SADC; data referenced as Farmland Assessment refers to data from the following reports: either Warren County data for the years 2000, 2005, 2015, 2017, and 2018, and/or for state data for 2017.

Produce, which includes vegetables and fruits, is a leading agricultural commodity in New Jersey. In 2017, Warren County vegetable growers on 94 farms harvested 1,671 acres, with resulting sales of \$6,388,000. Fruit, tree nut, and berry combined sales totaled \$2,601,000 in 2017, an increase of 16% from 2012. Total produce sales increased after 2002, from \$5,324,000 in 2002 to \$8,989,000 in 2017, a 69% increase.

Washington had a total of 87 acres which were harvested for fruits and vegetables in 2018, an increase from the 56 acres in 2015 and the 77 acres in 2005. The most prominent crop in 2018 was corn for grain (996 acres). Some of these crops do not require as much land as field and forage crops such as soybeans and hay, making them a positive match with the trend towards smaller farms over the years, especially those that follow organic or sustainable practices. However, these crops also have higher input costs than crops such as hay, and in that respect can benefit from economies of scale.

Farmers with roadside stands or markets should have their own websites, and utilize other websites and regional events, to gain visibility. Opportunities for promoting produce (and, in many cases, numerous other agricultural products) include:^h

- NJDA *Jersey Fresh* website listings have recorded three Washington farms, all of which have pick your own operations and on-farm markets.⁵⁴
- *Jersey Fresh* also offers community-supported agriculture (CSA), where residents can pledge to support a farm in advance of the growing season, where they receive shares of the total harvest in return. Genesis Farms in nearby Blairstown is a community supported farm.⁵⁵
- *Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension (NJAES-RCE)* created an educational website dedicated to agritourism for the public, planning and policy professionals, farmers, and educators.⁵⁶
- A training website was also developed by the Rutgers Agritourism Team for farmers and can be found at <http://agritourism.rutgers.edu/training/>.
- *New Jersey Skylands* promotes agritourism throughout Warren County, offering descriptions of the Warren County Farmers Fair, wineries, farmers markets, and other attractions. The website offers a comprehensive list of different types of produce available and the best time to attend pick-your-own operations for each produce category.⁵⁷
- *Natural Jersey* is a site promoting local natural health products and sustainable living. They highlight producers, such as farms, farm stands, and farmers markets throughout New Jersey which align with their mission.⁵⁸
- *Tour de Farm New Jersey* holds an annual cycling event in both Sussex and Warren Counties, with the goal of supporting local farmers. Farmers provide samples, as well as goods for sale along the route.⁵⁹
- *Warren County Farmers Fair* is a weeklong festival in Harmony featuring many local farms offering products for sale, as well as hot air balloons, artwork, and other attractions.⁶⁰

^h These websites are not meant to exclusively promote produce-centric farms, but rather to highlight various farms and events throughout Warren County, including Washington.

- *Greenmarket* is a network of New York City farmers markets designed to promote small family farms within the region. Over 50 Greenmarket locations are found within all five boroughs, where Race Farms in Blairstown offers products for sale.⁶¹
- Other resources listing direct marketing opportunities for produce in Washington include VisitNJfarms.org, NJ Farmers Direct Marketing Association (<http://njfarmmarkets.org/>), Northeast Organic Farming Association New Jersey (<http://nofanj.org>), LocalHarvest.org, and EdibleJersey.com (pick-your-own listings).

Specific recommendations include:

- Utilize consistent, inclusive, and up to date accurate information from the state, county, and regional/association websites.
- Establish or reestablish community farmers markets with help from the CADB, the NJAES-RCE, and the Warren County Economic Development Advisory Council.
- Explore expansion/diversification into value-added produce products, such as jams and jellies, in workshops and direct communications from the CADB in concert with the NJDA and Rutgers.
- Explore “Contract Growing,” that is, growing goods for specific customers on a contract basis (such as regional pharmaceutical or biotech companies).
- Explore diversifying into ultra-niche crops and produce crops that serve the needs of growing ethnic populations in the region, through NJAES-RCE workshops, videos, and resources: <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/ultra-niche-crops/>,⁶² <https://sustainable-farming.rutgers.edu/alternative-world-crops/>.⁶³
- Utilize state promotional campaigns, free signage, and other signage opportunities.
- Offer Community Supported Agriculture and other retail options to capture consumer dollars to garner increase from profitability, as well as raise community awareness of local agriculture.

Nursery, Greenhouses, Floriculture and Sod

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* focused on ensuring plant health, including inspections and research; increasing consumer awareness of the *Jersey Grown* brand; and working with government agencies to use New Jersey-produced products wherever possible. This was the highest-ranking category of agricultural commodities in Warren County in both 2012 and 2017, bringing in \$25,248,000 and \$40,793,000, respectively. It accounted for 28% of total agricultural sales in 2012, and 44% in 2017, versus 40% and 45% statewide.⁶⁴ This sub-sector exhibited steady growth from \$1 million in countywide in 1987, to \$7.6 million in 2002, before jumping to \$25.2 million in 2012, and jumping again to \$40.8 million in 2017. The county experienced a 232% revenue increase from nursery/greenhouse products from 2002 to 2012, and a 62% increase from 2012 to 2017. The sales increase is attributed in part to businesses taking advantages of market niches and new technologies, supplying specialty products to customers throughout the region.

Washington had a total of 181 acres dedicated to nursery (including cultivated sod and floriculture) in 2018, a decrease from the 204 acres in 2015, but a large increase from the 111 acres in 2005. There are three farms in Washington Township on the directory of current state certifications: Dutch Valley Tree Farm, Plant Farm Gardens, Nursery, and Gift Shop, and Tim Terry Landscape

Contracting.⁶⁵ There are no certified garden centers or nurseries listed on the *Jersey Grown* website,⁶⁶

In addition to those strategies listed above where nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod products may be applicable, other strategies to follow may include:

- Increase consumer awareness of the *Jersey Grown* brand; utilize the resources of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture for advertisement and marketing purposes.
- Seek and/or expand contracts with large box store operations such as Home Depot, Lowe's, and Walmart; contact Warren County for opportunities.
- Promote "drive up" operations where consumers can buy directly from the nursery or greenhouse.

Field and Forage Crops

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* for field and forage crops provide strategies to improve production, yield per acre, and management practices; and support organic crop production plans for a green energy initiative involving biofuel production that could provide a new local market for New Jersey agricultural products. The three prominent crops in Washington are corn, hay, and soybeans.

In 2017, the County reported total sales of grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas to be \$13.9 million, a -28% change since 2012 (\$19.2 million) with hay and other crops totaling \$2.7 million, a 47% change since 2012 (\$1.8 million), together representing approximately 23% of total agricultural sales in Warren County.

Corn In 2017, Warren County ranked second in the State for corn, with a total of 18,431 harvested acres (17,701 acres of corn for grain, and 730 acres of corn for silage), which brought in a total of \$9.9 million in sales. In 2012, Warren County harvested 20,883 acres of corn (19,575 acres of corn for grain, and 1,308 acres of corn for silage), resulting in sales of \$15.4 million. Though the total monetary amount for corn sales is not released on a municipal level, in 2018, Washington farmers harvested a total of 1,094 acres of corn (996 acres of corn for grain, and 98 acres of corn for silage), a decrease from 2015 when 1,112 acres of corn was harvested (999 acres of corn for grain, and 113 acres of corn for silage).

Hay Washington harvested 648 acres of hay, including alfalfa hay in 2018, a decrease from 878 acres harvested in 2015. Warren County on a whole harvested 10,340 acres of hay (including alfalfa hay, excluding haylage) in 2017, bringing in a total of 24,669 tons, and increase from 10,155 acres harvesting 18,836 tons in 2012.

Soybeans Warren County ranked fifth in the State for soybeans in 2017, with 63 farms harvesting 8,285 acres of soybeans, bringing in a total of \$3.7 million in sales. The 2017 numbers show a strong increase from 5,661 acres harvested in 2012 totaling \$3.4 million in sales, and the 5,382 acres harvested in 2007 bringing in a total of only \$1.7 million. While the acres of soybeans harvested and the total yield both increased from 2007-2017 by 54% and 56% respectively, the increase in total sales grew by an incredible 118%. Washington farmers harvested a total of 551 acres of soybeans in 2018, a decrease from 715 acres in 2015.

Field and forage crop strategies to consider include:

- Utilize improved management practices and ways to boost yield per acre.
- Capitalize on any available workshops on cropland and pasture management from the county or state.
- Diversify to row crops that meet newly emerging markets or markets with increasing demand (such as spelt as a dietary substitute for wheat or switchgrass for pelletized energy) and pursue to value-added marketing opportunities (such as sorghum for homemade jams and jellies that can be marketed from roadside stands, at community markets, and over the Internet).
- According to NJAES-RCE “there are a number of profitable alternative world crops that can be grown in New Jersey to satisfy the demand for fresh produce by immigrant populations. These crops are suited to diversified small to mid-size farms where high returns per acre is required.”⁶⁷ World Crops, of which NJAES-RCE is a sponsor, can point farmers to crops that meet the needs of ethnic populations in the area.⁶⁸
- Transition to certified organic or naturally grown bean and grain crops to increase their value.
- Investigate and possibly invest in crop insurance to mitigate market risk.
- Utilize county assistance to investigate alternative crops for local production and new markets (such as hops, specialty small fruits, small-scale animal products).

Dairy

Dairy has historically been one of the dominant agricultural sectors throughout Warren County but is now almost completely gone. In 2017, Warren County had 22 farms with milk cows, and 16 farms that sold milk from cows, bringing in a total of \$3.3 million. As of 2018, Washington had 311 head of cattle, compared to 472 head in 2005. This decrease in dairy production reflects the larger trend seen throughout Warren County. There are two active dairy farms in Washington Township.

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* for dairy included establishing a premium price for New Jersey-produced milk and ensuring stable pricing; increasing the demand for milk through sale and promotion of *Jersey Fresh* milk and milk products at community and retail markets; promoting FIN-PAK and risk-management software programs to producers; implementing dairy-quality benchmarks; and establishing a health and safety standard for sale of raw milk directly to consumers. Strategies for reviving the Washington dairy industry include:

- If applicable, license under the Jersey Fresh Quality Grading Program, which allows raw milk to be used in goods bearing the logo *Made With Jersey Fresh Milk*.
- Take advantage of the services offered by the Garden State Dairy Alliance, including disease control, milk quality, marketing and promotion, and technical assistance.
- Explore various additional products, such as cheeses and markets for dairy, including local restaurants and grocery markets.
- Aggressively market value-added dairy products, especially those that can carry the *Made With Jersey Fresh Milk* logo.

- Consider and encourage the NJDA’s campaign to establish a process to allow sales of raw milk direct from the farmer to the producer and the positive effects it might have for dairy farmers in Warren County.
- Encourage passage of proposed raw milk legislation that would permit sale of raw milk under certain conditions and establishes a raw milk permit program (A585, re-introduced in the 2020-2021 State Legislative session).⁶⁹

Livestock and Poultry

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* for livestock focused on animal health, ensuring safe and legal sales of poultry and eggs at community farmers markets; and supporting youth programs involving livestock. Operations in Washington include cattle and calves (both beef and dairy), sheep and goats, hogs, bees, ducks, fur animals, poultry, and eggs. (Table 19)

	2005	2010	2015	2018	% change (2005-2018)
Cattle and Calves	663	397	634	560	-16%
Sheep and Goats	170	191	202	208	22%
Swine	39	18	68	25	-36%
Bees	0	33	37	39	100%
Ducks	17	214	36	48	182%
Fur Animals	37	23	0	3	-92%
Meat Chickens	40	4,010	5,024	5,015	12,438%
Egg Chickens	346	298	1,248	2,304	566%
Turkey	7	1,000	3,000	4,004	57,100%
Other Livestock	7	9	84	160	219%

Source: Farmland Assessment Data (SADC)

Between the years 2005 and 2018, the cattle stock dropped by 16%. Notably, the number of dairy cattle has dropped, while the number of beef cattle has risen. In 2005, there were 191 beef cattle and 472 dairy cattle (both mature and young). In 2018, there were 249 beef cattle and 311 dairy cattle (both mature and young). This overall decrease is significant, but unlike many surrounding towns, there is still a cattle industry in Washington.

Other livestock that shows downward trends in Washington are fur animals (-92%) and swine (36%). The fastest growing animal industries are turkey, , followed by meat chickens. Other growing animals are bees (100%), egg chickens (566% growth), and other livestock (219%). These specialized products are easy to sell directly to consumers.

Sheep and goat increased by 22% over this thirteen-year time, indicating a niche sector for farmers to explore to provide specialty meat and value-added, such as milk, cheeses, soaps, and mohair products to nearby markets. The national price for wool in 2019 was \$1.89 per pound and the average yield per fleece was 7.2 pounds. *Grown in Warren* highlights the growing demand for sheep and goats due to growing ethnic food market.⁷⁰

To strengthen and expand its place in the Washington agricultural economy, some livestock and poultry strategies may include:

- Ensure animal health.
- Encourage USDA inspections in area farms to permit more direct sales of cuts of beef to consumers.
- Explore various additional markets, including local hospitals and assisted-living operations, restaurants and grocery markets, and increased outlets for meat sales at regional community markets (such as the Hackettstown Livestock Auction) and special events (such as the Warren County Farm Fair).
- Seek opportunities for production contracts with poultry and livestock processors.
- Investigate outlets for dairy products for goats and sheep and educate farmers about the benefits of diversifying into these value-added opportunities.
- Explore increased marketing opportunities for goat meat to meet the preferences of growing ethnic populations in the state.
- Encourage passage of proposed raw milk legislation that would permit sale of raw milk under certain conditions and establishes a raw milk permit program.
- Assist farmers with farming techniques, including continued and additional cooperation with the NJAES-RCE, NJDA, and NRCS.
- Promote the agritourism potential of livestock and livestock products in concentrated agricultural areas including exotic animals and poultry, such as “looking” or “petting” zoos, on-farm sales of value-added products such as wool and cheeses, and educational school tours.

Organic Farming

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* for organic farming included promoting federal cost-sharing funds for certification reimbursement; integrating marketing of *Jersey Organic* brand alongside *Jersey Fresh*; and working with NOFA-NJ towards research and technical assistance for organic growers.

Organic crops and animals have the potential to be an important market for the Township of Washington and Warren County. With an increasing population, potential markets in Pennsylvania and New York State (including Philadelphia and New York City), and increased consumer awareness regarding food production, organic products and the markets that support them should continue to gain a stronghold and become more mainstream as people demand high quality, readily accessible and affordable organic products. Certification of organic farms is regulated by the USDA via the Organic Food Production Act of 1990 (OFPA) through a National Organic Program (NOP), 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. Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) is a non-profit organization that offers certification “tailored for small-scale, direct-market farmers and beekeepers using natural methods.” Its standards are based on the NOP standards, but CNG uses a peer-review process, as it is more affordable for small operations than certifying through the state program.

Small organic operations (growers or processors), those with gross sales of less than \$5,000 per year of unprocessed organic product and/or less than \$5,000 of processed organic products (such as jam), can be exempted from the NOP certification process. They can market their products as organic if they follow the national organic standards for production, labeling and recordkeeping, but they cannot use the USDA Organic seal, which can only be used on certified products. They can also sell their products to the retail market, which can sell them as organic if the retailer does not re-package or process the product.⁷¹

In 2017, the Census reported two Warren County farms with the USDA NOP certification, one farm making the transition to NOP certification, and one farm which was listed as exempt from certification. On the state level in 2017, 102 farms reported \$13 million in sales of NOP certified or exempt organically produced commodities. There is an opportunity for other farms to invest in this practice to satisfy the continually growing trend.

Warren County and Washington can:

- Improve marketing of organic and natural produce.
- Explore various additional markets, including local restaurants and grocery markets.
- Promote agritourism for organic and natural farms stands.
- Educate growers about organic and natural regulatory and certification requirements.
- Explore ways to support organic food growing and processing.

Equine

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* for the equine industry focused on horse health and promotion of the industry through the *Jersey Bred* brand, hosted events, the equine website, and including youth programs. The *2017 Census of Agriculture* indicates that New Jersey produced over \$28 million in equine sales. Sales and farm sizes have varied since the category was created in 2002, where 39 farms averaged \$9,380 in sales. 2007 saw a much higher average sales figure, in part to a low of 35 farms, but largely due to a huge spike in total equine revenues, resulting in a \$22,770 sales average per farm. 2012 saw the lowest average sales, dropping to \$5,188 per farm.

Many equine farms in Warren County consist of pasture and stable horses. Part of the value of this small but viable sector comes from services offered, which are not included in total sales figures. Farms which have breeding services can make use of the *Jersey Bred* logo when marketing their animals.

On the state level, equine rules adopted August 4, 2008, established Agricultural Management Practices (AMP) for Equine Activities on Commercial Farms (N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.10) and expanded the list of equine activities eligible for Right to Farm protections (N.J.A.C. 2:76-2B.3). While breeding, raising, pasture, and hay production had always been eligible, the following were newly

added: boarding, keeping, training, rehabilitation of horses and complementary activities including but not limited to clinics, open houses, demonstrations, educational camps, farm events, competitions, and rodeos, as long as these activities are related to the marketing of horses that are raised, bred, kept, boarded, trained, or rehabilitated on the farm, and are in compliance with municipal requirements. This state level support is important to the sustainability and viability of the equine sector in Warren County.

To retain and grow its market share in the state and regional equine industry, Washington can:

- Ensure the health of equine animals.
- Educate farmers about the benefits of equine rules and seek guidance from Warren County about the rights of equine farmers.
- Promote the industry at shows and festivals, such as the Warren County Farm Fair.
- Promote the industry through enhanced listings of Warren County and Washington equine events in state, regional, and County website and print listings.
- Promote the agritourism aspect of the equine industry through farm tours, horse and pony rides, and boarding and riding lessons.

Wine

According to the *2011 Economic Development Strategies*, the state's grape production has not kept pace with its wine production. Strategies focused on expanding the locally grown content of New Jersey wine; supporting licenses to distill fruit-based spirits; expanding the number of eligible retail outlets supporting the ability to sell wines at farmers markets; and promoting New Jersey's wine trails.

In January 2012, Governor Christie signed into law in a bill permitting direct shipping by New Jersey wineries,⁷² and on July 2, 2014, the Governor signed into law another bill that establishes a pilot program through March 1, 2018, to allow wineries on preserved farms to conduct special occasion events under certain conditions as defined by the appropriate CADB.⁷³ In February of 2020, A2773 was introduced which would "allow preserved farms to hold 14 special events per year,"⁷⁴ essentially establishing the pilot program in law. The legislation was voted out of Assembly Committee.

A portion of western Warren County, along the Delaware and Musconetcong Rivers and their tributaries, has also been designated by the federal government as a wine grape-growing region.⁷⁵ In 2005, Washington had no acres dedicated to growing grapes, but as of 2018 it has 5 acres. Warren County had a total of 142 acres growing grapes in 2017, an increase of 118% from the 65 acres in 2005. Washington may consider:

- Exploring the feasibility for additional Warren County and Washington farmers to diversify into grape production (or other fruits suitable for wine making).
- Coordinating with wineries from other New Jersey counties, and New York and Pennsylvania, to grow a regional wine industry.
- Market through state tourism and marketing apparatuses, including the *Jersey Fresh* site (<https://findjerseyfresh.com/explore/#findfresh>), and the Official Tourism Website of New Jersey, visitnj.org.

- Encouraging promotion of Warren County and future Washington wineries and wines, as they develop, through publicity, expanding a County-wide wine trail or wine tour to multiple vineyards, and encouraging expanded distribution of local wines to local outlets such as retail outlets and restaurants, and at other special events.

Aquaculture

The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* lists New Jersey as one of the country’s largest and most culturally diverse consumer seafood markets. Warren County aquaculture operations rank third in the state in 2017 and include catfish, trout, baitfish, sport or game fish, and other food fish. To support a growing aquaculture and seafood economy, Warren County and Washington may consider:

- Working with the State Division of Animal Health to identify revenue streams to develop testing and certification for finfish species to allow transportation and sale of live farm-raised fish to markets in other states.
- Assist in crafting a supportive policy and regulatory path to allow aquaculture to grow in New Jersey, including revising the aquaculture rule providing for the Aquatic Farmer License Program, developing land-use permitting specifically for aquaculture, and assisting the industry and NJDEP in utilizing Aquaculture Development Zones.

Agritourism

Agritourism is one potential link in the long-term sustainability of the agriculture industry in Washington and Warren County. A highly successful example of agritourism is the seven-day Warren County Farmers Fair held annually in Harmony. The Farmers Fair, which highlights the past and present agriculture heritage of Warren County, has been operating since 1937, and is extremely popular, drawing thousands of visitors each year.

One advantage for Washington farmers is the proximity to New York City and Pennsylvania’s metropolitan areas, providing millions of potential customers to target. The NJDA *2011 Economic Development Strategies* for agritourism focused on expanding roadside programs, including signage and eligibility for signage, consumer promotion through an agritourism brochure, press releases and promotion of agricultural fairs, along with continued development of njfarms.org.

The strategy to expand roadside promotion included expanding participation of agritourism operations in the Tourist Oriented Destination Signage (TODS) program through the NJDOT, gaining a discounted agritourism rate and increasing the maximum distance (set at three miles) an operation can be from a state road to be eligible for the signage promotion. At least two of these goals have been achieved: in 2014, the maximum distance for an agritourism operation is 10 miles, and the annual cost per sign is \$400 versus \$800 for other businesses. To be eligible, businesses must be open at least six hours a day, five days a week during its growing or operating season.⁷⁶

Visitnjfarms.org, mentioned in the *2011 Strategies*, is a website sponsored by Rutgers, the New Jersey Farmers Direct Marketing Association, and the New Jersey Farm Bureau (NJFB). Its focus is on agritourism activities provided on commercial farms in New Jersey, and farmers must self-register. It includes a “find farms” option, event listings and a chart showing what is in season, and a map of various agritourism destinations. In 2011, the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural

Experiment State reported that “...census data shows our state ranks first nationally in the percentage of farm revenue earned from agritourism” and that 1 in 5 New Jersey farms offer agritourism activities.⁷⁷

In April 2014, the state gave further support to agritourism as a recognized sector of the agricultural industry by adopting an Agricultural Management Practices (AMP) for On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities and Events into the New Jersey Register (N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.13). The AMP “establishes performance-based standards for commercial farms seeking to qualify for right-to-farm protection for on-farm direct marketing facilities, activities and events that are used to facilitate and provide for direct farmer-to-consumer sales, such as farm stands, farm stores, community-supported agriculture and pick-your-own operations, and associated activities and events that fit within the scope of the Right to Farm Act. The intent of the AMP is to provide statewide standards on which farmers, municipalities, CADBs and the public can rely, while also providing flexibility to commercial farm owners and operators.”⁷⁸

The *2017 Census* reports that Warren County had \$4.4 million in direct sales, representing 5% of total agricultural sales for the County. This is an increase of 245% over 1997, even while the total number of farms increased by only 4%. **(Table 20)**⁷⁹

Table 20. Direct Sales in Warren County: 1997-2017						
	1997	2002	2007	2012	2017	% Change '97- '17
Farms	162	174	221	161	169	4%
Sales (\$1,000)	\$1,277	\$1,545	\$1,952	\$2,150	\$4,403	245%
<i>Source: Census of Agriculture</i>						

The wine sector has introduced not only tasting rooms and tours, but innovative programs such as music nights and weekend runs through the vineyards in neighboring towns. With continued support from the state, as well as county and local municipal efforts, this sector can benefit local agriculture both for farming as an industry and for the individual farmer as additional income. Agritourism helps change the perspective of the non-farming community and increases visibility, understanding, and appreciation of farming by County residents and visitors. Agritourism can be an important contributor toward the long-term sustainability of Washington’s agricultural industry. Visibility is given to agritourism opportunities through the many websites and publications available. **(Table 21)** For every dollar in agritourism sales, \$0.58 of additional sales are generated in other businesses (e.g., restaurants, construction companies, insurance providers).⁸⁰

Table 21. Agritourism Websites and Publications	
Source	Description
State	
NJDA <i>Jersey Fresh</i> Website ⁸¹	Roadside markets On-farm activities Wineries
NJAES-RCE	Agritourism education ⁸²
NJDA Jersey Equine Website	Equine events ⁸³ Equine facilities ⁸⁴
Visit New Jersey Farms Website ⁸⁵	Farms, farm products, activities and events Ability for website visitor to build itinerary of farms to visit
Visitnj.org (Office Tourism Website of New Jersey)	Farms & orchards ⁸⁶ Wineries & vineyards ⁸⁷ Fairs ⁸⁸
Regional	
New Jersey Skylands Website ⁸⁹	Calendar of events Farms, Gardens, Wineries section Family Attractions section, where several regional farms and wineries are listed
Warren County Website ⁹⁰	Tourism page includes links to countrywide and regional attractions
Explore Warren ⁹¹	Farm markets, and pick-your-own
Organizations	
NJ Farmers Direct Marketing Association, Inc. (www.njfarmmarkets.org) ⁹²	Farms and farm markets
New Jersey Christmas Tree Growers' Association ⁹³	Christmas Tree farms

Among the series of recommendations included in this report are:

- Marketing and promotion – centralized promotion system; agritourism marketing website; better inclusion and integration of agritourism on the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism marketing materials; stronger links between farmers and Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Senior, and school lunch nutritional programs; and assisting counties with funding for agritourism promotion.
- Liability protection and insurance – support the development of a New Jersey Agritourism Limited Liability act modeled after laws in Virginia and North Carolina and explore ways to reduce costs of liability insurance; encourage farmers and operations to protect their livelihoods with insurance.
- Regulatory guidance for operators – includes proactive communication about relevant regulations, and education about requirements and protections under the Right to Farm Act; address impediments to signage.

