

Ocean County Agriculture Development Board
Recommendation of a Site Specific
Agricultural Management Practice
George Mackres, Spyro Martin
Argos Farm
Lot 1 Block 2298
Lacey Township

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Right to Farm Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-1, et seq. and the State Agriculture Development Committee regulations, N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.3, a commercial farm owner or operator may make a request to the County Agriculture Development Board (hereinafter "Board") to determine if his or her operation constitutes a generally accepted agricultural management practice; and,

WHEREAS, on November 5, 2008, George Mackres owner/operator of the Argos Farm in Lacey Township, made a request in writing to the Board for the development of a site-specific agricultural management practice (hereinafter, "AMP") for an equestrian facility and all of its related activities; seasonal sale of field crops, u-pick, and produce; hay rides, corn maze; sale of livestock and poultry; and the sale of Christmas trees, wreaths, grave blankets, and roping; and,

WHEREAS, on January 7, 2009, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.3(c), the Board advised in writing the State Agriculture Development Committee and Lacey Township of the request; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.3(b), the farmer provided proof that his/her agricultural operation is a commercial farm as defined at N.J.S.A. 4:1-C-3 and N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.1, proof of which is attached hereto; and,

WHEREAS, on February 4, 2009, members of the OCADB, Ocean County Soil Conservation District, Rutgers Cooperative Agricultural Extension Agent, Ocean County Planning Department, and Ocean County Counsel conducted a site inspection of the Argos Farm; and,

WHEREAS, on February 11, 2009, at an advertised public hearing, the Board was presented with the findings of the site inspection; and,

WHEREAS, on February 11, 2009 the Board agreed to develop a site-specific AMP for Argos Farm after making the following findings of fact, based on information and documentation provided to the Board by George Mackres and information gathered during the site inspection:

1. The Argos Farm consists of 95.97 acres. Farm production includes pumpkins, gourds, horses, sheep, chickens, Christmas trees and various produce.
2. The Argos Farm is a commercial farm as defined in N.J.S.A. 4:1C-3 and N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.1, which produces agricultural products worth \$2,500 more annually and satisfies the eligibility criteria for differential property tax assessment pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964; and,
3. The Argos Farm has been in operation as of July 2, 1998 or earlier; and,

WHEREAS, The Board sought the assistance of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension and the Ocean County Soil Conservation District, in the determination of generally accepted agriculture management practices and standards relating to an equestrian facility and all of its related activities; seasonal sale of field crops, u-pick, and produce; hay rides, corn maze; sale of livestock and poultry; and the sale of Christmas trees, wreaths, grave blankets, and roping.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby determines that the equestrian facility and all of its related activities; seasonal sale of field crops, u-pick, and produce; hay rides, corn maze, and related activities protected under the Right To Farm Act; sale of livestock and poultry; and the sale of Christmas trees, wreaths, grave blankets, and roping on the Argos Farm constitutes a generally accepted agriculture management practice provided that the following conditions are satisfied:

1. All efforts must be made to obtain any and all necessary County permits and/or approvals required by the County of Ocean for road access on Lacey Road within (1) one year; and
2. All efforts must be made to obtain any and all necessary State licenses related to the use and storage of pesticides on the property on a continuing basis; and
3. A guard rail must be installed separating the farm road from the pond on the property on or before September 1, 2009; and
4. All efforts must be made to conform to all necessary rules, regulations and policies concerning nutrient and animal waste management on the property on a continuing basis; and
5. All efforts must be made to conform to all necessary requirements outlined in the AMP for Equine Activities on Commercial Farms which is located in NJAC 2:76-2A.10; and
6. All efforts must be made to conform to all County and State public health and safety requirements.
7. Any and all farming activities must conform to all relevant County, State, and Federal statutes, rules, and regulations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board shall forward a copy of its written recommendation of the site-specific AMP to George Mackres, Spyro Martin, Lacey Township, the Pinelands Commission, the SADC and any other individuals or organizations deemed appropriate by the Board within 30 days of the recommendation.

Douglas Hallock, OCADB Chairman

Date