

## VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### A. Consistency with NJ Department of Agriculture Economic Development Strategies

The Morris County Agriculture Development Board (MCADB) maintains the dual focus of farmland preservation and creating a positive climate for the business of farming. As found in the 1999 MCADB Mission statement, two of its goals specifically address the economic development of agriculture in Morris County: 1) *promote the future viability of agriculture as a profession*; and 2) *educate citizens and government officials of the important role agriculture plays in the community*.

The MCADB's mission statement mirrors the intentions of the "Agriculture Retention and Development Act", giving agricultural viability equal importance with easement purchases. The Morris County freeholders, Planning Board and CADB support the long-term use of land for agricultural purposes in our county. Through clear communication and support of right to farm ordinances we continue to provide an environment in which agriculture can flourish as an industry. Agriculture contributes open space, creates beautiful viewscapes, confers environmental benefits and provides economic benefits to our communities.

The MCADB works directly not only to preserve farms, but to properly steward our properties so they may enhance farming as an industry. This involvement includes: assisting with Right to Farm disputes, working with municipalities to create farm friendly environments and coordinating with non-profit, state and national level organizations to maximize the agricultural potential of the County. This includes the vital awareness of the need to support agriculture from an economic development perspective.

To achieve this awareness, the MCADB has carefully reviewed the New Jersey Department of Agriculture's "2007 Economic Development Strategies" to see where these suggestions may be applied in the County. This report offers a variety of strategies tailor-made to each product sector in agribusiness. Morris County continually strives to provide farmers and their business affiliations with the information, tools and methodologies listed below. An effort to be consistent with these strategies is more fully discussed in the individual sections that follow.

#### 1. Produce Industry

- **Jersey Fresh Hospitality Industry Program** - Continue to develop and strengthen the *Jersey Fresh* Hospitality Industry Program by encouraging farmers to market their *Jersey Fresh* produce to hotel, restaurant and the institutional food service industries.
- **Increase Produce Branding** – in conjunction with the distribution of *Jersey Fresh* materials to growers, marketing cooperatives and retailers, the county will continue to expand the branding of *Jersey Fresh* on packaging and at the point of sale.

- **Promote Vertical Integration** - Encourage industry attendance at produce industry trade shows, continue to work with representatives of nationally marketed produce brands and seek new methods to better integrate New Jersey's produce industry into the year-round supply model.
- **Promote improved communication and greater coordination** between the growing regions within Morris County.
- **Strengthen Existing, and Seek New Community Markets** in Morris County, the state and the NY metro area.
- **Promote Community Market opportunities to growers.** Maintain a current list of existing and new community farm markets that seek increased farmer participation.
- **Promote the existence of community farm markets to the public.** Create an interactive directory of community farmers markets on the county's website and continue to offer community farmers market lists for publication in local papers.
- **Expand Jersey Fresh Program** - continue to strengthen the appeal of the *Jersey Fresh* brand. Provide a link to the *Jersey Fresh* website on the county's website. Encourage the increased use of the *Jersey Fresh* brand name; discourage the use of the "Locally Grown" product claim wherever possible. Continue to broaden the *Jersey Fresh* promotional program to be more inclusive of all New Jersey produced fruits and vegetables, especially herbs, hydroponics and greenhouse produced fruits and vegetables, and ethnic produce items.

## **2. Ornamental Horticulture Industry**

- **Increase Consumer Awareness** - Continue working with growers to strengthen the *Jersey Grown* brand name to enable the industry to benefit from a common trademark identifying locally produced horticultural products. Provide list of certified, local *Jersey Grown* growers on the county's website.

## **3. Dairy Industry**

- **Continue to support the distribution of milk** as "*Jersey Fresh*," "Made with Premium *Jersey Fresh* Milk," "Made with *Jersey Fresh* Milk", "*Jersey Fresh* Flavored Milk" and "*Jersey Fresh* Milk." Integrate the sale and promotion of *Jersey Fresh* dairy product sales at community markets throughout the county, state and NY metro area
- **Continue to work with the Garden State Dairy Alliance** to support the dairy industry. The alliance will work to help sustain a viable and thriving dairy industry in New Jersey.
- Continue working with Rutgers and NJ Farm Bureau to promote the FIN Pak

Program, a software program for dairy farmers that promotes good business practices through financial management analyses.

