

N.J. Agricultural Mediation Program

The Agricultural Mediation Program is administered by the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC). The goal of the Program is to help farmers and others resolve agriculture-related disputes quickly, amicably, and in a cost-effective manner. The Agricultural Mediation Program can be used to help resolve farmer-neighbor and Right to Farm issues, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program issues, agricultural credit issues, lease issues, and farm transition issues.



How does mediation work?

Mediation is a voluntary process in which a trained, impartial mediator helps disputing parties examine their mutual issues, identify and consider options, and determine if they can agree on a solution.

Because the mediator has no decision-making authority, successful mediation is based on the voluntary cooperation of all parties.

What are the benefits?

Mediation can save farmers and others time and costly legal fees. It is a free service, is confidential, and generally takes only a few meetings to complete. Mediation is an alternative to the sometimes lengthy Right to Farm public hearing process, the USDA appeals process, and other court processes. Through mediation, the parties can shape the outcome of their dispute rather than requiring that a third-party decide the issue. Mediation also allows the parties to express their views and concerns, clarify misunderstandings, and maintain relationships.

Who can use the program?

- Farmers, Neighbors, Municipalities – *Famer-Neighbor issues*
- Farmers and USDA agencies – *USDA Program issues*
- Farmers, Lenders, Creditors – *Agricultural Credit issues*
- Farmers and Others – *Lease issues* (related to land, equipment, livestock, storage facilities, farm buildings, solar energy generation facilities, and other items)
- Farmers, Family Members, Business Partners, Others – *Farm transition issues* (within a family or between unrelated people, and that occur at any point in (before, during, after) a farm transition, transfer, or succession process)
- Farmers and Others – *Other issues* (as appropriate for better serving the agricultural community)

How do you request mediation?

Complete a mediation request form, available at www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/agmediation/request/, and return it to the Agricultural Mediation Program. Once each party agrees to participate, the Program assigns a mediator and schedules a mediation session at a time and place convenient for all the parties.



For more information

Visit www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/agmediation/, or call the SADC at (609) 984-2504.



NEW JERSEY
State Agriculture Development Committee
P.O Box 330
Trenton, NJ 08625-0330

phone: 609-984-2504
email: sadc@ag.nj.gov
web: www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc