

2009 Frequently Asked Questions

1.) Question: A four hundred acre farm has 100 acres protected though a conservation easement. Can we exclude the 100 since it is already protected?

Answer: You can not exclude any part of the farm including the 100 acre piece of land already under a conservation easement. When filling out the application, Step 11, asks the applicant if the property has a conservation easement on the property. You would answer that question in the affirmative. The acres acknowledged under conservation easement will then be subtracted from Step 19 when calculating ODA's points-based appraised value. ODA will not provide funding for acres already under easement.

2.) Question: A 300 acre farm has 3 houses already on it. Can they be divided off later if they are accepted?

Answer: No, the houses cannot be divided off after the farm is accepted into the program. Once signed, the deed of agricultural easement does not allow for any subdivision.

3.) Question: If the applicant property's local government has a comprehensive land use plan that was written more than seven years ago and 15A is answered "No", can question 15B be answered "Yes"?

Answer: Questions 15A and 15B are asking two separate questions and the answers for the questions are not correlated. Even if a comprehensive land use plan is greater than seven years old (15A- No), the property can still be located in the older plan within an agriculturally designated area (15B- Yes).

4.) Question: Do "scenic by-ways" apply to question 14C as an historic designation?

Answer: "Scenic by-ways" are not an accepted historic designation with question 14C because by-ways are not within any part of the applicant farm.

5.) Question: Can Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs) be included in question 12B as "non-easement" protected lands?

Answer: No, ASAs are not counted as "non-easement" protected lands in question 12B. ASAs are accounted for within question 14B.

6.) Question: If a farm has applied in a previous year but had a different landowner at that time, can question 14E be answered in the affirmative?

Answer: No, question 14E specifically asks if the landowner submitted the applicant farm in a previous funding round. Unless the landowner submitted the farm, the applicant farm cannot receive points for this question.

7.) Question: Is it possible to delete applications that are in the farm list queue?

Answer: There is not a tool on the Web site for local sponsors/applicants to delete farms from the queue. If it is necessary to delete farms, contact ODA to have them removed. Farm IDs would need to be supplied and the removed farms would not be able to be brought back once deleted.

8.) Question: How is migrant housing viewed within the deed of agricultural easement?

Answer: Migrant housing is an “agricultural structure” according to the deed. The relevant portions of the deed are section 4.2 and 5.8. Accordingly, existing structures are permitted and may be repaired and so forth as needed. However, 5.8 specifically prohibits the construction of new farm labor housing.

9.) Question: If a farm is interested in becoming permanently preserved yet is located in a floodplain area, is there another program that may better fit this farm’s needs?

Answer: I would encourage both the local sponsor and landowner to look into the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program, through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This program recently announced that it will be providing up to \$30 million to eligible landowners in Ohio to purchase easements on lands damaged by flooding. Interested parties should contact their local USDA Service Center NRCS Office for more information or visit, <http://www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov>.

10.) Question: If a farm is reapplying from a previous year and had been accepted for a large farm exception, does the applicant farm need to request a large farm exception this year?

Answer: Yes, farms must request a large farm exception each year an application is submitted.

11.) Question: Should I try to purposely leave out the landowner’s name from the narrative questions within Step 16?

Answer: Yes, please try to leave out the name of the applicant farmland owner within the essay questions in Step 16. When the advisory board reads and scores these applications ODA staff take measures to eliminate possible biases, one of which is to remove the landowners name from the essay questions and from the scoring sheets. The essays they read and score are therefore anonymous to the advisory board members.

12.) Question: Regarding “Attachment B,” can I write in the parcel number(s) for the applicant property if it is not provided on the map?

Answer: Yes, you may hand write the parcel number(s) of the applicant property on the map.

13.) Question: Where should I direct large farm exception letters?

Answer: Large farm exception letters must be written to the Director of ODA and the Executive Director of Farmland Preservation at 8995 E. Main St., Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068. Refer to the Applicant Handbook, for what the letter should include.

14.) Question: If the Soil and Water Conservation District representatives have questions about the application who can they contact?

Answer: Any and all questions can be directed to the Office of Farmland Preservation at 614-728-6210 or farmlandpres@agri.ohio.gov. Office staff is willing to help answer any and all questions that arise. Please do not hesitate to call.

15.) Question: I am a Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) representative and when I login I am unable to start my farm applications.

Answer: For any individual, regardless of title or organizational affiliation, to start an application one must gain a “local sponsor” login. The local sponsor is responsible for the bulk of the application and must start the farm's application.

16.) Question: I am a Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) representative and when I log in using my SWCD/NRCS ID, I am unable to find some of the farms that I was asked to enter information into (steps 17 and 18).

Answer: Unless you (the SWCD/NRCS rep) have entered information for an application in a previous year, that specific application will not appear in your queue. To add the farm(s) click the “add a new farm” icon. You will then be able to enter the needed information and be able to view that farm in your farm list.

17.) Question: If I accidentally copied the application two extra times. How do I delete the extra copies?

Answer: Local sponsors are not able to delete applications within the current system. The Office of Farmland Preservation staff can do that for you, although once deleted, the applications are not able to be retrieved. Contact office staff with farm IDs to have applications deleted.

18.) Question: Should I create a new login each year?

Answer: No, do not create a new login each year. Once you have created a username, the online system will be able to capture all information in one place and then will have the ability to transfer information from year to year which will save local sponsors time in filling out applications. If you forget your username, contact office staff to help you.

19.) To save paper, are double sided applications ok?

Answer: Yes, printing on both sides of a page is OK.