#### **4. Field and Forage Crops Industry**

- **Work with Rutgers Cooperative Extension and NRCS** - to conduct regional producer workshops that will emphasize the benefits of good pasture and cropland management and preservation of water quality.
- **Support Organic Field Crop Production** – to continue to encourage the production of certified organic soybeans, corn and wheat to increase the value of these crops.
- **Continue to assist in linking growers with organic food processors** - to help identify new market opportunities and take advantage of the growing demand for processed food products made from organic ingredients.
- **Support Plans for a Green Energy Initiative** - continue to facilitate and support efforts to construct an ethanol plant and bio-diesel production facilities in New Jersey. These efforts will create major new markets for the state’s soybean growers, and have the potential to elevate the price paid for regionally produced soybeans.

#### **5. Livestock and Poultry Industry**

- **Ensure Animal Health** - through the continued implementation of best management practices which will protect the health of the livestock and poultry industry from the immediate threat of devastating and economically damaging diseases.
- **Enhance Marketing Efforts** - strengthen the branding of meat products under the *Jersey Bred* program.
- **Encourage Production of Goat Products - as a complementary farm management practice**, the feed-out of goats on wild grass fields on a seasonal basis maximizes inputs and reduces costs associated with feeding these ruminant animals. This also aids in maintaining the open space benefits of rougher, less tillable, grasslands.
- **Encourage Production of Grass-Fed Animals** - expand the number of farmers markets that currently offer fresh meat products.
- **Support the marketing of locally produced poultry meat and eggs.**
- **Promote an Annual Market for Sheep, Goats** - livestock sales at several locations throughout the State and enhance support for the sale of market lambs and 4-H animals.

## **6. Organic Industry**

- **Promote Cost-Sharing** - continue outreach efforts to educate growers about federal funds available to help offset organic certification costs. Through a cost-sharing agreement with the Department and USDA, each operation is eligible for a reimbursement of up to 75 percent of its certification costs, not to exceed \$500.
- **Improve Marketing by continuing to** promote New Jersey grown organic products as distinct from, and of higher value, than competing products by establishing the *Jersey Organic* brand.
- **Educate Growers about Regulatory Requirements** - distribute fact sheets outlining the legal and regulatory requirements for production and sale of organic products, including livestock and livestock products. Make the fact sheets available on the County's website.

## **7. Equine Industry**

- **Promote the Industry** - continue to host high caliber events and to promote the county's many training clinics, horse shows, festivals, auction sales and industry meetings.
- **Add a Jersey Equine link in our county website** that highlights the different sectors of New Jersey's Equine Industry activities. The website will improve coordination of all equine activities in the state and feature schedules of events, horseback riding trails and other industry related activities.
- **Bolster promotion and education of the pleasure horse and racing industries** to increase interest and work to stimulate new owners while also creating career opportunities.
- **Aid in the development and promotion of the Jersey Bred brand and logo** by advertising farms where this can be found in our county, and also encouraging county breeders to seek this designation.
- **Improve Right to Farm Protection for the Equine Industry** – continue to support the development and adoption of the Equine AMP (Agricultural Management Practices) to allow for increased right-to-farm protection for this industry.

## **8. Wine Industry**

- **Increase Grape Production** – in an effort to increase the local agricultural output of grapes by New Jersey's wine industry, support the increase in the minimum acres required to establish a plenary or farm winery.

- **Expand the *Jersey Fresh Wine Festival*** by including producers of *Jersey Fresh* products and area restaurants to participate in the festival as well.
- **Promote Product Categories** - Consider the development of a joint marketing opportunity for New Jersey fruit wines such as raspberry, blueberry and cranberry. Promote them as a product category unique to local New Jersey fruit production.
- **Support the wine industry's effort to obtain licenses to distill fruit based spirits** such as fruit brandies and grappa.
- **Expand Retail Outlets** – support the wine industry's effort to expand its number of eligible retail outlets and also the ability to sell their wines at farmer's markets.