- Training and information workshops for farmers – include hospitality training, marketing strategies, and other issue-specific workshops such as liability, grants, traffic, signage; offer a forum for farmers getting into agritourism to interact with those who already are involved.
- Role of CADB – examine preservation policies to identify and address any restraints to agritourism development; provide outreach to operators and municipal officials; develop model long-term leases for farmers renting preserved farmland; host open houses and tours at agritourism operations; encourage municipal adoption of model Right to Farm ordinance.
- Resources – “how-to” website; innovation fund providing grants or low interest loans; technical assistance for farmers in identifying and obtaining grant funding.
- School tours – identify and compile farm-related curriculum for different grade levels.

Washington can work with the state, the CADB, state agencies, organizations, and County farmers to affect a strong agritourism presence in the County. Strategies may include:

- Establishing additional permanent, three season community markets, which may assist local farmers in selling farm and value-added products, strengthening the business of agriculture within the County.
- Establishing event-specific cooperative farm stands at community events in the County, which would promote and benefit the Washington farming industry and offer additional opportunities for product sales.
- Creating a regional harvest festival in the fall, a horticultural festival in the spring, or a farm itinerary tour of participating farms that could be listed on the Warren County Tourism page.
- Establishing a working farm devoted to public education, similar to The Farm Institute⁹⁴ on Martha’s Vineyard, a working farm on preserved land that offers innovative programs that involve children, families and others, such as local chefs who come in to demonstrate recipes that can be prepared using local produce.
- Working with schools and farmers to develop and promote an expanded curriculum of opportunities for school tours to farms and for farmer visits to schools, maintaining a list of available farmers, and acting as a clearinghouse or coordinating link between schools and farmers.
- Expanding participation in WIC & Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program as Certified Farmer Vendors. Four \$5 vouchers are available for each eligible WIC/Senior participant to use June through November to redeem for fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs grown by local farmers.⁹⁵
- Implementing a permanent signage program on a municipal or county level to supplement the NJDOT Tourist Oriented Destination Signage (TODS) program that alerts and directs tourists and local residents to agritourism destinations to help increase business and income for these farming establishments, informing farmers of the availability of these programs and encouraging participation.
- Exploring growth in other sections of agritourism such as hunting, fishing, and trapping. Often farmers do not charge for these privileges, if they offer them, perhaps, in part because of liability issues. Liability has also become an issue for petting zoos, causing some farmers in other areas to repurpose to “looking zoos” to avoid the safety and health issues that can

ensue from interaction between farm animals and visitors. If the Limited Liability protection mentioned above were enacted, farmers might feel freer to generate income from these activities.

Potential challenges to successful expansion of agritourism in Washington and Warren County include:

- Impediments to farmers making long-term investments in crop diversification (such as the unavailability of long-term leases for farmers who rent rather than own the land).
- Market saturation (too many farmers engaged in any given type of agritourism could cause profitability for individual farmers to fall, even as it contributed more dollars to the overall agricultural sector).
- Lack of recognition for agriculture in regulations and master plans, including municipal, federal, or state regulations that make it difficult or expensive for farmers to participate, such as requiring food products to be processed in federally licensed kitchens or slaughterhouses.

Farmers with direct sales or agritourism activities can post their listings in the following online resources: localharvest.org (CSAs), NOFA-NJ (organic and sustainable), visitnjfarms.org, NJDA websites (Jersey Fresh, Jersey Grown, Made with Jersey Fresh), and Warren County's tourism page. Farmers who want to learn more about running an agritourism operation can start with the resources available from the Rutgers Sustainable Farming on the Urban Fringe website. Agritourism resources include information on selecting a venture, writing business, marketing and risk management plans, and information on the Right to Farm Act and Agricultural Management Practices.⁹⁶ Additionally, the NJAES-RCE has publications available on its website on specific agritourism topics, such as how to budget for a corn maze.⁹⁷

General Strategies

“Many different agencies, councils and organizations, working through a variety of programs, have the common goal of assisting New Jersey’s agricultural community,” according to the *2011 Economic Development Strategies*. “Strengthened communication and coordination between agencies and programs can result in multiple benefits for the agricultural community.” Two areas of focus were called out: Farmland Assessment and Crop Insurance and Technical Assistance; and Export Development:

- Farmland Assessment – Updating documentation, supporting farmers in filling out applications, and supporting tax assessors in determining farmer eligibility.
- Crop Insurance – Implementing an education initiative in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency and Rutgers Cooperative Extension to increase knowledge and skills among farmers and improve their financial health.
- Technical Assistance – Offering assistance concerning the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code as it relates to farm buildings and the Real Property Appraisal Manual, Farm Building Section.
- Recycling and Food – Increasing participation in agricultural plastics recycling programs and assisting food processing industry in finding markets for soon-to expire and expired foods.

- Motor Vehicle Requirements – Providing information about regulations, license plates for farm vehicles, and other vehicle related provisions through a user-friendly website.
- Financing – Providing information on federal, state, and commercial lending institutions financing for agricultural loans.

Grown In Warren (2019)

Washington farmers continue to look for ways to explore new markets, promote their products, and increase the profitability of their agricultural operations. In 2019, Warren County released a report titled, *Grown in Warren, A Strategic Growth & Planning Report*, which outlines strategies for both Warren County and local farmers to “promote the sustainable growth of farming and related business.” The report includes an analysis of the opportunities, challenges, trends, and recommendations for the agricultural community in Warren County.⁹⁸ As this report mentions, Warren County is “ideally located within a two-hour drive of over 20 million potential customers in the New York-New Jersey-Philadelphia region...who are interested in the locally grown, locally sourced agricultural products that Warren County farmers can provide.”

Strategies include increasing direct marketing operations and promoting visibility through attendance at farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), on-farm sales and agritourism, promoting organically grown produce, sustainably and humane meat and animal products, value-added products, specialty crops, and ethnic products. The report also stresses the importance of internet promotion and direct customer engagement, as well as the promotion of regional initiatives such as “Grown in Warren” and regional bike tours.

The branding and execution of “Grown in Warren” is essential to the marketing and promotion of high-quality produce grown locally for a market invested in sourcing from and supporting local farmers. The four parts to this integral strategy are: 1.) establish the brand, 2.) increase the market share for Warren County’s agricultural producers, 3.) bringing added value to products that are associated with the “Grown in Warren” brand, and 4.) gaining acceptance and use of the “Grown in Warren” brand among the county’s agricultural community, with re-sellers of those products. and with consumers.

Specific recommendations for farmers to take include:

- Bring Warren County’s agricultural products to the consumer through direct sales.
- Utilize the brand identity of “Grown in Warren” to market products as fresh and locally grown.
- Bring consumers to Warren County with on-farm activities and other agritourism practices.
- Participate in high volume urban farmers markets
- Establish a CSA operation.
- Adopt practices that will result in multiple complimentary income opportunities.
- Process crops into high margin value-added products such as soups, jams & jellies, personal care products, and other consumer items.
- Create an internet presence to connect with potential customers, bring visitors to the farm, and to sell products direct to consumers.



- Forge relationships with restaurant owners, chefs, brewers, and other institutional consumers looking to source ingredients locally.
- Grow specialty and ethnic produce that includes fruits, vegetables, meats, and poultry.
- Plan for generational succession and transition to the next generation of Warren County farmers.
- Engage in cooperative regional marketing of Warren County’s agricultural products.

The report conducted an in-depth analysis on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to the Warren County agricultural community. (Table 22)

Table 22. Grown in Warren – SWOT Analysis	
Strengths include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large productive land base • Experienced population of farmers • Proximity to markets • Access to high-income/high-profit activities • Excellent soils • Supportive local communities • Beautiful natural environment 	Weaknesses include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging population of farmers • Very high cost of land • Difficult for new farmers to access land • Difficult access to capital • No established distribution networks • Lack of facilities for overnight visitation • Limited public transportation
Opportunities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing New types of crops • Selling to new markets • Taking advantage of consumer preferences • Developing regional branding • Demand for ethnic products • Demand for organic produce • Expanding opportunities for agritourism 	Threats include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volatile commodity prices • High cost of business • Complex & restrictive regulatory environment • Encroaching development • Uncertain impacts of climate change • Changing labor market
<i>Source: Grown in Warren Report</i>	

There is a strong link between outdoor recreation activities (hiking trails, roads conducive to bicyclist), farming and farm stand locations, and economic prosperity. “Warren County has a great deal to offer visitors interested in agritourism and ecotourism. The county features a beautiful natural environment with a myriad of opportunities for outdoor activities that include hiking, fishing, kayaking, and bicycling in addition to on-farm visitation.”

Planning for both agritourism and outdoor recreation is important because, “while the county is well-situated to take advantage of this consumer market in term of geographic location and suitable attractions, there is a decided lack of facilities to support this potentially lucrative source of business. There are few hotels in the county. Municipalities generally do not permit the creation of Bed & Breakfast facilities in the residential zones that predominate in the county’s rural communities. Public transit access is extremely limited.”⁹⁹ Specific recommendations on increasing agritourism and ecotourism in Warren County include:

- Extend marketing efforts to surrounding areas.
- Create and promote themed driving and biking tours.
- Support visitor transportation and accommodation options.
- Encourage multipurpose extended visitation.
- Actively market Warren County as a destination.



One of the benchmarks for a successful campaign was to have 175 farms registered on the “Grown in Warren” portal.¹⁰⁰ It is an additional opportunity for farmers to gain visibility and connect the market with the larger community.

B. Agricultural Industry Retention, Expansion, & Recruitment Strategies

There are many techniques to support the economic expansion, development, and solidification of Washington’s agricultural industry. 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. The AAC and the Township stand behind the local agricultural industry.

1. Institutional

Minimum wage impact on farm businesses – The State minimum wage was raised to \$10.44 for agricultural employees effective January 2021, followed by an increase to \$11.05 on January 1, 2022. There are further wage increases every year from 2023 until 2027, when the minimum wage reaches \$15.00 per hour.¹⁰¹ This minimum wage applies to farm workers and exceeds the federal minimum wage of \$7.25, as does that of neighboring New York State, raised to \$13.20 on December 31, 2021.¹⁰² 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. Other products that are prevalent in Washington 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 Washington farmers as they are for farmers in parts of the County or State that have major produce agriculture industries.

Farmer Support—Farmers at all levels can benefit from support. A variety of resources exist at the state level, published on the SADC website.¹⁰³ These include:

- Agriculture credit and finance.
- Business development for agriculture, food manufacturing, and related industries.
- Farm building construction.
- 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.
- Trespass, vandalism, and liability on farms.

One program, *Farm Link*, serves as a resource and referral center for new farmers, farmers seeking access to land and farming opportunities, landowners seeking farmers, and farmers working on estate and farm transfer plans.¹⁰⁴ In 2015, the SADC launched “NJ Land Link,” an interactive website connecting farmers seeking land or farming opportunities with those who have existing farmland or farming opportunities. Farmers interested in land or partnership/job opportunities, as well as those wanting to advertise available land and opportunities, sign up and create and manage their own listings. In FY2018, “NJ land Link had more than 845 registered users and more than 200 active listings.”¹⁰⁵

Resources specific to estate planning and retirement planning are available through the *Farm Link* Program’s Farm Transfer, Succession, and Retirement Planning section.¹⁰⁶ Resources include workshops, Farm Succession Guidebook,¹⁰⁷ plans and planning information, workbooks and worksheets, and informational documents. Farm Link can also be used to facilitate succession when there is no next generation to take over the farm. Information is also available for the incoming generation of farmers through this Farm Link Program.

Two resources available to farmers through the SADC are the New Jersey Farmland Leasing Guidebook,¹⁰⁸ created as part of a Beginning Farmer grant project,¹⁰⁹ and a New Jersey Agricultural Mediation Program Handbook, subtitled “A Guide for Farmers, Neighbors and Municipalities.”¹¹⁰ In addition, the state, NJAES-RCE and supply companies, such as fertilizer and pesticide merchandisers, provide other often-seasonal workshops for farmers, keeping them up-to-date on various issues related to the agricultural community.

Another opportunity is the New Jersey Agricultural Society’s New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program (NJALDP), administrated by Burlington County College.¹¹¹ NJALDP is “a two-year professional development opportunity, which is designed specifically for individuals in farming and agribusiness to become informed, articulate leaders.” Through a series of seminars and domestic learning experiences, NJALDP participants explore various agricultural topics, debate key issues, sharpen communications skills, particularly through public speaking, and establish and cultivate an extensive agricultural network throughout the state.

One program which could be expanded to Warren County is the School Gardens initiative, funded by Team Nutrition Training mini-grants provided by the USDA, the NJDA of Agriculture, and Grow Healthy – a program of the NJAES-RCE. This is a hands-on way to educate children about the importance of farming. Expanding this program to schools in Washington would be a great way to increase the awareness of both students and their parents about the benefits and value of the agricultural industry in the Township.

According to the NJAES-RCE, the Grow Healthy program is a way to:

- Help children eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Offer nutrition education, physical activity, gardening, and agriculture programs.
- Connect with local farms.

- Serve more local foods.
- Offer farm-to-school and nutrition trainings for foodservice staff.¹¹²

The Grow Healthy Initiative in Warren County is run by Sherri Cirignano, Family & Community Health Sciences Educator II (phone: 908-475-6504; email: cirignano@njaes.rutgers.edu).

Marketing, Advertising, Public Relations Support

Marketing and advertising are critical to profitability. Some farmers do opt to use paid advertising in local newspapers, but many, particularly those with smaller farms, hesitate to consider advertising, believing that the costs outweigh the benefits. They prefer to take advantage of free or less costly opportunities to market their products, such as state, regional, and County public and promotional websites that will “advertise” the products. Several embrace the opportunities of direct marketing, from roadside stands and from their own websites.

The CADB, the NJAES-RCE, and the state are great resources for farmers to learn about the availability of various free promotional channels such as the *Jersey Fresh*, *Jersey Bred*, *Jersey Grown* and *Jersey Equine* websites, Visit NJ Farms website, and the Warren County “Tourism” web page. For those farmers who want to consider paid advertising or garner free media coverage, web resources can help with the planning. For example, the New Jersey State Horticultural Society website publishes ad rates for its quarterly newsletter, *Horticultural News*.¹¹³ Another website for Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA),¹¹⁴ a non-profit organization in Western Massachusetts, offers a Basic Marketing Practices manual.

Signage

Signage promotes visibility and awareness of agriculture in general, as well as benefitting the individual farmers. Municipal considerations of farming needs when drafting their sign ordinances can be helpful in supporting farmer’ efforts to promote their products. Farm stands are often seasonal businesses that need to capture potential sales at harvest time. Signs that give directions to the farm stand and let customers know what is available are important. Having farm-friendly ordinances in place can make it easier for farmers to promote their products and can minimize right-to-farm complaints in cases where farmers run up against opposition to their signage, whether from neighboring residents or municipal officials. Farm signage can also benefit the municipality by drawing more visitors and dollars to the area, benefitting other businesses in the community as well as the farmer. Signs should conform to local, county, or state right-of-way and sight standards.

For farmers who qualify for the *Jersey* series of marketing programs, signage is available. This ranges from free price cards to banners and stickers, hats, and T-shirts. *Jersey Fresh* point-of-sale signs and other materials, both free and fee-based, can be ordered using the point-of-purchase application on the NJDA’s Marketing and Development Jersey Fresh page. Information on how to participate in the *Jersey Fresh* program is also included.¹¹⁵

Farmers Markets

In 2021, three community farmers markets were operating in Warren County. It is suggested that the County consider establishing a three-season market:

- Blairstown Farmers Market, across from Blairstown Elementary School, 5 Stillwater Road, Saturdays 9:30 am– 1 pm, June 4–October 29.
- Washington Borough Weekly Farmers Market, Washington Borough Main Street (Route 57), near the Downtown Pocket Park (40 East Washington Avenue), Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm, June 20 – September 26.
- Warren County Farmers Market, 565 County Route 519, Belvidere (White Township School), Sundays 10 am – 2 pm, June 2 – September 29.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Economic support of the Washington agricultural community also comes from local grass roots groups. This support is embodied in CSA, 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.¹¹⁶

Genesis Farms offers a CSA 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 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, making preserved farmland accessible to farmers at affordable long-term leases through the **Sustainable Agriculture Enterprise (SAGe)** program, protecting rivers through the voluntary River Friendly Farm Program, working towards establishing a food hub in New Jersey, 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. This is particularly beneficial for young or inexperienced farmers by removing a costly barrier to entry and facilitating networks between local farmers. In addition, the Alliance has published the Food Hub Feasibility Study For Northern New Jersey, the Northern New Jersey Regional Foodshed Resiliency Plan, and the Sustainable Agriculture Enterprise Information and Application for Sustainable Farm Businesses.¹¹⁷

Agricultural Education and Market Research Coordination

Washington may want to consider coordinating with Warren County and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Warren County to identify and integrate market research on agriculture and economic trends. The NJAES website offers additional information relating to animal agriculture,

farm management and safety, pest management, plant agriculture, and other elements of interest to those involved in commercial agriculture. The Warren County NJAES-RCE traditionally has been a sponsor of workshops, often funded through grants secured by the NJAES-RCE, and a helpful resource for local farmers in many other ways.

Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS) is “committed to the study of how human and environmental health can intersect to support a healthy and sustainable future.”¹¹⁸ Programs and activities include on-campus living labs, research laboratories, farms, greenhouses, gardens, living-learning communities, a historic herbarium, and an entomology museum. Strategies Washington can use to support agricultural education and market research coordination include:

- Coordinate with NJAES-RCE and NJDA to research and market agricultural education.
- Seek grants to fund farmer education.

2. Businesses

Input Suppliers and Services

Very few, if any, large scale agriculture suppliers, which supply medium to large size agriculture operations, exist in Warren County. The several suppliers in the area operate on smaller, more local scales. Many such suppliers are farmers themselves (for instance, selling feed from their corn crops to other local farmers raising animals), without any formal business practices such as advertising.¹¹⁹ Without an adequate number of suppliers within reasonable driving distances of farms, the business of farming can become so expensive and time consuming as to not be profitable. The Township welcomes agriculture-related businesses within the confines of its existing zoning.

With the decline of local suppliers, and the ease of access through the internet, mail orders from supply stores further away might work for small equipment or shipments. It is not ideal for large orders. Equipment and supply stores in Warren County include:

- Tractor Supply in Blairstown and Washington Townships, Warren County.
- Central Jersey Equipment in Columbia.
- Frank Rymon and Sons in Washington Township, Warren County.
- Tickner’s in Hackettstown.
- Smith’s Tractor in Washington Township, Warren County.
- Mayberry in Port Murray.
- S&L Kubota in Belvidere.

Seed and chemical supplies in the area include:

- Ace/ Agway in Blairstown.
- Penwell Mills Feed in Port Murray.
- Ise Feed in Stewartsville.

Product Distributors and Processors

Processing facilities such as creameries, slaughterhouses, and lumber mills have become absent from Warren County, and therefore Washington as well, forcing local farmers to ship their products out of town to be processed.¹²⁰

Field and forage crops are generally sold locally to cattle and equine operations, landscapers, nurseries, and farm stands as baled straw, or kept for the farmer's own livestock and other uses. Small volumes are also sold at the Hackettstown Livestock Cooperative Auction Market. Corn products¹ are almost entirely sold wholesale and fluctuate depending on the national market. Small amounts of corn are sold as retail to hunters for bait.

Produce products are sold through a variety of channels. The majority is sold through retail markets to maximize profits, and some are sold either directly to consumers or through roadside stands. Some farmers may travel to metropolitan areas, including New York City, to sell produce at farmers markets and/or greenmarkets. Additionally, some produce is wholesaled to local supermarkets.

Livestock products can be quite varied. Some animals are sold in their entirety directly to consumers (whether still alive or previously slaughtered). Other animals are sold at the Hackettstown Livestock Cooperative Auction Market. Farmers, as well as wholesalers, butchers, and private individuals sell, buy, and trade livestock, eggs, and crops at the Market. Washington farmers use the Livestock Cooperative Auction for the purchase and sale of agricultural livestock and products.¹²¹ The Auction is located on West Stiger Street in Hackettstown and is open every Tuesday throughout the year. It is the only remaining livestock auction in the state and is a staple of the Warren County agriculture industry.

3. Anticipated Agricultural Trends

Product Demand

From a county historical perspective, total agricultural sales have increased sharply from \$39.7 million in 2002, to \$75.5 million in 2007, \$91.2 million in 2012, and \$93.2 million in 2017. Much of this growth has been fueled by increased grain, nursery, and greenhouse sales, in part due to the consolidation of several large farms and cost-savings through economies of scale. The nursery, greenhouse, grain, and vegetables sectors of the agricultural industry should continue to be healthy and viable sectors since they often serve the needs of increasing livestock practices such as sheep, goats, and poultry in the face of a declining cattle industry, as well as a burgeoning population of homes and businesses within the County and the region.

The livestock sector has seen changes to its non-dairy and dairy subsectors, both of which have experienced lengthy declines in cattle stocks but have held constant since the early 2000s. Milk production follows this trend as well, with the commercial dairy industry completely gone now. The cattle industry is believed to be trending towards smaller and smaller farming operations,

ⁱ This does not include sweet corn, which falls into the produce section below.

many of which will raise a small amount of cattle as part-time jobs to qualify for farmland assessment.¹²²

Value-added products can bring additional income to farms involved in direct marketing through farm stands and websites. Direct marketers can capitalize on the advantages of selling at retail rather than wholesale, selling from their own location rather than having to pay transport costs, and of generating additional income by developing value-added products such as pies, cheeses, jams, honey, and other products that serve the increasing numbers of customers who want the advantages of ready-made and the appeal of items “home-made” by someone else.

An increased demand for organic products may encourage farmers to adopt more natural farming methods. Since federal certification requires a three-year commitment, many farmers may lean toward “natural” farming methods for food crops and for livestock, such as grass-fed beef raised without hormones or antibiotics.

One emerging trend is the emerging resurgence of hemp (*cannabis sativa*). The growing support for hemp products, and the recent legislative actions which removed it from the Schedule I list of Controlled Substances Act, have created a new market. The “New Jersey Industrial Hemp Pilot Program” was signed in 2018, for hemp that is cultivated and tested to ensure that THC content does not exceed 0.3 percent.¹²³

Other avenues to explore include:

- Changing the farm operation’s mix of products.
- Consider new crop opportunities being researched/promoted by the NJDA, the NJAES-RCE, and the NJFB: hops, tree nut crops, organic or low input produce or meat products, aquaculture, biotechnical and pharmaceutical use of farm products or animals, and hemp.
- Marketing livestock as dressed meat on a retail basis.
- Fresh herbs, sold at retail, in bunches or as potted plants.
- Economic development through preservation.
- Agricultural Enterprise District (AED) as a potential preservation mechanism. Modeled after Urban Enterprise Zones, the AED would provide economic development advantages, particularly to preserved farms, and use taxes from farmland assessed land to seed the formation of an economic development corporation and development of a program.

Market Location Washington is located near the large population centers of New York City and Philadelphia, with a direct route to New York City via Interstate Route 80. Maximizing the use of nearby highways can increase the number and type of consumer markets to be reached by Washington farmers. At least one County 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.

The agriculture community in Washington can seek contracts with area school to supply healthy, fresh farm products for use in their cafeterias. 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 Washington agriculture community.

Future of Agriculture. Among the most substantial trends reshaping the Township’s agriculture base is the rapid rise of the crops sector. Since the 2002 Census, crop, nursery, and greenhouse products have outpaced livestock and poultry sales. Niche products such as packaged and organic goods that generate “value added” revenue streams are likely to increase.

Challenges facing Washington’s farmers are land prices and property taxes. Higher land prices threaten to replace many of the County and Township’s farmlands and open space areas with residential and commercial developments that are less compatible with agricultural production.

The average age of farmers in Warren County is increasing. Young farmers are attracted by higher paying opportunities in other employment sectors, and fewer are becoming farmers. Consequently, the average age of farmers in Warren County has increased from 50 years old in 1982, to 56 years old in 2002, 59 years old in 2012, and between 55 and 64 in 2017.

