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PROCEEDINGS OF THE DADE COUNTY CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAND RETENTION

HOMESTEAD, FLORIDA
OCTOBER 18, 1991

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DECEMBER 30, 1991

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CONFERENCE CO-SPONSORS

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Homestead Properties

Association of Avocado
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Florida Mango Forum

Land Trust of Dade County

South Florida Tropical
Fruit Advisory Council

Tropical Fruit Growers of
South Florida

South Dade
Community Council

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PREFACE

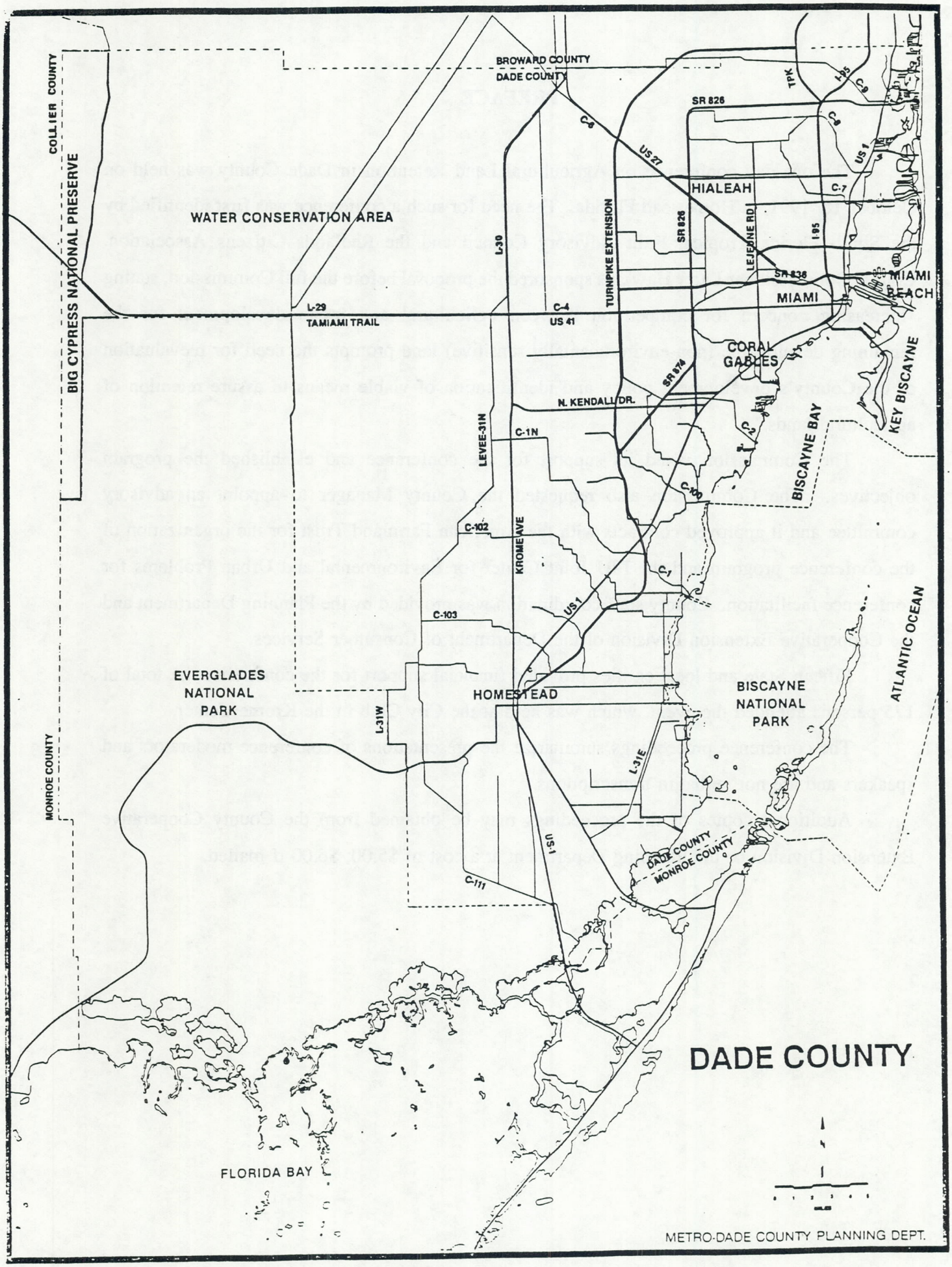
The one-day conference on Agricultural Land Retention in Dade County was held on October 18, 1991, in Homestead Florida. The need for such a conference was first identified by the South Florida Tropical Fruit Advisory Council and the Redlands Citizens Association. County Commissioner Larry Hawkins sponsored the proposal before the full Commission, stating "Increasing concern for competition between agricultural and urban development for the remaining developable (non-environmentally sensitive) land prompts the need for reevaluation of the County's development policy and identification of viable means to assure retention of agricultural lands."

The Commission voted its support for the conference and established the program objectives. The Commission also requested the County Manager to appoint an advisory committee and it approved contracts with the American Farmland Trust for the organization of the conference program and the FIU Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems for conference facilitation. County staff coordination was provided by the Planning Department and the Cooperative Extension Division of the Department of Consumer Services.

Fifteen State and local entities provided financial support for the conference. A total of 175 persons attended the event, which was held at the City Club in the Krome Center.

The conference proceedings summarize the presentations of conference moderators and speakers and are not verbatim transcriptions.

Additional copies of the proceedings may be obtained from the County Cooperative Extension Division or the Planning Department at a cost of $5.00; $6.00 if mailed.


COLLIER COUNTY
BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE
BROWARD COUNTY
DADE COUNTY
WATER CONSERVATION AREA
L-29
TAMIAMI TRAIL
L-30
C-4
US 41
TURNPIKE EXTENSION
SR 826
TPK
I-95
C-6
US 27
US 1
HIALEAH
C-7
LEJEUNE RD
SR 836
MIAMI
MIAMI BEACH
CORAL GABLES
SR 874
N. KENDALL DR.
LEVEE-31N
C-1N
C-100
BISCAYNE BAY
KEY BISCAYNE
C-102
KROME AVE
C-1
C-103
US 1
ATLANTIC OCEAN
EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK
HOMESTEAD
BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK
L-31W
L-31E
MONROE COUNTY
US-1
DADE COUNTY
MONROE COUNTY
C-111
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The Potential For

AGRICULTURAL LAND RETENTION

IN DADE COUNTY

A One-day Informational Conference

October 18, 1991
Krome Center
950 North Krome Avenue
Homestead, Florida

Organized by
American Farmland Trust

Co-sponsored by:

- Metropolitan Dade County
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- FIU-FAU Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems
- Dade County Agri-Council
- First National Bank of Homestead
- Redlands Citizens Association
- Dade County Farm Bureau
- Sierra Club
- Vision Council & Steve Torcise Sr.
- Greater Homestead/ Florida City Chamber of Commerce
- Homestead Properties
- Association of Avocado and Lime Growers
- Florida Mango Forum
- LandTrust of Dade County
- South Florida Tropical Fruit Advisory Council
- Tropical Fruit Growers of South Florida
- South Dade Community Council

DADE AGRICULTURAL LAND IS..

...UNIQUE. IT PRODUCES:

- 90 percent of the Nation's domestic lime and mango production
- All of the tropical vegetables grown in continental U.S.
- A major part of the State's ornamental foliage
- Most of the East Coast's fresh winter vegetables

...IMPORTANT. IT PROVIDES:

- $1 billion in economic output
- The equivalent of 23,000 full-time jobs

...UNDER PRESSURE. IT IS CONFRONTED BY:

- Metropolitan growth, projected to add 300,000 residents by the year 2000
- Wetlands set asides for environmental protection
- Conflicting government programs of agricultural promotion and regulation

THIS CONFERENCE WILL ...

- Convene persons with interests in agricultural continuation and growth management
- Review urban and environmental implications for agricultural land
- Review options for agricultural land retention
- Identify voluntary retention programs with most promising potential
- Seek the opinions of participants

AGENDA

Krome Center
City Club of Homestead
950 North Krome Avenue, Fourth Floor
Homestead

8:00 - 8:30 Registration

8:30 - 8:45 Opening

- Honorable J.T.(Tad) DeMilly, III, Mayor City of Homestead
- Honorable Larry Hawkins, Commissioner Metro-Dade County

8:45 - 9:30 South Dade Land Dynamics
Ag and urban land dimensions; past, present and future

- Reginald Walters, Moderator Dade Planning Department
- Robert Usherson Dade Planning Department
- Rodney Clouser, Ph.D. Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

9:30 - 9:45 Break

9:45 - 11:00 Ag Land Retention Overview
Who is doing what and why in Florida and the Nation

- David Holmes, Moderator Dade Cooperative Extension Division
- James Riggle American Farmland Trust

11:00 -12:15 Purchase of Development Rights
Capitalizing equity while retaining ag activity

- Craig Evans, Moderator American Farmland Trust
- Tom Daniels, Ph.D. Agricultural Preservation Administrator
- Wayne McGinnis Dairy Farmer
- Larry Williard Tobacco Farmer

12:15 - 1:45 Luncheon Buffet

- Honorable Bob Crawford, Keynote Speaker Commissioner of Agriculture, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

1:45 - 3:00 Conservation Easements/Estate Planning

Reducing the tax bite to sustain the heritage

- James Riggle, Moderator
  American Farmland Trust
- Ed Thompson
  Attorney
- Roger Allbee
  Banker
- Gene Garber
  Dairy Farmer

3:00 - 3:15 Break

3:15 - 4:30 Agricultural Districts

Protecting agricultural activity from adverse public actions and nuisance complaints

- James Riggle, Moderator
  American Farmland Trust
- Keith Eckel
  Tomato and Vegetable Grower
- Ralph E. Grossi
  Dairy and Beef Farmer

4:30 - 5:00 Conclusion

Speaking out about the potential for agriculture retention

- Allan Bly, Moderator
  Dade Planning Department
- Tom Wilson
  FIU/FAU Joint Center For Environmental and Urban Problems

About The American Farmland Trust

The American Farmland Trust, a private, nonprofit, membership organization founded in 1980 to protect the nations agricultural resources, works to stop the loss of productive farmland and to promote farming practices that lead to a healthy environment. The AFT works with farmers, business people, legislators and conservationists to encourage sound farming practices, care of land, innovative financial arrangements, supportive legislation and endangered land real estate transactions.

MODERATORS AND PRESENTERS

- **Roger Allbee,** Vice President of the Farm Credit Bank of Springfield, Massachusetts, is the former Commissioner of Agriculture for the State of Veront .
- **Allan Bly** is Assistant Director for the Dade Planning Department and conference coordinator.
- **Rodney Clouser,** Ph.D. is an agricultural economist with IFAS and a frequent participant in agricultural land retention workshops.
- **Bob Crawford** is the Commissioner of Agriculture for Florida.
- **Tom Daniels,** Ph.D., Director of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania Agricultural Preservation Board, is an agriculture economist and rural town planner.
- **Keith Eckel,** President, Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, farms 1000 acres of tomatoes and field crops.
- **Gene Garber** and his brother are Pennsylvania dairy farmers who operate under a conservation easement.
- **David Holmes** serves as Director of the Cooperative Extension Division of the Dade Department of Consumer Services.
- **Wayne McGinnis**, from Baltimore County, Maryland, has dairy and grain land that has been in a preservation program for more than a decade.
- **James Riggle**, Director of Operations of the American Farmland Trust, has a nationwide perspective on ag land retention and is program organizer for the conference.
- **Ed Thompson**, General Counsel for the American Farmland Trust, has expertise on the legal aspects of ag land retention.
- **Robert Usherson** is Chief of comprehensive planning for the Dade Planning Department and was project director for the preparation of the County's Agriculture Land Use Plan.
- **Reginald Walters** is the Director of the Dade Planning Department and has 32 years growth management experience in the community.
- **Larry Willard** is a tobacco farmer from North Carolina who participates in an ag preservation program.
- **Tom Wilson** is Associate Director for the FIU-FAU Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems and facilitator for the conference.
- **Craig Evans** is Senior Associate for Program Development for the American Farmland Trust and coordinator of it's Florida activities.
- **Ralph E. Grossi,** President of American Farmland Trust operates a 900 acre dairy and beef ranch in a California agricultural district.

LOCATION

The Krome Center at Homestead can be reached from US1/Florida Turnpike by exiting on Campbell Drive (SW 312 Street/NE 8 Street) and travelling west to Krome Avenue, then 2 blocks north. Parking is in the rear and the City Club facilities are on the fourth floor. The telephone number is 248-3131.

REGISTRATION

- Advanced registration for the conference is advised
- Registration fee, including lunch, is $25 through October 4 and $35 afterwards
- Registration is limited to 210 participants with preference through October 4 for Dade residents and property owners
- Make checks payable to FIU and mail with registration form below to:

Joint Center
Attention, Florence Brookmire
Florida International University
North Miami, Florida 33181

For additional information, contact the Joint Center at (940-5844) Dade Planning Department (375-2840) or Dade Cooperative Extension Division (248-3311).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

SS# (for audit purposes) _____

Affiliation:

Agribusiness:
Nursery _____ Row Crops _____Fruit Crops ____
Specialty vegetables _____ Other _____

Ag Land:
Owner _____ Lessor _____ Lessee _____
Realtor/Broker ____

Other:
Government Official/Administrator _____
Law/Banking _____ Environmental _____
Other_____

OPENING SESSION

Moderator: Reginald Walters, Director, Metro-Dade Planning Department

Speakers: Hon. J.T. (Tad) DeMilly III, Mayor, City of Homestead
Hon. Larry Hawkins, Metro-Dade Board of County Commissioners

Reginald Walters:

The City of Homestead recently passed a resolution supporting the agricultural industry in south Dade. This was prompted by the importance of agriculture revealed in a report by IFAS a year ago (which many of you are familiar with), indicating the billion dollar industry that agriculture is in Dade County. We are delighted and privileged this morning to have with us J.T. (Tad) DeMilly III, Mayor of Homestead.

Mayor DeMilly:

Good morning. I'd like to welcome all of you to Homestead, and to the City Club. Also with us today from the City of Homestead is Brian Gillis, who is our new Director of Community Development. If it were not for agriculture, which began here about 100 years ago, Homestead wouldn't be here, and we wouldn't be here today. We entered the twentieth century together, as partners, and I can assure you that we will enter the twenty-first century together, as partners, and we're privileged to have you here today in Homestead. Thank you.

Reginald Walters:

Our Dade County Commissioner from deep south Dade is Commissioner Larry Hawkins. Commissioner Hawkins sponsored a resolution, which the County Commission unanimously adopted, that has set the stage for this conference. So we're very happy and honored to have Commissioner Hawkins here to get us off to a good start this morning.

Commissioner Hawkins:

I'd like to welcome everyone, and take this opportunity to introduce my colleague, who was very supportive of this effort, Commissioner Charles Dusseau. This event today is the fruition of the work of many in the south Dade agricultural community, which continues to be

concerned about the future of this industry in the face of a changing local, national, and international context. The South Florida Tropical Fruit Advisory Council and the Redlands Citizens Association saw the need to explore the possibility of ag retention. The Board of County Commissioners understands the significance of this issue and co-sponsored this event here today. The [conference] advisory committee carefully worked through all the details; I want to thank all of the committee members for their work. The American Farmland Trust, who provided their expertise and will continue to provide it throughout the day, for organizing the program; we thank you. The staffs of the County's Consumer Services Department, the Cooperative Extension Division, and the Planning Department; we thank you for your work. The co-sponsoring agencies who provided financial assistance, we appreciate all your support. I'm pleased to have been able to spearhead the effort before the Board of County Commissioners. As I reminded my colleagues on the Commission, maintaining a supply of agricultural land is a continual concern not just for Dade County, but for all of this country. There are other challenges to this important industry, but land retention is the focus of the meeting today. I urge you to listen, and to respond to what you hear. As suggested at the outset, this conference should have, in my opinion, five purposes:

1. To convene community leaders with an interest in agricultural land retention.
2. To review current and projected impact of urban expansion on farmland conservation.
3. To identify the major options available for the retention of this land.
4. To review the most promising voluntary retention programs used elsewhere in the nation.
5. To seek and obtain a consensus from you of any need for follow-up activities.

Your presence here this morning confirms that the first purpose of this conference has already been accomplished. The expertise of the selected speakers promises that the second, third, and fourth purposes will be achieved by the end of today. I look to you to give us your responses at the end of the conference, to assure that the last and most important objective is accomplished. I know we're all busy people; this is an incredibly important issue, as the Mayor said. I appreciate personally the time and the work that went into the preparation of the conference. I look forward to a good conference, and let the show begin.

Reginald Walters:

The objective of today's meeting is to be informed, to be enlightened, so that we can evaluate and make our own local decisions. Our experts are very approachable people, so talk with them; take advantage of their being here today.

SOUTH DADE LAND DYNAMICS: Agricultural And Urban Land Dimensions--Past, Present and Future.

Moderator: Reginald Walters, Director, Metro-Dade Planning Department

Speakers: Robert Usherson, Chief, Metropolitan Planning Division, Metro-Dade Planning Department

Rodney Clouser, Ph.D., Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida

Reginald Walters:

Our first panel will be covering the topic of south Dade land dynamics. That word *dynamic* certainly characterizes the south Dade situation. I often point out that ninety-one years ago, only 5,000 people were living in Dade County. So all the development that we see around us now has taken place in a single lifetime. The outlook for the future is no less dynamic. All this suggests very rapid changes. And whether we like change or not, we have to learn to deal with it, and to manage it. So our opening topic is very appropriate.

Agriculture relies on a base resource, which is land. Without the land, there is no agricultural activity. Today you will hear about various programs being used elsewhere in the nation to retain agricultural land. These will be presented so that you can evaluate them in terms of the question "Will this work in Dade County?" I hope you'll be thinking about the implications for our own area. Are we going to sit back and let things happen, or are we going to be proactive and positive?

Robert Usherson:

I don't need to remind this group of the importance of south Dade's agricultural production as we compare with other counties around the nation. I was, frankly, a little surprised to see the number of categories in which Dade County agriculture has increased in its ranking as compared with other communities. I expected, in reviewing the Census data from the last number of years, to see some moderation, some declines. To the contrary, I saw a lot of increases relative to other areas of the country. According to the 1987 U.S. Census of Agriculture, Dade County ranks:

No. 10 in acres of vegetables harvested for sale, up from rank 18 in 1982.

No. 11 in the value of vegetables sold, up from rank 14 in 1982.

No. 8 in acres of tomatoes harvested for sale, up from rank 9 in 1982.

No. 1 in acres of snapbeans harvested for sale, up from rank 4 in 1982.

No. 18 in the value of crops sold, up from rank 27 in 1982.

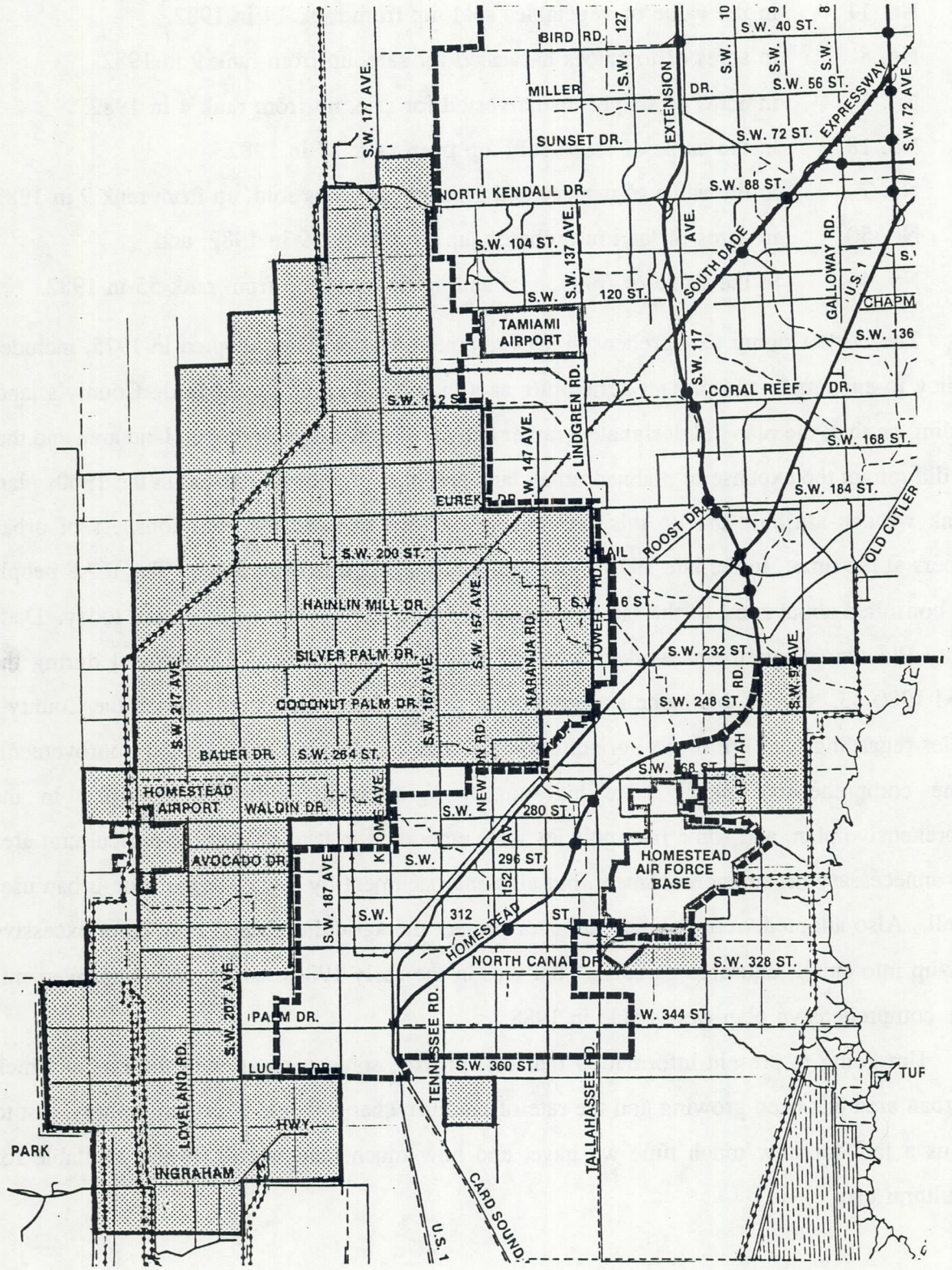
No. 7 in the value of nursery and greenhouse crops sold, up from rank 9 in 1982.

No. 50 in acres of land in orchards, up from rank 59 in 1982; and

No. 46 in the value of fruits, nuts and berries sold, up from rank 55 in 1982.

The Dade County Comprehensive Development Master Plan, adopted in 1975, included a policy to encourage and protect agriculture as a viable economic use of Dade County's land. Building on that, the plan did designate a rather extensive agriculture and open land area and that plan did retract the expanse of planned urban land area that previously existed in the 1960s plan. I think we can attribute that to this community's efforts to raise the consciousness of urban planners at the time. In the late 1970s, the community again raised the issue. The IFAS people were consulted about some of the same retention possibilities that will be discussed today. Dade County Planning Department worked with the Cooperative Extension Department during the period 1980-83. Out of this came an agricultural policy plan which strengthened the County's policies regarding land use in the agricultural area, and that also led to important improvements in the comprehensive plan. The high-quality agricultural land was identified in the comprehensive plan, and some firm policies were embodied in it to protect the agricultural area from unnecessary urban encroachment, but also encroachment by a grab-bag of non-urban uses as well. Also adopted were policies to better protect the agricultural land base from excessive break-up into small, unusable parcels. That was in the early 1980s; some other improvements to the comprehensive plan were made in 1988.

I'm going to present information that will provide some context as to the rate at which the urban area has been growing and the rate of land use changes in the agriculture area, just to give us a feel for how much time we have, and how much land is still in and available for agricultural use.



SOUTHDADE CORE AGRICULTURAL AREA

PLANNED URBAN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY FOR YEAR 2000

CORE AGRICULTURAL AREA

Table 1
Selected Characteristics of Dade County Farms
as Reported in
U.S. Census of Agriculture for Dade County, Florida
1974, 1978, 1982, 1987

	1974	1978	1982	1987
Number of Farms	872	1,354	1,483	1,623
Acreage in Farms	76,318	98,574	87,420	83,061
Average Farm Size (Acres)	88	73	59	51
Crop Farms (Number)	812	1,246	1,378	1,464
Total Cropland (Acres)	62,096	74,506	72,784	66,313
Harvested Cropland (Acres)	55,730	64,084	58,940	61,997
Value of Land & Bldgs ($1000)	281,682	533,476	683,663	555,066
Avg. Value/Farm (Dollars)	323,030	394,930	461,567	342,513
Avg. Value/Acre (Dollars)	3,691	4,965	7,835	6,853

Source: *Economic Impact of Agriculture and Agribusiness in Dade County, Florida,* by Ann E. Mosley, Department of Food and Resource Economics, University of Florida. Gainesville, Fl. 1990.

From Census of Agriculture, cited years, Florida Edition, US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census.

During the past decade, total agricultural acreage in production has remained quite stable. Some sectors have been increasing. Table 1 indicates that, according to the US Census, the number of farms in Dade County has been increasing; their size has been decreasing. Total acreage in farms peaked, according to the Census, in 1978 and has been falling slightly since 1978. Total cropland acres also peaked in 1978 and has declined slightly since then. The harvested cropland peaked in 1978 but also rebounded a bit in 1987. But we see relative stability in the shadow of this rapidly-growing urban area.

Data from the County Property Appraiser are presented in Table 2. These data also indicate stability during the latter 1980s and some increases in agriculturally-used acreage. We see strength in acreage of row and field crops harvested, strength in fruit grove acreage, and a

near-doubling of ornamental nursery acreage during the decade. What I think this indicates is that, with a slightly declining total land base as indicated by the Census, we see more efficient use of the land that is available.

Table 2
Acreage Classified Agriculture for Property Tax Purposes
Dade County, Florida: 1971-1991

1971	81,672 Acres
1972	79,718
1973	75,000
1974	75,000
1975	NA
1976	77,539
1977	82,910
1978	82,806
1979	82,892
1980	81,067
1981	76,732
1982	78,891
1983	76,590
1984	78,111
1985	79,427
1986	85,306
1987	88,335
1988	80,419
1989	83,556
1990	86,455
1991	84,000

Source: Metro-Dade County, Department of Property Appraisal

Table 3 reveals that urban development has been occurring in Dade County at a rate of approximately 3.4 square miles per year or 34 square miles per decade. We find that there is enough land inside the Urban Development Boundary, the area designated on the plan for urbanization, to accommodate this trend until the year 2010 and no longer, while at the same

time maintaining about 60,000 acres in agricultural production in South Dade outside of the urban area. That presumes very rigid maintenance of the Urban Development Boundary and no further substantial breakup of the agricultural land base into large-lot homesites. After the year 2010, five square miles of land north of the agricultural core could accommodate urban growth for less than two years, then the agricultural core area would rapidly give way to urban expansion at the rate of about 30 square miles per decade. The South Dade agricultural core area would then be fully urbanized by the year 2036 as far west as the Everglades containment levee. This would leave about 12,500 acres of agricultural land in the East Everglades west of Levee 31 North, and possibly some other marginal areas elsewhere in the county.

Table 3
Land Use Trends South of Tamiami Trail:
1980, 1985, 1988

Land Use	1980		1985		1988	
	Acres	Percent*	Acres	Percent*	Acres	Percent*
Developed Non-Agricultural[1]	97,725	15.3	103,364	16.5	107,821	17.2
Agriculture	83,447	13.1	83,735	13.4	81,846	13.1
Undeveloped Private Land[2]	85,296	13.4	77,868	12.4	74,684	11.9
Protected Areas[3]	371,834	58.3	362,033	57.7	362,146	57.8
Total Land	638,302	100.0	627,000	100.0	626,498	100.0
Water[4]	56,519		158,745		159,257	
Total County	694,821		785,744		785,754	

* - Percent of Total Land
1 - Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Hotels, Institutional, Urban Parks, Transportation, Communications, Utilities.
2 - Excludes high-quality pine and hardwood forests.
3 - National Parks, Water Conservation Areas, Comp. Planned Environmentally Protected, Vacant Government Owned.
4 - Inland and coastal water. Delineation of coastal water area revised in 1985.

Source: Metro-Dade County Planning Department. Measurements from Metro-Dade County aerial photography and USGS quadrangle maps.

The outlook for the retention of agriculture appears good for this decade; but in the next decade, pressure will become acute to expand the current Urban Development Boundary to relieve inflationary pressures on urban land prices. From the perspective of land use trends and projected urban growth, it appears that this conference is timely, and that it is not too late to review local policy or consider additional measures to protect the agricultural land base.

Rodney Clouser:

The assignment given me today was fairly simple: I was asked to address past production trends, comment on the outlook for future production, and summarize external factors that may influence Dade County agriculture in the future. It sounds nice and easy. The problem is, to do that you have to use reasonable assumptions, speculation, guesses as to what the future might be. Taking that into consideration, I'd like to summarize: In 1970, Dade Co. had a population of 1.3 million people; in 1980 it was 1.6 million; you're approaching 2 million in 1990; and by 2000 the projected population for Dade County is roughly 2.13 million people. Dade County has experienced a 60% increase in population over the last 30 years. Those new residents bring with them an increased demand for certain resources in the community. In Dade County, land and water may be in tight demand. Competition for those resources between agricultural activities and urban residents may be increasing. Conflicts sometimes arise. The result of those conflicts often is increased government regulation.

One assumption made by many individuals is that when population increases, the amount of land in agriculture decreases. That is not necessarily the case in Dade County. (All my data comes from the census of agriculture.) Since 1974, when there were 872 farms in the county, there has been a substantial increase--to 1354 in 1978; 1483 in 1982; and 1623 in 1987. So at the same time population increased about 60%, the number of farms in Dade County has increased about 86%.

Although the number of farms has been increasing, farm size has been decreasing. The average farm size in Dade County in 1974 was 88 acres; in 1987 that had decreased to 51 acres. Should that sound an alarm? There's no definitive answer to that, but probably the best thing you could say is "not necessarily." What is often forgotten in the debate over agricultural land use is productivity. There are some often-misunderstood, incorrectly-used statistics put out by the USDA, that try to measure productivity increases in the US. In 1979, the typical US farmer produced enough food and fiber for 113 people; in 1989, the same farmer produced enough food for 129 people. These increases in productivity are relieving some of the stress on the agricultural land base. Dade County agriculture, primarily through its fruit and vegetable industries, is expected to show some similar trends. Census data reveals that fruit acreage in Dade County has increased from 10,612 acres in 1974 to 17,496 acres in 1987. This increase was slightly in excess of 65%. Vegetable acreage exhibited similar trends, increasing from

companies who are willing to undertake the risk to do that. Pesticides and herbicides are important to this agricultural area because of the semi-tropical and tropical environment. If the chemicals are not developed or there are not substitutes found and not re-registered, there will be impacts on Dade County production levels. Improved management tools will be needed by the producers to cope with the decreased use of agricultural chemicals. I am not advocating that agriculture not be regulated; I said that agriculture is going to be impacted in the future by regulation at the local, state and national levels. The question to be addressed at these three levels is the cost of regulation. Some work going on in my department at the university indicates regulatory costs related to set-asides on land areas required by growth management for some citrus production in Florida at almost 2 cents per pound of solids. We need to document what those costs are and how they will affect Florida's competitive position.

The next external factor is global economic conditions. Shocks to the Dade County agricultural system will occur because of worldwide economic conditions. If the value of U.S. currency increases relative to other currencies of the world, then demand tends to decline. If economic development doesn't occur in other sections of the world, if per-capita incomes stay depressed, then demand tends to be weak. As incomes go up, there is more demand for food products and more demand for commodities produced in Dade County, like fruits and vegetables. These conditions are beyond our control. Factors that influence those conditions include national and worldwide monetary policy, federal debt, fiscal policy, inflation, and unemployment.

The last external factor, one that I think has agriculture most concerned, is free trade policies. Producers fear talk of free trade because of increased competition. There's no doubt that there will be increased competition. It's important to remember that trade policies are like all other policies: some people benefit from those policies, and some people lose. The key for producers in Florida is to remain competitive in the production of commodities. Producers in Florida must ensure that reasonable policies are adopted, and that the playing field is kept level. While trade brings increased competition, it also brings opportunity for new markets that can increase demand. However, over the last ten years there clearly have been impacts from free trade with the Caribbean region (which has allowed some commodities to come in duty-free), as well as with Canada, and there's the impending agreement with Mexico. It's fair to assume that, at some point in the future, we'll see Cuba enter into the picture. That will definitely have long-term impacts on Dade County.

I just want to leave you with these thoughts. Data does not suggest that agriculture in Dade County is in a bleak period, nor that it will be bleak in the future. At the same time, you must remember that changing conditions might alter that assessment. Change is going to occur in every segment of Florida's economy, including agriculture. You're planning for the future, and you've taken the right steps to start addressing some of these issues.

AGRICULTURAL LAND RETENTION OVERVIEW: Who is Doing What and Why in Florida and the Nation

Moderator: David Holmes, Director, Cooperative Extension Division, Metro-Dade Department of Consumer Services

Speakers: James Riggle, Director of Operations, American Farmland Trust
Tom Daniels, Ph.D., Director, Lancaster County (Pa.) Agricultural Preservation Board

Jim Riggle:

Let me say that I absolutely agree with Rod Clouser that if farmers can't make a profit, then there aren't going to be farmers to farm the land. But what we must understand is the influence of public policy on the ability of farmers to make a profit. If public policy assumes that the land is only there to be prepared for development, if government assumes that agriculture is merely a transitional use, that will ruin the conditions that would have allowed farmers to make a profit. Secondly, not all land is created equal, so the producer can't always pack it up and go somewhere else. The competition is over the highest quality land.

The farmland preservation issue had new life breathed into it in the late 1960s, with amendments to the U.S. Transportation Act. Restrictions were placed on development of parklands, wetlands, and certain habitat types. In 1969, passage of The National Environmental Policy Act closed the loop on farmlands, and defined analyses that must attend any public project. By the early 1970s we find that, almost by design, public projects are focused on the best agricultural land, because those lands are basically flat and well-drained. That led to more development, and we began to see efforts to raise the level of public concern for agricultural land nearer to the level of concern for environmentally sensitive areas, so that public policy begins to recognize the importance of maintaining agriculture, and policy statements begin to reflect attempts to refocus how we do public capital development.

Another important recognition that quickly came about was the economic benefits of the agriculture industry. (And the study that IFAS did here in Dade really encapsulates this notion.) Again, there's always been a presumption in the public sector that economic development means something other than agricultural development. Until we break that notion, we're not going to get very far in this business. In this county, you have a $1 billion annual industry, with around

20,000 full-time jobs. If I were to come to Florida and propose to build a rocket parts factory in Volusia County, and hire 23,000 people, every state official would meet me tomorrow. They would offer to give me land, give me tax breaks, run job-training programs; I could have half the state if I wanted it, for *that* notion of economic development. But I don't see the same thing happening when you already have a local industry here that's providing the same kind of benefit, not only now, but that is sustainable into the future. That's what I mean about the change of focus we need in public policy.

In 1981, we got the Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act, that put all of the burden on state and local government to protect the land. Around twelve states have policies that restrict the actions of state agencies with regard to the siting and scale of public infrastructure development. These have been applied not only to things like airports and roads, but also to parks, where for example a smaller park is opted for, and a buffer of protected agricultural land is put in place via conservation easements, rather than a larger park requiring a bigger transfer of land from private to public ownership, which would remove the fiscal [tax revenue] benefits. We've done studies time and again, showing that farmland only gets back 25 cents for every dollar that it generates in property taxes. A non-farm resident in a rural area often gets as much as $1.35 worth of public services for every dollar that they generate in property taxes. There is an absolute subsidy of urban type public services by privately owned agricultural land. That's an important fiscal benefit, and one that can be preserved basically forever.

Also in the early 1980s, Right to Farm laws came about as farmers reacted to new residents, who move into an agricultural area, and who don't like night-work, early morning work, the noise of equipment planting or harvesting, and drift from inputs used in the business. All fifty states have some sort of Right to Farm laws, to protect farmers from nuisance complaints. In a minute, I'll talk about a type of program that I think offers much better protection.

Also in effect in all fifty states is some kind of use-value assessment for property taxes. It's really not designed nor intended, in most cases, as a land protection measure--because it encourages speculative ownership of farmland--but the notion is, if you are not at the current economic highest use, the most intense use of the land, then you ought not to be taxed for it. Again, that's an equity measure. It doesn't necessarily protect the land, but many farmers would find themselves out of business if they were paying property taxes assessed at an urban rate.

Unless there is some restriction on that benefit, then it can easily encourage speculative ownership and holding of the land.

About fifteen states now offer some kind of voluntary agricultural district, (paralleling the Right to Farm benefits), which gives benefits to the land owner, who must then commit to a contract with local government, typically running between 8 and 11 years, stipulating that the land be kept in agriculture. The landowner receives, in many cases, stronger nuisance protection than under Right to Farm laws, and some protection from eminent domain. Many districting programs give a blanket exemption from unwanted annexation into a municipality. Virtually all provide exemption from special levees and ad-valorem taxes assessed for urban-style improvements during the period the agreement is in effect. There are penalties if this agreement is broken. There are about 20 million acres in agricultural districts throughout the country.

We've always tried to separate the notion of farmland protection, where we manage for the long-term but recognize that changes may occur, from land preservation, which offers permanent, legal protection through a deed restriction. This generally means selling the right to develop the land for non-agricultural uses, and placing a conservation easement over the land, usually in perpetuity. In 1980 there were 1500 acres of farmland in the country that had conservation uses sold into a public program. Now it's about 220,000 acres. About $750 million is invested in these programs. They're wildly popular. In Massachusetts and Connecticut, nine out of ten participating farmers surveyed said they would be willing to do it again.

Most of these programs are funded through general obligation bonds issued by the local government. Forsythe County, North Carolina, uses general revenues. Maryland uses an innovative real estate transfer tax which is effectively a farmland conversion tax levied on certain types of real estate transfer. Impact fees are used in California. Pennsylvania dedicates 2 cents from a cigarette tax increase to their farmland preservation fund, which provides a permanent revenue source. Purchasing development rights on land works, but it is expensive.

Transfer of development rights has been characterized as a "no-cost alternative" to PDR, which is not true. The only places that these systems have worked have been where there is major involvement by the public sector. TDR needs a sustained level of development pressure, and it needs some type of match between the supply of development rights that are available, and the demand for them. The buyer of development rights needs to know that there's a place to use them. This means designating sending and receiving areas for the transferred densities. Many

TDR programs have failed for lack of matching these areas.

A hallmark of our message is that farmland protection does not exist outside the context of overall land use. It is an economic land use, it's an open land use that fits well with other environmental and open land uses. More states are adopting mandatory growth management provisions aimed at local government. This means that there is no flexibility to bring land in and out of production as was the case years ago. There's a whole category of conservation lands that are no longer available as replacement lands. Land is now being used at its absolute capacity.

I've asked Tom Daniels to tell us about agricultural zoning.

Tom Daniels:

I want to emphasize that we won't succeed using just one technique for retaining agricultural land. I'll talk first about agricultural zoning, which we use extensively in Lancaster County. Agricultural zoning is tied in with comprehensive planning. It represents a tension. On the one hand, the Tenth Amendment of the Constitution gives government regulatory power to limit landowner development rights. On the other hand, the Fifth Amendment requires just compensation to the landowner if government takes land. The issue in agricultural zoning is how much should development rights be restricted and how much should the landowner be allowed to develop. An important point here is lot size. Minimum lot size should reflect the commercial agricultural size. This will vary considerably across the country.

In Lancaster County, agriculture is our number one industry. Farmers there in 1989 produced $822 million worth of farm products in 1989. We are the number one agricultural county in the northeast, and number one non-irrigated county in the entire nation. We have 400,000 of the county's 600,000 acres in farm use. Of our 400,000 acres, 262,000 acres are zoned for effective agriculture. This type of zoning is done on a township by township basis. Out of 41 townships in the county, 35 have this type of zoning. Effective agricultural zoning means that a land owner is allowed one building lot for 25 acres. This building lot has to be between 1 and 2 acres in size. This is a way that the landowner can get some cash out of that land, but still have enough land for a viable farm operation. Agricultural zoning is only as permanent as the public officials who are elected to enforce and administer it. They do a good job in Lancaster County where, in 1989, we found that only one farm was sold for development.

Agricultural zoning has enabled us to successfully use a purchase of development rights

program. When we purchase the development rights to a farm, and that farm is surrounded by ag zoning, that landowner has a pretty good sense that neighboring land will be in farming, and that he won't be surrounded by development. So agricultural zoning is important in stabilizing the local land base. It is also important to the transfer of development rights program being developed by one township in our county. In summary, I think agricultural zoning will continue to be our first line of defense. It is used in 400 counties and municipalities throughout the U.S.. If you are serious about retaining a critical mass of agriculture, not just to preserve the land, but to preserve the infrastructure for agriculture, and to maintain your profitability, agricultural zoning is going to be an important component.

PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS: Capitalizing Equity While Retaining Agricultural Activity

Moderator: Craig Evans, Senior Associate for Program Development, American Farmland Trust

Speakers: Tom Daniels, Ph.D., Director, Lancaster County (Pa.) Agricultural Preservation Board
Wayne McGinnis, Dairy Farmer, Baltimore County, Maryland
Larry Willard, Tobacco Farmer. Forsythe County, North Carolina

Tom Daniels:

First let me define what we mean by Purchase of Development Rights. When land is purchased, what is owned is a bundle of rights which include air rights, water rights, mineral rights, the right to sell it or pass it along to heirs, and a development right. When we purchase a development right, we are severing off the right to develop the land for non-farm uses, effectively retiring that right through a conservation easement that runs with the deed. If the land is sold, or passed to heirs, the conservation easement remains on the deed. All other rights and responsibilities of owning the land are retained. Development right sale is useful for several reasons. I've alluded to its use for growth management. For the landowner, it is a way to get cash equity out of the land to use for other purposes: to reinvest, to buy down debt, send your kids to college, retire, and so on. It is also a useful estate planning tool. Placing a conservation easement on property reduces the value of that property for estate tax purposes.

In Lancaster County, we accept applications once a year from farmers. We rank farms based on the quality of the land and the amount of development pressure on the farm. We then contract with professional appraisers who go out and appraise the development rights value. This value is the difference between what the farm would sell at on the current market, with no deed restrictions on it, and its value after a conservation easement is placed on that farm.

Purchase of development rights is a voluntary program. Last year, Lancaster County paid an average of $2,000 per acre, this year, due to the downturn of the real estate market, it is down to about $1,500 per acre. We have paid as much as $6,100 per acre. Purchase of development rights can be a useful tool not only for government trying to manage growth, but also for individual land owners. The Lancaster County program started in 1982. We have now preserved around 10,000 acres. You might think that 10,000 acres isn't much, in a county of 400,000

acres, but we've been strategic as to where we acquire development rights. I'm very impressed by your use of the urban development boundary concept. We're trying to implement this in Lancaster County, and because our planning commission is moving so slowly, what we've done, through our PDR program, is to create de facto UDBs by permanently preserving farms fairly close to development. What this means is that it will be extremely difficult to run sewer and water lines past those preserved farms out into the hinterlands. My chairman likes to say that we've actually preserved about 80,000 acres because of *where* we've acquired development rights, in conjunction with our effective agricultural zoning. We hope Lancaster County continues to look the way it does today, and if you'd ever like to visit, we certainly will welcome you as we welcome five million others every year. Thank you very much.

Wayne McGinnis:

We really enjoyed our tour of your county. Baltimore County is very similar to what you have here in Miami. Our agricultural area surrounds the city of Baltimore. From my farm it's about a 45-minute drive to the inner harbor in Baltimore. So we're fairly close to a major export market. In Baltimore County, we have approximately 120,000 acres of agricultural land. We inaugurated a program of agricultural preservation in 1978, with the help of our university people. Maryland has preferential tax assessment, where real estate taxes are determined by type of land: tillable ground, pasture ground, woodland, barren land, and so on. This has been a real asset to ag in Maryland.

In the beginning of the Baltimore County preservation program, we looked at a number of options and settled on a PDR program. It was decided that 100 acres would be a good minimum size for districts. In my area, we have now accumulated a 3500-acre buffer zone for ag. I feel confident that our operation can exist into the future, because we have a sufficient number of farmers in the program. Anyone that has 2 acres or more can join with adjacent lands to form a district. Small farms can join with larger farms to widen districts. The program is paid for, as mentioned earlier, through the state's 1.5% transfer tax. A percentage of this comes back to the counties to use for their cost share. The state pays 60% of the cost of these easements, the county pays 40%. The suburban counties, though, have a larger problem than the rural counties. The suburban counties have been looking toward additional programs and funding. As of January, 1990, we have 228 agricultural districts in Baltimore County, encompassing 20,000

acres. Of these, 84 are permanent districts and about 9,360 acres are in permanent easement. The values of agricultural easements have been slowly rising. In the past 10 to 12 years, very few farms have been sold after they have had a permanent easement in place because most of the people in the program believe in the program. Some farmers have been able to expand operations by purchasing neighboring farms that carry conservation easements. The easement made that land affordable for the buyer, while providing cash equity for the seller. So the program creates opportunities for people who want to sell the farm but who would like to see the land continue in agriculture, and for farmers wanting to expand operations.

The public has been very supportive of preservation efforts. A county bond issue proposed very early in the program passed by an overwhelming margin. My neighbors and friends, who I may have thought of as adversaries ten years ago, now tell me that they would leave if my farm were developed. They want to see us survive and prosper in farming, and they've been very helpful.

I've really enjoyed being here in Florida. I think you have a future in those tropical fruits that we tasted yesterday. I hope you'll put them in a press and market them as South Florida tropical fruit juice; then, instead of just drinking Florida orange juice, I'll have some of that; it's pretty good. I thank you for inviting me.

Larry Willard:

We had a beautiful tour yesterday afternoon, and we always like to come to Florida. I read in the newspaper that nine of the ten fastest-growing towns are in Florida. That put me in mind of our area, Winston-Salem. In the past 12 years, Forsythe County has lost about 33,000 acres of land to industry or road development. In 1984, we began talking, as you are today, about ways to preserve land. The first development rights were bought in 1987. Currently, we have 97 applications, on 5000 acres, for purchase of development rights, so there's a lot of interest in Forsythe County. There are 22 farms with 1303 acres already in the program, scattered all over the county.

I always liked to farm, and I farmed by sheer determination. There wasn't any great amount of land in our family. I started with a few acres and kept buying. My son wants to farm. When the PDR program came along, the easement money was a springboard for us to buy more land. We'll probably put the new land in the program also, so that our son can farm. So

the financial aspect was a big consideration on my part, as I expect it would be for any of you. But you have to forget about making a million dollars on a ten-acre deal.

The only problem we have is program funding. We're looking at ways to raise more money, but right now there just isn't enough to cover all the farmers who would like to participate.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Hon. Bob Crawford, Commissioner
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

When I talk to friends in north Florida, they are often shocked to learn that Palm Beach is the number one county for agriculture and Dade is number two. I was pleased that the Department of Agriculture was one of the sponsors of this meeting. Getting minds together to talk about problems and creative solutions is important, and there is no shortage of challenges to the agricultural industry in this state.

When we talk about land use in Florida, growth management comes to mind. As we try to manage growth in Florida, we find we are economically dependent on it. The 1985 Growth Management Act gives us the chance to assess where we are on growth management. And although the Legislature will continue to be committed to growth management, some things are happening that they probably didn't anticipate. For example, I know of a farmer in north Florida, who had a substantial mortgage on his land, and he had been making his payments just fine. The growth management plan came along and severely restricted the potential development of that property. This triggered a reassessment of his land by the bank. (Regulations now require all banks to reassess all the property in their portfolios.) The reassessed value of the property is so low that it doesn't meet the banking regulators' criteria, and they're calling in the loan. So all of a sudden, a change in the law has directly impacted his pocketbook and his ability to be in business. Now in that case, we may have preserved the land, but I'm not sure we preserved agriculture, because he will not be able to produce on that land anymore.

Growth management laws will affect property values as they relate to the financing of local government. Two recent court cases dealt with the current system of appraising agricultural land, which is based on a 5 year average value of your property. This has been declared unconstitutional. The court is now saying that agricultural land has to be valued annually so you won't get the cushioning effect of a 5 year average. We're not quite sure what that will mean, but with growth management it may be that, if we do have a decrease in the value of some property throughout the state, you could have a major reduction in the tax base of counties all in one year. I think it's important that everybody know the price that's being paid for this

regulation, and consider whether we need to make modifications to cushion the blow.

With regard to the ideas that the [American Farmland] Trust is advocating, in view of everything that is happening in this state, I think that the voluntary nature of preservation of agricultural lands is probably the most important component. I think some of these ideas have a lot of value. I read of the success of New Jersey's PDR program. We continue to support the widespread purchase of important lands throughout the state for preservation.

One of the most important ways to preserve agricultural land is for us to make sure that agriculture as a business entity is viable. If we can make money, then by the nature of capitalism, we will stay in agriculture. We can't control all the factors affecting the viability of agriculture. One of the things we can control, or at least have an impact on, is water resources. We go from drought to flood in about 24 hours in this state. We can develop creative ways to better manage our water resources. I hope to pull together a group out of our office--an agricultural water policy council--to start bringing some promising ideas together.

South Florida is very much impacted by the world trade situation. The Mexico Free Trade Agreement could have a devastating effect on Florida agriculture. We're pushing our trade negotiators to recognize our concerns, to give some exemptions to winter-grown vegetables and citrus products. We can compete when Mexico has the same environmental and safety standards that we have. We want a level playing field. I hope you'll join us in this effort.

The tax commission is talking about a Green Belt Law, which should get your attention because it's an important incentive to keep land in agricultural production. It's great to be back in South Florida, and I wish you well with your meeting today.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS
AND ESTATE PLANNING: Reducing the Tax Bite to Sustain the Heritage

Moderator: James Riggle, Director of Operations, American Farmland Trust

Speakers: Ed Thompson, General Counsel, American Farmland Trust
Roger Allbee, Vice President, Farm Credit Bank of Springfield, Mass.
Gene Garber, Dairy Farmer, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Ed Thompson:

The last time I was here was about 10 years ago, and as I flew into the airport yesterday, I noticed the dramatic growth you've had here. We toured some of your specialty crop operations; I was also impressed with the changes in that industry. The revitalization of the ornamental horticulture industry here is to me a very exciting development. Dade County is among the crown jewels of American agriculture.

The kind of urban growth that you're experiencing here brings with it a number of complications for farmers. It threatens your right to farm, it poses the threat of additional regulations and potential legal liability, and inflates land values. The tax man can't wait to get his hands on all that additional value. Estate planning and conservation can play a role in dealing with the tax man so that you can continue farming.

We see a tremendous inflation in land values as a result of development pressures. Landowners must take some deliberate steps to avoid being forced to sell the farm just to pay the estate taxes. The reason for doing estate planning, first and foremost, is to carry out the wishes of yourself and your family, for the passing on of family wealth, the tenure of the land, and so forth. But where there's a tax problem, that becomes a part of fulfilling your family's wishes, and you'll have to deal with it. Estate planning is highly complex; expert technical advice is needed. I can only scratch the surface here, but I'd like to provide a sampling of some of the things that you can do.

First, there's proper ownership: Often, a husband will own all land outright, and that can create a real tax problem. You want to split ownership among spouse and children so that they can take full advantage of each person's exemption ($600,000 per person). Second, take advantage of federal tax provisions that relate to the valuation of farmland. If you're a full-time producer, you own the land and are not leasing it out, and you're actively managing it, you can

qualify for special use valuation. That enables you to have your land valued at its agricultural value rather than speculative value. The catch here is that you cannot reduce your estate to less than $750,000 per spouse.

If those strategies aren't sufficient you may want to consider lifetime gifts of land or interests in the land (possibly through a family corporation or partnership) to the children. Each individual can give away $10,000 a year to any number of other individuals without incurring any gift tax. So a program of planned giving can, over the years, enable you to pass on a substantial amount of your land wealth without running afoul of Uncle Sam.

What I want to talk most about are conservation easements. It is possible not only to sell development rights, but also to donate them. That's charity, very clearly. But there are tax-deduction incentives to do that. You can reduce the value of the land to avoid its forced sale just to pay the estate tax man. In addition, you can often put money in your pocket by qualifying for immediate income tax deductions. These are voluntary choices you can make in order to help keep the farm in the family. We've heard a lot of talk about voluntariness today, and we subscribe to that philosophy. But there's absolutely nothing voluntary about having the tax man tell you you have to sell it.

Conservation easements and development rights are synonymous. In fact, the term "development rights" is something of a misnomer. When development rights are removed from the land, that doesn't give the holder of those rights the right to develop your land, it gives them the right to prevent the development of your land. The legal instrument through which this is done is called a conservation easement. This isn't a positive easement, like a right of way that gives the holder of that easement the right to cross your land. Conservation easements are negative easements; they give someone the right to *prevent* something from happening on your land--namely, development for non-farm purposes. The holder of the easement gets a deed, and has the power to enforce the covenants, the promises made in that deed. Those promises that you make are very flexible. They are like a contract in that they are negotiable and can mean whatever you put down in black and white. Easements do not allow public access to the property. Easements can permit some development, can allow houses to be built, and can even allow lots for sale to non-farmers.

Finally, easements can be terminated if conditions change dramatically. If you can't farm this land because it's been surrounded, provision can be made to extinguish that easement,

permitting the land to go into another use.

I had some more examples to show you, but I think my time is up. It's been terrific being with you, and I look forward to a good weekend down here.

Roger Allbee:

I've been asked to address the issue, in terms of our experience in the northeast, of lending on property with deed restrictions. Development pressures on ag land have been very intense. Our philosophy on lending: loans should be based primarily on the ability of the business to repay that loan, based upon earnings of that business, and not upon appreciated land values. We're not into the speculative lending business. We got burned once trying that, back in the early seventies. There's enough experience around the country to know that speculative lending can be very dangerous if the underlying value of the property changes downward for any reason. People always say it won't happen here. They said it in the northeast, where projections were that the boom would always be on. They said it in the midwest in the early eighties. I remember a report by the Carter administration, Agriculture 2000, which projected great demand for American food from economies around the world for a long period of time. Farmers were told to plant fencerow to fencerow. Two or three years later, the markets were not there and the land values declined greatly. It can happen.

You should know that on high value land, where there is ultimate demand for the property, the size of the loan is limited by earnings long before the total value of the property is reached. On the other hand, where the value is lower due to the agricultural use, this results in a smaller loan with no effect on earnings potential of the land. We believe this enhances the repayment ability of the business. In our part of the country, we do market appraisals based on what the property would sell at for agricultural use.

Based upon our method of lending, requests for credit on deed-restricted farms basically is no problem. Let me give you three examples of where we've seen a PDR program work well. One is on generational transfers, where son, daughter or sibling cannot afford to farm based upon the price of the land, the parents retain or sell off the development rights, and sell the agricultural value to the sibling. This reduces the overall debt and places the business on a sound operating basis. Land value is reduced to where the return on assets justifies the investment by the son or daughter. The second example where development rights works well is to reduce debt or where

the operator wants to expand his operation and doesn't want to do it through debt. If they currently have a loan, we may require a paydown to get the loan to the security ratio desired, and some of the proceeds would go for that purpose. The third example is just where someone wants to protect the land and stay in farming.

I have heard concern about agricultural values; that there's no market for that land. That's not true. In our analysis of the sale of those farms, there's a very active market for land on which the development rights have been sold. The value does increase, although at a slower rate than land with those rights. A voluntary program that gives the farmer the option to stay in farming benefits the farmer, the agricultural community, and the lender. There is great support for this by lenders in the North.

Gene Garber:

I'd like to tell you about some of the reasons I chose the preservation route. You've heard talk here today about making farming economically viable. To do that, you must preserve the farmer's number one asset--the land. If you preserve the land, you preserve the water that goes with it. If you preserve that, you have made farming economically viable because you've removed all the other development costs. It costs the farmer a lot to produce because he is pushed by development. If you attach development prices to the land, and the farmer says "I really need another 20 acres," he has to pay the same price the developer is willing to pay. How will he pay that off? Let's preserve that farmland and then have him pay agricultural value. The price of production gets to the point where it becomes economically viable.