## **9. Agri-Tourism Industry**

- **Develop a link on County website with information about regional agri-tourism** sites, seasonal events, special attractions and farm market opportunities.
- **Coordinate an agri-tourism press familiarization tour** to acquaint the regional travel and tourism media with New Jersey agri-tourism.
- **Consumer Promotion** Produce and distribute an inexpensive agri-tourism brochure citing the County website and providing contact information for specific farms. This brochure would promote seasonal events, special attractions, and direct farm marketing opportunities. Coordinate a county-wide industry cooperative advertising program.
- **Direct Consumers to “visitnjfarms.org” via County website** thus allowing for easy consumer mapping based on products, services and location. Promote to growers the website's feature that allows password access to provide updates to their listing.
- **Support the continued work towards the adoption of agri-tourism Agricultural Management Practices (AMP's)** as proposed by the State Agriculture Development Committee. Compliance with the agri-tourism AMP's will aid grower protection under the Right to Farm Act.

## **B. Agricultural Industry Retention, Expansion and Recruitment Strategies**

### **1. Institutional**

#### ***a. Farmer Support***

The SADC administers the Farm Link Program, which serves as a resource and referral center for new farmers, farmers seeking access to land and farming opportunities, landowners seeking farmers, and farmers working on estate and farm transfer plans.

The program's service connects farmland owners with farmers seeking access to land and farming opportunities. People looking for land typically include new farmers or farmers looking to expand or relocate their operations. When matches occur, they often involve leasing arrangements, partnerships, apprenticeships, work-in arrangements, or standard sales.

The Farm Link Program provides support for all farmers, both new and established. The program's resources, including its linking service, are particularly useful for the following groups:

- New farmers looking for land and opportunities to gain experience and get started
- Established farmers looking for land to expand
- Farmers and landowners looking to lease, sell, or make some land available for farming
- Retiring farmers who would like to ensure their land stays in agricultural production but have no family members who want to continue to farm
- Farmers looking to fill farm manager or apprenticeship positions, or to mentor a new farmer
- Non-profit organizations, municipalities, and counties looking for farmers for farmland they have bought and preserved
- Farmers working on intergenerational farm transfers

Please note: The Farm Link Program's linking service is not a real estate service, but rather a unique service for farm owners/landowners and other farmers. Accordingly, people looking for land but not planning to farm may not participate in the program. For more information, contact the Farm Link Program at (609) 984-2504 or email [david.kimmel@ag.state.nj.us](mailto:david.kimmel@ag.state.nj.us).

Farm succession is an ongoing concern. The *2002 Census of Agriculture* reported the average age of farmers in Morris County as 56.7 years old. When farmers express an interest in entering the farmland preservation program, the CADB advises them to consult with their financial and tax advisors about estate planning to be sure they understand the implications and find the best solutions for their specific situation.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) website offers a variety of technical and financial resources for agri-tourism assistance, First Pioneer Farm Credit, deer fencing, farmer's market assistance, etc. In addition, the *NJDA's Strategic Plan of June 2006* lists among its objectives to increase the profitability of New Jersey's agriculture industry through new market

opportunities and to create additional income for farmers by providing information on a variety of grant opportunities through their website, news releases and one-on-one contact.

The State of New Jersey, Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension (RCE), and certain supply companies (i.e. fertilizer and pesticide) provide seasonal workshops for farmers, thus keeping them up to date on various issues related to agriculture. The New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program (NJDALP), which is sponsored by the New Jersey Agricultural Society, provides a two year professional development opportunity designed specifically for farmers and agribusiness professionals. This program is comprised of a series of seminars and interactive workshops during which various agricultural topics are explored and debated, and the individual establishes and cultivates an extensive agricultural network throughout the state.