4. Agricultural Support Needs

Agricultural Facilities and Infrastructure

The County lacks permanent suppliers of items such as seeds, feed, and chemicals required to keep farms productive. Most of these services involve local farmers selling these items to one another, hampering the stability of these support services. An increase in permanent agricultural suppliers would work to guarantee the stability of these services. Ultimately, it comes down to whether there are enough opportunities to make money in supporting the County and region’s agricultural industry. If those outside the farming community see ways to make profits doing so, then they will feel much more confident in setting up operations, whether they be cattle and equine veterinarians, feed and fertilizer suppliers, or machinery sales and repairs.¹²⁴

In Hunterdon County, Growmark Farm Supply provides retail sales of seed, plant nutrients, lime, crop protection materials, custom application, turf, propane, and precision agriculture, and will deliver products to farmers throughout Warren County. Growmark Farm Supply is located at 60 Lehigh Street, Bloomsbury, and can be contacted at (908) 479-4500.

In 2018, the Foodshed Alliance released *The Food Hub Feasibility Study*. Food hubs serve as an aggregation and distribution facility for local farmers. The report found that a food hub “could help strengthen the farm industry in New Jersey by giving farmers easy access to institutional buyers to fill the need for locally grown, fresh healthy food.” The Foodshed Alliance works on connecting local farmers with suppliers, distributors, agricultural coalitions, municipal and state authorities. It is also developing a lead organization to guide the food hub network and securing funding for a flagship food hub.

Kendrya Close is the contact for farmers interested in this work group and can be reached at kendrya@foodshedalliance.org.

Flexible Land Use Regulations

State Level – Examples where regulatory flexibility is important are the NJDEP’s “Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules” (N.J.A.C. 7:13-et. seq.), which grants exemptions for agricultural activities, and the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:13). The latter was adopted in 2007 and amended last in June 2019, with amendments for agriculture effective June 2016, including numerous agricultural permits.¹²⁵

Municipal level – Building an awareness of and provisions supportive of agriculture into municipal master plans and zoning ordinances can go a long way towards the kind of support agriculture needs to be an economically viable sector. Washington farmers benefit from having a Right to Farm ordinance enacted in their town.

Other areas where municipal sensitivity to the land use needs of agriculture can be helpful include consideration of the following issues when creating municipal regulations. Sample ordinances provided by the SADC have incorporated these recommendations:

- Setting specific buffer standards for non-farm development adjacent to working farms that help to limit trespassing and littering and protect the residential landowner from dust and spray materials spread during farm activities, thus minimizing potential Right to Farm conflicts.
 - Subdivision Regulations: *“Buffers adjacent to actively farmed land shall be established in residential subdivisions. Said buffer strips, when required shall be no less than thirty (30) feet in width and may be required up to a width of one hundred (100) feet, depending on the type of agriculture or farm use, the topography and the proposed design and planting of such strip.”*¹²⁶
- Code or ordinance provisions requiring developers to notify purchasers of the proximate existence of active agriculture.
- Exemptions for certain farm structures from building height restrictions.
 - Building Height: *“Building height for a single-family dwelling on a ten-acre or larger lot in the AG Agricultural Zone may increase to a maximum of 40 feet in height and 2 1/2 stories, provided that the minimum required front, each side and rear yard setback requirements shall be increased by a minimum of five feet for each foot or portion thereof by which the dwelling exceeds 35 feet in building height.”*¹²⁷
- Allowing additional principal dwelling units on farms to meet the needs of farmers for additional housing for their children or for farm managers.
 - Accessory Dwelling Units: *“Farm labor housing units shall be permitted as an accessory use on a commercial farm, subject to compliance with the following requirements in addition to the existing residential requirements of the zone.”*¹²⁸
 1. *The parcel on which the housing is located is at least [10 contiguous acres];*
 2. *The unit must be a permanent structure;*
 3. *The occupants must use the same driveway as the farm operation or principal residence on the property;*
 4. *The overall density shall not exceed one unit per [10 acres]. Requests for more than one farm labor housing unit for a single commercial farm will only be approved if the farm operator demonstrates a need for more farm labor*

housing supported by a business plan. The local Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), or the County Agricultural Development Board if no AAC has been established, shall be consulted in this approval.”

- Exemptions from setback requirements when farmers seek to expand an existing nonconforming structure.
 - Nonconforming Structure Incentive: *“The Town Board may grant the following incentives to the applicant on a specific site... Increases in non-residential density:¹²⁹*
 1. *Decreases in required minimum lot area, setbacks or other bulk standards;*
 2. *Increases in impervious lot coverage, floor area ratios, building heights or other standards.”*
- Flexible fencing ordinances that make allowances for types of fencing on farms that might not be desirable in residential zones, in consideration of the farmers’ needs to prevent wildlife damage.
 - Commercial Farm Fencing: *“On commercial farms only, open wire fences may be erected to a height not to exceed 10 feet in height when located more than 15 feet from a street line. Any other type of fence may be erected to a height not to exceed five feet when located within 25 feet of any street line and six feet when located more than 25 feet from a street line.”¹³⁰*
- Construction fee reduction for agricultural buildings.

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, Washington passed a Right to Farm ordinance to ensure farmers can practice accepted agricultural operations. In addition, Washington supports farms, processing and packaging agricultural output, irrigation pumps and equipment, using tractors and other necessary equipment, and hiring and utilizing necessary farm labor. As such, the Township’s zoning is supportive of agriculture.

Agriculture Representation in Economic Development

The Warren County Economic Development Committee (EDC) was created in January 2016 to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Commissioners, to assist the County in promoting economic development, including an increased focus on tourism and agritourism. An established framework will be used in coordinating local, state, and federal efforts towards this end, including a major emphasis in laying the basic groundwork necessary for attracting and encouraging sound economic growth within the County.¹³¹ A list of business resources within Warren County is available on the EDC website at <http://warrenecdev.com/business-resources>.

5. Agricultural Support Implementation

The NJAES-RCE of Warren County has always been a source of support to local farmers, helping them adapt to new technologies, introducing new farming practices to improve efficiency, and keeping farmers up to date with market trends. With the rise of online shopping, more and more people are choosing to order products, including agricultural products, from the comfort of their own homes. The NJAES-RCE can work with local farmers in expanding their presence to the web in addition to traditional advertising such as signage and roadside stands.

The average age of farmers is increasing as well, with a large need for new generations of farmers to come in and take over agricultural operations in the years to come; the NJAES-RCE can reach out to those interested in or just beginning their own farming operations, assisting them in reaching the point where their operations become profitable.

The Township, as well as the County and other relevant parties, can also continue to promote agritourism, helping to boost farm revenues and raise local awareness of, and support for, farming operations. This can be done in conjunction with the non-farming community, such as local artists, who can help in attracting people who may primarily be more interested in artwork or music than agriculture and end up gaining exposure to farming activities and products when visiting art exhibits or concerts.

Federal agriculture support can be found through the USDA's Grants and Loans webpage¹³² including grant and loan programs ranging from farm loans, housing assistance, rural development loan and grant assistance, beginning farmers and ranchers, livestock insurance, specialty crop block grant program, the farmers market promotion program, and the organic cost share program. In a number of these federal programs, the government will assist farmers in design, implementation, and cost of projects.

The USDA hosts special accommodations to new farmers, small-to-mid sized farmers, and organic farmers. New farmers, designated by the USDA as less than ten years of farming experience, have access to webinars, lectures, and service centers to help their business. Similarly, small-to-mid sized farmers also have access to educational resources, as well as financial assistance programs such as the Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL), microloans, Value Added Producer Grants, and Socially Disadvantaged Group Grants. Organic farmers can access the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP), in which, farmers may receive up to 50% of their certification costs paid during the program year.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is a USDA competitive grants program that helps build the future economic viability of agriculture in the United States.¹³³ SARE funds are used for:

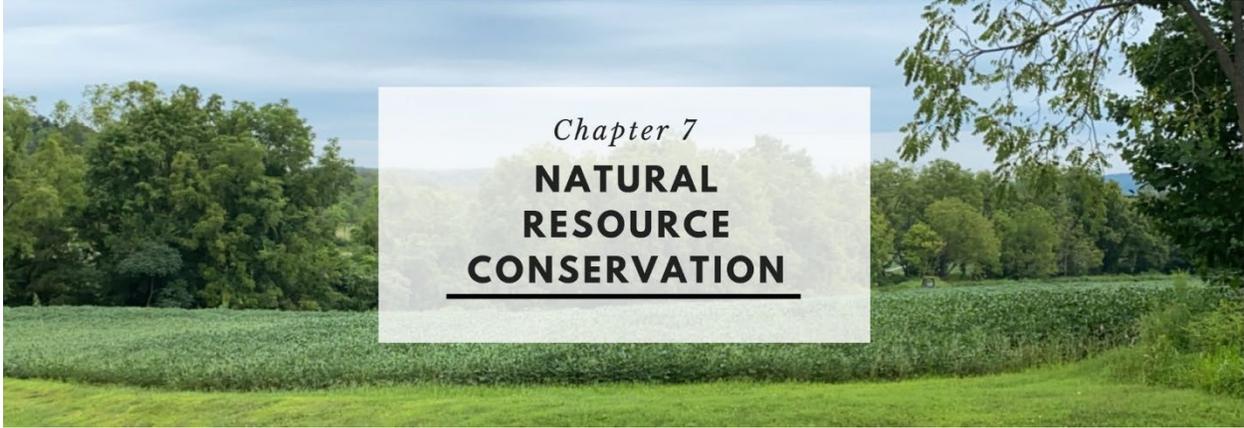
- *Farmer & Rancher Grants*: These grants have the goal of helping farmers shift to practices that are environmentally sound, profitable, and beneficial to the wider farm community.
- *Partnership grants*: These grants are for RCE and NRCS personnel, non-profits, and agricultural consultants who work directly with farmers. Grants are used for on-farm research and demonstration projects that address sustainability.
- *Sustainable Community Grants*: These grants allow for key issues to be addressed which connect farming with community prosperity and revitalization.
- *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.

State agriculture support includes the 2020 Specialty Crop Block Grants, New Jersey Wine Industry Project Grants, Soil and Water Conservation Grants, New Jersey Risk Management and Crop Insurance Education, New Jersey Junior Breeder Loan Fund, Organic Cost Share, and Farm to School Mini Grants. More information can be found on the NJDA Grants webpage,¹³⁴ accessed through the following link: <https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/grants/>.

Farmland Preservation Programs support include State Acquisition, County Planning Incentive Grants, Municipal Planning Incentive Grants, and Grants to Non-Profits. More information can be found through the State Agriculture Development Committee webpage,¹³⁵ accessed through the following link: <https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/farmpreserve/programs/>.

New Jersey Farm Bureau

The NJFB is a private, non-profit membership organization that represents the agricultural producers and enterprises in New Jersey at all levels of government. The NJFB advocates for farmland preservation, environmental regulations, wildlife and water issues, and legislation relating to agricultural labor and the Right to Farm. Through grants, initiatives, and partnerships, the NJFB educates the public about the agricultural industry and participates in farmer training and education programs.¹³⁶



Chapter 7: Natural Resource Conservation

A. Natural Resource Protection Coordination

1. Natural Resources Conservation Service

There are numerous public and private entities which administer, fund, and provide technical guidance for Washington farmers relative to natural resource conservation. An important partner in support of natural resource conservation for the agricultural community is the USDA NRCS. The NRCS “*provides assistance to private landowners [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 opportunities for cost-shares and financial incentives.¹³⁷

Washington farmers may utilize this local NRCS office for assistance. NRCS also will reach out directly to landowners if they know of a farmer who needs technical assistance or could use the guidance of the NRCS staff. The local NRCS office serving Washington Township:

Address: Building 1, 101 Bilby Road, in Hackettstown Commerce Park.
Phone and Website: 908-852-2576, www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov
Staff: Jill Ott, District Conservationist, 908-441-7518, jill.ott@nj.usda.gov¹³⁸

Within one year of selling their development easement, owners of preserved farms are required to develop a Conservation Plan with the NRCS. The conservation planning process is a collaboration between NRCS conservation planners and the farmer to provide tools and resources that ensure continued maintenance of the preserved land. A Conservation Plan is also required to apply for Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The following strategies would strengthen natural resource conservation efforts for farms in Warren County and its municipalities, including Washington:

- Ensuring that Conservation Plans are prepared and implemented will guarantee that the objectives of the program are put in place, and active stewardship practices are underway.
- While NRCS services are voluntary, farmers can benefit from conservation and the plans can help make farmers eligible for NRCS and USDA funding.¹³⁹

The NRCS “Field Office Technical Guide” contains information about the development and implementation of soil, water, air, flora, and fauna resource conservation practices, and is used to develop conservation and resource management plans.¹⁴⁰ Conservation practices discussed in the Guide that are pertinent for Washington 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.

Program opportunities and incentives are available for farmers who wish to implement conservation practices on their farm. Eligibility requirements can be found on the New Jersey NRCS website at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/nj/programs/financial/>. Farmers can reach out to the local NRCS office for more information.

In November of 2020, the USDA NRCS completed an update to its National Conservation Practice standards. The 2018 Farm Bill required the NRCS to review these practices. They provide guidance for planning, designing, installing, operating, and maintaining conservation practices. Some of the main areas of interest they cover are:

- Irrigation water management.
- Heavy use area protection.
- Composting facilities.

Two new conservation practices which deal with wastewater treatment and wildlife habitat planning will be added, and an additional 18 conservation standards are being tested to establish and document natural resources benefits. This update addresses changes in technology and added criterion for soil health, water conservation, drought tolerance, and resiliency.¹⁴¹

2. Upper Delaware Conservation District

The NJDA Division of Agricultural and Natural Resources includes the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC). Among its objectives are the protection of agricultural lands through farmland retention and productivity improvements, control and prevention of soil erosion and sedimentation on agricultural land, protection of water quality and control, and prevention of storm and flood water damages.¹⁴²

The SSCC coordinates and supports the work of the state’s 14 local soil conservation districts (SCDs), including the Upper Delaware CD. The SSCC are part of the New Jersey Conservation Partnership, which also includes the USDA NRCS and NJAES-RCE. The Upper Delaware CD is charged with implementing natural resource conservation and assistance programs and services, which include agricultural conservation planning assistance, agricultural conservation 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 surveys.

The Upper Delaware CD works with the NRCS in providing survey assistance, engineering designs, and plans. For development easements which require a conservation plan for the farm to be obtained within one year, the NRCS will prepare a conservation plan at no cost to the farmer. It also provides administrative support to Conservation Assistance Program (CAP) in support of Federal Farm Bill Conservation programs and the New Jersey Farmland Preservation Program, including the preparation and implementation of Conservation Plans. Its goal is to promote best management practices (BMPs) for soil erosion and sediment control, animal wastes, nutrient management, water quality improvement, and other natural resource management concerns.

Washington farmers may approach this local SCD office (as well as the local NRCS office) with a Request for Assistance (RFA) to apply for funds from the State Conservation Cost Share program and federal programs such as EQIP. If approved, the RFA is forwarded to the local NRCS office in Hackettstown for processing. The administration of the RFA includes preparation of a Conservation Plan and program contract. The Upper Delaware CD is involved in review of Conservation Plans and program contracts and must give final approval to both. The Upper Delaware CD office serving Washington farms is:¹⁴³

Address: 51 Main Street, Suite B in Blirstown

Phone: 908-852-2579

District Manager: Sandra Myers, smyers@upperdelawarescd-nj.com

Staff: Tim Matthews, District Forester, Eileen Greason, SESC Inspector Warren County

Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, Cooperative Extension of Warren County (NJAES-RCE)

The NJAES-RCE of Warren County provides field and technical research on BMPs for farmers to ensure the long-term viability of the agricultural economy and the natural resources upon which it is based.

The NJAES-RCE of Warren County offers the Agriculture and Natural Resource Management program to provide educational programs and services including soil testing, insect identification, plant disease diagnosis, and pest management recommendations for agricultural operations.¹⁴⁴ The NJAES-RCE of Warren County is:¹⁴⁵

Address: Warren County Administration Building, Suite 102, 165 County Route 519 South in White Township (mailing address of Belvidere)

County Extension Department Head:

Alayne Torretta, 908-475-6502, torretta@njaes.rutgers.edu

Agricultural and Natural Resources Senior Program Coordinator:

Henry Bignell Jr., hdbignell@njaes.rutgers.edu

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

The NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry oversees the Private Lands Management Program for the stewardship and retention of privately owned productive forest lands.¹⁴⁶ This includes the private woodlands currently under Farmland Assessment, which totaled 228,000 acres statewide in 2020.¹⁴⁷ Such tracts were added as “farm products” in the 1970s. There are two classifications

of woodlands: appurtenant (or attached) and non-appurtenant (or unattached). 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.¹⁴⁸

The 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 approved for this purpose.¹⁴⁹ Once a WMP is in place, a Woodland Data Form (WD-1) must be submitted with the farmland assessment application yearly to certify compliance with the WMP.

Non-appurtenant woodlands are woodland acreage on a farm over and above total farmed acreage (tilled and pasture). 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 Washington for 2018, there were 789 acres of non-appurtenant (or unattached) woodland acres in farmland assessment.¹⁵⁰ The total of non-appurtenant woodland acres in 2018 was up from 2010 when there were 650 acres. The 2018 non-appurtenant acres are also up from 2000 when there were 739 acres.¹⁵¹ (Table 23)

Table 23. Woodlands in Washington Township			
Year	Non-Appurtenant Woodlands (acres)	Appurtenant Woodlands (acres)	Total
2018	789	539	1,328
2015	883	494	1,377
2010	650	563	1,213
2000	739	657	1,396
<i>Source: Farmland Assessment (SADC)</i>			

Appurtenant woodlands are woodland acreage on a farm, less than or equal to, farmed acreage. 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. In Washington for 2018, there were 539 acres of appurtenant (or attached) woodland acres in farmland assessment, down from 2010 when there were 563 acres. In 2000, there were 657 appurtenant acres in farmland assessment in Washington. Overall, there was a 4.9% decrease in woodland between 2000 and 2018.

The NJDEP’s Nongame and Endangered Species Program administers the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP). This program worked to improve habitat management and protection for threatened and endangered species on private lands, some of which were agricultural lands. Since 2014, there is no expectation of congressional reapproval of LIP. While LIP is no longer available, other incentive programs through NJDEP are listed on the NJDEP, Division of Fish and Wildlife website.¹⁵²

USDA, Forest Service’s Forest Stewardship Program

The United States Forest Service (USFS) sponsors the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP), administered locally by the BFM. In the summer of 2017, the Forest Stewardship Program transitioned to a new program that eliminated income requirements to qualify for the program and enhanced monitoring and management of enrolled acres.¹⁵³ This program supports landowners whose property has a FSP that recognizes and manages the wetlands, wildlife, aesthetics, soil, and water in addition to the woodlands on the property. This program, when fully funded, offers landowners cost-share initiatives of up to 75% of the cost of a new or revised FSP to allow the landowners to fully follow the guidelines in their plan.¹⁵⁴

As of 2020, 184 properties covering 9,891 acres in Warren County are enrolled in FSP¹⁵⁵ and Washington contained 301 acres of farmland on nine different properties.¹⁵⁶ The New Jersey Forest Service Northern Region office is:¹⁵⁷

Address: 204 Main Street (Route 206 N), Andover, NJ 07821

Phone: 973-786-5035

Website: https://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/forest/stw_inc_prog.html

North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council (NJRC&D)

The Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D) began in 1962 to “help people care for and protect their natural resources to improve an area’s economy, environment, and living standards.” Among other programs, the NJRC&D offers a River-Friendly Farm Certification, which is a voluntary certification program designed to provide technical assistance and recognize farms that protect natural resources through responsible management. In more recent years, the program has expanded into Warren County with the certification of four farms in the past seven years.¹⁵⁸

Over the past three years, North Jersey RC&D has assisted 12 farmers with implementing conservation practices on over 1,150 acres of farmland in Washington Township. These practices address water quality goals within the region and support soil health conservation. Of the 1,150 acres, close to 350 acres were enrolled in aerial and single species cover crop programs and close to 500 acres received in-field soil health assessments. Additional practice implementation and technical assistance has included the completion of conservation plans, certified nutrient management plans, and riparian buffers. Ongoing assistance by RC&D includes cover crop and no-till education, implementation, and management, in addition to structural manure management practices and in-field erosion and sediment control practices. NJRC&D is located at

Address: 10 Maple Avenue in Asbury, Warren County

Phone: 908-574-5368

Executive Director: Laura Tessieri, ltessieri@northjerseyrcd.org

Private non-profit groups and private citizens

The preservation of agriculture and agricultural resources requires not only the broad support of state, county, and local governments, but also the help of private non-profit groups and citizens. The Washington agriculture community has the support of a variety of committees and organizations, including the newly created Washington Township Agricultural Advisory

Committee. Other local committees and organizations include the Warren County Board of Agriculture, New Jersey Farm Bureau, 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and the Warren County Farmers Fair. Regional non-profit organizations include the Ridge and Valley Conservancy, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey, The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and New Jersey Audubon Society.

B. Natural Resource Protection Programs

1. SADC Soil and Water Conservation Grants

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 agricultural 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.¹⁵⁹

These grants fund soil and water conservation projects approved by the Upper Delaware Conservation District (UDCD), with the program administered by both the UDCD and the local NRCS office in Hackettstown. Once the District deems the conservation project necessary and feasible, applications are forwarded to the SCC, which recommends projects to the SADC for funding approvals. A permanent source of funding needs to be put in place to ensure that farmers can continue to participate in these beneficial programs.

2. SADC Deer Fencing Grant Program

Farmers can apply to the SADC for cost-sharing grants for the installation of high-tensile woven wire deer fencing on permanently preserved farms. Farmers who are successful in their applications can cover up to 50% of the cost of materials and installation. Assistance for this program is capped at \$200/acre or a total grant amount of \$20,000. Program contact:¹⁶⁰

SADC: David Clapp or David Kimmel
Phone, Email: 609-984-2504, sadc@ag.nj.gov

3. Federal Conservation Programs

Farm Bill Programs

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. Since 2002, the legislature has drafted and instituted new Farm Bill programs in 2008, 2014, and 2018. 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).¹⁶¹ These programs were continued under the Food, Conservation and Energy

Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). These programs were renewed in 2014 and 2018, with the most recent legislation being The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill).¹⁶² The 2018 Farm Bill will be active until 2023. As in the past, these programs are administered by the local NRCS office in Hackettstown, and the Upper Delaware CD.

In 2014, the Farm Bill repealed the 2008 Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program. This voluntary program provided payments when revenues fell below established levels. In 2014, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) replaced the ACRE program with two new programs: Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC), which are continued through the 2018 Farm Bill.¹⁶³ These programs, “*pay producers who have eligible historical base acres when prices and/or yields of covered commodities fall below a certain amount, regardless of their current planting decisions.*”¹⁶⁴ Since a significant acreage of field crops such as corn and soybeans are grown in Washington, and are also covered commodities under these programs, such a revenue support system may well have a positive effect since it would help specialty crops and niche markets receive their fair share of payment support.

The 2018 Farm Bill, in effect since December 2018, made minor changes regarding conservation programs administered by the NRCS and the FSA. Some highlights include:

- Increases mandatory funding for conservation programs by about 2% from 2019-2023.
- Increasing Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage cap from 24 million acres to 27 million acres by 2023.
- Continuing the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), but at a reduced funding level, and replacing an acreage cap with a funding cap.
- Increases funding for EQIP, the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and direct funding for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP).¹⁶⁵

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The CRP is a land conservation program where farmers enroll on a volunteer basis to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production. In exchange, participating farmers plant species that improve the environmental health of the land and receive a yearly rental payment. The contract period is between 10-15 years.¹⁶⁶

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The NJ CREP program is an offshoot of the CRP and establishes a partnership between the USDA and the state to address environmental impacts related to agricultural practices. The program’s goals are, “*to maintain and improve water quality by reducing agricultural pollutants into streams, enhance farm viability, and to contribute to the State’s open space goals.*” In exchange for removing environmentally sensitive lands from production, and introducing conservation practices, agricultural landowners are paid an annual rental rate. Like CRP, farmers enter in a voluntary contract for 10-15 years. This program targets 30,000 acres of agricultural lands throughout the state, requesting \$100 million in federal funds and a state match of \$23 million over the life of the program. 100% of the cost is paid to establish the conservation practices and annual rental and incentive payments to the landowner.¹⁶⁷

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that offers financial and technical assistance to implement conservation practices on eligible agricultural land.¹⁶⁸ Opportunities include:

- Funding opportunities for beginning farmers.
- Financial assistance to help agricultural producers and forest owners address specific natural resource concerns.
- Financial assistance to install high tunnels (similar to hoop houses) to protect high-value crops.
- Soil health initiative to provide technical and financial assistance for soil conservation practices.¹⁶⁹

As of 2014, portions of the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), which was not reauthorized in the 2014 Farm Bill, have been folded into the EQIP program; anyone interested in applying for wildlife projects should apply through the Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) initiative through EQIP.

