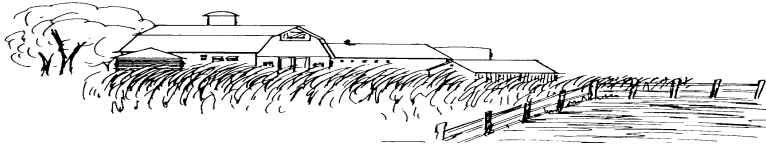


Mifflin County Agricultural Conservation Easement Program



2024 Application Packet



**Mifflin County Agricultural Land Preservation Board
c/o Mifflin County Conservation District
20 Windmill Hill #4
Burnham, PA 17009
(717) 248-4695**

Dear Prospective Applicant:

Attached is the information and forms you will need to complete in order to apply for the Mifflin County Agricultural Land Preservation Program's 2024 competitive round.

The initial application form is found in Section A of the enclosed materials, listed as pages 1-3. The Mifflin County Conservation District can assist you with the required items on page 2 (maps, soils report, capability class table). Complete and sign this form and mail or drop it off at the address listed above. Sections B, C, and D (the Land Evaluation & Site Assessment, or LESA) are included to show how applicant farms are scored and ranked and are for your information only.

Please note that the application (Section A) must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, June 28, 2024.

Note: the approval of this year's conservation easements are subject to available state funds and applications must meet the following minimum criteria ([Administrative Manual](#) Section 1.2, p.3):

1. located in an Agricultural Security Area
2. be contiguous acreage of at least 50 acres, unless the tract is at least 10 acres and is utilized for a crop unique to the area or is contiguous to a property which has a perpetual conservation easement in place.
3. contain at least 50% soils of Capability Classes I through IV
4. contain the greater of 50% or 10 acres of harvested cropland, pasture, or grazing land

If you have any additional questions contact Trevor Weaver, MCCD District Manager, at (717) 953-3148 or by e-mail at tweaver@mifflinccd.com.

APPENDIX, A
MIFFLIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

SECTION A
Agricultural Conservation Easement Application Form

I. General Information

Name(s) _____

Address _____
(Street / R.R.) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Social Security # (s) _____

Telephone # (s) _____
(Please include best times to contact)

County _____ Municipality _____

Location of the Agricultural Security Area (ASA) in which your farm is located and recorded:
_____ Township, Mifflin County -- Recorded ASA as listed below:

Book: _____ Volume: _____ Page: _____

Street location of farmland tract _____

Directions from nearest state route _____

Total acreage of farmland tract _____

Total acreage offered for easement purchase _____

Deed of Ownership: Reference: _____ Book: _____ Volume: _____ Page: _____

County tax map, include tax parcel number or account number

Date of U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service Conservation Plan, if any

Name (s), address and telephone number of person (s) to contact to view the Farmland tract:

II. Maps

The applicant is required to provide the following maps as part of this application. Each of the farm parcel boundaries must be clearly identified on every map.

1. Location Map - A United States Geographical Survey Topographical Map showing the location of the farmland tract. A copy of this map may be obtained at the Mifflin County Conservation District Office.

2. Soils Map - The soils map of the farmland tract must be color coded as follows: Soils maps are available at the Conservation District office in Burnham.

- Class I - Green
- Class II - Yellow
- Class III - Red
- Class IV - Blue
- * Unique Land - Purple
- Wetlands - Cross Hatch or include on separate map

3. Tax Map - Tax map (s) of the farmland tract with map reference and tax parcel numbers clearly indicated. Tax maps are available at the Mifflin County Tax Assessor's Office.

III. Soils Report

The applicant is required to provide a soils report for the farmland tract as part of the application. This report should contain a listing of the soil types found on the tract and the number of acres of each type. Information for this report can be found in the Mifflin County Soil Survey available through the Mifflin Conservation District Office.

IV. Capability Class Table

The applicant is required to provide a table showing the capability class and use of the land as part of this application.

Class	Acres of Cropland	Acres of Pasture	Other	Total Acres
Class I				
Class II				
Class III				
Class IV				
Other Classes				
Total				

Other = Woodland/Wetland areas = _____ Class I - IV Soils = _____ %

Homestead/buildings = _____ Class I = _____ % Class II = _____ %

Signatures

It is necessary for all owners of the farmland tract to give their approval and consent to this application. In the following section, list any judgments or liens against your farm:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Judgments or Liens: _____

Please submit this application to:

Mifflin County Ag Land Preservation Board
c/o Mifflin County Conservation District
20 Windmill Hill #4
Burnham, PA 17009

Please call the Mifflin County Conservation District Office (717-953-3148) or Program Administrator Dan Dunmire (717-513-2637) if you have questions or would like assistance in completing this application.

