



Agricultural Preserve Boards of Michigan

318 W. Ottawa • Lansing, Michigan 48933 • 517-484-4928

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Agricultural Preserve Board Report February 2010

KENT COUNTY MI: After a very long process – the County Board of Commissioners finally appropriated funding to the Agricultural Preservation program that was established in 2003. The program received \$275,000 for 2010 with expectations of leveraging more through state, federal and foundation sources. The political opposition to the funding was very active and that does not appear to be going away anytime soon. The following are four of many articles that appeared in the Grand Rapids Press.

http://www.mlive.com/opinion/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2010/01/editorial_right_priorities_for.html

http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2010/01/kent_county_commissions_new_le.html

http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2009/12/passage_of_funding_for_kent_co.html

http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2010/01/trickle_of_outside_funding_beg.html

ALSO, AS YOU RECALL: In the last issue of the APB Report, there was an “on-line petition battle” going on between those who favored and those who didn’t favor funding for the Kent County Farmland Preservation Program. Thanks to all of you who helped with this effort. Here are the final numbers:

Favored Kent County Funding: 307 [Support Signatures Link](#)

Opposed Kent County Funding: 111 [Opposed Signatures Link](#)

MEANWHILE, NEXT DOOR IN OTTAWA COUNTY MI: The Agricultural Preservation Board just finished up development of their scoring criteria. [Ottawa County Article](#)

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY, MI: The county program has a web page that is very well done, a one stop shop for everything you need to know. [St. Joseph County Website](#)

SPEAKING OF ONE STOP SHOPS: The State of New Jersey also has a page dedicated to everything you want to know about their state program at: [New Jersey Website](#)

WEBSTER TOWNSHIP, WASHTENAW COUNTY, MI: Received a call last month from a Webster Twp farmer who was involved in establishing a farmland preservation millage in his township five years ago. Without much fanfare, last November township voters renewed the millage. (It's ½ mill, a total of about \$1 Million over the five years) He wanted everyone to know --once the program starts working and local people can actually see what you are doing for the community even during very challenging economic times, people are willing to support it.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY MI LOSES LEADER: Chuck Kwasnick a farmer from Kenockee Township passed away on January 5th at the age of 71. Chuck was one the early supporters of the farmland preservation issue not only in St. Clair County but early on during the state's program. He served on the St. Clair County Ag Preservation Board since it's creation in 2004. And, even beyond that, Chuck and his wife donated one the first easements to the county program on 57 acres. Upon preserving the 57 acres, Chuck remarked, *"Agriculture is such an important economy in this county and it all depends on a land base for its future. I hope this example serves as a first step in preserving farming's future in St. Clair County."*

FEDERICK COUNTY MARYLAND: The Board of Commissioners placed 3,051 acres on 18 farms into the preservation program in 2009 bringing the total preserved acreage to 45,738 – 10th in the nation. [Frederick County Article](#)

WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PA: Is approaching 10,000 acres. [Westmoreland County Article](#)

RECENTLY: The Governor of Pennsylvania nominated and the Senate confirmed Russ Redding as the Secretary of Agriculture for the State of Pennsylvania. Russ in his role as Deputy Secretary has been a speaker at most every land use tour we've taken out east due to his long standing leadership in the farmland preservation issue both at the state and county levels. [Russ Redding Bio](#)
[Pennsylvania Farmland Stats by County](#)

E-mail: questions, comments, news, events, funny stories to:

C/O Scott Everett

agpresbrdofmi@earthlink.net