***b. Marketing/Advertising / Public Relation Support***

Marketing, advertising and public relations are critical elements in assuring a farm's profitability. Many farmers in Morris County have reached consumers through the direct marketing of their agricultural products from farm stands or more often out of the barn itself. Some also market through participation in community or "farm markets" hosted by municipalities.

Few farmers individually advertise their products in print, although many agribusinesses involved in on-site direct marketing do maintain websites. Going forward the CADB will endeavor to communicate to farmers the availability of various free promotional websites such as the *Jersey Fresh*, *Jersey Bred*, *Jersey Grown*, and *Jersey Equine*, and *Visit NJ Farms*. The website for the Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) which is based in Massachusetts, offers professional, written advice on "Developing a Marketing Plan", "Merchandising", "Working with the Media: PR and Publicity", etc.

In an effort to market agriculture/farm based activities to the public, and thereby increase farm profitability, agricultural organizations in the five counties that comprise the Skylands region (Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, Sussex and Warren) developed the *Skylands Region Agri-tourism Brochure*. Involved in the project were County Agriculture Development Boards, County Boards of Agriculture, Rutgers Cooperative Extension and the New Jersey Farm Bureau. The regional Agritourism brochure provides detailed information about farms that are open to the public and offer farm based recreational activities such as harvest tours, hay rides, pick your own, farm markets and others. The brochure is handed-out at a variety of in-state and out-of-state trade shows and exhibitions, and is part of the tourist information packet distributed by the Skylands of NJ Tourism Council, Inc. The brochure was originally distributed in 2002. It has been revised once and is currently in the process of a third revision.

Other methods of marketing, advertising, and public relations the Morris CADB recommends include:

- Participation in community events – 4-H fairs, equine events, craft and street fairs, municipal celebrations
- Festivals and tours – creating a harvest festival, or a product-driven festival (ie. Apple

Festival). In some cases, such as the “Northwest NJ Buy Fresh Local” campaign multiple counties joined together to host a “Farm and Food Open House”.

- Establish a relationship with local schools, scout troops, etc to build farm tours into their curriculum. Once a child has visited a farm, they often will bring the whole family back for a visit.
- Signage – alerts the public to the existence of a preserved farm, and/or the opportunity to buy fresh agricultural products.

Within Morris County a number of farms have successfully established direct marketing to consumers through a “*Pick-Your-Own*” enterprise. The table below reflects some of the more successful agribusinesses in Morris County.

<b>Farm</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Website/ E-mail</b>	<b>Open</b>
Alstede Farms	84 County Route 513 (old Rt. 24)	Chester	<a href="http://www.alstedefarms.com">www.alstedefarms.com</a>	Daily, year round, Mon. - Sat. 9 am - 6 pm, Sun. 10 am - 5 pm
Ashley Farms	25 Hillside Ave.	Flanders	<a href="mailto:aimash@msn.com">aimash@msn.com</a>	Year-round, Weekdays 9 AM - 7 PM; Saturday 9 AM - 6 PM; Sun & Holidays 9 AM - 5 PM
Conklin Farm	Vreeland Ave. & River Rd.	Montville		Mid-Sept. - Halloween, daily, 10 am - 6 pm
Greenway Flowers & Greenhouses	441 Schooley's Mtn. Rd.	Hackettstown	<a href="http://www.greenwayflowers.com">www.greenwayflowers.com</a>	Year-round, Monday - Saturday 9 am - 6 pm, Sundays in May, June, Sept., Oct. & Dec.)
Hacklebarney Farm Cider Mill	104 State Park Rd.	Chester	<a href="http://www.hacklebarneyfarm.cjb.net">www.hacklebarneyfarm.cjb.net</a>	Spring - call for hours; September 10 - December 23, Tuesday - Sunday 10 am - 5 pm
Hamilton Farms Greenhouses & Farm Market	130 Old Denville Rd.	Boonton Twp.	<a href="http://www.hamiltonfarms.com">www.hamiltonfarms.com</a>	Apr. - Oct., & Dec., 9 am - 6 pm
Hillview Farms	223 Meyersville Rd.	Gillette		May 1 - Nov. 30, daily, 10 am - 6 pm
Miller's Hill Farm	10 Combs Ave.	Mendham/Randolph Twp.		June - October, Daily Monday - Friday 11 am - 7 pm, Saturday & Sunday 10 am - 6 pm