Those applicants who receive preference for appraisal will be asked to submit a \$500 good faith deposit prior to ordering the appraisal. In addition, if the easement purchase offer is accepted, the applicant will be asked to pay the costs of a survey of the easement area by a licensed surveyor. Both the cost of the survey and the good faith deposit will be refunded after closing unless the applicant refuses an offer to purchase the conservation easements on the property at full market value or unless the applicant breaks a sales agreement with the Mifflin County Agricultural Land Preservation Board. The deposit is to be held in escrow and will be refunded within 30 days of the closing.

Soils and Application Assistance Mifflin County Conservation District
20 Windmill Hill, #4
Burnham, PA 17009 (717)-953-3148

Natural Resource Conservation Plan----- Natural Resource Conservation Service Office
20 Windmill Hill, #4
Burnham, PA 17009 (717)-248-9541 X 3

Deed Reference-----Registrar and Records Office, Mifflin County Courthouse
(717) 242-1449

Tax Account Numbers ----- Office of the Chief Assessor, Mifflin County Courthouse
20 North Wayne Street
P.O. Box 68
Lewistown, PA 17044 (717)-248-5783

**Mifflin County Soils
Class, Slope & Relative Values**

<u>Soil Symbol</u>	<u>LC</u>	<u>Soil Name</u>	<u>Slope</u>	<u>Relative Value</u>
As	1	Ashton	0-3	100
AbB	2e	Allegheny	2-8	100
AdB	2e	Allenwood	2-8	100
BuB	2e	Buchanan	3-8	100
CaB	2e	Chavies	2-8	100
EdB	2e	Edom	3-8	100
HaB	2e	Hagerstown	2-8	100
HcB	2e	Hagerstown	3-8	100
HhB	2e	Hazelton	3-8	100
KrB	2e	Kreamer	2-8	100
LaB	2e	Laidig	3-8	100
MeB	2e	Mertz	3-8	100
MrB	2e	Morrison	3-8	100
MuB	2e	Murrill	3-8	100
MoA	2w	Monongahela	0-3	100
No	2w	Nolin	0-3	100
Ph	2w	Philo	0-3	100
Po	2w	Pope	0-3	100
WaB	2e	Watson	2-8	100
EeB	2e	Edom-Klinesville	3-8	93
ErB	2e	Ernest	2-8	93
MoB	2e	Monongahela	3-8	93
Ne	2w	Newark	0-3	93
EfB	3e	Edom-Weikert	3-8	93
AdC	3e	Allenwood	8-15	93
HcC	3e	Hagerstown	8-15	93
HhC	3e	Hazelton	8-15	93
MeC	3e	Mertz	8-15	93
MuC	3e	Murrill	8-15	93
ElB	3s	Elliber	3-8	93
BkB	2e	Berks	2-8	68
BkC	3e	Berks	8-15	68
BuC	3e	Buchanan	8-15	68
EdC	3e	Edom	8-15	68
EeC	3e	Edom-Kinesville	8-15	68
EfC	3e	Edom-Weikert	8-15	68
ErC	3e	Ernest	8-15	68
KlB	3e	Klinesville	3-8	68
KrC	3e	Kreamer	8-15	68
LaC	3e	Laidig	8-15	68
MrC	3e	Morrison	8-15	68
OpB	3e	Opequon	3-8	68
WeB	3e	Weikert	3-8	68
AlB	3w	Alvira	2-8	68
At	3w	Atkins	0-3	68
Ev	3w	Evendale	0-4	68

