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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fulton County Landowners Receive Clean Ohio Funds to Preserve Farmland

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Jan. 9, 2008) – Fulton County landowners David and Janet Hines were awarded a permanent agricultural easement from the Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (AEPP), administered by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, on their 74.95 acre farm in Pike Township. The farm is one of 20 chosen to be preserved in the sixth round of Clean Ohio funding. More than 230 applications were received by the department in 2007.

“Since the Clean Ohio Fund’s inception, the department has received an overwhelming response from farmers vying for extremely limited preservation funds,” said Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Robert Boggs. “Through careful planning, we will work with our preservation partners to spread those funds across Ohio, preserve precious farmland, and continue Ohio’s strong agricultural base.”

More than 93 percent of the Hines’ property consists of “prime farmland soils” as classified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture or “locally important soils” as declared by Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation District. The farm is managed under a standard rotation of corn, wheat, and soybeans using no-till, conventional, and conservation tillage practices. Land surrounding the farm is used primarily for agricultural purposes, and the farm itself is within 1.5 miles of three other protected farms that total more than 675 acres.

Agricultural easements are voluntary legal agreements restricting non-agricultural development on farmland with the land itself remaining on the tax rolls and under private ownership and management. Landowners may undertake any agricultural activity permitted under Ohio law, and they can sell their farm or pass it along as a gift to others. However, the easement remains with the land, prohibiting any future non-farm development to make certain that it remains used for agricultural purposes.

The Clean Ohio Fund has preserved agricultural easements on 104 farms totaling more than 21,984.94 acres statewide. For more information on the department’s Clean Ohio AEPP, call 614-728-6210 or visit <http://clean.ohio.gov>.

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