Ort Farms	25 Bartley Rd.	Long Valley		Daily, Mar. 15 - Dec. 24, 9 am - 7 pm
Parks Farms	Rt. 24	Chester		May - December 24., Daily, 9 am - 6 pm
Riamede Farm	122 Oakdale Rd.	Chester	<a href="http://www.riamede.com">www.riamede.com</a>	Daily, Sept. - Oct., 9 am - 4:30 pm
Stony Hill Farm Market	15 North Rd.	Chester	<a href="http://www.stonyhillgardens.com">www.stonyhillgardens.com</a>	Easter - Christmas, 9 am - 6 pm
Stony Hill Gardens	8 Rt. 24	Chester	<a href="http://www.stonyhillgardens.com">www.stonyhillgardens.com</a>	Daily, year-round, 9 am - 6 pm
Sun High Orchard	19 Canfield Ave.	Randolph	<a href="http://www.sunhigh.com">www.sunhigh.com</a>	Daily, May - Dec., 9 am - 6 pm
Union Hill Farms	25 Cooper Rd.	Denville	<a href="mailto:unionhillfarms@aol.com">unionhillfarms@aol.com</a>	May - October, Daily, 10 am - 6 pm
Wightman's Farms	Rt. 202, 1111 Mt. Kemble Ave.	Morristown	<a href="http://www.wightmansfarms.com">www.wightmansfarms.com</a>	Year-round , Daily, 8 am - 6 pm

Source: <http://www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/agriculture/jerseyfresh/search.pl>

### c. *Community Farmers Markets*

Farmers markets in Morris County provide another valuable service for local farmers. They attract large numbers of county, state and out-of-state individuals to the County who are looking to buy local produce. There is a high demand for local produce among New Jersey residents, and farmers markets create a direct link between Morris County's farmers and their potential customers. Farmers also sell "value added" products that add to the farmers' income. Below is a listing of the farmers markets that currently operate in Morris County:

<b>Farmers Market</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Open</b>
Boonton	Upper Plane Street Parking Lot	June 9 - Sept. 29; Saturdays, 9 am - 1 pm
Chatham Borough	Chatham Train Station (RR Plaza South @ Fairmount Ave)	June 30 - Oct. 7, Saturdays, 8am - 1pm
East Hanover	Eagle Rock & Ridgedale Avenue (Liker's Park)	June 18 - Oct. 29, Mondays, 12 pm - 6 pm
Madison (Fall)	Rosedale & Main Street (Madison Community Pool)	Sept. 6 - Oct. 25, Thursdays, 2 pm - 7 pm
Madison (Summer)	Ridgedale & Park Avenue (Madison High School)	June 28 - Aug. 30, Thursdays, 2 pm - 7 pm
Morris Plains	Speedwell Avenue Extension (Off Rt. 202)	June 23 - Oct. 6, Saturdays, 9 am - 2 pm
Morristown	Spring Street & Morris Avenue (Public Parking Lot #10, Dumont Place, behind Post Office)	June 17 - Oct. 28, Sundays, 8:30 am - 2 pm

Netcong	Main Street & Rt. 46 (Train Station)	June 16 - Oct.13, Saturdays, 9 am - 2 pm
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Source: <http://www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/agriculture/jerseyfresh/search.pl>

In addition, Morris County’s farmers also sell at markets outside of Morris County. For example, a Washington Township sheep farmer sells his sheep’s milk products at farmers markets in New Jersey and in New York City. Other farmers from Morris County participate in “tailgate markets” in Jersey City and New York City.

**d. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**

By offering a “share” in the harvest for a set price to specific individuals, farmers can maximize their profits by reducing marketing, transportation and labor costs that result from bringing products to a community marketplace or running an on-site farm stand. They are also assured of a steady cashflow to cover their operating budget, thus allowing them to plan more proactively in the management of their business. This concept also encourages a direct relationship and commitment between the farm, its owner and a community of supporters.