You have a very unique agricultural area here. Protect it! Once it's gone, you've lost a very valuable asset, not just to this area but to Florida and the United States. I was particularly interested to hear the projection that the land will be used up by the year 2036. I would urge you to start today and protect every one-acre tract if you have to. If you wait, that agricultural land will be gone well before the year 2036.

The reason I donated a conservation easement was simply love of the land and a desire to protect it for future generations. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. My brother sold the easement rights to his farm; my father donated the easement rights to his farm; another brother donated his; my uncle sold his development rights to the county. The tax consequences were an issue for me. I had conservation easement in mind, but that for me was secondary because

my land never had any development value. You couldn't pay me enough to develop it . Development doesn't belong where my land is. It belongs where the county planners have planned for it, within the urban growth boundaries. Decisions must be made according to what's best for the community. It may sound trite, but it's the bottom line. My father was able to transfer farms to his three sons. For him also, the tax advantages were secondary. He had a great desire to see his sons in agriculture. He sent us to college because he wanted us to become farmers only if we wanted to become farmers. A lot of people in farming are not farmers, they're land speculators. I have two boys. I would love that they become farmers. But if they don't, those farms are available for someone else. If my children don't have the sense to realize that there's a tremendous asset there, then I want to make that decision for them.

In 1989, there was no such thing as effective ag zoning in my township. When I became a local supervisor in 1990, I replaced a pro-development supervisor, and a pro-preservation majority was created. We now have ag zoning. But I can be replaced in two years, and it may swing back the other way. So there's no such thing as effective ag zoning, unless you elect your officials in perpetuity, and elect pro-preservationists.

I've heard that farm imports and taxation are two problems we really have to face. You don't have to face them; face the land preservation issue! Allow your farmer to raise his product at a low enough level and he can compete with imports. The taxation problem will take care of itself if you preserve that farm.

What I've been hearing since I came to Florida, and what I see on the land use map, is that farmland is undeveloped land. Wrong. Agriculture is the highest form of developed land use. If you don't believe me, let's ask one of the tomato farmers here. That acreage you have gets highly developed before tomatoes go in, does it not? That land is highly developed. How highly developed is it to bring in a bulldozer, push out all the vegetation, and throw up concrete slabs?

I've sure appreciated being given a chance to get up on the soapbox and spout off. My concern is genuine. I fell in love with what I saw here, and my heart goes out to those of you who want to continue farming, and turn it over to your children, and I sure hope you're able to do that.

AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS: Protecting Agricultural Activity from Adverse Public Actions and Nuisance Complaints

Moderator: James Riggle, Director of Operations, American Farmland Trust

Speakers: Alvin Myers, Director of Government Affairs, Pennsylvania Farmers Association.
Ralph E. Grossi, President, American Farmland Trust

Alvin Myers:

I'd like to give you a historical perspective on ag districting, or ag security areas as we call them in Pennsylvania. Our problems with urbanization started in the sixties with considerable growth in suburban areas. The first thing we noticed was increased real estate taxes for farmers. In 1974, Pennsylvania passed a law which allows farmland to be assessed at its use value rather than its development value. In the early seventies, a committee was appointed within the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau to address the issues of protection from nuisance ordinances, unreasonable regulations, and eminent domain proceedings, compensation for loss of equity, and other things farmers find need for when urban development encroaches. Pennsylvania has a one hundred million dollar conservation easement program. It is the largest state program in the country, I believe. This program is an important partner to our Agricultural Security Area Program, which was inaugurated in 1981. The Farm Bureau members took great pride in developing and supporting this program. Currently, Pennsylvania has 420 Agricultural Areas in 56 (of 67) counties. There are 14,500 farmers enrolled in Ag Areas, and the total acreage exceeds 1.5 million.

I would like to describe the Ag Area program and explain why the farm community regards it an important tool in protecting farmland. In 1981, the general assembly passed Act 43, the program that sets up the Ag Security Area Program. It also created an option for a conservation easement program, but there were no funds at the time. The legislation was in response to a tremendous loss of farmland in Pennsylvania. In 1950, the state had over 170,000 farms, and fifteen million acres of farmland. We now have 50,000 farms, and less than eight million acres of farmland. About 20% of our remaining farmland is in Ag Security Areas.

A little background on the conservation easement program. Generally, a conservation

easement is a legal document landowners sign when they voluntarily decide to protect their land from commercial development, thus assuring the land will remain for agriculture. It can be donated or it can be sold. The value of the easement is the difference between the development value and the farm value of the land. After an agricultural easement is recorded with the county, the land can only be used for commercial production of agricultural products. In Pennsylvania, an easement can be perpetual, or can have a duration of 25 years. The first requirement to qualify is to be located in an Agricultural Security Area. If the easement is for perpetuity, the purchase price cannot exceed the difference between the appraised agricultural value and appraised commercial value. For 25-year purchase of easement rights, the price cannot exceed 1/10 of the calculated difference in appraisals. So it's less money for the 25 years. Farms must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the program:

1. Must be located in an Agricultural Security Area.
2. Must be part of a farm capable of producing gross receipts of greater than $25,000.
3. Contain at least 50% soils in capability Classes 1 through 4.
4. Contain at least 50% of harvested crop land, pasture or grazing land.
5. Must be capable of producing sustained yields equal to the county average yield for the crop produced. (It need not achieve this every year.)

The purpose of these minimum criteria is to emphasize the preservation of land that is commercially important to agriculture in each county. Farms are selected for easement purchase if they receive a high rank in the county's numerical ranking system. Policy is determined at the county level, so that the excellent farms which are located in the areas targeted for preservation receive a high score. It is important to remember that the farmland preservation program is not an open space program.

Act 43 allows farmers to petition their local governments, townships, and boroughs for ag area designation. The most common unit of government in our state is the township; we have 1,549 townships. We're very proud of our heritage of local control. The signatures on a petition must represent a cumulative minimum of 500 acres in order to create an agricultural area. The largest ag area in the state is just over 10,000 acres. Within 180 days, township supervisors must review, publicize, hold public hearings on, and vote on the proposal. There are about 100 proposals currently in the pipeline. The ag area must be re-authorized by local government every seven years. Upon approval, certain benefits are given to farms in the ag area: Local

governments are not to enact ordinances that would unreasonably restrict normal farming practices or structures. Local governments should not define as a public nuisance normal farming practices. Hazardous waste and low-level radio active waste sites are not to be located in agricultural security areas. Farmland in security areas is eligible for the easement program. State-funded development projects which might affect ag areas are to be reviewed for possible alternatives, so there is some protection from eminent domain proceedings.

In return for these benefits, the farmer agrees to stay in farming during the 7 year lifetime of the ag area. I should stress that farmers can leave without penalty. Farmers are not excused from existing environmental regulations. It is in the area of eminent domain protection that the ag area really flexes its muscles. If a condemnation proceeding is initiated against land in an ag area, four levels of review are mandated before any farmland can be condemned. One case went to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which upheld a previous decision not allowing condemnation.

The ag areas program is not a panacea, nor a utopia for the agricultural community. But we have found that it serves as a valuable tool for protecting farmers from onerous rules that would put them out of business.

Ralph Grossi:

You may notice as I speak that I'll be switching hats, moving between my role as a beef farmer in California and my role as President of AFT. I took on this position in 1985-- it was supposed to be for 3 or 4 years--and it was a tough decision. Trying to run things on the farm from 3,000 miles away eventually caused me to convert from a dairy operation to a beef cattle and small grains operation, which is a little easier to run than a 300-cow dairy.

Last night I had the privilege of sitting in on the Dade County Farm Bureau meeting at their invitation and hearing the presentation of their strategic plan. It brought back some fond and not-so-fond memories of my experience in California, and I would like to share with you a little bit about what happened in Marin County. When you cross the Golden Gate Bridge, you're in Marin. We're very close to an urban area. There are quarter-acre building lots selling a mile and a quarter from our barn for $600,000 to $700,000; houses selling for $1.4 million, and they're selling. I think I can appreciate urban pressure. The last time I went home, I sat down for a family meeting with my father and brothers. (I'm the managing partner, and they each hold

some interest in the farm.) I noticed that my brother had brought a set of plans. When he rolled them out on the table, I discovered that they were for a Robert Trent Jones golf course on our farm. So I understand family pressures as well. Fortunately, my dad, who is 80 but still puts in a full day on the farm, looked over at the plans and said, "not in my lifetime." And that was the end of the discussion.

I want to talk about the Williamson Act in the context of Marin County. Marin County does not have the kind of farmland you have here. We have rolling hills, grazing land, a little crop land on which we can grow forage crops--oat and legume silage--for our cattle, and that's about it. But we have 140,000 acres of it, and it's highly productive pasture. In the late 1960s, Marin County was viewed as a major potential metropolitan area. In fact, the county planners had plans for 1.1 units per acre on the whole 140,000 acres. There was a major freeway that was going to go up along the coast. It would have opened up the entire western part of Marin County. There was a growing concern among the family farmers (almost all of them are family operations that have been there since the late 1800s--4th, 5th and 6th generation ranchers); we really wanted to stay. But it wasn't the ranchers who took the initiative, it was the environmental groups. I'll talk more on that later.

In 1967, the Williamson Act set up what became a defacto agricultural district program. It is California's method of use-value taxation for agriculture. In 1967, we were paying $20 an acre for unimproved land real estate taxes in our county. This year, 24 years later, we're paying $2.50. It's the Williamson Act that made that possible. This allows any county to set up an agricultural preserve--which is our form of ag districts in California--in the context of the comprehensive plan. The reason it got popular very quickly (the same reason the Pennsylvania program got popular in the last few years) is that you must be in an agricultural preserve before you qualify to sign a Williamson Act contract. Anyone in the preserve can sign up for use-value taxation. The results, in our case, were dramatic. We would have been long gone if it weren't for the Williamson Act. Our relatively low-value grazing land cannot compete with housing. We have no crops in Marin County that can compete with housing. So it was crucial to have use-value tax evaluation.

By 1969, forty-eight counties had set up ag preserves. There are still a few agricultural counties that don't have the Williamson Act; they didn't want to give up the revenue stream. Participating counties get a subvention payment from the state, which is supposed to make up

for the revenue loss. It's not a large amount of money; only about $14 million a year. Counties are arguing that they should be getting a great deal more money, when in fact, for most of them, preserving farmland has allowed them to limit urban sprawl, limit the deliverance of public services, and has probably been a fiscal benefit. But they don't want to admit that at the moment.

In any case, the Williamson Act is a very important part of farmland protection in California because it took away one of the great threats, and that was the premature sale of the farm because of a tax burden. In 1978, we passed Proposition 13 in California, and while the final chapter hasn't been written yet on Proposition 13, it had an additional benefit for agriculture. Land under a Williamson contract is not affected by Proposition 13, but improvements on the property are now assessed under Proposition 13 criteria, which means the assessed value can only be raised by 2% a year. So as long as a farmer doesn't sell his land, then the tax burden isn't very significant. When you sell, there's an upgrading of the assessed value under Proposition 13 and then your taxes can jump dramatically.

We have a series of agencies in California we call LAFCOs, Local Agency Formation Commissions, which are super-county agencies that determine where urban service boundaries are. When a city, county or water district wants to extend urban services or change its boundary, it must get approval from this commission, which is made up of representatives from both county and city governments. One of the express purposes of LAFCOs, when they were set up, was to preserve farmland.

Let me return to what happened in Marin. The debate over this new freeway that was to go out across west Marin became very heated in the late 1960s, and our five county supervisors were split 2 to 2, with 1 on the fence. It appeared that the one would go with the proposed development plan. The environmental community, which is strong and is generally moderate, brought forward a candidate and an ad valorem tax to protect open space in Marin County. Both of them passed by big margins, so there was a strong statement from the public that they wanted to protect the western part of the county. That supervisor, who was elected in 1972, is still a county supervisor. Three of the county supervisors have been sitting since 1974. So we have a stable political situation in the county, but we didn't think that was enough.

Four months after the election, the board voted to rezone the 140,000 acres from 1.1 unit per acre to 1 unit per 60 acres. That was not supported by the farm community. We were

outraged by the fact that we had been down-zoned; that what would have been 155,000 homes in west Marin would now be 2,500. I should tell you that 19 years later, there has not been a single zoning change, except for some technical changes to provide for things such as clustering of homes. The zoning change went all the way to the Supreme Court, and last year the Court refused to hear the case. A developer from Chicago challenged the county zoning, and the county won its case. That's not to say that that's the right way to do it. In Marin, it was shoved down our throats.

After that, the environmental groups and the politicians recognized that that 3-2 vote can go back and forth on any given Tuesday. The environmental community reached out to us, asked us what they could do to enhance agriculture in this county. We began to work together, although very suspiciously, on issues such as the Clean Water Act of 1972. Most of us had dairies that our grandfathers had built right on the creek banks so that the corrals could be cleaned efficiently, so we had major water quality problems. We had to make major investments; on our dairy we spent close to $200,000. The county said we'll pay 25% of the cost of the facilities up front, and we also got some cost share from the federal government. Most of the ranchers participated. This initiative by the County showed us that they wanted agriculture not only as open space for them, but also to be a viable economic industry in the county. In the mid 1970s, we put together a coalition to go to Sacramento to get an increase in the price of milk for dairymen. This coalition included the County Farm Bureau, the Marin Conservation League, the Sierra Club, and Friends of the Earth. Needless to say it was an interesting coalition, but it also shocked a lot of people in agriculture. The lesson we were learning was that we had some friends out there we can count on when we can find some common ground that we can agree on. In the drought of 1977-78, again they came to our aid and the county paid for the hauling of water, which at one time was to 55 dairies over a half million gallons a day by tanker truck. Each time we went to the Board of Supervisors for assistance, the vote was 5 - 0. It's real difficult for any group of politicians to turn their backs on a coalition of environmentalists and farmers working together. There are lots of opportunities for that to occur in other areas of the country.

In the late 1970s we developed the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) which was sponsored by the County Farm Bureau with assistance from Trust for Public Land and a few other organizations, to set up a private alternative to use conservation easements and purchase

of development rights. The board is primarily agricultural, but there are some environmentalists, civil servants, and others. During the intervening 11 years, the Marin Agricultural Land Trust has raised almost $20,000,000 through various techniques. They have taken the issue and gone with it and have not relied on the political sector to solve this problem. This is an alternative to what you've been hearing all day. They have now purchased or had donated easements to the Trust on 15,000 acres of land and are currently negotiating more than 5,000 acres of additional properties.

You've talked about funding mechanisms today, and I want to focus briefly on what MALT has done in Marin County. MALT was able to convince the county that some of the money from the open space fund should go into the farmland protection fund, which the Land Trust uses to acquire development rights. We are also the beneficiaries of a private trust that left $250 million to Marin County. That money allowed MALT to hire a professional staff to do the planning needed to set up a land trust and negotiate with farmers. The trust also gave them $1 million to get their land acquisition program going. The big break came in 1988 when there was an Open Space and Parks Bill Bond Act on the ballot in California for nearly $800 million. Local groups were allowed to buy into the Bond Act with a commitment that they would get a certain number of signatures to qualify it for the ballot. For every signature they get, they can get so many dollars written into the Bond Act for them. People recognized that it wouldn't be hard to get signatures in Marin County, so they put themselves down for $15 million and that is what the Trust is operating on right now.

Sonoma County has just passed a quarter cent sales tax that will go into the same kind of fund for that county, and will generate $8,000,000 a year to purchase development rights. The county to the east of Marin, Solano County, became the first to adopt what we call Mello-Roos districts, named after the authors of a bill which provided this authority to counties, and essentially the authority is to create a district for new development. If agricultural land is going to be subdivided, the local government can set up such a district. The developer commits a certain amount of money up front--you could call it a mitigation fee. For 20 years, every homeowner who buys a home in this district pays an additional open space tax for living in those homes. The beauty of it is, politically, that you don't tax yourself, you tax future homeowners. So there are lots of ways to generate a revenue stream. We continue to find that in spite of tough economic times, people will vote for farmland protection. We have seen bond issues as

recently as 7 months ago on the ballot alongside of other bond issues for transportation, prisons, and schools and the ones that pass are the open space bond issues. There is still very strong support for protecting open space/farmland and our polls in Florida, although they're not as recent as we'd like, indicate strong support here as well.

There's something else that's occurred in areas where there have been PDR programs, that not enough people appreciate. It happened in Marin, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and in Maryland. There is an entire change in the way farmers think about their land when there's an alternative available. Whatever the program is that offers some compensation for preserving land, it is an alternative to the only other logical option: every farm is going to come up for sale. Every farm is going to change hands anywhere from 15 to 25 years on the average. It's at that point in time, when the farm is going to change hands, that you need an alternative. Heretofore, the only alternative has been to subdivide in order to get the value out of the land. These programs are designed to present an alternative to that. These are voluntary programs, and shouldn't be regarded as a threat to anyone. If there is no alternative, then the farmer thinks about having to move from that farm and won't make the major investments he needs; he loses his commitment to the land. Pretty soon the efficiency starts to drop, because you haven't made the investments in new equipment and technology. So the process of farms going out of business starts way before they actually go out. In Marin County in 1967, virtually every dairy was run by people in their 50s and 60s, and their children are already leaving. We have actually had a number of cases where the children have now come back to the dairy from being auto mechanics, car salesmen, and I can go down the list. Virtually every one of Marin's dairy and beef operations is now run by a young family member. It was only possible because of an alternative program. What we have seen in areas that have farmland protection programs is a change in thinking. Now people know they have an alternative, they know they can plan for their future, and their children's future.

We also found that you don't need to pay the full difference between the agricultural value and market value, or what has been described all day as the development value. Lots of people will take something less than that because they want to stay on that farm so badly and continue the family operation. It's also important to note that the land stays on the tax roll. These kinds of programs don't impact local revenues at all. Most communities already have some sort of use-value taxation so the land is already valued for tax purposes at its agricultural value. You don't

have to buy that land to protect it, you just need to buy the easement. Perhaps most important, in today's fiscal crunch, is that any public dollars that are available for land protection, open space, or sensitive areas can be stretched much further because typically you pay anywhere from 30 to 70 percent of the full market value for the easement, so in effect you can get 2 acres of protection for every 1 that you could through the traditional open space acquisition programs. The adoption of a PDR, TDR, or other conservation program is in fact a statement by the community that it respects property rights. The community recognizes that a landowner's life savings is in that land, and makes a commitment to compensate him for that value. Without such programs, there are only two choices: either let the property be subdivided, or regulate it.

You probably recall a question I asked regarding domestic policies concerning food and agriculture. We do want food as cheap as possible on our tables. There's a line of thinking that says food ought to be produced wherever it's the cheapest to get it to the consumer--that that is a worthy public policy goal. I suggest that there are some other issues here. One of them is that, over the long term, do we want to be a food importing nation or do we want to have the strength to produce our own food here? We now import almost as much food and fiber as we export in this country. Within 5 to 10 years, we could very well be a net importing country. That's a significant public policy issue and it relates directly to unique farming areas like you have in Florida.

One final point: while we benefited in Marin County from good friends in the environmental community, we also have concerns in the environmental community. We have real tough issues and you have them here as well. Water and chemicals in agriculture are premier issues. Diversity of agriculture is significant to the economy and to the nation. We in the farm community need to develop our own environmental agendas. We need to have a positive approach to issues, not a reactionary approach. There are lots of potential allies out there. The public today understands more about the impact of agriculture on their quality of life. We've got to recognize that there are greater expectations of the farmer today. The water issue is an example. We have a three-cornered tug-of-war going on in California over water, particularly water supplies. The three corners are environmental needs, urban needs, and agriculture. None of those three has the power to take the water away from the other, although that dynamic is changing quickly. If you think about a tug-of-war, you have one group on each side, pulling a rope, with a big hole in the middle full of water, and one group ends up in the

water. What we have is a three-cornered tug-of-war, with the environmentalists, the urban community, and farmers all tugging away. One of them is going to end up in the hole, and it's going to be dry. They're not going to get any water. The other two are going to split the water. Our challenge is to make sure that we [farmers] are one of those two. The way to do it is to build allies, friends, find common ground, and pull the third one into the hole. That is probably where we are on a lot of conservation and environmental issues. We found that we can work with people who are traditionally regarded as adversaries in the farm community. We still have some problems with some of those issues, but on land conservation, there's a lot of common ground. There are great opportunities, because farmland protection is still a more positive land use than smothering good crop land in houses. It is still a better buffer to the Everglades than 24 housing units per acre and the kinds of impacts that would have on environmental resources. I would like to challenge the farm community as well as the public policy community to try to find those bridges and build them as quickly as possible.

CONCLUSION: Speaking Out About the Potential for Agricultural Retention

Moderator: Allan Bly, Assistant Director, Dade County Planning Department

Facilitator: Tom Wilson, Associate Director, Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems at Florida International University.

Allan Bly began the closing session by summarizing the day's presentations. He encouraged participants to become involved in planning the next step for agricultural retention in Dade County, and to direct their suggestions to the organizations represented on the Conference Advisory Committee, or to the Metro-Dade Planning Department, or to the IFAS Center in Homestead. Further action would be predicated, to a large extent, on the reactions of participants to the options presented at the conference. He informed the participants that the conference proceedings would be published by the Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems at Florida International University and mailed to each registered participant in approximately two months.

Tom Wilson administered a survey questionnaire to conference participants for their responses to the day's presentations and overall evaluation of the conference. The results of this survey comprise the following section of this report.

APPENDIX

CONFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS

CONFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please help us to evaluate the conference and plan future courses of action for Dade County by answering a few questions:

Q-1. Please indicate your areas of expertise relating to agriculture and/or land use policy:

1 Farmer
2 Rural Landowner
3 Builder/Developer
4 Local government professional
5 Banking/Finance
6 Realtor
7 Other (please specify):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q-2. How much land do you own, rent, or use in farming operations? Include all land regardless of location or use -- cropland, pastureland, orchards, woodland, idleland, etc.

a. How much TOTAL LAND do you currently operate? ....._____ Acres
b. How many acres do you OWN? ....._____ Acres
c. How many acres do you RENT FROM OTHERS? ....._____ Acres
d. How many acres do you RENT TO OTHERS? ....._____ Acres

Q-3. Please rate the topic areas and presentations according to the following scale:

1 NOT EFFECTIVE/INFORMATIVE
2 SLIGHTLY EFFECTIVE/INFORMATIVE
3 UNDECIDED
4 MODERATELY EFFECTIVE/INFORMATIVE
5 VERY EFFECTIVE/INFORMATIVE

South Dade Land Dynamics	1	2	3	4	5
Ag Land Retention Overview	1	2	3	4	5
Purchase of Development Rights	1	2	3	4	5
Conservation Easements/Estate Planning	1	2	3	4	5
Agricultural Districts/Tax Relief/Lending	1	2	3	4	5
Concluding Discussion	1	2	3	4	5

Q-4. Which agricultural land retention strategies do you think are most appropriate for Dade County? Please rate each strategy according to the following scale:

1 VERY INAPPROPRIATE/USELESS
2 INAPPROPRIATE/USELESS
3 UNDECIDED
4 APPROPRIATE/USEFUL
5 VERY APPROPRIATE/USEFUL

Purchase of Development Rights	1	2	3	4	5
Transfer of Development Rights	1	2	3	4	5
Conservation Easements	1	2	3	4	5
Agricultural Districts	1	2	3	4	5
Zoning Controls	1	2	3	4	5

Please complete the survey questions on the reverse side

Q-5. What are appropriate roles for the state? Please rate each role according to the following scale:

1 STRONGLY DISAGREE
2 DISAGREE
3 UNDECIDED
4 AGREE
5 STRONGLY AGREE

Cost Share on Purchase/Development Rights	1	2	3	4	5
Marketing Assistance	1	2	3	4	5
Low-cost Loans to Farmers	1	2	3	4	5
Better Information on Land Use, Development, Farmland Conversion	1	2	3	4	5
Enabling Legislation for Agricultural Districts	1	2	3	4	5

Q-6. Would you like to participate in any follow-up conferences or other activities concerning agricultural land retention in Dade County? What kinds of activities do you feel would be most appropriate?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q-7. Please provide your name and address if you would like more information on topics covered in the conference. If you would like information on topics not covered in the conference, please indicate.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for attending the conference and for your cooperation in filling out this survey.

