



Governor John R. Kasich
Lieutenant Governor Mary Taylor
Director David T. Daniels

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

**Ohio Department of Agriculture Announces 2014 Funding for
Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program**

REYNOLDSBURG, OH (Dec. 09, 2013) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) today announced that 17 land trusts, counties and local Soil and Water Conservation Districts will receive funding to help preserve farmland across the state. These organizations will receive allocations from the Clean Ohio Fund to manage the Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP).

LAEPP sponsor organizations will accept on-line applications from Ohio landowners who are interested in selling an agricultural easement to ODA beginning January 15, 2014. The local sponsors have been certified to accept applications from landowners in 46 counties. A total of \$6 million will be made available in this funding round. It is estimated this can leverage up to \$18 million from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program for a total of \$24 million.

The program allows landowners to voluntarily sell easements on their farms to the State of Ohio. The easement requires the farm remain permanently in agricultural production. Selected farms must be more than 40 acres, actively engaged in farming, participate in the Current Agricultural Use Valuation program, demonstrate good stewardship of the land, have support from local government and not be in close proximity to development. Landowners may use the proceeds of the easement in any way they wish, but most reinvest it in their farm operation.

Funding for the program is derived from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund, approved by voters in 2008, and used to purchase agricultural easements from willing sellers through a competitive process. When combined with easements from all programs, 303 family farms in 48 counties have collectively preserved 52,662 acres in agricultural production.

For more information go to <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/divs/FarmLand/FarmLand.aspx>.

-30-

Media Contact: Ashley McDonald, Public Information Officer, 614-752-9817

Note to Editors: Attached is the list of partnering sponsor organizations and amounts for the 2014 round of the Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program.