The Morris CADB and Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension (RCE) can work to publicize this concept through newsletters, such as “*Green and Growing*” or workshops led by a current CSA farmer. The CADB can also encourage a connection between the Food Shed Alliance (FSA) and local farmers.

The FSA is a grassroots, nonprofit group which describes itself as “devoted to sustainable farming and locally grown, fresh, healthy food in northwestern New Jersey.” The FSA links the health of the land and communities; they believe local farms are the key in “connecting people with food, the land, and our sense of place.” An extension of the FSA’s work is the northwest Jersey “Buy Fresh, Buy Local” campaign. This is an effort by the FSA, local farmers, and community leaders to build connections between farmers and consumers through food guides, food and farming events, and community outreach.

**e. Agricultural Education and Market Research Coordination**

Awareness of the latest information on agricultural practices and new market opportunities is key to today’s farmer trying to maintain a viable, profitable enterprise. The Morris CADB is aware of this critical need, and recommends the following resources:

- i. *Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE)* – in 2004 the RCE, in conjunction with the NJAES, launched an innovative produce distribution and merchandising pilot project to help New Jersey farmers get their products into new retail locations, such as high end restaurants and grocery chains. This new avenue of distribution has quickly turned into a successful sales program.
- ii. *New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station* – in addition to the program described above, the NJAES website is a font of information on the topics of farm management, animal husbandry, farm safety, pest management, plant agriculture and most topics within the field of commercial farming

- iii. *Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences* – the Morris CADB can contact Rutgers regarding any opportunities for County farms to participate in farm research, or experimental projects that may be suitable.
- iv. *Other* – the Community College of Morris (CCM) offers courses in Agribusiness and Horticulture; the Morris CADB could reach out to host or sponsor agriculture-related events, seminars, or workshops. A dialogue with CCM could be initiated to encourage them to tailor a curriculum to cover more agri-business topics.

## **2. Businesses**

### *a. Input Suppliers and Services*

#### Farm Supplies –

- Morris County Farms – Denville, NJ
- Tractor Supply Co. – Flanders, NJ
- Neshanic Farm Center – Neshanic Station, NJ
- Somerset Grain, Feed Supply – Bernardsville, NJ
- Agway – Morristown, Washington, Clinton, and Flemington, NJ
- JeffersLivestock.com – is a popular website for discount prices on Livestock supplies

New Machinery – requires going out of Morris County, popular dealers include:

#### *New Jersey*

- Dave’s Equipment Sales – Ringoes, NJ
- Tractor Supply – Washington, NJ
- Storr Tractor Company – Somerville, NJ
- Binder Machinery – South Plainfield, NJ
- C & S Equipment – Easthampton & Mount Holly, NJ

#### *Pennsylvania*

- Aglander Tractor – Paradise, PA
- Beaver Creek Tractor & Equipment – Beaver Springs, PA
- Burkholder Brothers Tractor – Lebanon, PA
- Glenn Beidler – Freeburg, PA
- GVM Inc. – Freeburg, PA

Some farmers have also had success with online resources like *Tractorhouse.com* which is a trusted source for equipment and parts dealers (including “equipment haulers” who bring the product to your farm), auction information and finance companies. They also provide a free “For Sale” and “Want to Buy” service, including a search engine for these listings.

Equipment Repairs/Parts – many farmers choose to repair their own equipment, although as farm equipment becomes more sophisticated, this is becoming increasingly difficult. Often, more mechanically-saavy farmers will help each other out within communities. Parts supply and repair facilities include;

- Tractor Supply Co. – Flanders, NJ
- Dave’s Equipment Sales – Ringoes, NJ
- Salem Farm Supply – Salem, NJ
- Hooper Inc. – Intercourse, PA

Veterinarians – there are a variety of local providers which include:

- Dr. Mary Stankovics - Washington
- Pleasant Valley Veterinary Services – Washington
- Black River Veterinary Hospital - Chester
- Washington Animal Hospital – Washington
- Brass Castle Animal Hospital – Washington
- Dr. Victor Villari - Chester
- Dr. Jeffrey P. Grodkiewicz – Washington
- Three Rivers House Calls – Morristown
- Dr. John E. Nelson – Morristown
- Dr. Nancy Padover- Morristown

**b. *Product Distributors and Processors***

- Hay and other forage crops are often sold locally to other farms, equine operations, landscapers and nurseries as baled straw. Also, farmers grow these products for their own livestock.
- Grain crops
  - Are often sold locally to other farmers, or used for the farmer’s own livestock.
  - Can be sold to feed stores, i.e. Neshanic Farm Station (Neshanic, NJ), The Paddock Master (Randolph, NJ), and the Agway in New Egypt and Berlin, NJ.
  - Sold through grain brokers in NJ: Bishop Farms and Feed (Elmer), Alliance Grains (Vorhees), Kirby Brothers (Medford), Tickners, Inc (Hackettstown), Agrain, Inc (Pennington), Northern Valley Feed (Closter)
  - Can be processed through “Feed Mills” in Morristown, Passaic, Pleasantville, Hackettstown, Phillipsburg, Washington, Fairview, North Plainfield and Somerset, or through Rosedale Mills in Pennington.
- Nursery and Greenhouse products – there is such a plethora of outlets for these products that it is easier to discuss the number of venues, rather than attempting to name them. Within Morris County there are: 488 “Ornamental Plant” Nurseries, 186 Garden Centers, and 371 Landscape Contractors who often buy product directly from farmers (Source: Local.com)

- Livestock Sales, Brokers, Dealers - there are a number within the state of NJ:
  - Livestock Coop Auction Market - Hackettstown
  - Hackettstown Auction Market – Hackettstown
  - Harkers Auction Co. – Tabernacle
  - Helis Stock Farms – Jobstown
  - S. Ferrari – Wayne
  - Norman Parker – Wrightstown
  - S. Ferraro – Montville
  - Sal’s Farm – Montville

(Source: Jefferslivestock.com)

- Meat Processing - the top five within NJ are:
  - Green Village Packing – Green Village
  - Trenton Halal Packing Co – Trenton
  - Marcucci Meats – Vineland
  - D & M Meat Products – Newark

Some farmers (especially those with specialty meats) will have their product shipped to the Lower East Side of Manhattan for processing. (Source: Jefferslivestock.com)

**3. Anticipated Agricultural Trends** - As previously demonstrated in this chapter, the farming community in Morris County has done an excellent job of not only remaining economically viable, but achieving an admirable profitability level. They have been sensitive to what products are economically feasible, given the shrinkage of potential farmland due to development and high land costs, while also being attuned to what the shifts in product demand have been through the years. Land will continue to be at a premium; one of the best ways to offset these costs, and raise money for capital and operational improvements for farms, is the sale of development rights through farmland preservation programs administered by the State and Morris County.

*a. Market Location* – Morris County is ideally poised to provide agricultural products to a saavy, health conscious, wealthy consumer base, and well as being located near major metropolitan markets in New York, Philadelphia, and other affluent New Jersey counties.

*b. Product Demand* - In the past 20 years, Morris County producers have moved away from large animal production, shifting instead to poultry and egg production, sheep products and pheasants; the only exception to this rule is equine – which continues to be both popular and profitable. From a horticulture standpoint they have continued with hay and grain production, at slightly lower levels, and have chosen to focus the majority of their efforts on nursery products that are in great demand, are easily marketed to the public and have a great rate of return on a per acre basis.