EQIP is the most popular and widely used conservation program in Warren County. There were 1,285 contracted acres, with 16 contracts in 2019. These contracts totaled \$141,205 (amount available, not paid out). While some farms in Washington may be assisted through EQIP, the number of farms enrolled is not tracked on a municipal level.¹⁷⁰

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

Funded by EQIP, the aim of the CIG is to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in conjunction with agricultural production. Funds are awarded as competitive 50-50 matching grants to non-governmental organizations, tribes, or individuals for projects with a one- to three-year duration. Each year, the NRCS announces a new round of competitive grants; NJRC&D was the most recent Warren County recipient of such a grant in 2019 worth \$74,995 to assess the use of short season variety corn and soybeans to facilitate adoption of multi-species cover crop.¹⁷¹

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The CSP, initiated in 2007, is a voluntary conservation program that provides technical and financial assistance to manage and maintain existing conservation systems, implementing additional conservation activities on land currently under production. CSP Provides two types of payments through five-year contracts: annual payments for installing new conservation activities and maintaining existing practices; and supplemental payments for adopting a resource-conserving crop rotation. Participants earn payments for conservation performance – the higher the performance, the higher the payment. Minimum annual payments amount to \$1,500. Participants can apply for renewal at the end of the five-year contract. The local NRCS administers this program.¹⁷²

Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) Program

Administered by the local NRCS, WLFW provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers to assist the implementation of conservation practices that benefit target

species and priority landscapes. Washington is situated in focal areas for two out of three target species in New Jersey, the Golden Winged Warbler, and the American Black Duck.¹⁷³

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

In 2014, the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) was repealed and consolidated into the ACEP. Administered by the local NRCS, the ACEP merges three former programs – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP). It has two components:

- Agricultural Land Easements – prevents the loss of working agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. NRCS may contribute up to 50% of the fair market value of the easement.
- Wetland Reserve Easements – provides habitat for fish and wildlife and improves water quality through restoration and enhancement and may provide opportunities for limited recreational activities. There are two types available in New Jersey: permanent (100% of the value and 50-75% of restoration costs) and 30-year easements (50-75% of the value and of the restoration costs).¹⁷⁴

In February 2021, the USDA released a final rule to update ACEP as directed by the 2018 Farm Bill. This update incorporates public comments and makes minor changes improving the processes in place to protect ecologically important lands.¹⁷⁵

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

RCPP was introduced in the 2014 Farm Bill, and significant changes were made in the 2018 Farm Bill. This program encourages partnerships to implement solutions to conservation challenges. Partnerships can be formed by agricultural producer associations, farmer cooperatives, municipal entities, and non-government organizations. Significant changes that were made in 2018 to RCPP are:

- RCPP is now a standalone program with its own funding of \$300 million annually. Moving forward, landowners and ag producers will enter RCPP contracts and RCPP easements.
- Enhanced Alternative Funding Arrangement provision – NRCS may award up to 15 AFA projects, which are more grant-like and rely more on partner capacity to implement conservation activities.
- Three funding pools reduced to two – the National pool was eliminated. Partners must apply to either the Critical Conservation Area (CCA) or State/Multistate funding pool.
- Emphasis on project outcomes – all RCPP projects must now develop and report on their environmental outcomes.¹⁷⁶

Partnerships must apply for a project grant on a competitive basis during the grant applications period. There are two funding categories: critical conservation areas (CCA) (New Jersey does not fall within one of these eight areas), and state/multi-state. To apply for state funding, the project must address at least one of the national or state priorities of soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, and wildlife habitat. In September 2021, the NRCS announced investment in 15 projects totaling \$75 million; although none of these projects reside in New Jersey. The most recent New Jersey projects that were awarded funding were in 2018:

- Columbia Dam Removal and Restoration on Paulins Kill (\$567,000) – Plan to remove the Columbia Dam and a downstream remnant dam to restore and reconnect habitat for diadromous fish species.
- Black River Gateway – Soil and Water Protection (\$922,000) – Plan to preserve farms in the Black River.¹⁷⁷

C. Water Resources

1. Supply Characteristics

Washington Township falls completely within the Highlands Region, both in the Preservation Area (3,595 acres) and Planning Area (7,953 acres). The physiographic and geologic layout of Washington dictates water supply, availability, and recharge, as well as location of agriculture. Washington is located within seven sub-watersheds, four of which are in a deficit for net water availability, and five are on the Highlands Impaired Water list. The Township does have 2,484 acres of prime groundwater recharges area.¹⁷⁸

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.”¹⁷⁹ 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.

The 2018 *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.”*¹⁸⁰

2. Agricultural Demand & Supply Limitations

Agricultural lands are identified as cropland harvested, cropland pastured, woodland, equine, and permanent pasture. The most recent farmland assessment data in 2018 listed Washington’s total agricultural acreage at 4,895. About 59% of this total is harvested cropland, land that requires the most amount of water for production.

Washington's water demand for agricultural use stems primarily from the production of water-intensive crops such as alfalfa, corn, and soybeans, which comprise 74% of the field crops grown in the Township. However, because of the region's climate, none of the township's field crops are labeled as irrigated, and there has been no change from 2015-2017.¹⁸¹

In some cases, population pressures and climate change can affect water supply in New Jersey towns. Increased pressure from development and the concomitant demands on water supplies are being felt by Washington farmers. Increased development exacerbates water supply concerns, not only by increased water usage from occupants of the units, but also by creating more impervious surface, causing more stormwater runoff (which often washes pollutants into waterways) and less opportunity for aquifer recharge. Lack of sufficient water recharge areas can compromise soil conditions and means less water stays in the area and flows away to other areas, adversely impacting the region due to the fluctuations in natural water distribution.

3. Water Conservation and Allocation Strategies

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. Historically, from 2008 to 2018, dry conditions occurred with greater frequencies than in years prior.¹⁸² The dominant crops in Washington are hay, corn, and soybeans. These crops rely on rain and some groundwater for water needs, making water conservation strategies difficult to implement. 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 Washington uses drip irrigation. However, since vegetable, fruit, and nursery agriculture are minor to hay, corn, and soybeans, the positive effects and opportunities of water conservation efforts for the Township are minimal. Total irrigated acres in Washington increased from zero acres in 2005, to 2 acres in 2018, with both of these acres being used for vegetables. Water conservation strategies may become more important as irrigation in Washington grows.

Washington falls in the scope of the Highlands Act and so has access to water resource studies. Washington can benefit from analyses done for neighboring communities within the Highlands, and the use of stream base flow monitoring 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.¹⁸³

The NJDA encourages farmers to implement water-management practices as a routine part of their conservationist approach to agriculture. The faculty of NJAES-RCE publishes annual crop production recommendation guides for multiple crop groups that include irrigation guidelines and recommendations. These guides include tips for maximizing irrigation efficiency, such as optimizing irrigation scheduling, selecting appropriate growing mediums, planning, and installing irrigation systems that provide efficient water use, managing stormwater runoff, and collecting and recycling irrigation water.¹⁸⁴ Farmers can use floats and timers to eliminate the needs for constantly running water to keep troughs full for livestock.

The Office of the New Jersey Climatologist at Rutgers University operates the Weather and Climate Network of weather monitoring stations. Farmers can use the information from stations near them to assist with irrigation scheduling, as well as pest management and other conservation issues, temperature, precipitation, wind speed and gusts. Other stations measure barometric pressure and New Brunswick measures soil temperatures as well. Farmers can set favorite locales and view charts and tabular data.¹⁸⁵

D. Waste Management Planning

Livestock farmers in Washington may opt to participate in SCD/NRCS conservation programs that cost share the creation of animal waste facilities on their farms. By building these temporary holding tanks, usually concrete, the farmer accomplishes two purposes: preventing the waste from mixing with runoff and polluting streams and other water bodies and providing a ready source of manure or fertilizer for farm fields. When convenient, farmers can remove the waste from the temporary storage facilities and apply it to the fields, following BMPs.¹⁸⁶

Animal Waste

Waste production from horses and cows is a continuous focal point of conservation practice in the Township.¹⁸⁷ Horse waste on farms can be a problem due in part to the relatively small land area of horse farms, making the manure more difficult to distribute on fields effectively and safely. This can contribute to the spread of disease from the manure if not controlled. For dairy farms, however, manure concentration and distribution are less of a concern because of the relatively large land area dedicated to those operations assuming that manure is managed and applied in an appropriate manner and in accordance with New Jersey state regulations.¹⁸⁸

Many farmers have “Nutrient Management Plans” to manage the manure generated on their farms.¹⁸⁹ For livestock waste disposal services, Ag Choice LLC in Andover, Sussex County, picks up, accepts, and composts food and livestock waste on a commercial scale. It is then available as bulk pickup, sold to landscapers and garden centers, or bagged and sold at retail outlets. This type of operation not only helps control the problem of livestock waste on farms but is also a good revenue source for the owners.

Animal feeding operations (AFOs) have the potential to cause water pollution since mismanagement of the animal waste can lead to soil and groundwater contamination via introduction of organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorus, and bacterial pathogens into nearby surface waters.¹⁹⁰ 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.¹⁹¹

In general, self-certified waste management plans will be coordinated through the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension (NJAES-RCE), which continues to aid farmers who have not yet completed AWMPs or implemented environmental BMPs on their farms. Farmers can apply for funding through Environmental Quality Incentive Program (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) site or waste storage facility must have a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP). NRCS can assist producers with the development of a CNMP which in turn can be used as guide for implementing waste management practices in the future. These plans are developed with the assistance of a Technical Service Provider (TSP).¹⁹²

Recycling

Recycling is an important part of natural resource conservation for the agriculture industry. Hay, corn and soybeans, the dominant farm products by acreage in Washington, use limited products that can be recycled, and as such limit recycling opportunities. Although nursery and produce make up a small part of Washington’s agricultural operations, there still is a need to provide outlets for recyclable waste from these operations. The following are the recycling facilities available to Washington farmers:

- Warren County Recycling Center – This facility is open to all Warren County residents and accepts #1-#7 plastics in addition to glass bottles and jars and aluminum, tin, steel, and bimetal cans.¹⁹³
500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, Oxford (White Township), (908) 475-6532
<https://www.warrencountynj.gov/government/planning-department/recycling-and-solid-waste>
- The Recycling Center of North Jersey – This facility accepts comingled glass and plastics, all types of metal and aluminum.¹⁹⁴
48 Hope Road, #521, Blairstown, (908) 362-1255
<https://balbienterprises.com/recycling-center>
- Warren County District Landfill – 500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, Oxford. 908-453-2174. This facility accepts tires on a “daily basis” between 8:00 am – 3:30 pm. Proof of Warren County residency is required. Charges range from \$2.50 for each automobile tire up to 22” to \$10.00 for each farm equipment tire up to 50”.¹⁹⁵
500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, Oxford (White Township), (908) 453-2174
<https://www.warrencountynj.gov/government/planning-department/recycling-and-solid-waste>

In the past, Warren County has organized “Tire Amnesty Day,” which provided opportunities for farmers to dispose of their used tractor tires for free.¹⁹⁶ For other farm-oriented recyclables, the NJDA website lists resources for agricultural recycling. Programs listed include options for nursery and greenhouse film, pesticide containers, nursery pots, plug trays, flats, mulch film, and irrigation tape. Some of these services are free, and others come at a cost to the farmer.¹⁹⁷

E. Energy Conservation Planning

In January 2010 (P.L. 2009, c.213) 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.¹⁹⁸

In 2019, Governor Phil Murphy signed the Updated Global Warming Response Act seeking to reduce greenhouse emissions 80% by 2050. Green energy policy is also echoed in Governor Murphy's *Energy Master Plan*, in which, the state seeks to transition to 100% clean energy by 2050.¹⁹⁹ Washington farmers can take advantage of this initiative by applying for the financial incentives to implement energy efficient improvements to their farms and operations. The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) funds grant and loan guarantees to agricultural producers for assistance in purchasing renewable energy systems. Renewable energy systems include generation from: biomass, geothermal, hydropower, hydrogen, wind, and solar.²⁰⁰

The NRCS also has the authority to use EQIP to implement Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) to address concerns of energy conservation. As a part of the EQIP On-Farm Energy Initiative, these plans are designed to evaluate energy use and efficiency within farming operations. These energy audits can qualify a farmer for financial assistance to implement recommendations of the process if the audit meets the proper time and standard requirements. This plan is implemented to assist the landowner's goals of achieving cheaper and more efficient energy consumption.²⁰¹

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.²⁰² The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities offers rebates for solar electric, wind, and sustainable biomass systems if funding is available. Washington Township farmers interested in EQIP can contact the local NRCS office at (908) 441-7518 for more information.

Solar Energy

The SADC does allow solar generating facilities on preserved farms, and rules for these installations are contained in Subchapter 24 of Chapter 76.²⁰³ Solar generating facilities are also allowed on unpreserved farms and the SADC has provided AMP (agricultural management practices) for these facilities.²⁰⁴ A summary of the policies aligned by both the subchapter and the AMP is given below:

- Solar panels (solar energy general facilities) are allowed on commercial farms (preserved and unpreserved).
- Panels cannot be constructed/installed on prime farmlands (to the maximum extent practicable).
- The SADC prefers they be constructed on buildings or facilities; if on the ground, they are to be installed without concrete footing or permanent mounting.
- Facilities cannot exceed more than 1% of the total farm area.
- Purpose of the facilities must be to provide energy for the farm, with an allowance for income opportunity for farmers.
- System cannot exceed height of 20 feet.
- Must minimize views from public roadways and neighboring residences.
- Facilities must use existing roadways to provide access to facilities to avoid construction of new roadways.

EQIP provides cost-share funding for solar livestock watering facility as part of a grazing system. Special rates are available to qualified farmers. In 2018, two contracts were planned and applied, but in 2019 no contracts were developed.²⁰⁵

Wind Energy

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. New Jersey and Washington farmers might take advantage of a distributed or “small” wind system, which uses turbines of 100 kilowatts or smaller to directly power a home, farm, or small business. New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program provides a model small wind ordinance for municipal adoption. Although this is a first step toward encouraging wind energy, New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program incentives for wind energy installations have been on hold since 2011.²⁰⁶

In Washington, a wind turbine would be deemed a principal or accessory use under current land development regulations and thus would require a height variance.²⁰⁷ This, along with Warren County’s embrace of alternative energies through the New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program, indicates Washington’s willingness to consider alternative energy source.

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 state 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 Washington as Hackettstown and Long Valley.²⁰⁸

Biopower

Starting in 2017, biopower projects are incentivized through the Combined Heat and Power Program (CHP). Program participants are eligible to receive financial incentives for CHP installations to further enhance energy efficiency in their buildings through on-site power generation and using distributed generation to provide reliability solutions for New Jersey while supporting the state’s Energy Master Plan. Washington farmers can find the program eligibility requirements and the program’s financial incentives in the CHP-FC Program Guide.²⁰⁹

Ethanol and Pelletized Switchgrass

Corn, the second most dominant field crop in Washington, could position the Township’s farmers to financially capitalize on the spreading movement towards ethanol-blended fuels. In addition, interest has been shown in utilizing switchgrass to make energy producing pellets. This could add another market for Washington farmers, and another source of clean energy.²¹⁰

Biodiesel

Biodiesel, made from the oils of soybeans, is an alternative to petroleum diesel. The Environmental Protection Agency reported a record 2.1 billion gallons of biofuel were consumed in 2015. Countywide, soybean production has nearly doubled since 2011, from 221,000 bushels to 430,000

bushels in 2015. Warren County leads northern New Jersey in soybean production. Washington can utilize its soybean production to maximize the benefits of its third largest field crop. While no bio-diesel producers are available nearby, several retailers operate within the region, including:

- Dixon Energy – 99 Cobb St. Rockaway, NJ, 973-334-1000
- Wooley Fuel Co. – 12 Burnett Ave. Maplewood, NJ, 973-762-7400
- Quarles – 1046 N Godfrey St. Allentown, PA, 877-444-3835²¹¹

Biogas

In 2020, New Jersey ranked 30th nationwide in biogas production. Out of 59 operational systems, down from 62 in 2015, 22 are landfill systems and 32 are wastewater systems, and five are food waste systems. Increasing biogas operations can lead to economic opportunity through job creation and environmental benefits through reducing greenhouse gasses.²¹²

Renewable Energy Grant Programs

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.

Renewable Energy Incentive Program (REIP): This program previously offered funding assistance for solar, wind, and sustainable biomass installations. Currently, this program is on hold for wind systems. Solar projects are no longer eligible for REIP incentives. Those who sought assistance for solar projects used to register for Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SREC) through the SREC Registration program (SRP).²¹³ Since the Spring of 2020, those who seek to register solar projects do so through the Transition Incentive Program (TI).²¹⁴

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.²¹⁵

New Jersey Smart Start Buildings: Operated by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, this program is a statewide energy efficiency program available to qualified commercial, industrial, institutional, governmental, or agricultural customers that seek to change their electric or gas equipment.²¹⁶

USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP): Reauthorized under the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill), the REAP program provides guaranteed loan financing to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements.²¹⁷ For agricultural producers, a guaranteed loan and grant program can provide financial assistance with the installation of renewable energy systems.

Advanced Biofuel Payment Program: This program is to increase the production of advance biofuels. Quarterly payments are distributed to participants for actual quantity of eligible advance biofuel production. An advanced biofuel is a fuel that is derived from renewable biomass, other

than corn kernel starch. Biofuels that may be specific to Washington farmers are those derived from waste material such as crop and animal wastes.²¹⁸

Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program: This program provides loan guarantees up to \$250 million to assist the development of new and emerging technologies. These technologies include advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals, and biobased products.²¹⁹

F. Outreach and Incentives

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

As competing uses impact farmers in Warren County and in Washington, education, outreach, and regional coordination will become more integral to the success of farming operations.



Chapter 8. Agricultural Industry, Sustainability, Retention, & Promotion

A. Existing Agricultural Industry Support

1. Right to Farm

In 1983 the State Legislature enacted the Right to Farm Act (RFA) and amended it in 1998, ensuring that farmers can continue accepted agricultural operations. Another critical piece of legislation in support of agriculture was the 1983 Agriculture Retention and Development Act. This Act created the SADC, and authorized counties to create CADB's.²²⁰

The SADC works to maximize protection for commercial farmers under the RFA by developing AMPs, 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. 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; and comply with AMPs recommended by the SADC, or site-specific AMPs developed by the Warren County CADB at the request of a commercial farmer.²²¹

As of 2022 the SADC had 12 AMPs in place, the latest being an AMP for On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities, and Events, adopted April 7, 2014. The SADC lists 30 site-specific AMPs for Warren County, all of which the Warren CADB resolved.²²²

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 qualifies as a commercial farm (N.J.S.A. 4:1C-3) and whether the operation or activity is eligible for right-to-farm protection. The CADB and/or SADC typically conducts a site visit for additional fact finding, sometimes consulting with agricultural experts and municipalities (in cases where municipal regulations are involved in right-to-farm disputes. Depending on the nature of the issues, either the CADB or SADC (or both in some cases) holds a public hearing at the county level. Decisions made by the Warren CADB may be appealed to the SADC, and final SADC determinations may be appealed to the New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division.²²³

Municipalities can and should limit the number of right-to-farm complaints and encourage farming as an industry by:

- Working to better understand the Right to Farm process to adopt or update comprehensive Right to Farm ordinances as outlined by the SADC.
- Making agriculture a permitted use in all appropriate zones.
- Requiring buffers between new non-agricultural development and adjacent existing farmlands.
- Requiring notification to homeowners purchasing a home in a new subdivision where active agriculture occurs on adjacent property.

Right to Farm ordinances are a necessary item for municipalities that wish to enter the Farmland Preservation Program. Washington adopted its Right-to-Farm Ordinance (Ord. No. 99-14) in 1999. **(Appendix C)**

The Ordinance states that *“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 and private nuisance suits, where best management practices are applied and are consistent with relevant federal and state law and nonthreatening to the public health and safety.”*²²⁴

The Ordinance declares the right to engage in agriculture to be *“permitted in this Township as permitted by zoning and other land use regulations and as permitted by state law”* and must not be contrary to Township zoning and land use regulations. The protected farming activities under Washington Township’s Right to Farm Ordinance are those adopted by the Administrative Procedure 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. Further, the owner and operator of a commercial farm may engage in all agricultural activities permitted by N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9.

The RTF Ordinance requires the following language to be included in the deed of any newly subdivided lot in Washington, any part of which is located in a zoning district where agriculture is a permitted use:

“Grantee is hereby given notice that there is, or may in the future be, farm use near the premises describe in this deed, from which may emanate noise, odors, dust, and flumes associated with agricultural practices permitted under the Right-to-Farm Ordinance...”

Washington Township’s 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.

2. Farmland Assessment

The Farmland Assessment program is a tax incentive that reduces property taxes on active commercial farmed land. This tax incentive is made possible by the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964, N.J.S.A. 54:4-23.1 et seq. Its provisions were recently updated by legislation that was signed into law in 2013, becoming effective in tax year 2015. Basic eligibility requirements include:

- The applicant must own the land.
- The property owner must apply annually for Farmland Assessment on or before August 1 of the year immediately preceding the tax year, and effective as of tax year 2015, must submit proof of sales or clear evidence of anticipated gross sales along with the FA-1 application form.
- 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.
- Effective as of tax year 2015, gross sales of products from the land must average at least \$1,000 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 \$500 for the first five acres and \$0.50 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.
- The property owner must represent that the land will continue in agricultural or horticultural use to the end of the tax year.²²⁵

The Farmland Assessment program does not apply to farm structures, such as barns and storage facilities.

There are 4,895 acres in Washington devoted to agricultural and horticultural usage. Within these 4,895 acres, 3,556 are in agricultural use as either cropland or pasture. The remaining 1,339 acres are woodland/wetland areas, equine boarding/rehabilitation or training operations.²²⁶ According to New Jersey Farmland Assessment data from 2010 to 2018, general trends indicate:

- From 2010 to 2018 total assessed acreage increased 1% from 4,863 acres to 4,895 acres.
- Harvested cropland decreased 4% from 2010 (3,006 acres) to 2018 (2,875 acres).
- Pastured cropland increased 42% from 2010 (159 acres) to 2018 (226 acres).
- Permanent pasture decreased 5% from 2010 (479 acres) to 2018 (455 acres).
- Total acreage in active agricultural use (cropland harvested, cropland pastured, and permanent pasture) decreased 2% from 2010 (3,644 acres) to 2018 (3,556 acres).
- Woodland/wetland acreage increased 9% from 2010 (1,213 acres) to 2018 (1,328 acres).
- Equine acreage increased 83% from 2010 (6 acres) to 2018 (11 acres).

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.

B. Additional Strategies to Sustain, Retain, and Promote Agriculture

1. Permit Streamlining

Municipalities play a key role in the preservation of farming as an industry. Without strong and active support from municipal governments, farming can be too costly and burdensome to be profitable or worthwhile. 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 Washington’s strong agricultural base requires support on many fronts, one of which is flexibility in government regulation.²²⁷

- *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).
- *Flexibility*: State agencies should consider the *NJDA Agricultural Smart Growth Plan* when making 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 Washington Township farmers.
- *Agriculture-Friendly Zoning*: This refers to a comprehensive land use practice that coordinates zoning and land use policy in a proactive way which encourages agribusiness, while at the same time reducing the incidence of farmer-homeowner nuisance issues.

2. Agriculture Vehicle Movement

Washington farmers need to move heavy, slow-moving agricultural equipment over local, county, and sometimes state roads to access unconnected fields and barns. The township’s 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 transportation paces can, and do, cause conflict between Washington’s farmers and suburban dwellers, while creating unsafe road conditions as residents and farmers “compete” for road space.

Since many farm vehicles travel over local municipal roads, municipalities should continue to support local agricultural business’ right to do so. The SADC model Right to Farm ordinance recognizes, as a specific right, the operation and transportation of large, slow-moving farm equipment over roads. Washington Township does not include slow-moving equipment as a protected farming activity in their Right-to-Farm ordinance.

Signage alerting fast-moving cars to 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 Washington life. Where absent or inadequate, appropriate signage can be posted. Township officials may consult with farmers as to what adequate signage is and where it should be posted.

3. Agricultural Labor Housing/Training

An adequate labor supply is integral to harvesting vegetables, fruits, and berries. Measured in farmed acreage, Washington 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.²²⁸ As of 2018, only 87 acres in Washington Township were devoted to fruits, berries, and vegetables, while 3,737 acres were devoted to field crops and nursery products. Since the overall acreage devoted to labor intensive farming is small in Washington, 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.

In recent years, problems that face New Jersey Employers persist as the wage (\$11.05/hour) for agricultural employers as of January 1, 2022. It is expected to increase to \$15.00/hour by 2027.²²⁹ The cost of labor in New Jersey is a significant issue for some farming sectors such as produce, and one that needs further consideration for its effect on agriculture in New Jersey, Warren County, and Washington.

Agricultural Labor Housing

Since the overall acreage in Washington dedicated to the intensive labor is few, likewise, the demand for agricultural labor housing is scarce. There are no seasonal labor housing structures in the Township.

Farmer Education and Training

To sustain a modern, diverse, and stable food and agricultural industry, education and progressive ongoing training for farmers promotes a more efficient and productive business environment.

The **NJAES-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. NJAES of Warren County also provides practical assistance to farmers, such as assistance with obtaining pesticide application licenses and water certification and registration permits from the NJDEP.

