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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Department of Agriculture Reschedules Clean Ohio Information
Session for Northeast**

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Feb. 17, 2010) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture has rescheduled a Clean Ohio information meeting in Hiram previously cancelled due to inclement weather.

Farmland owners can learn how to apply for Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program funds on Tuesday, Feb. 23, at the Hiram College Kennedy Center, Second Floor Ballroom, 11730 Garfield Rd., Hiram, Ohio from 6 to 8 p.m.

The meeting will feature a presentation by the department's farmland preservation staff as well as testimony from a landowner who has participated in the program. Meeting attendees will also have the opportunity to discuss the program with Ohio Department of Agriculture staff.

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.

Local partners Countryside Conservancy, Portage County Regional Planning, Western Reserve Resource Conservation and Development Council and Western Reserve Land Conservancy will also attend the meeting to provide information and direction to landowners. It is important for attendees to connect with these partners, who submit the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program applications to the department on behalf of farm owners.

Visit www.agri.ohio.gov for more information about the Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program.

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