**4. Agricultural Support Needs** – based on the 2001 NJDA *Agriculture Retention and Development Master Plan* (ARDMP) the following would be highly beneficial for the agriculture industry:

- A supportive municipal regulatory environment, especially in the arena of Right To Farm and Land Use ordinances
- Municipalities can also encourage the farming industry by supporting agricultural economic development activities such as farm stands and CSA farming.
- Effective marketing and advertising can increase the visibility of Morris County farmers while also raising sales and productivity. Tapping into the success of the *Jersey Fresh*, *Jersey Equine* and other state marketing programs and publications can be used by more farm operations. County tourism publications should include farm products, sale outlets and events in their listings.
- Investigate the use of irrigation and greenhouse additions as method of increasing productivity. Proactive review of these options from both a regulatory standpoint at all levels of government, state, county and municipal, will be required to bring about these changes while still holding true to the basic tenets of a farming operation.
- Agriculture can provide valuable economic development opportunities for Morris County, but to effectively accomplish this, it needs to become a recognized part of the economic planning and strategy of the County, especially in their efforts to promote tourism.
- There are seven clear agricultural sectors (nursery, cash grains, vegetables, fruit, equine, poultry, sheep) in Morris County, all of which would benefit from bringing together the producers and related businesses to both discover the areas of mutual opportunities, and to identify the barriers that must be overcome to allow this symbiotic business relationship.

Given the proximity of a majority of the nation's Biotech/Life Science/Healthcare product manufacturers to Morris County, it would make sense to bring farmers and these organizations together to discuss the possibility of local farms producing the required plant and animal materials for "nutraceuticals".

The Morris CADB can continue to aid their farming industry by:

- Educating business leaders about the agriculture industry and potential business activities that might be created between the two
- Having a clear economic development program within its farmland preservation program that helps to ensure farm operation viability. Examples of this include: providing information and resources to farmers on the topics of business plan development, cooperative opportunities, crop diversification, direct marketing, agritourism, etc.

*a. Agricultural Facilities and Infrastructure* – The infrastructure that farmers most need is assistance on the regulatory and technical front. Helping to assure that municipalities, residents and consumers have a positive view of agriculture in their community and recognize the inherent quality of life advantages this industry brings to a locality. Having large, institutional consumers of agriculture products, at the local level, provides is an important potential benefit to farmers. Examples of such institutions are hospitals, assisted living facilities, food service outlets, schools, restaurants, gourmet and other food stores.

*b. Flexible Land Use Regulations* – The 2006 *Agricultural Smart Growth Plan for New Jersey*, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, identified flexibility in government regulation as an important component to farm viability. The Morris CADB can continue to work with the NJDA, New Jersey Farm Bureau, Morris County Board of Agriculture and North Jersey RC&D to ensure appropriate regulatory flexibility. The MCADB will also continue educating municipalities on the importance of agriculture to their economy. Specific areas of communication are: Right To Farm ordinances, accommodations for agricultural vehicle movement, provisions for agriculture in municipal master plans and zoning ordinances.

*c. Agriculture Representation in Economic Development Organizations* – the following organizations in Morris County support the agricultural community:

- Morris County Economic Development Corp
- Morris County Agriculture Development Board
- Morris County Board of Agriculture
- Morris County Soil Conservation District
- Morris County Chamber of Commerce
- Various Municipal Agriculture Advisory Committees
- Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension Service

**5. Agricultural Support Implementation** - the primary method of supporting the agriculture industry in Morris County is the continued implementation and monitoring of the farmland preservation program. It is truly the most effective way of protecting and ensuring the continued presence of agriculture in our county. Secondary methods include workshops, education opportunities, and symbiotic relationships with marketing organizations, like boards of tourism.

*a. Cost* – Confronted with continual rising land prices, the County is always looking for ways to hold farmland preservation costs down. The most effective method to date has been to encourage applicants to either donate a portion of the land to be preserved, or to accept a lower price than the certified market value. This benefits the program by maximizing our available funds, while also providing the landowner with significant tax benefits.

*b. Funding Opportunities* – Farmland preservation is funded mainly through the

Morris County Open Space Trust Fund, State Agriculture Development Committee programs, soil and water conservation grants and federal programs like the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program.

- c. Timeline* – As Morris County has come to recognize the importance of aiding their farmers in developing an economic presence in the county, the Morris CADB will be increasing its efforts on this front. Initial elements, such as website improvements, providing linkages to resources can be completed within the year. Building closer relationships with corporations, tourism boards, local economic development boards, and communities are inherently long term efforts.