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**Aug. 2, 2017**

**Official News Release**

**For Immediate Release**

**ROCKAWAY TWP. FARM ENROLLED IN COUNTY PRESERVATION PROGRAM**  
**KOEHLER FARM IS MORRIS COUNTY'S 133<sup>rd</sup> PRESERVED FARM**

The Morris County Agriculture Development Board has permanently enrolled the 35-acre Koehler Farm, a working sheep farm in Rockaway Township, into the county's farmland preservation program.



Koehler Farm in Rockaway Township

It is the second Rockaway Township agricultural property to enroll in the preservation program, and the 133th preserved farm in Morris County.

The Morris County CADB purchased a development easement on the property for \$695,297 from the Koehler family, which has farmed the tract for five generations.

The agreement restricts the land from non-agricultural uses, but the Koehler family retains ownership.

The first and only other Rockaway Township farm to enroll in preservation was the 88-acre Oakeside Farm on Charlottesburg Road in 2008.

Koehler Farm is located on Split Rock Road and is just a half-mile from Oakeside Farm and from four properties preserved through the county's open space preservation program. The farm has been in Koehler-family ownership for 105 years. It previously was used to raise dairy cows

and beef cattle, and to grow corn and hay crops, according to Katherine Coyle, director of the Morris CADB.

Financing for the Koehler Farm easement purchase came from the voter-approved Morris County Open Space, Farmland, Floodplain Protection and Historic Preservation Trust Fund at \$19,800 per acre.



Christine Myers

“This long-term preservation program over the past several decades has been very effective in preserving Morris County’s agricultural roots, and creating a permanent and viable agricultural business district, especially in western Morris County,” said **Freeholder Christine Myers**, the county governing board’s liaison on preservation matters.

In contrast to open space preservation, the agricultural landowner retains ownership of, and may even choose to sell, the preserved farmland. However, the land retains a deed restriction ensuring that it cannot undergo non-farm development.

Agricultural development of the farm is permitted and the type of farming activity can change in the future.

Preservation of Koehler Farm brings the total area of preserved farmland in the county to 7,963 acres or the equivalent of 12.4 square miles, which is approximately the area of Denville, which is the 16th largest municipality in Morris County.

Koehler Farm is the second of a large number of potential farm preservation closings in Morris County in 2017. Another 12 farms, totaling nearly 500 acres, are under consideration for enrollment in the county program. They are located in Chester Township, Harding, Mine Hill, Mendham Township, Mount Olive, and Washington Township.

For detailed information on the county’s agricultural preservation program, visit:

<http://morriscountynj.gov/planning/divisions/prestrust/farmland/>

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