

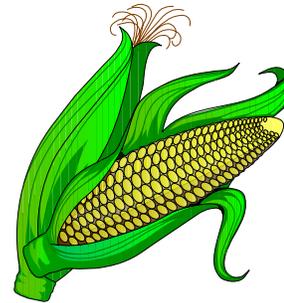
Purpose



The purpose of this report is to provide the municipalities of Cumberland County with a variety of options to promote farmland preservation. It includes an overview of current trends in agriculture zoning techniques, as well as, other non-zoning methods to preserve farmland.

The agricultural zoning methods, described in this report, are intended as a guide for municipalities wishing to strengthen their existing zoning regulations. For municipalities without zoning, but are considering adopting a zoning ordinance, this report is intended to provide guidance in developing the ordinance's Agricultural district regulations. A zoning ordinance is the most powerful land use control available to municipalities. As such, the bulk of this report focuses on effective zoning techniques which place priority on protecting prime agricultural soils and the farming industry. Various zoning methods are described including the advantages and disadvantages of each. Also included are the steps necessary to develop, adopt, and implement the regulations.

Another goal of this report is to provide examples of non-zoning methods of farmland preservation that can be implemented by municipalities. These include state and county programs that encourage agricultural land preservation. The local governing body's role in implementing and promoting these programs is discussed.



It is recognized that local circumstances vary greatly from one part of the county to another. Conditions such as development pressure, soil types, population density, political priorities, local budget, and available staff, all contribute to a municipality's ability to implement effective preservation techniques. For this reason, one "standard" agricultural zoning district or preservation method may not be practical for all of Cumberland County. This report will provide several options and recommendations to allow municipalities to choose the most appropriate method of farmland protection.