The **Warren County Community College** teaches crop monitoring for precision agriculture techniques in their photogrammetry class. The College would be willing to explore the possibility of setting up college-level or continuing education courses if requested to so by the Warren CADB, or the wider agriculture community.²³⁰

NOFA-NJ offers educational programs for farmers of all ages and skill sets, including a Beginning Farmer Program. Other educational programming includes organic gardening, permaculture design certification, business courses, technical assistance, and farm-to-table workshops.²³¹

Through its **Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources**, Natural Resource Conservation Program, the NJDA offers technical, financial, and regulatory assistance, and provides educational outreach to landowners throughout the state.²³²

Agriculture labor education and training funding may be available through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Programs. These programs can help assist in upgrading the skills and productivity of the agricultural workforce.²³³ The NJDA hosts a web page with links and information on Agricultural Education, geared mostly toward teachers but also listing conferences and other information of potential education interest to farmers.²³⁴

The NJFB also hosts educational meetings and provides educational information for farmers on its website about legislative issues, farmland preservation, and labor resources.²³⁵

Youth Farmer Education Programs

According to the *Census of Agriculture*, the farmer population in Warren County is getting older, with an increase of 2.2 years of an average age of 59.4 in 2017 versus 57.2 in 2007.²³⁶ The nationwide average age of operators in 2017 was 58.6, less than a one-year difference compared to Warren County.²³⁷ In 2017, there were 83 farmers (5.5%) out of 1,516 farmers in Warren County who were under the age of 35.²³⁸

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 prepared to enter the industry. At the post-secondary level, neither Centenary University nor Warren County Community College offer agriculture education courses, but Centenary University does offer programs in Equine Sciences and Equine Studies.²³⁹ Typically, students who enter programs in natural sciences (biology, chemistry, etc.) at these schools can also adapt their degree plan to include elements of business, economics, and resource management to receive a well-rounded education that can translate to practical use on Washington farms.²⁴⁰

The closest post-secondary institutions to Washington Township that offer programs relating to agriculture and horticulture are:

- 11 miles – Sussex County Community College, One College Hill Road, Newton.
- 22 miles – County College of Morris, 214 Center Grove Road, Randolph.
- 53 miles - Bergen County Community College, 400 Paramus Road, Paramus.
- 69 miles – Mercer County Community College, 1200 Old Trenton Road, West Windsor Township.

Changes in the cost of attendance/financial assistance for college education in New Jersey may offer incentives for young farmers to seek enrollment in higher education. In the Spring of 2019, the state piloted the New Jersey Community College Opportunity Grant, where students may be eligible for tuition-free college.²⁴¹

Future Farmers of America (FFA) is a national educational organization that helps prepare youth for careers and leadership in agriculture by aiding students in the development of agricultural skills.²⁴² The National FFA has 8,612 chapters and 700,170 members aged 12-21 in all 50 states.²⁴³ In 2020, there were 36 chapters in New Jersey with more than 2,400 members.²⁴⁴ North Warren Regional High School in Blairstown offers Applied Horticulture/Horticultural Operations²⁴⁵ and has a local FFA Chapter. North Warren Regional High School in Blairstown also offers courses in animal science/wildlife management. Based on student interest, the school could consider offering other related courses such as environmental science or agriculture business management.²⁴⁶

4-H is an informal, practical educational program for youth, which assists young people interested in farm animals through livestock projects. The 4-H Youth Development Program is overseen by the Warren County NJAES-RCE.²⁴⁷ The 4-H program is led by volunteers that teach about different areas of interest varying from animals, plants, agriculture, and leadership. Within Warren County, all 4-H club members are active in County events such as the Warren County Farmers Fair.²⁴⁸

There are two local non-profit groups that focus on agricultural issues, the **Foodshed Alliance** in Blairstown and **Genesis Farm** in Frelinghuysen. These organizations are concerned with supporting and promoting sustainable agricultural practices and connecting farming with the community at-large. They also work to foster and train the next generation of farmers in the county.

NJ Farm Link is a program for farmers, new and established, and assists:

- New farmers looking for opportunities to gain experience
- New farmers looking for land to get started
- Established farmers looking for land to expand
- Farm owners looking to lease, sell, or make land available for farming
- Retiring farmers who would like to ensure their land stays in agricultural production but have no family members who want to continue to farm
- Farmers looking to hire farm managers, fill apprenticeship positions, or mentor a new farmer
- Non-profits, municipalities, and counties looking for farmers for farmland they own or manage
- Farmers and landowners working on farm transfer plans.²⁴⁹

Farmers interested in land or partnership/job opportunities, as well as those wanting to advertise available land and opportunities, can sign up and create and manage their own listings through the interactive NJ Land Link website. In 2022 there are 17 farmland listings in Warren County.²⁵⁰

4. Wildlife Management Strategies

Crop damage from wildlife leads to economic loss for the farmer and is a serious problem throughout Warren County. At present, hunting is about the only effective method available to farmers. Although many farmers are avid hunters and do apply for depredation permits that allow them to hunt out of season, even hunting is becoming a less viable solution. Encroaching

development that takes away territory from these animals also limits the farmers ability to hunt. As farms become smaller and more developments are built adjacent to farms, areas can no longer be hunted, even by the farmers who own the land, because they would be hunting too close to a neighborhood dwelling. In many instances, this is the only short-term solution to control crop damage. Special hunting options include:

- License exemptions for farm families.
- Special farmer black bear permit.
- Farmer Depredation Permit.
- Deer Management Assistance Program.

Insects are also causing crop damage. The pesticides used to control them can cause other kinds of damage, possible health concerns for the end user of the product, and pollution of the County’s water supply. At the county level, studies undertaken by the NJAES-RCE, such as the perimeter trap study on insects and pumpkins undertaken several years ago and the integrated pest management resources available through the NJAES-RCE, are attempts to help solve these problems in ways that work for both the farmer and the environment.²⁵¹

Warren County has also been placed on quarantine by the NJDA, due to an outbreak of the spotted lanternfly. This insect has the potential to damage crop output and has been a concern since at least 2018.²⁵²

The NJDA’s Division of Plant Industry works to safeguard the state’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.²⁵³ The Division’s Gypsy Moth Suppression Program is a voluntary cooperative program involving local governments, county, and state agencies, as well as the USDA Forest Service. Aerial spray treatments of *Bacillus thuringiensis* are utilized when gypsy moth cycles are at a peak and natural controls are not sufficient to control defoliation. The gypsy moth was reported as a “heavy problem” in Washington Township in 2008 and rose to a “severe problem” in 2016 aerial defoliation surveys. Their report dropped back to a “heavy” problem in 2017. Township was not included in any aerial defoliation surveys since 2017, showing that the invasion has improved through the years, though it is still present in Warren County.²⁵⁴

5. Agricultural Education and Promotion

The USDA has an array of loans and grants, known as the **Rural Development Program**, 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. The Agricultural Act of 2018 (Farm Bill) updates the Rural Development Program in several ways, including:

- Amends the definition of rural to exclude from population thresholds individuals incarcerated on a long-term or regional basis and excludes the first 1,500 individuals residing in on-base military housing.

- Increases annual appropriated funding for broadband deployment from \$25 million in FY2019 to \$350 million in FY2023.
- The 2018 Farm Bill redirects program funds of existing rural development programs to target a range of rural health issues.
- The 2018 Farm Bill also includes other provisions to reauthorize and/or amend loan and grant programs that help with rural water and wastewater infrastructure, business development and retention, and community and regional development.²⁵⁵

Grants and loans are available in three key areas: Business-Cooperative, Housing and Community Facilities (including farm labor housing), and Utilities (including Broadband).²⁵⁶ To qualify for some of the program's loans and grants, municipalities must have less than 10,000 residents, other program thresholds have increased. At a population of approximately 2,344 as of July 2019,²⁵⁷ Washington may qualify for these loans and grants.

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.²⁵⁸

The New Jersey Legislature has considered bills that would provide income averaging similar to the federal program. In the 2018-2019 Regular Session, Bill NJ A236 was introduced and has since been referred to the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee. The NJDA, SADC, Warren County Commissioners, and Warren County CADB can work with, and encourage, the New Jersey Legislature to continue to introduce bills that would assist Warren County and Washington farmers to remain economically viable.

The New Jersey FSA has both **Direct and Guaranteed Farm Ownership** loans available for farmers, including those in Warren County. Direct Farm Ownership Loans are available up to \$600,000, and guaranteed loans can go up to \$1,776,000. Down Payment loan funds may be used to partially finance the purchase of a family farm. Loan applicants must contribute a minimum down payment of 5% of the purchase price of the farm and the Agency will finance 45% to a maximum loan amount of \$300,015.²⁵⁹ The Hackettstown Service Center handles loans for Warren County.²⁶⁰

FSA loans can be used for most agriculture necessities such as purchasing land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, supplies, and for construction of buildings, or to make farm improvements.²⁶¹

Maps

Map 1. Farmland

Map 2. Preserved and Public Lands

Map 3. Agricultural Soil Categories

Map 4. Agricultural Development Area

Map 5. Project Area Map

Target Farm Analysis Maps:

Map A. Farm Parcels & Units that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Tillable Land

Map B. Farm Parcels & Units that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Agricultural Soils

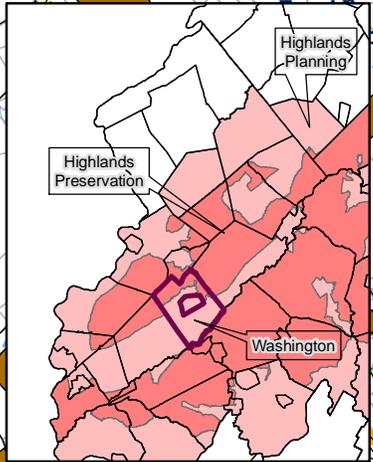
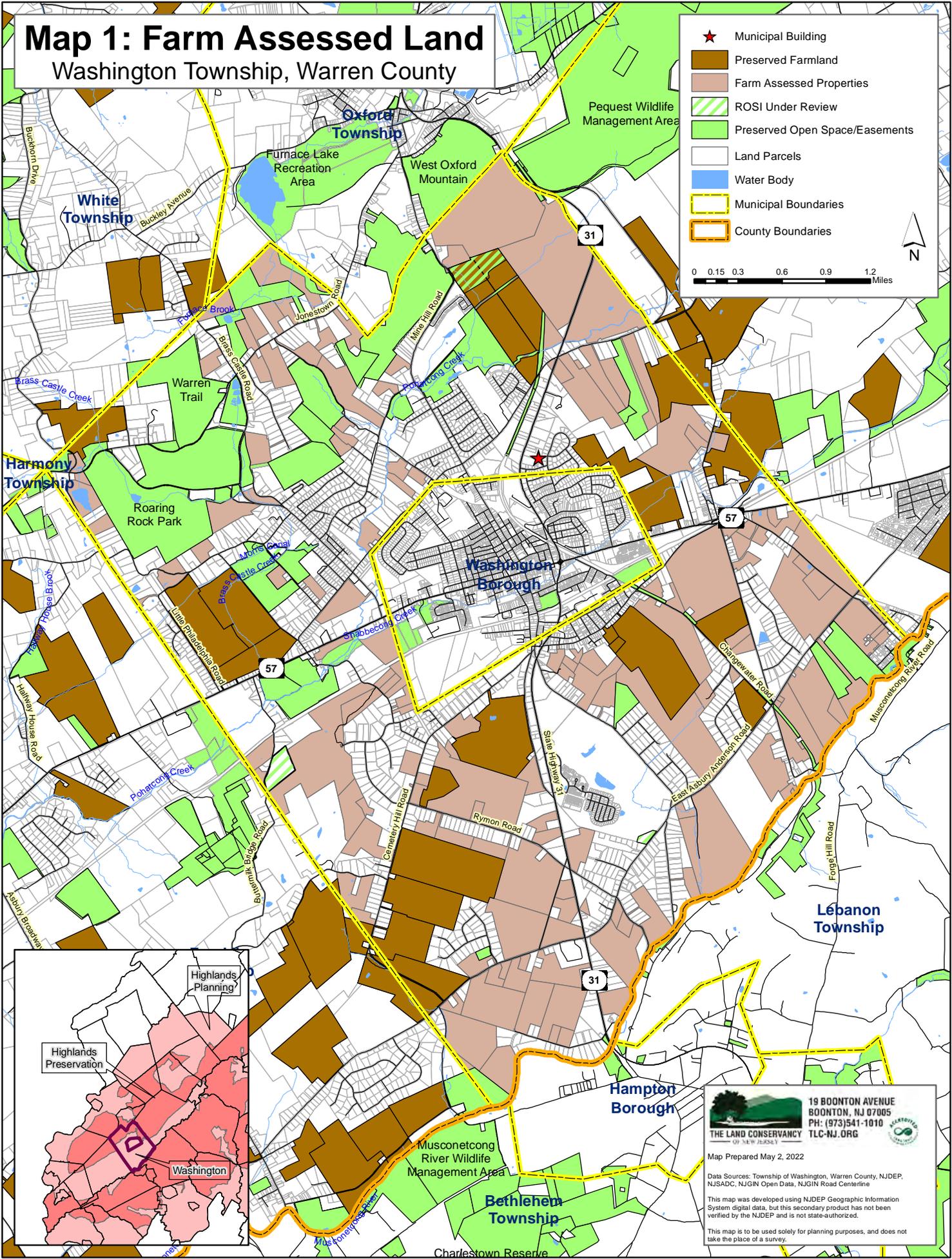
Map C. Target Farms: Potentially Eligible Farm Parcels & Units that meet SADC criteria for Agricultural Soils and Tillable Land

Map 1: Farm Assessed Land

Washington Township, Warren County

-  Municipal Building
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Farm Assessed Properties
-  ROSI Under Review
-  Preserved Open Space/Easements
-  Land Parcels
-  Water Body
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  County Boundaries

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles


19 BOONTON AVENUE
BOONTON, NJ 07005
PH: (973)541-1010
TLC-NJ.ORG

Map Prepared May 2, 2022

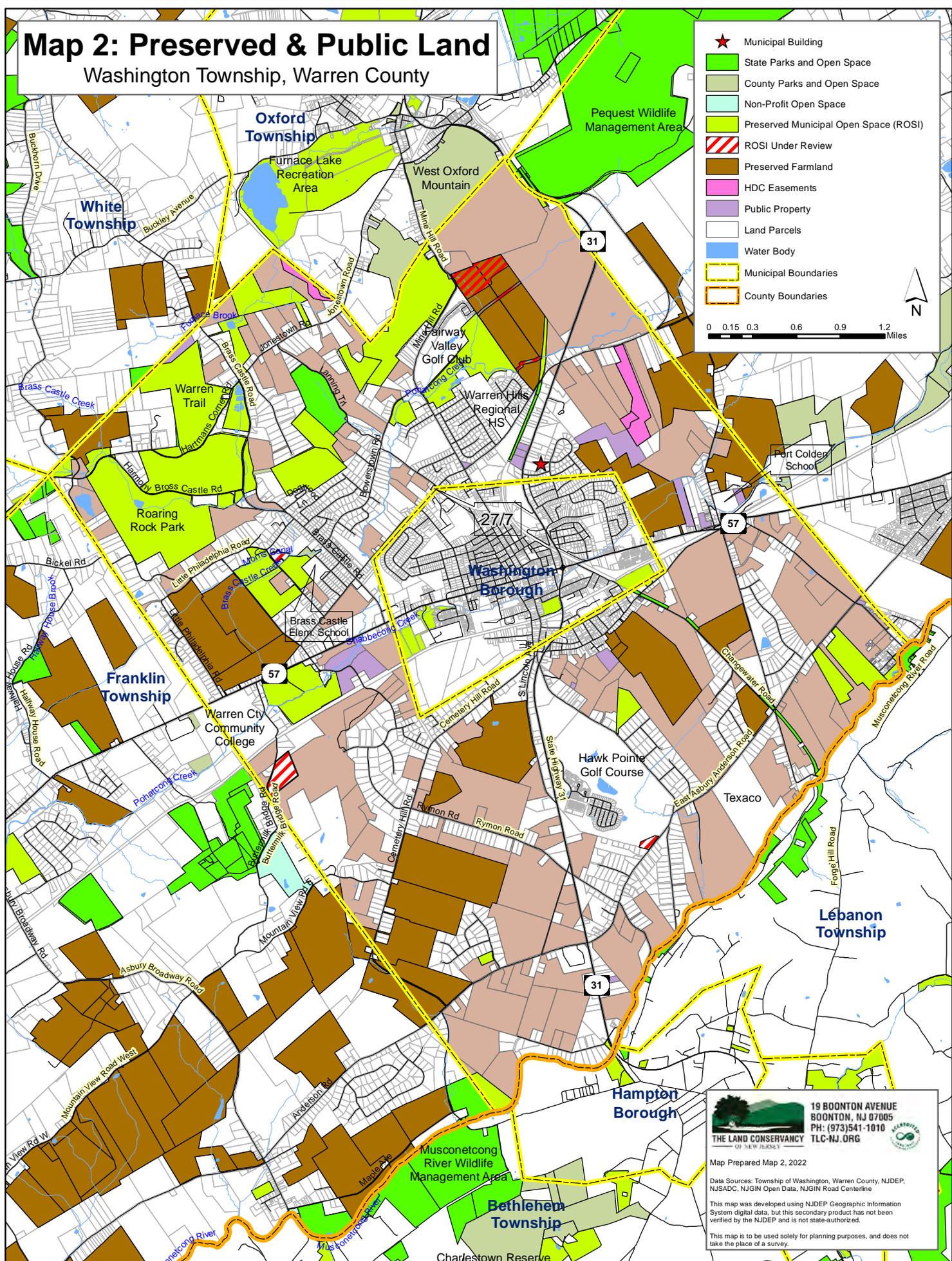
Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NJDEP, NJSADC, NJGN Open Data, NJGN Road Centerline

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.

Map 2: Preserved & Public Land

Washington Township, Warren County




19 BOONTON AVENUE
BOONTON, NJ 07005
PH: (973)541-1010
TLC-NJ.ORG

Map Prepared Map 2, 2022

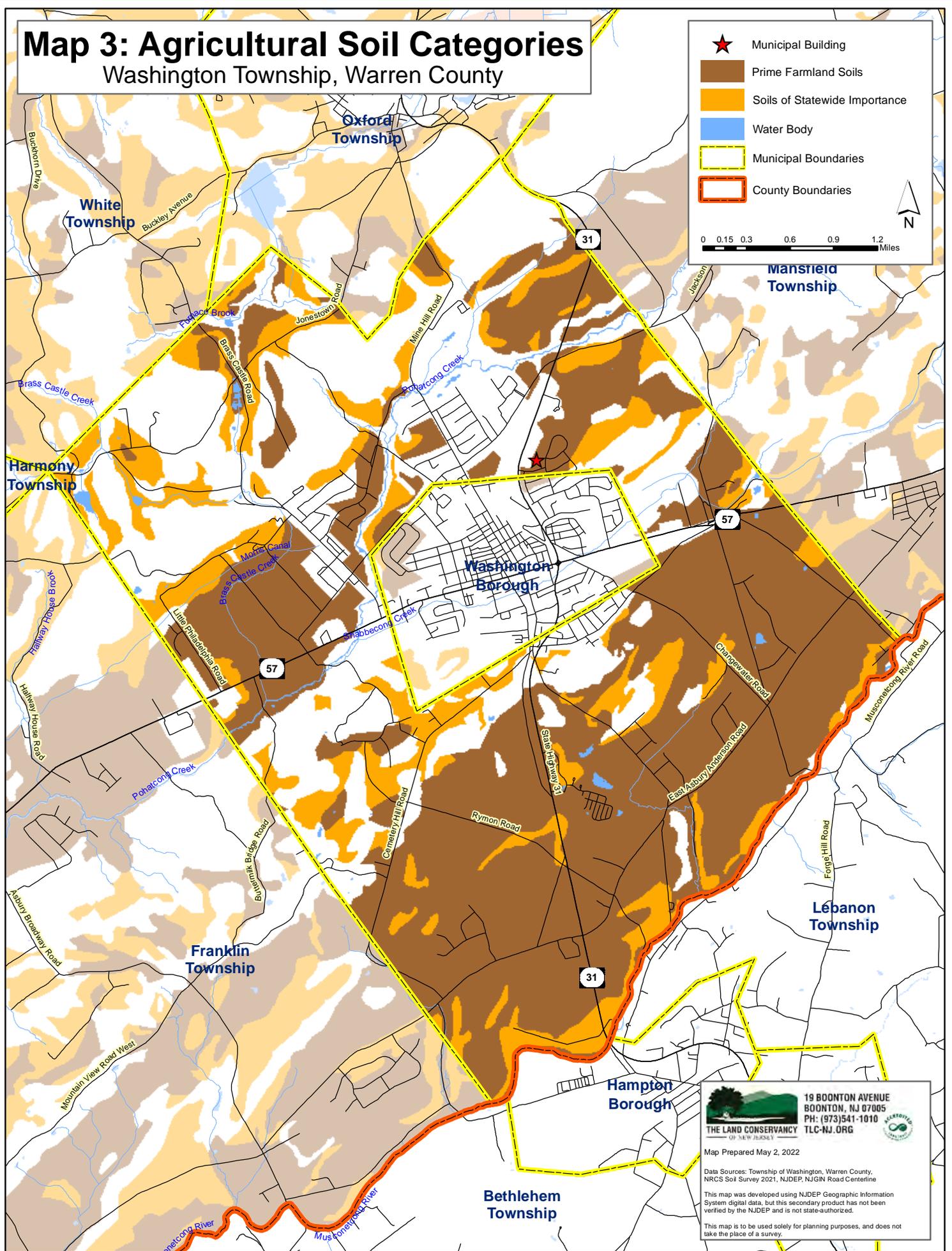
Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NJDEP, NJSADC, NJGN Open Data, NJGN Road Centerline

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Map 3: Agricultural Soil Categories

Washington Township, Warren County



- ★ Municipal Building
- Prime Farmland Soils
- Soils of Statewide Importance
- Water Body
- Municipal Boundaries
- County Boundaries

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles

N

19 BOONTON AVENUE
BOONTON, NJ 07005
PH: (973)541-1010
TLC-NJ.ORG

Map Prepared May 2, 2022

Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NRCS Soil Survey 2021, NJDEP, NJGIN Road Centerline

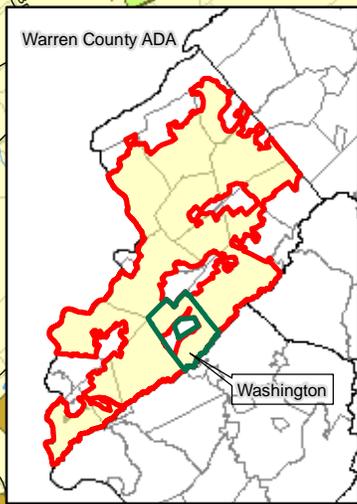
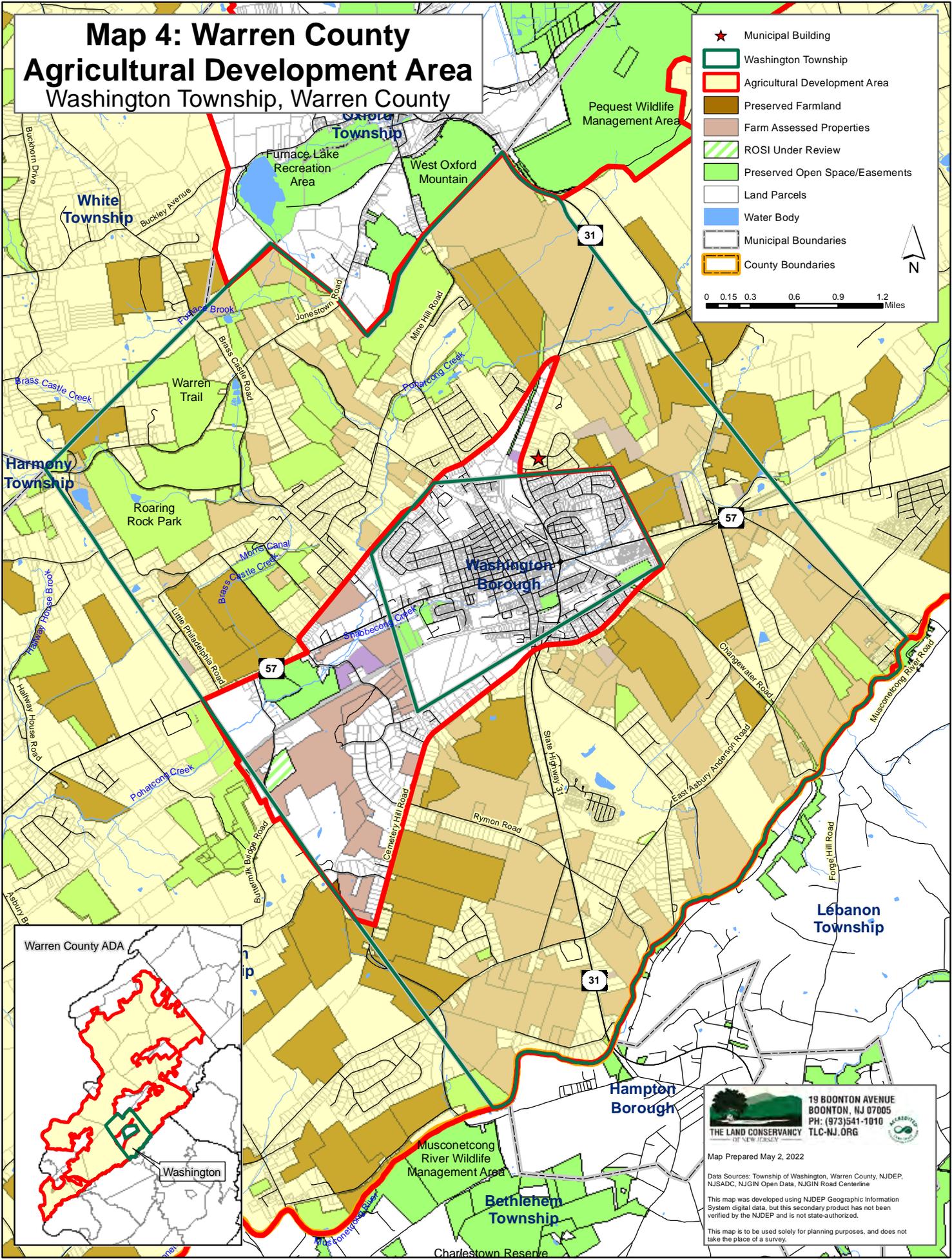
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Map 4: Warren County Agricultural Development Area Washington Township, Warren County