**Mifflin County Soils
Class, Slope & Relative Values**

<u>Soil Symbol</u>	<u>LC</u>	<u>Soil Name</u>	<u>Slope</u>	<u>Relative Value</u>
Ma	3w	Melvin	0-2	68
Pe	3w	Pennlaw	0-3	68
Ty	3w	Tyler	0-3	68
WaC	3e	Watson	8-15	68
AdD	4e	Allenwood	15-25	61
EdD	4e	Edom	15-25	61
EeD	4e	Edom-Klinesville	15-25	61
EfD	4e	Edom-Weikert	15-25	61
HcD	4e	Hagerstown	15-25	61
HhD	4e	Hazelton	15-25	61
LaD	4e	Laidig	15-25	61
MeD	4e	Mertz	15-25	61
MrD	4e	Morrison	15-25	61
ElC	4s	Elliber	8-15	61
VaC	4s	Vanderlip	5-15	61
AnB	4w	Andover	2-8	61
BrA	4w	Brinkerton	0-3	61
BrB	4w	Brinkerton	3-8	61
Pu	4w	Purdy	0-3	61
BlD	4e	Berks-Weikert	15-25	37
KlC	4e	Klinesville	8-15	37
OpC	4e	Opequon	8-15	37
WeC	4e	Weikert	8-15	37
KlD	6e	Klinesville	15-25	0
OpD	6e	Opequon	15-25	0
WeD	6e	Weikert	15-25	0
HeD	6s	Hagerstown	8-25	0
BxB	6s	Buchanan	3-8	0
BxD	6s	Buchanan	8-15	0
ElD	6s	Elliber	15-25	0
HsB	6s	Hazelton	3-8	0
LtB	6s	Leetonia	0-12	0
BMF	7e	Berks-Weikert	25-60	0
KlF	7e	Klinesville	25-50	0
ORF	7e	Opequon-Hagerstown	25-50	0
AoB	7s	Andover	0-8	0
AoC	7s	Andover	8-15	0
ElF	7s	Elliber	25-60	0
HSD	7s	Hazelton-DeKalb	15-25	0
HTF	7s	Hazelton-DeKalb	25-70	0
LcB	7s	Laidig	3-8	0
LcD	7s	Laidig	8-25	0
LDF	7s	Laidig	25-45	0
Qu	8	Pits & Quarries	---	0
Ru	8s	Rubble land	2-60	0

APPENDIX, A

MIFFLIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD
SECTION C
Site Assessment Worksheet

The site assessment portion of the LESA consists of 14 factors which relate to the viability of the site for present and future agricultural use. These factors consider the development pressures in the area and the likelihood of future development pressures in the area, as well as the likelihood that these pressures will impact farm operations. The three primary factors considered and their points and weights are listed below. Explanations for each factor can be found Appendix A, Section C, pages 8 -14 of the Mifflin County Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

Factor	Allocated Points	Weight	Maximum Total
Development Potential	100	.15	15
Farmland Potential	100	.25	25
Clustering Potential	100	.10	10
Total	300	.50	50

1. DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL FACTORS

Maximum Points = 100

Weight Factor = .15

These factors are intended to identify the extent to which development pressures from urban areas cause conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. The greater a farm's likelihood to conversion is to non-farm uses the higher its score.

1-A) Availability of Public Sanitary Sewer

A farm is more likely to be surrounded by incompatible land uses or be converted to non-agricultural use of if it is an area that has access to public sewer or is expected to have access to such services within 20 years. A tract of land that is in close proximity to sewer service shall receive a higher score.

Criteria	Points
Sewer line 1 mile or more away	0
Sewer line within 1 mile	15
Sewer line within 2500 feet	20
Sewer line within 1000 feet	25
Sewer line adjacent to tract	30

SCORE: _____

1-A.1) For Municipalities Without a Public Sewage System
 Percent of soils in classes I or II (Alternative Factor)

Calculate the percent of soils that would have a slight to moderate limitation for on-lot sewage disposal. A tract of land which has a higher percentage of soils that are suitable for on-lot sewage (Class I and II soils) shall receive a higher score.

Criteria	Points
0% to 5% of soils in classes I or II	0
6% to 20% of soils in classes I or II	15
21% to 40% of soils in classes I or II	20
41% to 60% of soils in classes I or II	25
61% to 100% of soils in classes I or II	30

SCORE: _____

1-B) Public Water System

Calculate the distance of tract from a public water system. A tract of land in closer proximity to public water services shall receive a higher score.

Criteria	Points
Water line 1 mile or more away	0
Water line within 1 mile	5
Water line within 2500 feet	10
Water line within 1000 feet	15
Water line adjacent to tract	20

SCORE: _____

1-C) Amount of Road Frontage

Better access to public roads increases the suitability of the tract for subdivision and development. A tract with more road frontage adjacent to crop or pasture land shall receive a higher score.

