



Governor Ted Strickland  
Lieutenant Governor Lee Fisher  
Director Robert J. Boggs

Office of Communication  
8995 East Main Street, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068  
Phone: 614-752-9817 • Fax: 614-466-7754  
www.agri.ohio.gov • communications@agri.ohio.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Morrow County Landowner Preserves Farmland,  
Donates Development Rights to State**

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (July 13, 2009) – Morrow County residents Robert and Marilyn Weiler preserved their 38-acre farm for agricultural use by donating an agricultural easement to the Ohio Department of Agriculture in June. This assures the land will forever be used for agricultural purposes.

The Harmony Township farm consists of cropland, nearly 76 percent of which is designated as prime soils by the United States Department of Agriculture. The property is farmed in accordance with the best management practices as provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Morrow County, under a standard rotation of corn, wheat, and soybeans using no-till, conservation, and conventional tillage practices.

This farm is the eighth in Morrow County to be preserved through donation, seven of which were donated by the extended Weiler family. The department currently holds easements on more than 1,261.18 acres in the county, including pending offers. The Morrow County Soil and Water Conservation District will monitor the land annually to assure the easement is followed.

Under the department's Ohio Agricultural Easement Donation Program, landowners can donate a permanent agricultural easement on their farm to the state. 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 ensure it remains in agricultural use.

Landowners can receive federal tax advantages from donating permanent agricultural easements to the department. Donated easements that meet Internal Revenue Code criteria are treated as charitable gifts, and interested landowners should seek professional advice from an accountant or attorney.

To date, Ohio landowners have donated agricultural easements on 42 farms totaling more than 5,534 acres statewide. For more information on the department's Agricultural Easement Donation Program, call 614-728-6210 or visit [www.agri.ohio.gov](http://www.agri.ohio.gov).

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*Media Contact: Kaleigh Frazier, Public Information Officer, 614-728-6211*