At the end of the conference, a survey questionnaire was distributed to conference attendees by Joint Center staff. The questionnaire contained questions on occupation, land ownership status, and opinions on several aspects of farmland preservation. The questionnaires were gathered as participants completed them and left the conference.

Of the sixty people who completed the survey questionnaire, thirty-three percent were representatives of local government, and twenty-eight percent were farmers. Twenty-two percent indicated that their main occupation was something other than the choices given on the questionnaire. The remaining seventeen percent were non-profit organization (8%), banking/finance (7%), and rural landowners (2%). Table 1 lists only one respondent as "rural landowner." There were actually ten respondents who identified themselves as rural landowners, but nine of these *also* listed some other occupation. In this case, the other occupation was used for data analysis, since land ownership was dealt with in question #2 and was therefore a redundant choice in question #1. "Non-profit organization" was *not* one of the choices offered on question #1, but eight percent of the respondents identified themselves as "other" and specified their affiliation with some non-profit group.

Since only sixty of the participants completed the questionnaire, conference registration forms, which contained occupational information, were examined to determine the representativeness of the questionnaire. The examination revealed little variation. The occupation that departed most from the survey results was the percentage of farmers (thirty-seven percent of registrants versus thirty-three percent of survey respondents).

Information from the registrations and survey questionnaires revealed conference participation by a diverse array of industries, government agencies, and professions. In addition to the six occupations specified on the survey, there were teachers, attorneys, and engineers present. The fertilizer, rock mining, and electric utility industries were represented, as were growers associations and other agricultural support groups. Federal and state agencies present included the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission, South Florida Water Management District, and the South Florida Regional Planning Council. A member of the Florida House of Representatives was also present.

The majority of respondents felt that all of the topics and presentations were moderately effective or very effective, and seventy-four percent asked to be kept informed on agricultural

preservation issues and future events. When asked about appropriate agricultural land retention strategies for Dade County, most found some method appropriate or very appropriate (seventy-four percent for PDR, eighty-two percent for easements, seventy-three percent for agricultural districts, and fifty-one percent for agricultural zoning). Only thirty-five percent found TDR to be appropriate or very appropriate, whereas twenty-nine percent thought it an inappropriate or very inappropriate strategy. The remaining thirty-seven percent were undecided.

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the five specified roles the state could play in an agricultural land retention program, although a large percentage were undecided. The largest percentage of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) were for *enabling legislation for agricultural districts* (87%) and *better information on land use, development, farmland conversion* (87%). The largest percentage of negative responses (disagree or strongly disagree) were for *low-cost loans to farmers* (20%).

The distribution of responses is shown in the tables that follow. Table A6 shows the distribution of responses to the strategies listed in question #4 among the occupations indicated in question #1. Table A7 shows the distribution of responses to the strategies listed in question #4 across land ownership categories, as indicated by respondents in question #2. There were no readily apparent patterns in responses across these occupation and land ownership categories.

TABLE A1

QUESTION 1
OCCUPATION/AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENTS

OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	20	33%
FARMER	17	28%
OTHER	13	22%
NON PROFIT	5	8%
BANKING/FINANCE	4	7%
RURAL LANDOWNER	1	2%
BUILDER/DEVELOPER	0	0%
REALTOR	0	0%
TOTAL	60	100%

FIGURE A1

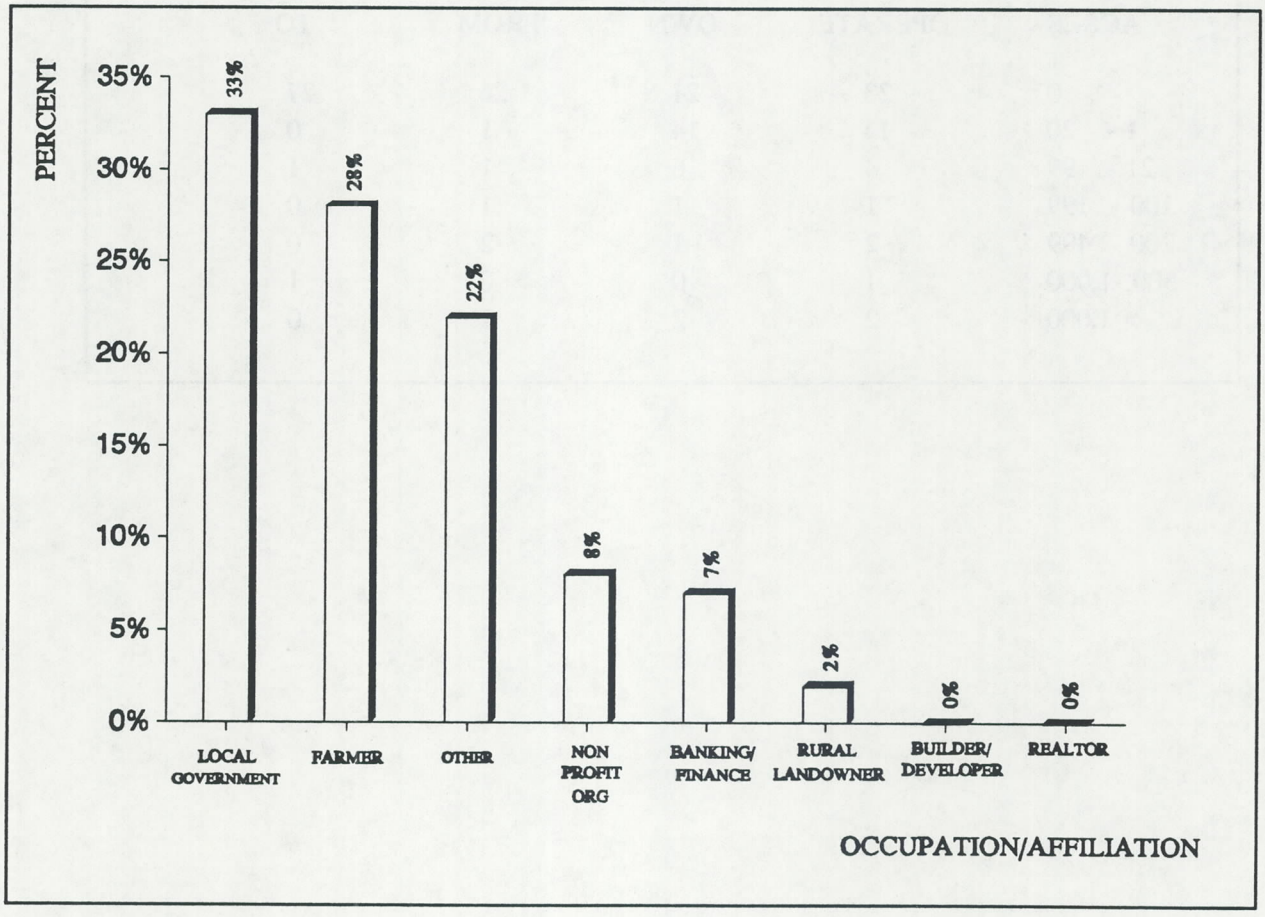


TABLE A2

QUESTION 2
OWNERSHIP STATUS
FREQUENCIES

ACRES	OPERATE	OWN	RENT FROM	RENT TO
0	23	21	26	27
1 - 20	14	14	1	0
21 - 99	4	6	1	1
100 - 199	1	1	1	0
200 - 499	2	1	2	0
500 -1,000	1	0	0	1
> 1,000	2	2	1	0

TABLE A3

QUESTION 3
CONFERENCE TOPICS RATING

FREQUENCY	Dynamics	Overview	PDR	Easements	Ag District	Conclusion
NOT EFFECTIVE	1	0	1	0	1	0
SLIGHTLY EFFECTIVE	8	2	1	3	2	1
UNDECIDED	7	7	2	5	7	13
MODERATELY EFFECTIVE	20	22	25	29	22	21
VERY EFFECTIVE	21	26	29	22	26	15
TOTAL	57	57	58	59	58	50

PERCENTAGE[1]	Dynamics	Overview	PDR	Easements	Ag District	Conclusion
NOT EFFECTIVE	2%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%
SLIGHTLY EFFECTIVE	14%	4%	2%	5%	3%	2%
UNDECIDED	12%	12%	3%	8%	12%	26%
MODERATELY EFFECTIVE	35%	39%	43%	49%	38%	42%
VERY EFFECTIVE	37%	46%	50%	37%	45%	30%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

[1]Percent totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

TABLE A4

QUESTION 4
IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE/INAPPROPRIATE AGRICULTURAL
LAND RETENTION STRATEGIES FOR DADE COUNTY

FREQUENCY	PDR	TDR	Easements	Districts	Zoning
VERY INAPPROPRIATE	2	6	0	0	3
INAPPROPRIATE	1	10	0	2	6
UNDECIDED	12	21	11	14	20
APPROPRIATE	13	15	24	19	14
VERY APPROPRIATE	29	5	24	24	16
TOTAL	57	57	59	59	59

PERCENTAGE[1]	PDR	TDR	Easements	Districts	Zoning
VERY INAPPROPRIATE	4%	11%	0%	0%	5%
INAPPROPRIATE	2%	18%	0%	3%	10%
UNDECIDED	21%	37%	19%	24%	34%
APPROPRIATE	23%	26%	41%	32%	24%
VERY APPROPRIATE	51%	9%	41%	41%	27%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

[1]Percent totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding

TABLE A5

QUESTION 5
IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE ROLES FOR THE STATE

FREQUENCY	PDR	Marketing	Loans	Information	Districts
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	6	2	0
DISAGREE	0	4	6	6	0
UNDECIDED	16	17	12	0	8
AGREE	21	18	26	24	17
STRONGLY AGREE	20	18	9	27	34
TOTAL	58	59	59	59	59

PERCENTAGE[1]	PDR	Marketing	Loans	Information	Districts
STRONGLY DISAGREE	2%	3%	10%	3%	0%
DISAGREE	0%	7%	10%	10%	0%
UNDECIDED	28%	29%	20%	0%	14%
AGREE	36%	31%	44%	41%	29%
STRONGLY AGREE	34%	31%	15%	46%	58%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

[1]Percent totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.