- ★ Municipal Building
- Washington Township
- Agricultural Development Area
- Preserved Farmland
- Farm Assessed Properties
- ROSI Under Review
- Preserved Open Space/Easements
- Land Parcels
- Water Body
- Municipal Boundaries
- County Boundaries

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles



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Map Prepared May 2, 2022

Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NJDEP, NJSADC, NJGN Open Data, NJGIN Road Centerline

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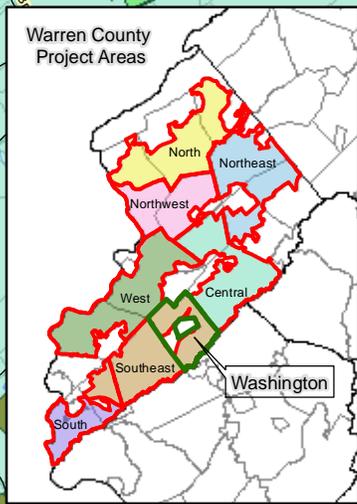
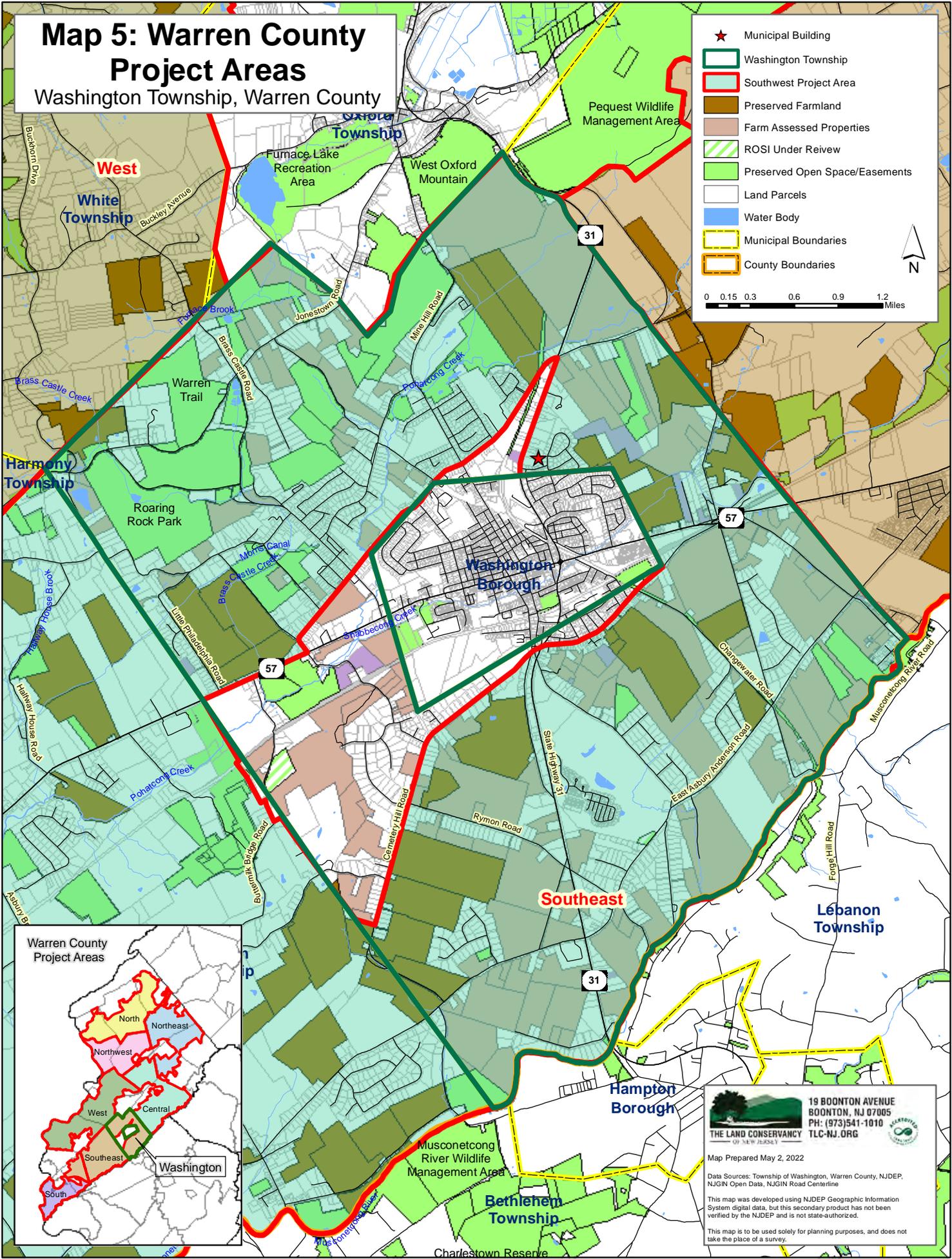
This map is to be used solely for planning purposes, and does not take the place of a survey.

Map 5: Warren County Project Areas

Washington Township, Warren County

- ★ Municipal Building
- Washington Township
- Southwest Project Area
- Preserved Farmland
- Farm Assessed Properties
- ROSI Under Review
- Preserved Open Space/Easements
- Land Parcels
- Water Body
- Municipal Boundaries
- County Boundaries

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles



19 BOONTON AVENUE
BOONTON, NJ 07005
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TLC-NJ.ORG

Map Prepared May 2, 2022

Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NJDEP, NJGIN Open Data, NJGIN Road Centerline

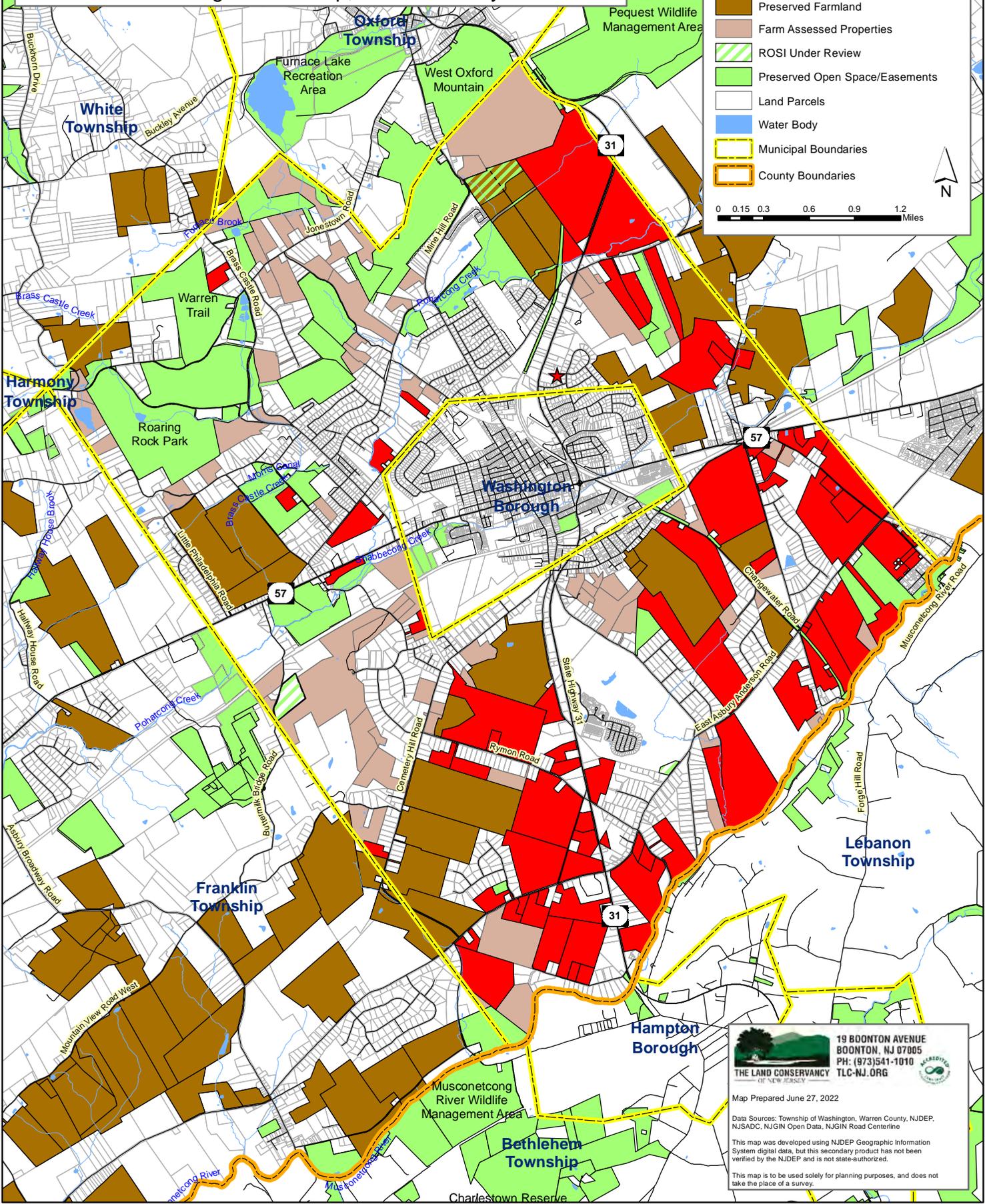
This map was developed using NJDEP Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by the NJDEP and is not state-authorized.

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

Map A: Farm Parcels of Units that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Tillable Land Washington Township, Warren County

-  Municipal Building
-  Farm Parcels & Units that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Tillable Land
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Farm Assessed Properties
-  ROSI Under Review
-  Preserved Open Space/Easements
-  Land Parcels
-  Water Body
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  County Boundaries

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles


19 BOONTON AVENUE
BOONTON, NJ 07005
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Map Prepared June 27, 2022

Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NJDEP, NJSADC, NJGN Open Data, NJGIN Road Centerline

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.

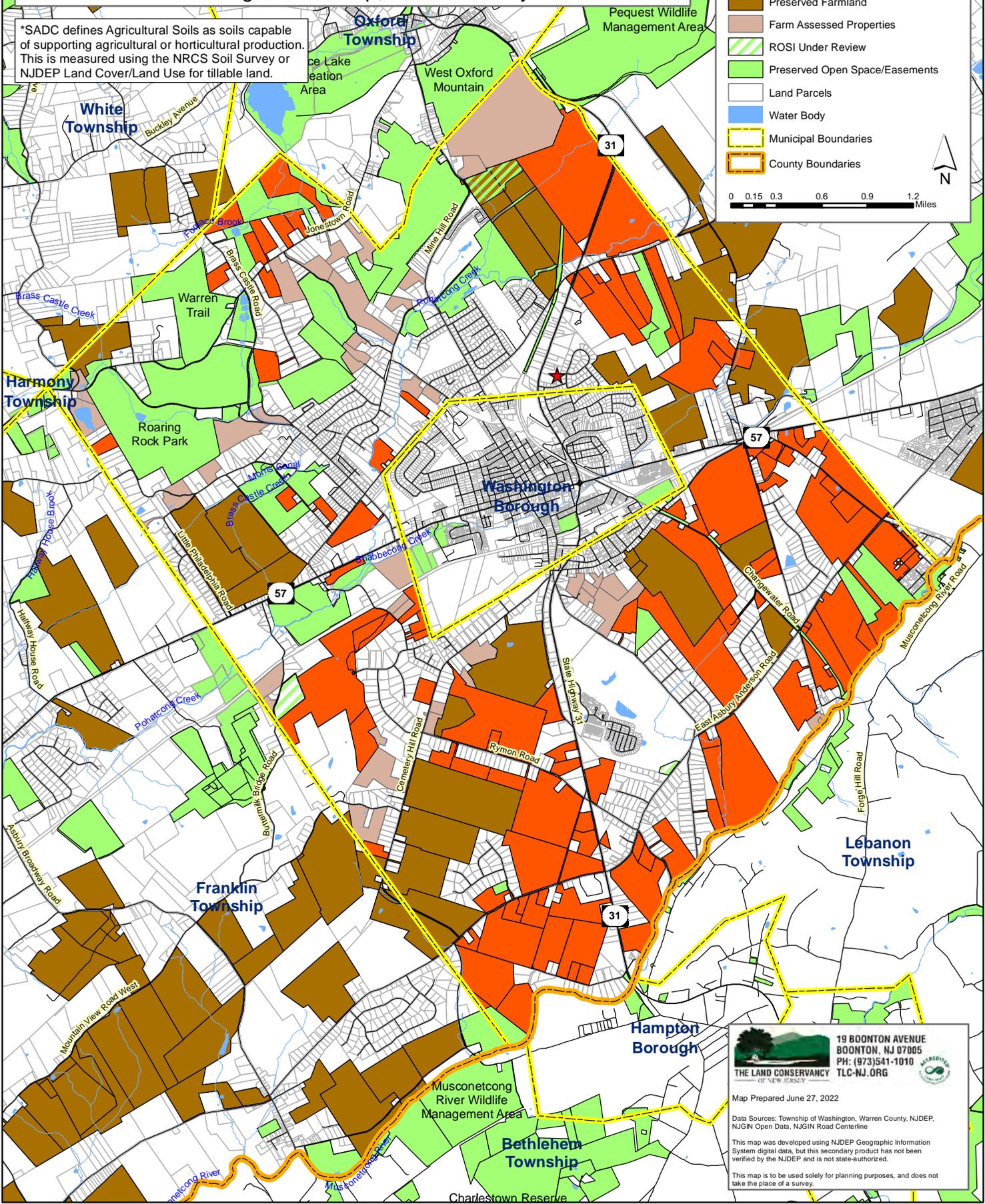
This map is to be used solely for planning purposes, and does not take the place of a survey.

Map B: Farm Parcels & Units that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Agricultural Soils* Washington Township, Warren County

*SADC defines Agricultural Soils as soils capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production. This is measured using the NRCS Soil Survey or NJDEP Land Cover/Land Use for tillable land.

-  Municipal Building
-  Farms Parcels & Units that meet the SADC Minimum Eligibility Criteria for Soils*
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Farm Assessed Properties
-  ROSI Under Review
-  Preserved Open Space/Easements
-  Land Parcels
-  Water Body
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  County Boundaries

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles


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Map Prepared June 27, 2022

Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NJDEP, NJGIN Open Data, NJGIN Road Centerline

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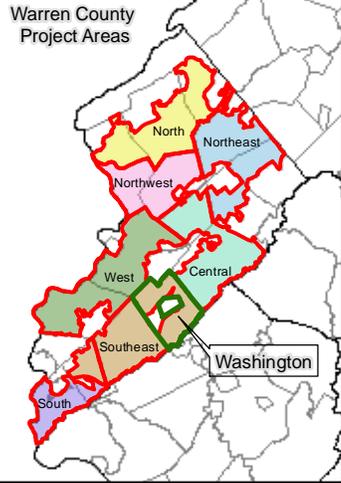
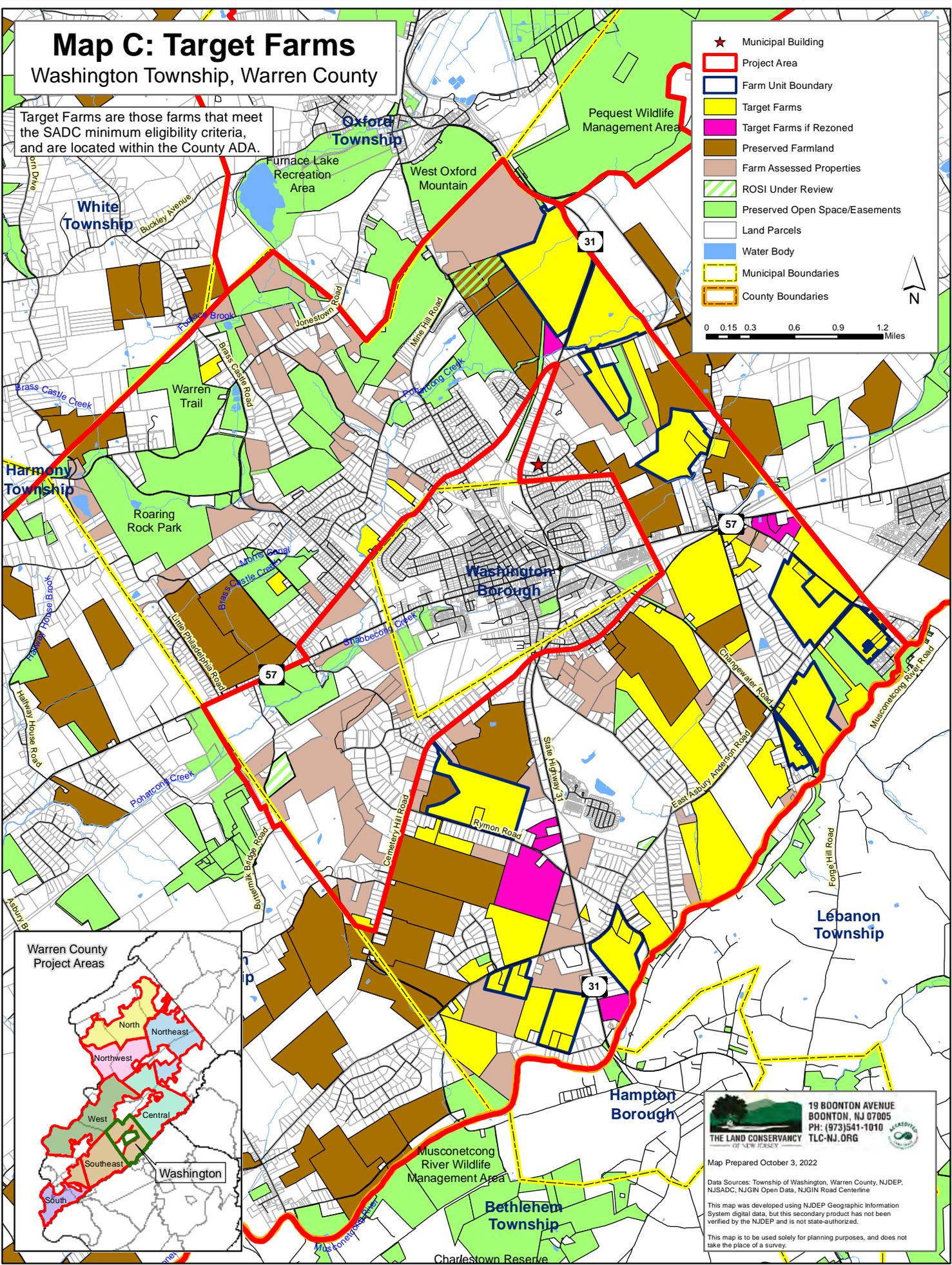
Map C: Target Farms

Washington Township, Warren County

Target Farms are those farms that meet the SADC minimum eligibility criteria, and are located within the County ADA.

- Municipal Building
- Project Area
- Farm Unit Boundary
- Target Farms
- Target Farms if Rezoned
- Preserved Farmland
- Farm Assessed Properties
- ROSI Under Review
- Preserved Open Space/Easements
- Land Parcels
- Water Body
- Municipal Boundaries
- County Boundaries

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles



**19 BOONTON AVENUE
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**THE LAND CONSERVANCY
OF NEW JERSEY**

Map Prepared October 3, 2022

Data Sources: Township of Washington, Warren County, NJDEP, NJSADC, NJGN Open Data, NJGN Road Centerline

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.

Appendix

Appendix A. Public Meeting Materials

Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

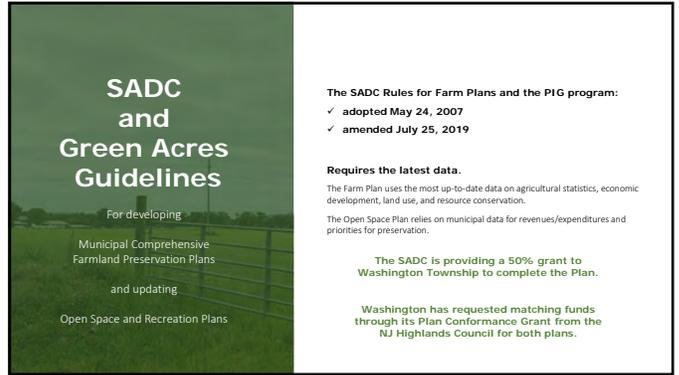
Appendix C. Washington Right to Farm Ordinance (1999)



2021
Farmland and Open Space Plans

Township of Washington
September 21, 2021
Township Committee

1



SADC and Green Acres Guidelines

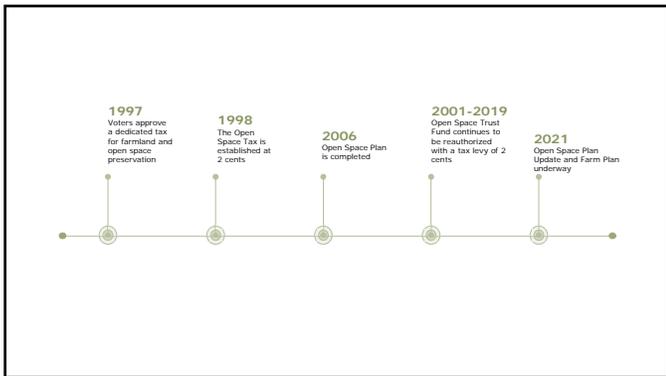
The SADC Rules for Farm Plans and the PIG program:
✓ adopted May 24, 2007
✓ amended July 25, 2019

Requires the latest data.
The Farm Plan uses the most up-to-date data on agricultural statistics, economic development, land use, and resource conservation.
The Open Space Plan relies on municipal data for revenues/expenses and priorities for preservation.

The SADC is providing a 50% grant to Washington Township to complete the Plan.

Washington has requested matching funds through its Plan Conformance Grant from the NJ Highlands Council for both plans.

2



3



Why have a Farm Plan?

- Compiles information regarding agriculture in Washington.
- The Plan will offer the municipality entry into the SADC Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) for farmland preservation.
- The Plan will keep the town current with the state for 10 years.

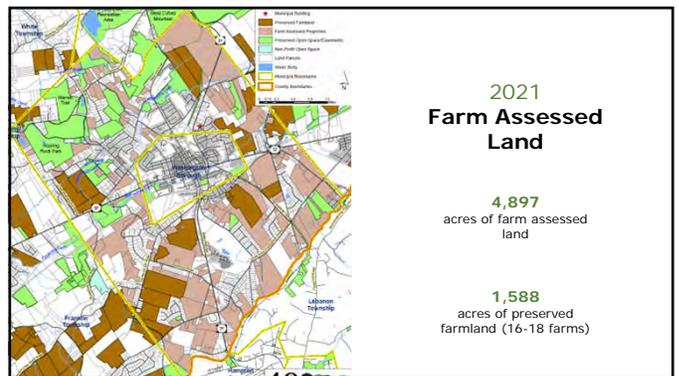
4



Agricultural Land Base

- Inventory and map farm properties
- Document and map agricultural soils
- Number of irrigated acres and available water sources
- Assessment by average farm size and agricultural use (cropland, pasture, equine)

5

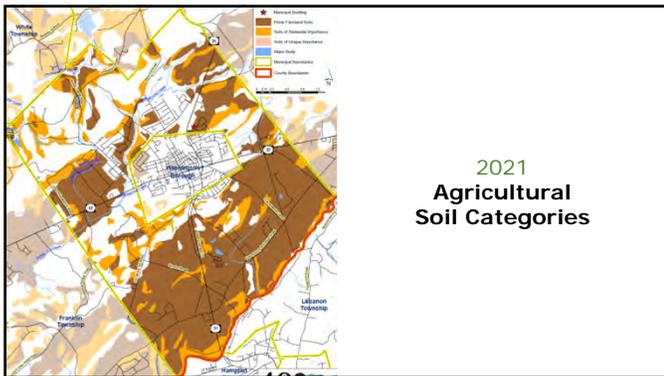


2021 Farm Assessed Land

4,897 acres of farm assessed land

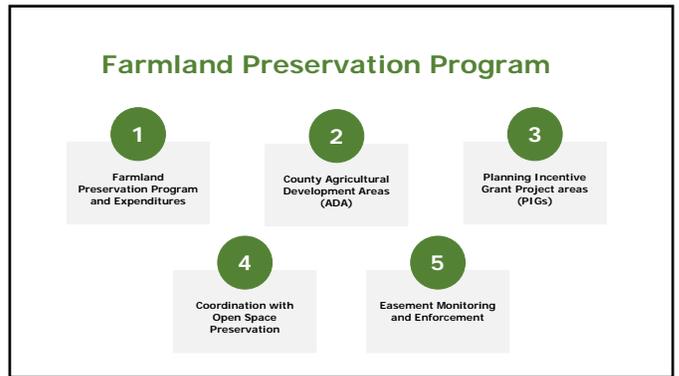
1,588 acres of preserved farmland (16-18 farms)

6

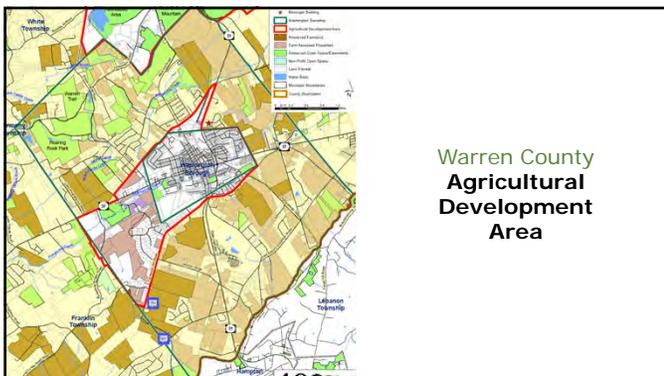


2021
Agricultural
Soil Categories

7



8

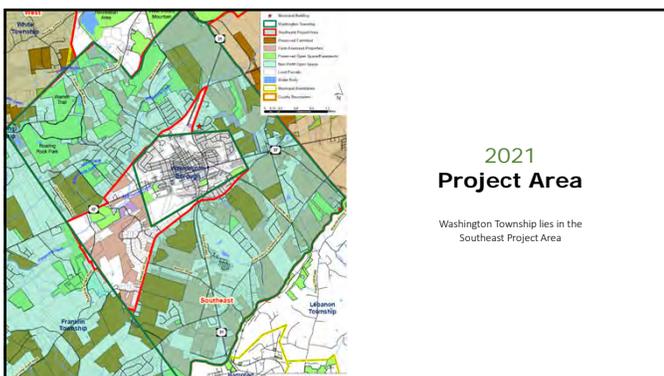


Warren County
Agricultural
Development
Area

9



10



2021
Project Area

Washington Township lies in the
Southeast Project Area

11

Open Space Funding

The current balance of the OSTF is \$14,359 as of August 2021.

<p>The Warren County Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund has contributed \$910,350 for open space and historic preservation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1999 American Water Co for \$200,000 2008 Port Colden Church for \$36,118 2008 Port Colden School for \$248,000 2011 Port Colden Church for \$208,732 2016 Freise (Morris Canal Restoration) for \$120,000 2016 First Presbyterian Church of Washington for \$97,500 	<p>NJDEP Green Acres has contributed \$2,187,370.63 for open space and recreation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1999 Montana Mountain Acquisition for \$443,759 2000 Meadow Breeze Park Development \$500,000 2002 Washington Twp. Open Space Acq. \$750,000 2001 Meadow Breeze Acquisition for \$293,611
---	--

As of July 2021, there are three projects still open through the MCCT.

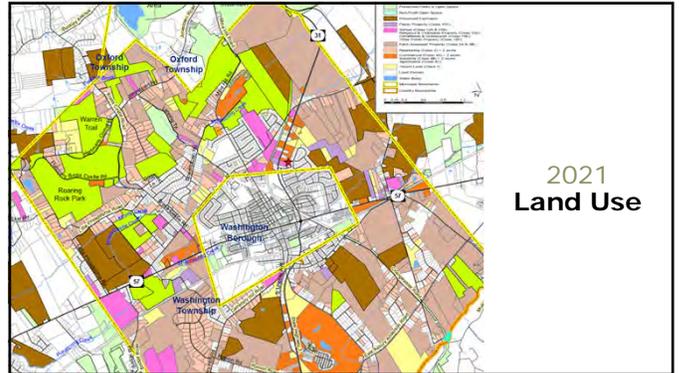
12

2006 Open Space Goals

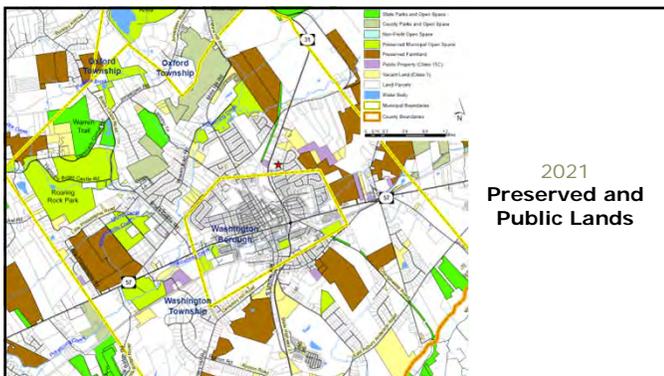
These goals are also consistent with the Master Plan Re-Examination Report (2017)

Protect and Preserve	Historic Resources	Environmentally unique sensitive areas	Wellheads
Provide	Diverse passive recreation opportunities	Active recreational facilities throughout the Township	Specialized recreations facilities such as handicapped and youth fishing areas
Municipal	Retain the rural atmosphere without impacting growth and development	Encourage preservation of farmland and open space while maintaining property owner equity	Partner to leverage funding and achieve open space objectives

13



14



15

Washington Township Next Steps

Open Space and Recreation Plan:

- Confirm Program Goals
- Interview Stakeholders (Recreation and Historic)
- Report Income/Expenditures
- Inventory Preserved Lands
- Develop Recommendations (Acquisition, Access, Stewardship)
- Identify Action Items



16

Plan Update Schedule

→	June 8 and 13, 2021 – Kickoff Meetings with SADC, AAC, EC
→	August 16, 2021 – Farm and Open Space Tour
→	September 21, 2021 – Public Meeting #1 with Township Council
→	Upcoming Delivery of Draft Plans Presentation to Land Use Board Adoption as an Element to the Master Plan

17



18

2022
Farmland and Open Space Plans
 Township of Washington
 July 28, 2022
 Land Use Board



1

Why update the Open Space Plan and have a Farm Plan?

- The current Open Space Plan (2006) is out of date.
- The plans will keep the town current for 10 years.
- The town will qualify for state and county matching grants.

2

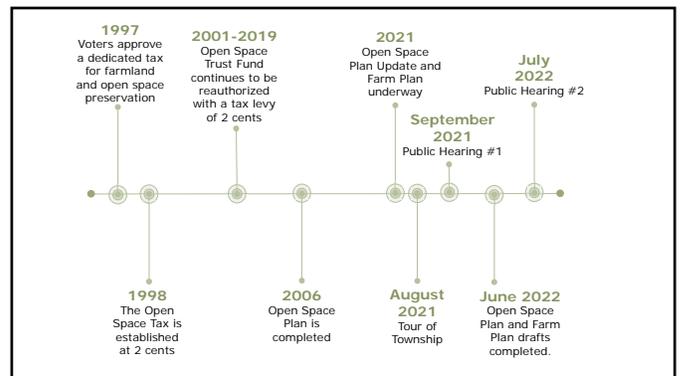
SADC and Green Acres

SADC is providing a 50% grant to complete the Plan.

Highlands Counwil will provide matching funds through the town's Plan Conformance Grant.

- ☑ The Farm Plan uses the most up-to-date data on agricultural statistics, land use, and resource conservation.
- ☑ The Open Space Plan relies on the latest municipal data for revenues/expenditures and priorities for preservation.

3



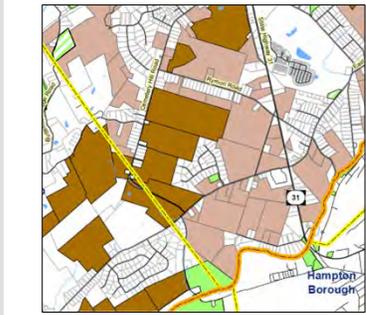
4

Farm Plan

-  Inventories and maps farm properties
-  Documents and maps agricultural soils
-  Identifies available water sources
-  Provides average farm size and agricultural use (cropland, pasture, equine)



5

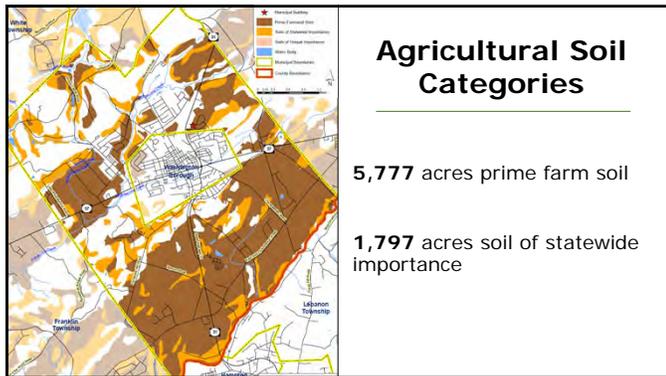


2022
Farm Assessed Land

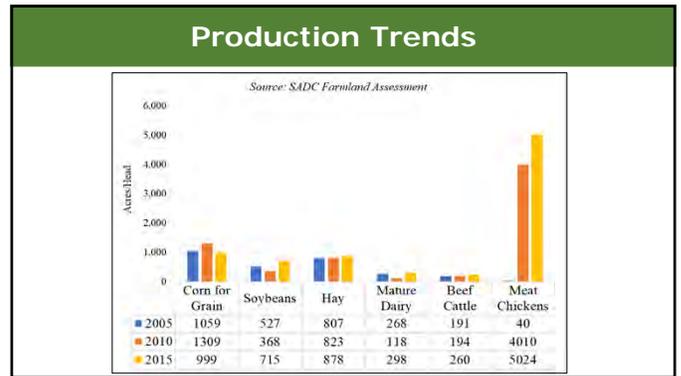
5,098
 acres of farm assessed land

1,395
 acres of preserved farmland (19 farms)

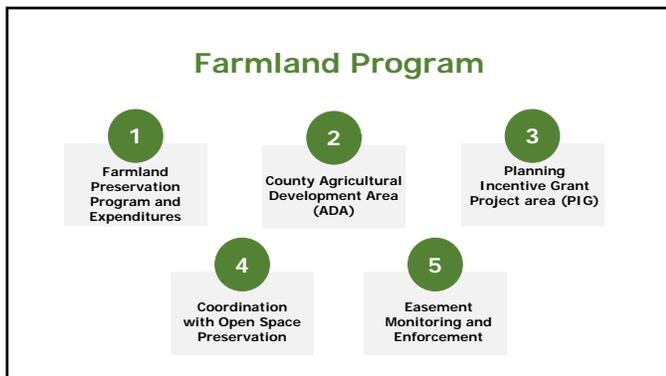
6



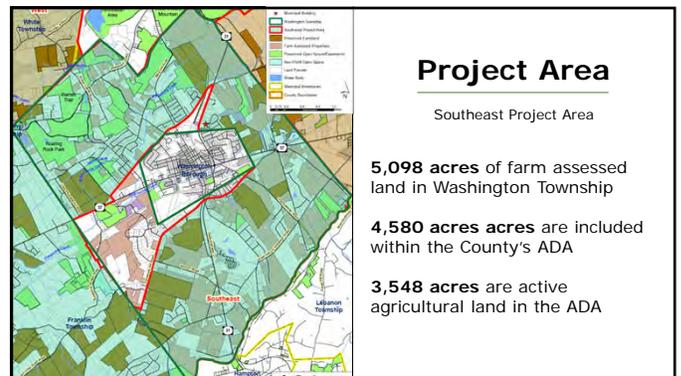
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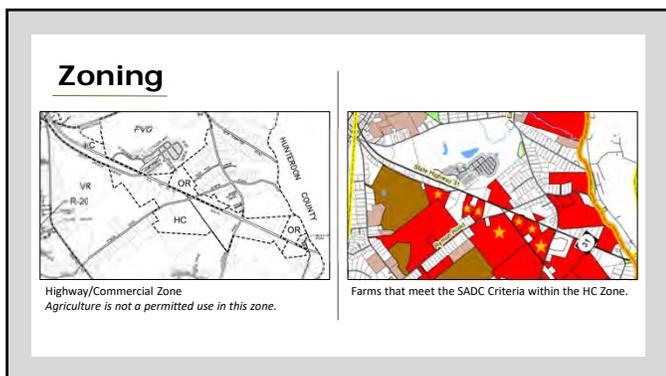
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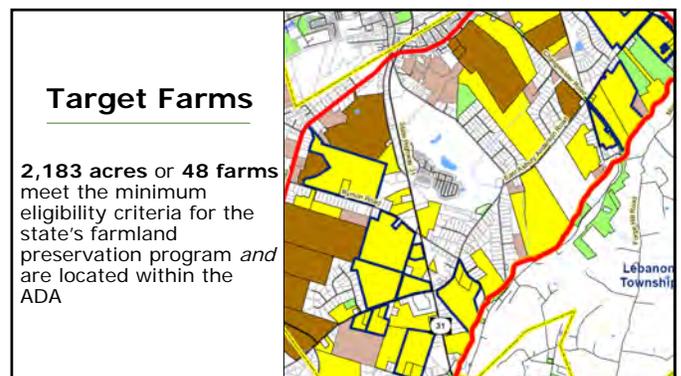
9



10



11



12

Recommendations

A connected system will provide agricultural greenbelts, trails for healthy lifestyles, and corridors of protected habitat for wildlife.

How can this be done?

-  Supporting the farmer and town's farming heritage.
-  Connecting natural and cultural treasures defining the town's historic landscape
-  Partnering to protect water resources.
-  Providing opportunities for recreation, including trails and playing fields.

19

Forest Protection

- **1,400 acres** of farm assessed land are properties that are mostly wooded
- These properties have the **potential** for **expanding** existing public open space
- These lands provide water and air **filtration**, protecting the water we **drink** and the air we **breathe**



20

Water Resources

- Properties with **90%** of the lot identified as important for water resource protection are **prioritized** for preservation
- **27 acres on 6 properties** are in the highest priority category
- **733 acres on 63 lots** are within 100 feet of already preserved public land and are equally important for their water resource value



21



Recreation

Increased open space fosters **community**, encourages people to **gather**, and participate in **recreational activity**.

Continue to prioritize **connecting** open space and parks via **trails** for **passive recreational use**.

22

ROSI Updates

- **Add 3 properties**
- **Remove 3 properties** (most likely added in error)
- **Remove state and county properties**



23

Washington Township Next Steps

-  **ADOPTION**
Adopt the Plans as elements of the Township's Master Plan.
-  **NJDEP and SADC:**
Submit the Plans for state approval and funding.



24

Agricultural Businesses Servicing Warren County and Washington Township

Sources: SADC Green Pages

Equipment

Central Jersey Equipment
228 State Rt 94
Columbia, NJ 07832
Warren County
(908) 362-6916

Everitt Equipment LLC
258 County Rd 579
Ringoes, NJ 08551
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-5082
<http://www.everittequipment.com/>

Powerco, Inc
12 NJ-173
Clinton, NJ 08809
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-2149
<https://www.powercoinc.com/>

Smith Tractor & Equipment, Inc
115 NJ-31
Washington, NJ 07882
Warren County
(908) 689-7900
<https://www.smithtractorandequipment.com/>

Seed

Growmark FS
60 Lehigh Ave
Bloomsbury, NJ 08804
Hunterdon County
(908) 479-4500

Nutrien Ag Solutions
127 Perryville Rd
Pittstown, NJ 08867
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-5545

Garden State Heirloom Seed Society
82 Delaware Rd
Columbia, NJ 07832
Warren County
(973) 475-2730

Animal Feed
Blairstown Ace
2 Bridge St
Blairstown, NJ 07825
Warren County
(908) 362-6177

Morristown Agway Store
176 Ridgedale Ave
Morristown, NJ 07960
Morris County
(973) 538-3232
<https://morristownagway.com/>

Sergeantsville Country Store
735 Route 523
Sergeantsville, NJ 08557 Hunterdon County
(609) 397-0807
<https://sergeantsvillegrainandfeed.com/>

Tractor Supply Company
128 NJ-94 #9
Blairstown, NJ 07825
Warren County
(908) 362-0082
<https://www.tractorsupply.com/>

Tractor Supply Company
293 US Hwy 206, Unit 15A
Flanders, NJ 07836
Morris County
(973) 252-2925

Tractor Supply Company
144 Hwy 202/31 North
Ringoes, NJ 08551
Hunterdon County
(908) 284-2021

Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

Tractor Supply Company
775 NJ-23
Sussex, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 875-7087

Tractor Supply Company
398 Rte 57 West 4
Washington, NJ 07882
Warren County
(908) 689-3202

Dover Pet Shop
112 E Blackwell St
Dover, NJ 07801
Morris County
(973) 361-2322

Ise Feed
110 Good Springs Rd
Stewartsville, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 859-8424

Mike's Feed Farm
90 Hamburg Turnpike
Riverdale, NJ 07457
Morris County
(973) 839-7747
<https://www.mikesfeedfarm.com/>

New Village Farms
11 Stewartsville Rd
Stewartsville, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 859-3381

Outlaw Outfitters
530 US-206
Newton, NJ 07860
(844) 780-3261
Sussex County
<https://outlawtack.com/>

Penwell Mills
448 Penwell Rd
Port Murray, NJ 07865
Warren County
(908) 689-3725
<https://www.penwellmills.com>

The Tack Room
367 Pittstown Rd
Pittstown, NJ 08867
Hunterdon County
(908) 730-8388

Schaefer Farms
1051 County Rd 523
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
<http://www.schaeferfarms.com/>

Delaware Valley Feed and Farm Supply
1133A NJ-12
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Hunterdon County
(908) 628-3550

Deer Run Hay Company
110 Amwell Rd
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(732) 904-5137

Brodhecker Farm, LLC
2 Branchville-Lawson
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(973) 383-3592
<https://brodheckerfarm.com/>

Slaughterhouses
A&M Packing LLC
268 Newton-Swartwood Rd
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(873) 383-4291

Seugling Meat Packing Inc.
9 Mandeville Ave
Pequannock, NJ 07440
Morris County
(973) 694-3156

V Roche Butcher Shop
9 High St
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2006

Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

Green Village Packing Co.
68 Britten Rd
Green Village, NJ 07935
Morris County
(973) 377-0875
<https://greenvillagepacking.com/>

Louie Chiu Slaughterhouse
40 Montana Rd
New Village, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 859-6635

Livestock Supplies

Ackerman & Sons Livestock Hauling LLC
932 Maple Ave
Stillwater, NJ 07875
Sussex County
(973) 383-4240

Construction & Concrete

Morton Buildings
512 State Rt 57
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-7900
<https://mortonbuildings.com/location/phillipsburg-nj>

Fine Woodworking
606 Rt 519
Sussex, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 875-8779

County Concrete Corp.
50 Railroad Ave
Kenvil, NJ 07847
Sussex County
(973) 584-7122
<https://www.countyconcretenj.com/>

Lentini Ready Mix, Inc.
217 Limecrest Rd
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(973) 300-4146

SCC Concrete, Inc.
1051 River Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 859-2172
<https://www.sccconcreteinc.com/>

Sparta Redi-Mix
33 Demarest Rd
Sparta, NJ 07871
Sussex County
(888) 383-4651
<https://www.spartaredimix.com/>

Flemington Precast & Supply, LLC
18 Allen St
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-3246
<https://www.flemingtonprecast.com>

Franklin Precast
95 Scott Rd
Franklin, NJ 07416
Warren County (973) 827-7563
<https://www.franklinprecast.com/>

Precast Manufacturing Co.
187 Stryker's Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-2122
<https://www.precastmfgco.com/>

B&B Concrete Co.
811 Rt 57
Stewartsville, NJ 08886
Warren County
(908) 454-1622

Donald Baker Mason Contractors, Inc.
188 Thatcher Hill Rd
Flemington, NJ 08822
Warren County
(908) 782-2115

JM Lenze Construction
69 Upper North Shore Rd
Branchville, NJ 07826
Sussex County
(937) 948-5491

SMB Construction
73 Mercer St
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-9530

William R. Hunt Stonework & Masonry, LLC
PO Box 346
Whitehouse Station, NJ
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2194
<https://huntstonework.com/>

Bill Wroblewski, LLC
5 Whitehall Rd
Andover, NJ 07821
Sussex County
(973) 347-3888

Brad Lauyer Masonry Contractor, LLC
611 Main St
Pattensburg, NJ 08802
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-0875

PowerPro Equipment
70 Rt 202
Ringoos, NJ 08551
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-4278

Well Drilling

Samuel Stothoff Co., Inc.
PO Box, 59 Rt 31
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(908) 782-2116
<https://www.stothoffwellwater.com/>

Colaluce Well & Pump Service
2293 Rt 57
Washington, NJ 07882
Warren County
(908) 454-8008
<https://www.colalucewell.com/>

Dan Ballentine Well Drilling, Inc.
PO Box 178, Port Murray Rd
Port Murray, NJ 07865
Warren County
(908) 689-7666
<https://www.ballentinedrilling.com/>

Site Work Contractors

Apgar Brothers Excavating Co.
PO Box 91
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
Hunterdon County
(903) 303-9758

Harrington Contractors
50 Parker Pd
Chester, NJ 07930
Morris County
(908) 879-7500
<http://www.harringtoncontractors.com>

KOR Companies
1 Greenwood Place
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(908) 284-2272

Charles T. Matarazzo Excavating & Masonry, LLC
1024 Route 173
Asbury, NJ 08802
Warren County
(908) 479-2025

John P. Martin Excavating, LLC
112 Ferry Rd
Flemington, NJ 08822
(908) 782-2512
Hunterdon County
<https://www.jpmartinexcavating.com>

Appendix B. Agricultural Support Services

A.S. Milkowski & Sons Contracting
249 Rocky Run Rd
Glen Gardner, NJ 08826
Hunterdon County
(908) 537-2590

Rick Mueller Excavating, Inc.
31 Rick Rd Milford, NJ 08848
Hunterdon County
(908) 996-3031

S Snook Excavating, Inc.
150 Pelletown Rd
Lafayette, NJ 07848
Sussex County
(973) 875-5754

Wantage Excavating Co.
137 Holland Rd
Sussex, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 875-5670
<http://www.wantageexcavating.com/>

Willever Excavating
200 Creek Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 454-6242

Bill Wroblewski, LLC
5 Whitehall Rd
Andover, NJ 07821
Sussex County
(973) 347-3888

Petersen Excavating
273 Mt. Lake Rd
Belvidere, NJ 07823
Warren County
(908) 637-8531

Earthway Excavating
16 Greengate Rd
Lebanon, NJ 08833
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-4343

William R. Hunt Stonework & Masonry
PO Box 346
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2194
<https://huntstonework.com/>

The Viersma Companies
PO Box 224, Airport Rd
Allamuch, NJ 07820
Warren County
(908) 852-0552
<https://www.viersma.com>

Richard Pfauth, Jr. & Son
239 Halls Mill Rd
Lebanon, NJ 08833
Hunterdon County
(908) 534-2535

John Peach Excavating
PO Box 78, Pleasant Grove Rd
Schooleys Mountain, NJ 07870
Morris County
(908) 852-5875

William H. Wilson Contracting Co., Inc.
210 Houses Corner Rd
Sparta, NJ 07871
Sussex County
(973) 579-5353

D&V Construction Co.
83 Good Springs Rd
Asbury, NJ 08802
Warren County
(908) 479-6911

A. Mokros Backhoe Service, Inc.
17 Lynnbrook Dr
Lambertville, NJ 08530
Hunterdon County
(609) 737-8311

Razz Construction
79 Sky Manor Rd
Pittstown, NJ 08867
Hunterdon County
(908) 996-3298

Ravcon Construction Group LLC
PO Box 1098
Whitehouse, NJ 08889
Hunterdon County
(908) 482-7037
<https://www.ravcon.us/>

Paul W. Steinbeiser Landscape
718 County Rd 519
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Hunterdon County
(908) 996-6609
<https://www.pwsteinbeiser.com/>

Fence Installation

Farmette Services
67 Henry Rd
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(973) 300-0103

Hunt's Fencing
567 Rt 94
Newton, Nj 07860
Sussex County
(973) 383-4426

The Fence Company
3 Hill Hollow Rd
Pittstown, NJ 08867
Hunterdon County
(908) 735-8879

J&M Fence & Sheds
328 Rt 46 West
Great Meadows, NJ 07838
Warren County
(908) 637-8799

Seamless Gutters

Warren Valley Seamless Gutters
17 Ernella Dr
Belvidere, NJ 07823
Warren County
(908) 752-5397

Wayne Johnson & Sons, Inc.
1167 NJ-23
Kinnelon, NJ 07405
Morris County
(201) 838-2358
<https://www.waynejohnsonandsons.net>

NJ Soil Conservation Districts

Upper Delaware Soil Conservation District
51 Main Street, Suite B
Blairstown, NJ 07825
Warren County
(908) 852-2579
<https://upperdelawarescd-nj.com>

NJ County Agricultural Development Boards

Warren County Agricultural Development
Board
500 Mt. Pisgah Ave, PO Box 179
Oxford, NJ 07863
(908) 453-3252
<https://www.co.warren.nj.us/Land%20Preservation%20Dept/CADB.html>

Rutgers

Cooperative Extension of Warren County
165 County Rd 519 South, Suite 102
Belvidere, NJ 07823
(908) 475-6505
<https://warren.njaes.rutgers.edu/>

**United States Department of Agriculture
(USDA) – Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

Hackettstown Service Center
101 Bilby Rd, Suite 1H
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
(908) 852-2576
<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/New-Jersey/index>

USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Hackettstown Service Center
101 Bilby Rd, Suite 1H
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
(908) 852-2576
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/nj/home/>

USDA Rural Development

Hackettstown Service Center
101 Bilby Rd, Suite 1H
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
(908) 852-2576
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/nj>

Auctions

Hackettstown Livestock Auction
225 W Stiger St
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
Warren County
(908) 852-0444
<https://www.hackettstownauction.com>

Crop Insurance Agents

Crop Growers, LLC
9 County Rd 618
Lebanon, NJ 08833
Hunterdon County
(800) 234-7012
<https://www.cropgrowers.com/>

Financial Services

Farm Credit East
9 County Road 618
Lebanon, NJ 08833
(908) 782-5215
<https://www.farmcrediteast.com/>

Licensed Foresters

G. Lester Alpaugh
PO Box 211
Stockton, NJ 08559
Hunterdon County
(609) 397-0615

Andrew Bennett
PO Box 790
Lafayette, NJ 07848
Sussex County
(973) 729-7430
<https://www.ridgeandvalleyforest.com/>

Dylan Borger
PO Box 790
Lafayette, NJ 07848
Sussex County (570) 730-1977
<https://www.ridgeandvalleyforest.com/>

Thomas S. Broddle
217 Hickory Corner Rd
Milford, NJ 08848
Hunterdon County
(908) 996-2333

E. Joseph Bruschetta
1178 Bridge Rd
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865
Warren County
(908) 475-8466

Donald Donnelly
650 Jackson Valley Rd
Oxford, NJ 07863
Warren County
(908) 752-2538

Thomas D. Doty
45 Lilac Dr
Flemington, NJ 08822
Hunterdon County
(973) 813-3222

Joseph Dunn
49 Millbrook-Stillwater Rd
Blairstown, NJ 07825

Lorens D. Fasano
PO Box 72
Brookside, NJ 07926
Morris County
(973) 214-8294

G. Mike Fee
10 Paulinskill Rd
Hardwick, NJ 07825
Warren County
(908) 362-5565

William Grundmann
151 County Rd
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Hunterdon County
(908) 309-6611
<https://www.organicplantcarellc.com/>

Kris Hasbrouck
9 East Buena Vista Way
Bloomington, NJ 07403
Passaic County
(201) 819-6454

Thomas Koepfel
PO Box 54
Pequannock, NJ 07440
Morris County
(973) 633-0360

John D. Linson
PO Box 6089
West Orange, NJ 07052
Essex County
(973) 766-2143

Robert A. Sidor
154 President St
Passaic, NJ 07055
Passaic County
(973) 356-8828

Timothy J. Slavin
319 Route 515
Stockholm, NJ 07460
Sussex County
(973) 697-6646

Douglas Tavella
PO Box 313
Newton, NJ 07860
Sussex County
(570) 350-5359

Richard S. Wolowicz
4 Maude Lane
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
Warren County
(973) 220-6797

Veterinarians

Dr. Carole Edwards AVCA, CHI, FIAMA
Specialty: Equine
PO Box 232
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Hunterdon County
(908) 575-7834
<https://www.carole-edwards.com>

Mountain Pointe Equine Veterinary Services
Specialty: Equine
14 Schooleys Mountain Rd
Long Valley, NJ 07853
Morris County
(908) 269-8451
<https://www.mountainpointequine.com>

Woods End Equine Veterinary Services
Specialty: Equine
67 Rose Morrow Rd
Wantage, NJ 07461
Sussex County
(973) 209-4994
<https://www.woodsenequine.com>

Equihart Veterinary Services
Specialty: Equine
PO Box 215
Califon, NJ 07830
Hunterdon County
(732) 616-6188
<https://www.equiheartvet.com>

Chapter 98

RIGHT TO FARM

GENERAL REFERENCES

Development regulations — See Ch. 64.

Zoning — See Ch. 123.

§ 98-1. 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 and private nuisance suits, where best management practices are applied and are consistent with relevant federal and state law and nonthreatening to the public health and safety.

§ 98-2. 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; poultry and poultry products; livestock, including beef cattle, sheep, horses, ponies, mules and 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; or when devoted to and meeting the requirements and qualifications for payments 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.

§ 98-3. Permissible activities under agricultural uses.

- A. The right to engage in agriculture, as defined herein, shall be permitted in this 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 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 the 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.

§ 98-4. Construction.

Nothing in this chapter, however, despite any other wording in this chapter, shall be construed to permit any use of land or structure in any manner contrary to the zoning regulations of this Township (including the provisions of Chapter 123 of this Code and any future zoning ordinance or regulation of the Township) or to permit any use of land or building 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 or any federal, state or county statute, law or regulation.

§ 98-5. Notice of farm use.

- A. The purchaser of any real estate in this Township in any zoning district where agriculture is a permitted principal use should be notified of the importance of our farming community and be provided with a copy of this Right-To-Farm Ordinance.
- B. The following language shall be included in the deed of any newly subdivided lot in this 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 flumes associated with agricultural practices permitted under the Right-to-Farm Ordinance, Chapter 98 of the Code of the Township of Washington."
- C. The Township shall take reasonable steps to make it possible for real estate salespersons to provide notification to prospective purchasers of

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land in this Township, using language similar to the deed notification described just above.

Inventory Tables

Inventory Table 1. Farm Assessed Property in Washington Township

Inventory Table 2. Targeted Farms and Farm Units in Washington Township

Inventory Table 1A. Unpreserved Farmland in Washington Township

Block	Lot	Class	Location	Acres (Tax Data)	Acres (GIS)
1	2	3B	6 SPRING LANE	3.05	2.81
3	5	3B	255 BRASS CASTLE ROAD	9.00	10.74
3	18	3B	6 SPRING LANE	3.83	4.48
4	1	3B	282 BRASS CASTLE ROAD	12.60	18.43
4	3	3B	318 JONESTOWN ROAD	36.46	45.22
4	5	3B	212 JONESTOWN ROAD	2.79	3.23
4	9	3B	334 JONESTOWN ROAD	8.66	9.22
4	11	3A	346 JONESTOWN ROAD	1.00	12.30
4	14.02	3B	360 JONESTOWN ROAD	10.21	12.68
4	15	3B	368 JONESTOWN ROAD	9.63	10.64
5	11	3B	81 MINE HILL ROAD	6.00	7.97
5	16	3A	121 BOWERSTOWN ROAD	1.50	7.10
5	21	3B	95 BOWERSTOWN ROAD	19.94	42.68
5	28	3B	90 LANNINGS LANE	14.11	12.65
5	32.01	3B	321 JONESTOWN ROAD	9.45	8.79
5	34	3B	305 JONESTOWN ROAD	17.36	14.37
5	38	3B	161 MINE HILL ROAD	0.20	0.29
6	2	3B	373 JONESTOWN ROAD	8.54	10.56
6	3	3B	361 JONESTOWN ROAD	23.76	24.20
6	7	3B	23 LANNINGS TRAIL	6.32	5.00
6	11	3A	16 LANNING TERRACE	1.00	6.63
6	19.01	3B	19 LANNING TERRACE	5.54	6.88
6	36	3B	116 BRASS CASTLE ROAD	7.85	7.69
6	43	3B	28 MOUNTAIN RIDGE DRIVE	17.10	20.63
14	1	3B	9 ROARING ROCK ROAD	26.60	28.60
14	32	3B	74 LITTLE PHIL ROAD	8.75	9.22
14	35	3B	10 COLEMAN HILL ROAD	7.87	7.13
14	40.01	3B	96 ANGEN ROAD	8.43	9.56
14	42	3B	135 HARMONY-BRASS CASTLE	23.52	23.41
14	43	3B	135 HARMONY-BRASS CASTLE	3.82	3.60
15	2	3B	96 LITTLE PHIL ROAD	9.60	9.10
15	7.01	3B	116 LITTLE PHIL ROAD	1.13	2.91
17	6.01	3B	39 MEADOW BREEZE LANE	3.78	8.27
18	12	3B	20 MEADOW BREEZE LANE	8.05	7.70
22	3	3B	29 PLEASANT VALLEY ROAD	28.76	28.93
27	3	3B	27 PLANE HILL ROAD	8.32	9.23
27	4	3B	17 PLANE HILL ROAD	5.00	5.51
27	11	3B	44 KINNAMAN AVENUE	6.37	6.91
27	15	3B	80 KINNAMAN AVENUE	11.23	13.59
30	1	3B	283 ROUTE 31 NORTH	1.30	1.42
38	5	3B	349 ROUTE 31 NORTH	184.73	185.84
38	8	3B	311 ROUTE 31 NORTH	10.63	11.86
38	23	3A	162 MINE HILL ROAD	1.00	12.36
38	28	3B	515 ROUTE 31 NORTH	194.26	193.69
39	1	3B	131 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	119.98	110.29
40	28	3B	284 ROUTE 31 NORTH	7.62	7.85
40	29	3B	112 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	54.35	53.94
40	29.02	3B	116 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	0.47	1.41
40	30	3B	128 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	26.13	26.92
40	31.01	3B	134 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	18.41	19.85
40	33	3B	158 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	30.44	28.62
40	33.03	3B	154 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	6.22	10.21
40	46	3B	135 PORT COLDEN ROAD	81.10	80.80
40	47	3B	123 PORT COLDEN ROAD	7.38	8.27

Inventory Table 1A. Unpreserved Farmland in Washington Township

Block	Lot	Class	Location	Acres (Tax Data)	Acres (GIS)
43	3.02	3B	150 PORT COLDEN ROAD	8.00	9.19
44	6	3B	661 ROUTE 57 EAST	17.54	19.37
44	6.05	3B	667 ROUTE 57 EAST	6.82	4.64
44	7	3B	1059 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	53.76	52.33
45	14.03	3B	9 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	5.72	6.76
45	14.04	3B	33 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	6.03	7.17
45	14.05	3B	1018 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	9.02	10.01
45	14.06	3B	1012 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	5.27	6.36
45	15	3B	1022 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	5.00	6.06
45	20	3B	1050 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	100.58	97.31
45	20.02	3B	1062 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	5.15	6.56
45	20.03	3A	1078 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	1.00	15.23
47	7	3B	30 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	131.98	131.30
47	8	3B	349 WASHBURN AVENUE	5.70	6.89
47	8.02	3B	27 CHANGEWATER ROAD	6.00	6.84
47	9.07	3B	82 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	6.85	7.85
47	9.08	3B	80 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	7.02	8.38
48	10	3B	1 WOOLVERTON DRIVE	9.52	7.85
48	17	3B	61 WASHBURN AVENUE	0.34	0.33
48	25	3B	WASHBURN AVENUE,	3.21	3.26
48	69	3B	30 CHANGEWATER ROAD	64.60	66.64
48	72.01	3B	122 CHANGEWATER ROAD	3.27	2.87
48	74.03	3B	94 CHANGEWATER ROAD	10.52	11.11
48	75	3B	161 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	118.00	120.34
48	77	3B	89 SPRINGTOWN ROAD	15.22	16.42
48	79	3B	BIRCHWOOD AVENUE,	11.13	11.74
48	80	3B	WASHBURN AVENUE,	4.30	4.25
48	81	3B	75 SPRINGTOWN ROAD	26.38	31.09
48	90	3B	21 SPRINGTOWN ROAD	5.00	5.11
65	8	3B	366 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	22.75	22.74
66	1	3B	45 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	127.06	128.90
66	1.05	3B	133 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	6.36	6.44
66	1.09	3B	121 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	4.25	4.51
66	1.10	3B	83 RYMON ROAD	5.00	5.94
66	2	3B	81 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	10.60	4.19
66	6	3B	77 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	5.63	16.52
66	20.03	3B	289 SOUTH LINCOLN AVENUE	16.88	16.01
66	20.04	3B	355 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	9.00	9.28
66	20.06	3B	349 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	7.01	9.03
67	57	3B	75 MILL POND ROAD	10.39	10.94
67	57.01	3B	83 MILL POND ROAD	7.07	7.51
67	57.02	3B	87 MILL POND ROAD	5.30	4.06
67	58	3B	69 MILL POND ROAD	7.98	5.16
67	59	3B	63 MILL POND ROAD	6.35	4.97
67	63.01	3B	351 ROUTE 57 WEST	23.73	25.52
67	67	3B	ROUTE 57 WEST,	9.60	9.08
68	18.27	3B	68 MILL POND ROAD	19.54	19.39
68	22	3B	174 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	3.70	4.49
68	23	3B	CEMETERY HILL ROAD	27.23	28.43
68	24	3B	190 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	29.95	32.52
68	45	3A	56 MILL POND ROAD	3.00	142.09
68.01	18.62	3A	124 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	1.00	11.15
68.01	25	3B	138 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	0.21	0.20
69	7	3B	52 BUTTERMILK BRIDGE RD	15.72	16.15

Inventory Table 1A. Unpreserved Farmland in Washington Township

Block	Lot	Class	Location	Acres (Tax Data)	Acres (GIS)
69	8	3B	76 BUTTERMILK BRIDGE RD	3.00	4.19
70	2.02	3B	669 MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD	21.37	26.97
70	4	3B	240 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	10.79	7.25
71	4	3B	48 RYMON ROAD	14.85	14.65
71	4.04	3B	44 RYMON ROAD	8.91	10.02
71	4.20	3B	100 RYMON ROAD	14.09	14.73
71	5	3B	120 RYMON ROAD	96.18	99.16
71	6	3B	50 ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	69.28	69.20
71	7.39	3B	80 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	13.18	13.77
74	2	3B	SHURTS ROAD,	4.86	3.86
74	3	3B	11 SHURTS ROAD	62.67	61.96
74	3.01	3B	144 BRYANS ROAD	33.83	34.96
74	4	3B	111 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	7.21	7.04
74	5	3B	1 OLD FARM ROAD	4.41	67.03
74	6	3B	51 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	17.64	17.31
74	6.01	3B	75 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	7.36	8.47
74	6.02	3B	73 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	4.10	4.13
74	6.03	3B	37 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	4.00	3.91
75	1	3B	459 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	34.28	34.20
75	2.01	3B	169 BRYANS ROAD	47.38	47.22
75	2.03	3B	159 BRYANS ROAD	35.52	36.50
75	2.04	3B	177 BRYANS ROAD	5.22	7.10
75	2.05	3B	173 BRYANS ROAD	4.00	4.50
76	1.02	3B	421 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	13.30	13.15
76	1.03	3B	409 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	8.57	8.43
76	4	3B	10 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	22.15	22.61
78	3.01	3B	426 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	2.51	2.47
79	1	3B	10 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	59.67	58.88
79	1.01	3B	30 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	7.01	5.43
79	1.02	3B	236 RYMON ROAD	6.67	6.83
79	7	3B	496 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	22.00	21.81
81	8	3B	233 RYMON ROAD	34.33	34.92
82	5	3B	202 CHANGEWATER ROAD	5.00	5.34
82	5.01	3B	204 CHANGEWATER ROAD	0.72	0.82
82	15	3B	196A CHANGEWATER ROAD	40.28	43.33
82	17	3B	146 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	141.30	142.97
82	18	3B	128 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	5.12	6.17
82	19.05	3B	43 NEW HAMPTON ROAD	10.17	11.50
83	1.01	3B	286 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	28.63	29.39
83	2	3B	260 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	72.00	71.43
83	2.01	3B	258 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	8.00	10.27
83	4	3B	240 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	35.27	36.79
83	4.01	3B	234 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	1.07	1.15
83	4.02	3B	236 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	0.92	0.96
83	16	3B	169 CHANGEWATER ROAD	18.60	19.14
83	17	3B	171 CHANGEWATER ROAD	0.69	0.79
84	1	3B	1132 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	41.23	41.32
84	1.01	3B	1146 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	4.19	4.38
84	1.02	3B	1142 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	2.41	2.61
84.01	1	3B	332 ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	1.57	1.37
85	1	3B	1117 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	0.21	0.24
85	9	3B	1133 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	3.15	2.80

Inventory Table 1A. Unpreserved Farmland in Washington Township

Block	Lot	Class	Location	Acres (Tax Data)	Acres (GIS)
85	10.01	3B	BUTLERS PARK ROAD	0.11	0.11
		Total Unpreserved Farm Assessed Land:		3,300.37	3,666.22
		Total Preserved Farm Assessed Land:		1,341.43	1,374.60
		Total Farm Assessed Land:		4,698.70	5,098.40
		Unpreserved Farm Assessed Land (within the ADA):			3,208.75
		Preserved Farm Assessed Land (within the ADA):			1,371.61
		Total Farm Assessed Land (within the ADA):			4,580.35
		Farm Assessed Land meeting the tillable land requirement:			2,277.42
		Farm Assessed Land not meeting the tillable land requirement:			1,388.80

Inventory Table 1B. Preserved Farms in Washington Township

Block	Lot	Class	Location	Acres (Tax Data)	Acres (GIS Data)
3	20	3B	18 SPRING LANE	38.55	39.43
16	4	3B	95 LITTLE PHIL ROAD	94.58	102.58
16	9	3B	35 KAYHARTS LN/438 RT57 W	151.20	93.54
16	17	3B	35 KAYHARTS LN/438 RT57 W		57.20
38	15	15F	REAR;JACKSON VALLEY RD	137.73	137.73
38	16	3B	77 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD		
40	41	3B	PORT COLDEN ROAD,	59.29	62.73
40	87	3B	1 JULIA DRIVE	97.40	100.50
43	3	3B	140 PORT COLDEN ROAD	52.44	52.86
47	9	3B	50 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	40.09	44.49
48	53	3B	201 WASHBURN AVENUE	3.61	5.11
48	70	3B	249 WASHBURN AVENUE	133.80	135.65
48	70.01	3B	201 WASHBURN AVENUE	4.71	4.27
48	72	3B	120 CHANGEWATER ROAD	27.35	27.10
66	1.06	3B	31 RYMON ROAD	22.66	23.88
66	17	3B	243 SOUTH LINCOLN AVENUE	119.70	125.54
70	2.01	3B	MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD,	3.10	2.99
70	5	3B	MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD,	3.32	4.42
71	1	3B	247 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	61.52	59.74
71	2	3B	227 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	75.60	79.75
71	3	3B	185 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	146.88	147.09
71	8	3B	299 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	45.60	46.91
72	1	3B	300 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	22.30	21.07
Preserved Farmland (Class 3B and 15F)*:				1,341.43	1,374.60
Preserved Farmland (within ADA):				1,338.33	1,371.61
<i>*SADC and Warren County data calculate 1,395 acres of preserved farmland</i>					
Farmland Preserved with a Highlands Development Credit Easement:					
4	4	3B	JONESTOWN ROAD,	13.12	13.83
40	33.01	3B	152 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	38.46	39.16
40	109	3B	148 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	5.32	4.59
Farmland - Highlands Development Credit:				56.90	57.58

Inventory Table 2A. Target Farms in Washington Township

*Farm Parcels = Individual Lot
Farm Units = Multiple Lot Farm*

Block	Lot	Class	Location	Acres (Tax Data)	Acres (GIS Data)
17	6.01	3B	39 MEADOW BREEZE LANE	3.78	8.27
27	11	3B	44 KINNAMAN AVENUE	6.37	6.91
27	15	3B	80 KINNAMAN AVENUE	11.23	13.59
3	5	3B	255 BRASS CASTLE ROAD	9.00	10.74
40	33	3B	158 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	30.44	28.62
43	3.02	3B	150 PORT COLDEN ROAD	8.00	9.19
44	7	3B	1059 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	53.76	52.33
45	14.03	3B	9 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	5.72	6.76
45	14.04	3B	33 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	6.03	7.17
45	14.05	3B	1018 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	9.02	10.01
45	20.03	3B	1078 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	14.18	15.23
47	7	3B	30 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	131.98	131.30
47	9.08	3B	80 MC CULLOUGH ROAD	7.02	8.38
48	69	3B	30 CHANGEWATER ROAD	64.60	66.64
48	75	3B	161 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	118.00	120.34
70	4	3B	240 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	10.79	7.25
71	4.04	3B	44 RYMON ROAD	8.91	10.02
71	4	3B	48 RYMON ROAD	14.85	14.65
71	6	3B	50 ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	69.28	69.20
71	7.39	3B	80 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	13.18	13.77
74	3	3B	11 SHURTS ROAD	62.67	61.96
74	4	3B	111 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	7.21	7.04
75	2.03	3B	159 BRYANS ROAD	35.52	36.50
78	3.01	3B	426 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	2.51	2.47
81	8	3B	233 RYMON ROAD	34.33	34.92
82	15	3B	196A CHANGEWATER ROAD	40.28	43.33
82	17	3B	146 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	141.30	142.97
83	1.01	3B	286 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	28.63	29.39
Target Farm Parcels (Acres):				948.59	968.94
					28 farms

Inventory Table 2A. Target Farms in Washington Township

*Farm Parcel = Individual Lot
Farm Unit = Multiple Lot Farm*

Block	Lot	Class	Location	Acres (Tax Data)	Acres (GIS Data)	Farm Unit Acres (Tax Data)
79	1	3B	10 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	59.67	58.88	
79	1.01	3B	30 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	7.01	5.43	
79	1.02	3B	236 RYMON ROAD	6.67	6.83	71.14
66	1.10	3B	83 RYMON ROAD	5.00	5.94	
66	1	3B	45 CEMETERY HILL ROAD	127.06	128.90	134.84
39	1	3B	131 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	119.98	110.29	
38	5	3B	349 ROUTE 31 NORTH	184.73	185.84	296.13
74	6.01	3B	75 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	7.36	8.47	
74	6.02	3B	73 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	4.10	4.13	12.61
74	6.03	3B	37 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	4.00	3.91	
74	6	3B	51 W ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	17.64	17.31	21.22
40	30	3B	128 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	26.13	26.92	
40	31.01	3B	134 JACKSON VALLEY ROAD	18.41	19.85	46.78
75	2.01	3B	169 BRYANS ROAD	47.38	47.22	
75	2.05	3B	173 BRYANS ROAD	4.00	4.50	
75	2.04	3B	177 BRYANS ROAD	5.22	7.10	58.82
83	4.01	3B	234 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	1.07	1.15	
83	2	3B	260 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	72.00	71.43	
83	4	3B	240 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	35.27	36.79	
83	4.02	3B	236 E ASBURY-ANDERSON RD	0.92	0.96	110.34
83	16	3B	169 CHANGEWATER ROAD	18.60	19.14	
83	17	3B	171 CHANGEWATER ROAD	0.69	0.79	19.93
45	20.02	3B	1062 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	5.15	6.56	
45	20	3B	1050 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	100.58	97.31	103.87
85	1	3B	1117 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	0.21	0.24	
84	1.01	3B	1146 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	4.19	4.38	
85	10.01	3B	BUTLERS PARK ROAD	0.11	0.11	
84	1.02	3B	1142 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	2.41	2.61	
85	9	3B	1133 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	3.15	2.80	
84	1	3B	1132 BUTLERS PARK ROAD	41.23	41.32	51.47
40	47	3B	123 PORT COLDEN ROAD	7.38	8.27	
40	46	3B	135 PORT COLDEN ROAD	81.10	80.80	89.07
			Target Farm Units (Acres):	1,018.42	1,016.20	12 farms
			Target Farm Parcels (Acres):	948.59	968.94	28 farms
			Total Target Farms (Acres):	1,967.01	1,985.14	40 farms

Inventory Table 2B. Farms Potentially Eligible for Preservation

Located in a zone that does not permit agriculture.

Block	Lot	Class	Location	(Tax Data)	(GIS Data)
38	8	3B	311 ROUTE 31 NORTH	10.63	11.86
44	6.05	3B	667 ROUTE 57 EAST	6.82	4.64
44	6	3B	661 ROUTE 57 EAST	17.54	19.37
66	20.04	3B	355 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	9.00	9.28
66	20.06	3B	349 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	7.01	9.03
71	5	3B	120 RYMON ROAD	96.18	99.16
79	7	3B	496 ROUTE 31 SOUTH	22.00	21.81
Farms Eligible for Preservation (Acres):				169.18	175.14

Literature Cited

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- ² New Jersey Division of Taxation, 2018 NJ Farmland Assessment. <https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/pdf/lpt/2019farmland.pdf>. Accessed January 2021.
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