Criteria	Points
Less than .10 miles	0
Between .11 and .24 miles	15
Between .25 and .49 miles	20
Between .50 and .74 miles	25
Greater than .75 miles	30

SCORE: _____

1-D) Extent of Non-Agricultural Use in Area

The extent of non-agricultural use in an area (within a one mile radius) makes a tract more susceptible to non-agricultural development. The greater the extent of non-agricultural uses the higher the score.

Criteria	Points
No significant non-agricultural use in area	0
Scattered non-agricultural development within 1 mile radius (20 or more lots)	10
Extensive scattered non-agricultural development within 1/2 mile radius (20 or more commercial, industrial, or residential lots)	15
Intensive non-agricultural development adjacent to tract or in immediate vicinity (10 or more commercial, industrial, or residential lots)	20

SCORE: _____

SUBTOTAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL SCORE	(1A + 1B + 1C + 1D) = _____
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2. FARMLAND POTENTIAL FACTORS

Maximum Points = 100

Weight Factor = .25

These factors measure the potential agricultural productivity or farming practices on the site. The higher the quality, the more valuable a farm is and the higher its score will be in this category.

2-A) Percentage of the Farm Used for Harvested Cropland, Pasture, and Grazing Land

Large amount of productive farmland make a farm more viable. At least 50% of the farmland tract must meet these criteria under the State minimum criteria. The purpose of the preservation program is to protect viable farmland. If a large percentage of a tract is devoted to other uses, the tract will receive a lower score.

Criteria	Points
Less than 55%	0
Between 56% and 65%	5
Between 66% and 75%	10
Between 76% and 85%	15
Greater than 85%	20

SCORE: _____

2-B) Stewardship of the Land and Use of Conservation Practices and Best Management Practices

Farmland tracts under consideration must have implemented sound, conservation land best management practices, including but not limited to soil erosion and sedimentation control and nutrient management. This factor addresses the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated good stewardship of the land and the use of conservation management. Such practices enhance the ability of the subject farm to sustain long-term soil productivity. In order to receive a score, a farm must have a minimum of 50% of its NRCS plan implemented.

Criteria	Points
Less than 50% implemented conservation plan	0
Between 50% and 65% implemented conservation plan	5
Between 66% and 75% implemented conservation plan	10
Greater than 75% implemented conservation plan	15

SCORE: _____

2-C) Acreage of the Tract Proposed for Easement Purchase. Number of Acres _____

The viability of farming increases with farm size. A farm unit at or above the optimum size in the county will be assigned a high value and the value will decrease as the amount of land decreases. This factor recognizes that larger acreages of cropland and pastureland are necessary to support the viability of agriculture on the local community and operate an efficient farming operation. The more acres proposed the higher score the tract will receive.

Criteria	Points
Less than 50 acres but 10 or more contiguous to perpetually eased tract	5
Between 51 and 109 acres	10
Greater than 109 acres	15

SCORE: _____

2-D) Percent Acreage of Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance and/or Prime Farmland Soils

The greater the percentage of total acres designated as either Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance or Prime Farmland Soils, the greater is the likelihood that the tract will remain a viable agricultural entity.

Criteria	Points
Less than 30%	0
Between 31% and 45%	5
Between 46% and 55%	10
Greater than 55%	15

SCORE: _____

2-E) Farm Product Sales

This factor measures the productivity of the tract. A higher score is given to a more productive farm measured by the dollar value of the annual receipts.

Criteria	Points
Gross annual receipts of less than \$25,000	0
Gross annual receipts of \$25,000 - \$39,999	5
Gross annual receipts of greater than \$40,000	10

SCORE: _____

2-F) Percentage of Landowners Total Family Income Derived from Farming Operations (Not Including Tenants Income)

Criteria	Points
Less than 50%	0
Between 51% and 75%	5
Greater than 75%	10

SCORE: _____

2-G) Historic, Scenic, and Environmentally Sensitive Qualities

Tracts declared or listed by local, state or federal agencies as historic, scenic, open space, or cultural and tracts adjoining designated protected areas such as flood plains, wildlife habitat, parks, forests and educational sites will be awarded higher values reflecting broader policies affecting the farmland landscape. Environmentally sensitive and historical areas can buffer farmland from non-compatible land uses.

