

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 451 of 1994**

**324.36201 Definitions.**

Sec. 36201.

As used in this part:

(a) "Agricultural conservation easement" means a conveyance, by a written instrument, in which, subject to permitted uses, the owner relinquishes to the public in perpetuity his or her development rights and makes a covenant running with the land not to undertake development.

(b) "Agricultural use" means substantially undeveloped land devoted to the production of plants and animals useful to humans, including forages and sod crops; grains, feed crops, and field crops; dairy and dairy products; poultry and poultry products; livestock, including breeding and grazing of cattle, swine, captive cervidae, and similar animals; berries; herbs; flowers; seeds; grasses; nursery stock; fruits; vegetables; Christmas trees; and other similar uses and activities. Agricultural use includes use in a federal acreage set-aside program, a federal conservation reserve program, or a wetland reserve program. Agricultural use does not include the management and harvesting of a woodlot.

(c) "Board" means the agricultural preservation fund board created in section 36204.

(d) "Commission" means the commission of agriculture and rural development.

(e) "Department" means the department of agriculture and rural development.

(f) "Development" means an activity that materially alters or affects the existing conditions or use of any land in a manner that is inconsistent with an agricultural use.

(g) "Development rights" means an interest in land that includes the right to construct a building or structure, to improve land for development, or to divide a parcel for development purposes.

(h) "Farmland" means 1 or more of the following:

(i) A farm of 40 or more acres in 1 ownership, with 51% or more of the land area devoted to an agricultural use.

(ii) A farm of 5 acres or more in 1 ownership, but less than 40 acres, with 51% or more of the land area devoted to an agricultural use, that has produced a gross annual income from agriculture of \$200.00 per year or more per acre of cleared and tillable land. A farm described in this subparagraph enrolled in a federal acreage set-aside program or a federal conservation reserve program is considered to have produced a gross annual income from agriculture of \$200.00 per year or more per acre of cleared and tillable land.

(iii) A farm designated by the department as a specialty farm in 1 ownership that has produced a gross annual income of \$2,000.00 or more from an agricultural use. Specialty farms include, but are not limited to, greenhouses; equine breeding and grazing; the breeding and grazing of cervidae, pheasants, and other game animals; bees and bee products; mushrooms; aquaculture; and other similar uses and activities.

(iv) Parcels of land in 1 ownership that are not contiguous but which constitute an integral part of a farming operation being conducted on land otherwise qualifying as farmland may be included in an application under this part.

(i) "Fund" means the agricultural preservation fund created in section 36202.

(j) "Grant" means a grant for the purchase of an agriculture conservation easement under this part.

(k) "Owner" means a person having a freehold estate in land coupled with possession and enjoyment. If land is subject to a land contract, owner means the vendee in agreement with the vendor.

(l) "Permitted use" means any use expressly authorized within an agriculture conservation easement consistent with the farming operation or that does not adversely affect the productivity of the farmland. Storage, retail or wholesale marketing, or processing of agricultural products is a permitted use in a farming operation if more than 50% of the stored, processed, or merchandised products are produced by the farm operator for at least 3 of the immediately preceding 5 years. Permitted use includes oil and gas exploration and extraction, but does not include other mineral development that is inconsistent with an agricultural use.

**History:** Add. 2000, Act 262, Imd. Eff. June. 29, 2000 ;-- Am. 2013, Act 86, Imd. Eff. June 28, 2013

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