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## CENTRE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

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**FOR RELEASE**  
July 31, 2020

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### Centre County's agricultural easement program preserves 54<sup>th</sup> farm

(BELLEFONTE, PA)—The Centre County Agricultural Land Preservation Board on July 13 officially preserved 335 additional acres of farmland, bringing its total acreage for preserved farms to 8,124 acres.

Supported by state, county and Ferguson Township funds, the board recorded a deed of agricultural easement for 100 acres on the Galen and Katherine McWilliams farm, a crop operation on Shingletown Road. The farm is now permanently preserved for agricultural production and cannot be developed for any other purpose.

The McWilliams farm is the county's 54<sup>th</sup> agricultural easement, and the 27<sup>th</sup> property to be preserved in Ferguson Township, bringing the township's total acreage for preserved farms to 3,665 acres.

The Board preserved the 235-acre Fairbrook Farms on Tadpole Road in January of this year.

A third farm in Ferguson Township will soon be closing on its Commonwealth approved agricultural conservation easement.

At its meeting on June 11, 2020, the state board safeguarded 4,432 acres on 48 farms in 25 counties through the state's farmland preservation program. Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding announced this represents an \$11.9 million investment by the State in farmland preservation. County governments invested an additional \$2 million in the farms preserved on June 11, bringing the total investment to \$13.9 million.

Pennsylvania leads the nation in farmland preservation.

Currently, 38 eligible applicants are on a ranked waiting list to be considered for farmland preservation. Farmland is ranked by weighted criteria that includes the percentage of Class I through IV soils, proximity to farms that have already been preserved, and their potential to be purchased by developers. Applicants must be in their municipality's Agricultural Security Area (ASA).

For more information about the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) program, visit the Centre County website at <http://centrecountypa.gov/609/PACE-Program> or email Diana Griffith, Agricultural Land Preservation Coordinator, at [dlgriffith@centrecountypa.gov](mailto:dlgriffith@centrecountypa.gov)

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