Criteria	Points
Is not adjacent, or does not contain any documented historical or environmental characteristics	0
Has features favorable to preservation - significant but undocumented historical features and/or limited but recognized environmental features	5
Has significant features favorable to preservation - farm located adjacent to area with special environmental circumstances.	10
Has exceptional features favorable for preservation - farm listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is within a state designated scenic area – or is a designated Century Farms or Bicentennial Farms	15

SCORE: _____

SUBTOTAL FARMLAND

POTENTIAL SCORE (2A + 2B + 2C + 2D + 2E + 2F + 2G) = _____

3. CLUSTERING POTENTIAL FACTORS

Maximum Points = 100

Weight Factor = .10

The following factors measure the importance of preserving blocks of farmland which support commercial agriculture and help to shield agriculture from conflicts with incompatible land uses. The closer a farm is to other preserved farms or other areas targeted for preservation the higher the score that tract shall receive.

3-A) Consistent with County Important Agricultural Areas Map

The County Board, after consultation with local agriculture leaders and County planners, has determined that certain land areas in the area are important to the current and future agriculture of Mifflin County. These are designated as either green or yellow on the Mifflin County Important Agricultural Areas Map. The Official County Important Agricultural Areas Map is located in the Conservation District Office. A reduction of this map, to be used for reference purposes only, can be found in Appendix B of this document.

Farms located in areas designated as desirable for agricultural use are more viable for easement purchases. Compatibility with the county and/or local municipality planning is advisable.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Points</u>
Tract is not in an area designated as important for sustaining agricultural infrastructure	0
Less than 50% of the tract is in an area designated as important for sustaining agricultural infrastructure	10
Between 50% and 75% of the tract is in an area designated as important for sustaining agricultural infrastructure	25
Greater than 75% of the tract is in an area designated as important for sustaining agricultural infrastructure	35

SCORE: _____

3-B) Proximity of this Farm to other Farmland containing Agricultural Conservation Easements.

Clustering of agricultural conservation easement purchases in the same area helps to develop a critical mass of farmland which can support commercial agriculture and reduce conflicts with incompatible land uses. This factor takes into account the number and/or acreage of “preserved farms” at various distances from the subject site being rated, giving more weight to properties that are close to the “preserved farm”. This factor also takes into account consideration of easements held by private non-profit organizations.

Criteria	Points
One or more farms have conservation easements further away than 2 miles	0
One or more farms have conservation easements within 2 miles	15
One or more farms have conservation easements within 1 miles	20
One or more farms have conservation easements within 2500 feet	25
One or more farms have conservation easements within 1000 feet	35

SCORE: _____

3-C) Percent of Adjacent Land in an Agricultural Security Area (ASA):

Areas where agriculture has been given protection by the local municipality, at the request of the landowners provides an environment conducive to farming

Being in an Agricultural Security Area is a prerequisite to the purchase of a conservation easement. This factor will give preferences to a farm, if it adjoins another farmland parcel within an Agricultural Security Area.

Criteria	Points
Less than 20% of adjacent land in ASA	5
Between 21% and 35% of adjacent land in ASA	10
Between 36% and 45% of adjacent land in ASA	15
Between 46% and 55% of adjacent land in ASA	20
Between 56% and 75% of adjacent land in ASA	25
Greater than 75% of adjacent land in ASA	30

SCORE: _____

SUBTOTAL CLUSTERING POTENTIAL SCORE	(3A + 3B + 3C) = _____
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SUBTOTAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL SCORE (from above) = _____

X .15 = TOTAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL POINTS = _____

SUBTOTAL FARMLAND POTENTIAL SCORE (from above) = _____

X .25 = TOTAL FARMLAND POTENTIAL POINTS = _____

SUBTOTAL CLUSTERING POTENTIAL SCORE (from above) = _____

X .10 = TOTAL CLUSTERING POTENTIAL POINTS = _____

TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS = _____

SECTION D

**MIFFLIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD
LESA Summary Sheet**

	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Farmland Tract <u>Land Evaluation</u> Score (From Appendix A – Section B)	_____	50 pts.	50 %
Farmland Tract <u>Site Assessment</u> Score (From Appendix A – Section C)	_____	50 pts.	50 %
Total Weighted LESA Score	_____	<u>100</u>	<u>100 %</u>

NOTE: A minimum of 25 total soils points is required for program eligibility