

Prepared By:

Return To:

UPI#

DPERSF (6-2006)

EXHIBIT "C"

**DEED OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT TO THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA IN PERPETUITY**

THIS DEED OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT, made this _____ day of _____, _____, by and between _____ (hereinafter, "Grantor") and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (hereinafter "Grantee") is made pursuant to the Agricultural Area Security Law (P.L. 128, No. 43) as amended (hereinafter "Act") is made pursuant to the Act.

WHEREAS, Grantor is the sole owner of all that certain land situate in _____ Township, _____ County, Pennsylvania more particularly described in Exhibit "A" attached hereto consisting of _____ acres and all buildings and improvements erected thereon ("the subject land");

AND WHEREAS, the State Agricultural Land Preservation Board has determined to purchase an agricultural conservation easement in the subject land pursuant to the Act;

AND WHEREAS, the Agricultural Land Preservation Board of _____ County, Pennsylvania has recommended that the Commonwealth purchase an agricultural conservation easement in the subject land pursuant to the Act;

AND WHEREAS, all holders of liens or other encumbrances upon the subject land have agreed to release or subordinate their interests in the subject land to this Deed of Agricultural Conservation Easement and to refrain from any action inconsistent with its purpose;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the sum of \$ _____ dollars, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, Grantor does voluntarily grant, bargain and sell, and convey to the Grantee, its successors and assigns and the Grantee voluntarily accepts, an agricultural conservation easement in the subject land, under and subject to the Act and the following terms and conditions:

1. Permitted Acts - During the term of the agricultural conservation easement conveyed herein, the subject land shall be used solely for the production for commercial purposes of crops, equine, livestock and livestock products, including the processing or retail marketing of such crops, equine, livestock or livestock products if more than fifty percent of such processed or merchandised products are produced on the subject land (hereinafter "agricultural production"). For purpose of this Deed, "crops, equine, livestock and livestock products" include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Field crops, including corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley, soybeans, speltz, buckwheat, hay, potatoes and dry beans;
- (b) Fruits, including apples, peaches, grapes, cherries, pears, and berries;
- (c) Vegetables, including tomatoes, pumpkins, snap beans, cabbage, carrots, beets, onions, sweet corn and mushrooms;
- (d) Horticultural specialties, including nursery stock ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees and flowers;
- (e) Livestock and livestock products, including cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, furbearing animals, milk, eggs, and furs;
- (f) Timber, wood and other wood products derived from trees; and
- (g) Aquatic plants and animals and their byproducts.
- (h) Commercial equine activity including boarding of equine, training of equine, instruction of people in handling, driving or riding equines, use of equines for riding or driving purposes, pasturing equines all of where a fee is collected. THE TERM DOES NOT INCLUDE ACTIVITY LICENSED UNDER THE ACT OF DECEMBER 17, 1981 (P.L. 435, NO. 135), KNOWN AS THE "RACE HORSE INDUSTRY REFORM ACT."

Except as permitted in this Deed, neither Grantor nor his agents, heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, nor any person, partnership, corporation or other entity claiming title under or through Grantor, or their agents, shall suffer, permit, or perform an activity on the subject land other than agricultural production or commercial equine activities.

2. Construction of Buildings and Other Structures - The construction or use of any building or other structure on the subject land other than as existing on the date of the delivery of this Deed is prohibited except that:

- (a) The erection of fences for agricultural production or a commercial equine activity and protection of watercourses such as lakes, streams, springs and reservoirs is permitted.
- (b) The construction of one additional residential structure is permitted if:
 - (i) The construction and use of the residential structure is limited for the landowner's principal residence or for the purpose of providing necessary housing for persons employed in farming the subject land on a seasonal or full-time basis.
 - (ii) No other residential structure has been constructed on the restricted land at any time since the delivery of the Deed,

- (iii) The residential structure and its curtilage occupy no more than two acres of the restricted land, and
 - (iv) The location of the residential structure and its driveway will not significantly harm the economic viability of the subject land for agricultural production or a commercial equine activity.
- (c) The construction or use of any building or other structure for agricultural production or a commercial equine activity is permitted. The maximum building coverage may be restricted if the County Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program approved by the State Board imposes such a restriction.
 - (d) The replacement of a residential structure existing on the restricted land on the date of the granting of the easement is permitted if the preexisting residential structure is razed or removed and the replacement residential structure is erected within the curtilage of the residential structure it replaces.
 - (e) The renovation or modification of an existing residential structure, or an addition to an existing residential structure, is permitted if it would not increase the curtilage of the residential structure.
 - (f) The renovation or modification of an existing agricultural building or structure, or an addition to an existing agricultural building or structure, is permitted. The maximum building coverage may be restricted if the County Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program approved by the State Board imposes such a restriction.

3. Subdivision - The land under the Agricultural Conservation Easement is subject to the Subdivision Guidelines of the County of _____, Agricultural Land Preservation Program, approved by the State Agricultural Land Preservation Board on _____, year of _____, as may be attached hereto. If the subject land is subdivided, the Deeds to all of the subdivided parcels shall state on which of the subdivided parcels the residential structure permitted by this Deed may be constructed. Deeds to all other parcels shall recite that no additional residential structure is permitted.

4. Utilities - The granting of rights-of-way by the Grantor, his heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, or any person, partnership, corporation or other entity claiming title under or through Grantor in and through the subject land for the installation, transportation, or use of, lines for water, sewage, electric, telephone, coal by underground mining methods, gas, oil or oil products is permitted. The term “granting of rights-of-way” includes the right to construct or install such lines. The construction or installation of utility lines other than of the type stated in this paragraph is prohibited on the subject land.

