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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Department of Agriculture to Hold Clean Ohio Information Sessions

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Feb. 19, 2009) – Find out how to apply for Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program funds during two upcoming meetings offered by the Ohio Department of Agriculture in partnership with local sponsors.

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-agricultural development to make certain that it remains used for agricultural purposes.

Meetings will feature a presentation by the department's farmland preservation staff as well as testimony from landowners who have participated in the program. Experts will be available to discuss the tax advantages involved. Meeting attendees will also have the opportunity to discuss the program with Ohio Department of Agriculture staff.

Local partners will also be present at each meeting to provide information and direction to landowners. It is important for attendees to connect with these partners, who submit the applications to the department on behalf of farm owners.

The meeting times and locations are as follows:

Feb. 24, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Ashland County Agriculture & Family Center
804 U.S. Route 250 East
Ashland, Ohio
Local Partners: Ashland Soil & Water Conservation District
RSVP to 419-281-7645, extension 3.

March 5, 6:30 – 8 p.m.
Allen County Agriculture Service Center
3900 Campus Drive
Lima, Ohio
Local partner: West Central Ohio Land Conservancy
Refreshments will be provided. No RSVP necessary.

Contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Office of Farmland Preservation with any questions about the meetings at 614-728-6210, or visit the Web site at www.agri.ohio.gov.

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