5. Mining - The granting of leases, assignments or other conveyances or the issuing of permits, licenses or other authorization for the exploration, development, storage or removal of coal by underground mining methods, oil and gas by the owner of the subject land or the owner of the underlying coal by underground mining methods, oil and gas or the owner of the rights to develop the underlying coal by underground mining methods, oil and gas, or the development of

appurtenant facilities related to the removal of coal by underground mining methods, oil or gas development or activities incident to the removal or development of such minerals is permitted.

6. Rural Enterprises - Customary part-time or off-season minor or rural enterprises and activities which are provided for in the County Agricultural Easement Purchase Program approved by the State Board are permitted.

7. Soil and Water Conservation - All agricultural production or commercial equine activity on the subject land shall be conducted in accordance with a conservation plan approved by the County Conservation District or the County Board. Such plan shall be updated upon any change in the basic type of agricultural production or commercial equine activity being conducted on the subject land. In addition to the requirements established by the County Conservation District or the County Board, the conservation plan shall include an installation schedule and maintenance program and a nutrient management component which, when completely implemented, will improve and maintain the soil, water and related plant and animal resources of the land and shall require that:

(i) The use of the land for growing sod, nursery stock ornamental trees, and shrubs does not remove excessive soil from the subject land, and

(ii) The excavation of soil, sand, gravel, stone or other materials for use in agricultural production or commercial equine activities on the land is conducted in a location and manner that preserves the viability of the subject land for agricultural production or commercial equine activity.

As part of the settlement documents, the executed Conservation Plan Agreement shall be recorded with the Deed of Easement at the County Recorder of Deeds.

8. Responsibilities of Grantor Not Affected - Except as specified herein, this Deed does not impose any legal or other responsibility on the Grantee, its successors or assigns. Grantor shall continue to be solely responsible for payment of all taxes and assessments levied against the subject land and all improvements erected thereon. Grantor shall continue to be solely responsible for the maintenance of the subject land and all improvements erected thereon. Grantor acknowledges that Grantee has no knowledge or notice of any hazardous waste stored on or under the subject land. Grantee's exercise or failure to exercise any right conferred by the agricultural conservation easement shall not be deemed to be management or control of activities on the subject land for purposes of enforcement of the Act of October 18, 1988, (P.L. 756, No. 108), known as the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act.

Grantor, his heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns agree to hold harmless, indemnify and defend Grantee, its successors or assigns from and against all liabilities and expenses arising from or in any way connected with all claims, damages, losses, costs or expenses, including reasonable attorneys fees, resulting from a violation or alleged violation of any State or Federal environmental statute or regulation including, but not limited to, statutes or regulations concerning the storage or disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals or materials.

9. Enforcement – Annually, Grantee, its successors, assigns or designees shall have the right to enter the subject land for the purpose of inspecting to determine whether the provisions of this Deed are being observed. Written notice of such annual inspection shall be mailed to Grantor, his heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns at least ten days prior to such inspection. The annual inspection shall be conducted between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on a weekday that is not a legal holiday recognized by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or at a date and time agreeable to the county and the landowner.

Grantee, its successors, assigns or designees shall also have the right to inspect the subject land at any time, without prior notice, if Grantee has reasonable cause to believe the provisions of this Deed have been or are being violated.

Grantor acknowledges that any violation of the terms of this Deed shall entitle Grantee, its successors, assigns or designees to obtain an injunction against such violation from a court of competent jurisdiction along with an order requiring Grantor, his heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns to restore the subject land to the condition it was in prior to the violation, and recover any costs or damages incurred including reasonable attorney's fees. Such relief may be sought jointly, severally, or serially.

10. Duration of Easement – The agricultural conservation easement created by this Deed shall be a covenant running with the land and shall be effective in perpetuity. Every provision of this Deed applicable to Grantor shall apply to Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, assigns, agents, and any person, partnership, corporation or other entity claiming title under or through Grantor.

11. Conveyance or Transfer of the Subject Land – Grantor, his heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns, and any person, partnership, corporation, or other entity claiming title under or through Grantor, shall, within thirty (30) days of a change in ownership or within any lesser period prescribed in the county program, notify the county agricultural land preservation board and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in writing of any conveyance or transfer of ownership of the subject land. Such notification shall set forth the name, address and telephone number of the Grantor and the party or parties to whom ownership of the subject land has been conveyed or transferred, and the price per acre or any portion thereof and a reference to the volume and page in which the transfer has been recorded by the County Recorder of Deeds.

This obligation shall apply to any change in ownership of the subject land. Whenever interest in the subject land is conveyed or transferred to another person, the deed conveying or transferring such land shall recite in verbatim the language of the easement as set forth in this deed.

12. Applicability - Every provision of this Deed applicable to Grantor shall apply to Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, assigns, agents, and any person, partnership, corporation or other entity claiming title under or through Grantor.

13. Interpretation – This Deed shall be interpreted under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. For purposes of interpretation, no party to this Deed shall be considered to be the drafter of the Deed. All provisions of this Deed are intended, and shall be interpreted, to effectuate the intent of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as expressed in Section 2 of the Act.

To have and to hold this Deed of Agricultural Conservation Easement unto the Grantee, its successors and assigns in perpetuity.

AND the Grantor, for himself, his heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns does specially warrant the agricultural conservation easement hereby granted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have duly executed this Deed on the day first written above.

GRANTOR

Witness:	_____ [Seal]
_____	_____ [Seal]
_____	_____ [Seal]
_____	_____ [Seal]

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

COUNTY OF

SS:

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

On this _____ day of _____, 20____, before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, residing in the City of _____ personally appeared the above named _____ and _____, and in due form of law acknowledged the above Deed of Agricultural Conservation Easement to be their voluntary act and deed, and desired the same to be recorded as such.

WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal the day and year aforesaid.

Notary Public

My Commission expires: