

## Landscapes3 Agriculture Survey Results

### Q1 Farmland preservation is a priority in Chester County.

Answered: 79 Skipped: 1

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
35.44%	46.84%	3.80%	11.39%	2.53%	79	4.01
28	37	3	9	2		

### Q2 Farmland preservation should be a priority in Chester County.

Answered: 79 Skipped: 1

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
73.42%	24.05%	0.00%	2.53%	0.00%	79	4.68
58	19	0	2	0		

### Q3 Additional funds should be allocated to farmland preservation in Chester County.

Answered: 79 Skipped: 1

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
62.03%	21.52%	11.39%	5.06%	0.00%	79	4.41
49	17	9	4	0		

## Q4 There will be a point when enough farmland has been preserved in Chester County.

Answered: 79 Skipped: 1

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
5.06%	25.32%	13.92%	35.44%	20.25%	79	2.59
4	20	11	28	16		

## Q5 Why did you answer the way you did in Q4?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 11

Representative comments are provided below, in order of submission. 69 comments were submitted.

Representative Comments Submitted:

I'm not clear about the amount of farm land currently so I need more information to answer this question
Preserving farmland does not preserve the farm. Simply buying development rights does not preserve the farm in agriculture. A community that respects the value that farm's existence is just as important. The problems of the ag/urban interface, are serious and do and will impede the success of the farm.
Don't believe funds will be allocated to preserve all working farms in the county
If we continue to put more funds to farmland preservation and conservation easements we can do the work needed. I hope that is the case.
No farms, no food. Agriculture is dominant sector of local, regional, and national economy.
Most preserved farmland becomes nothing but a haven for environmentalists to keep agricultural practices off the land. I am tired of all the conservancies and land trusts taking over ground and then not allowing livestock or crops or manure to be applied to the land. If you can promise it will be kept in true agriculture production then I am all for this but if not it is an exercise in futility.
Not necessary to have all farmland preserved but sufficient to preserve both the best soil/land and ensure sufficient ideally contiguous land to sustain a healthy and sustainable farming economy.
We have very fertile soil that produces excellent crops generally without irrigation. There are other locations and methods of building houses but no other currently feasible way to grow food.
If the county wishes to grow and prosper a balance of farm land, industrial land, residential, commercial land, and other special purpose land must coexist.

## Q6 Municipal officials understand the extent of regulations that farms are subject to (environmental, production practices, etc.).

Answered: 72 Skipped: 8

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
2.78%	11.11%	13.89%	50.00%	22.22%	72	2.22
2	8	10	36	16		

## Q7 Agriculture is meeting its regulatory obligations (e.g. environmental, production practices, etc.).

Answered: 72 Skipped: 8

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
6.94% 5	38.89% 28	23.61% 17	25.00% 18	5.56% 4	72	3.17

## Q8 My municipality takes an active role to support the agricultural industry.

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
15.71% 11	30.00% 21	27.14% 19	17.14% 12	10.00% 7	70	3.24

## Q9 Why did you answer the way you did in Q8?

Answered: 64 Skipped: 16

Representative comments are provided below, in order of submission. 64 comments were submitted.

Representative Comments Submitted:

My township supervisors have made Ag preservation a priority, resulting in almost 1/3 land preserved.
Our township has not used its available Open Space funding for years.
Zoning ordinances should be reviewed to adhere to agricultural industries.
I don't know
There is active participation in committees for Ag, there is farmland preservation and they call upon us to answer questions
They tolerate agriculture. They do not take an active role to support it.
Successful open space program; large ASA; successful efforts to tailor zoning to agricultural needs
Our township allows farmers latitude and goes above and beyond to stay off their backs and supports them.
My municipality has passed ordinances that violate the statewide ACRES law and has opposed agricultural operations on preserved farms.
They take a stand to slow development and conserve land but do not often understand agriculture. not many farmers active in township activities.

## Q10 What tools are most effective in preserving agriculture in Chester County? (Please Rank 1 - 5, with 1 being the most effective)

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average	Response Count
Agricultural easements	27	10	12	7	11	2	2.58	69
	39.13%	14.49%	17.39%	10.14%	15.94%	2.90%		
Agricultural zoning (not large lot zoning)	12	13	19	10	6	1	2.80	61
	19.67%	21.31%	31.15%	16.39%	9.84%	1.64%		
Farm transition assistance (mechanisms to help next gen join farm operation)	9	10	16	16	10	0	3.13	61
	14.75%	16.39%	26.23%	26.23%	16.39%	0.00%		
Allowance of accessory farm uses (secondary farm businesses/value-add)	6	20	8	17	11	1	3.16	63
	9.52%	31.75%	12.70%	26.98%	17.46%	1.59%		
Transfer of development rights	7	12	7	8	20	4	3.59	58
	12.07%	20.69%	12.07%	13.79%	34.48%	6.90%		
Other	3	0	2	4	4	10	4.57	23
	13.04%	0.00%	8.70%	17.39%	17.39%	43.48%		

## Q11 Elected officials understand the importance of agriculture to our quality of life.

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
2.86%	34.29%	12.86%	42.86%	7.14%	70	2.83
2	24	9	30	5		

## Q12 Elected officials understand the importance of agriculture to our local economy.

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
1.43%	40.00%	8.57%	40.00%	10.00%	70	2.83
1	28	6	28	7		

**Q13 The “agricultural community”  
(producers, ag service providers, nonprofits  
and government agencies) conducts  
enough outreach and educational programs  
for elected officials.**

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
1.43% 1	8.57% 6	24.29% 17	55.71% 39	10.00% 7	70	2.36

**Q14 Residents of Chester County  
understand the importance of agriculture to  
our quality of life.**

Answered: 68 Skipped: 12

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
5.88% 4	25.00% 17	8.82% 6	51.47% 35	8.82% 6	68	2.68

**Q15 Residents of Chester County  
understand the importance of agriculture to  
our local economy.**

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
5.71% 4	20.00% 14	7.14% 5	48.57% 34	18.57% 13	70	2.46

**Q16 The “agricultural community”  
(producers, ag service providers, nonprofits  
and government agencies) conducts  
enough outreach and educational programs  
for residents.**

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
1.43% 1	10.00% 7	14.29% 10	64.29% 45	10.00% 7	70	2.29

## Q17 Prioritize the need for agricultural outreach to the following audiences.(Select the three most important audiences for outreach)

Answered: 70 Skipped: 10

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Rating Average	Response Count
Municipal officials	29	15	7	4	2	2	2	0	0	2.16	61
	47.54%	24.59%	11.48%	6.56%	3.28%	3.28%	3.28%	0.00%	0.00%		
Adults	14	9	15	7	1	5	3	0	0	2.98	54
	25.93%	16.67%	27.78%	12.96%	1.85%	9.26%	5.56%	0.00%	0.00%		
Young adults	6	10	19	7	6	4	1	0	0	3.25	53
	11.32%	18.87%	35.85%	13.21%	11.32%	7.55%	1.89%	0.00%	0.00%		
Other elected officials	3	18	7	8	4	2	2	4	0	3.54	48
	6.25%	37.50%	14.58%	16.67%	8.33%	4.17%	4.17%	8.33%	0.00%		
Youth 9-12	4	10	7	3	11	3	4	0	0	3.76	42
	9.52%	23.81%	16.67%	7.14%	26.19%	7.14%	9.52%	0.00%	0.00%		
Youth K-8	11	3	8	3	3	7	4	7	0	4.22	46
	23.91%	6.52%	17.39%	6.52%	6.52%	15.22%	8.70%	15.22%	0.00%		
English as a second language community	0	1	2	2	5	6	6	10	2	6.38	34
	0.00%	2.94%	5.88%	5.88%	14.71%	17.65%	17.65%	29.41%	5.88%		
Seniors	1	0	1	3	4	4	11	9	3	6.56	36
	2.78%	0.00%	2.78%	8.33%	11.11%	11.11%	30.56%	25.00%	8.33%		
Other	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	10	7.85	13
	7.69%	0.00%	7.69%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	7.69%	76.92%		

## Q18 Most farm operations have a transition plan in place.

Answered: 67 Skipped: 13

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
0.00%	7.46%	31.34%	55.22%	5.97%		
0	5	21	37	4	67	2.40

**Q19 Rank the following challenges to successful farm transitioning:(1 being most challenging, 5 being least challenging)**

Answered: 64 Skipped: 16

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average	Response Count
No clear successor	29	16	8	3	4	0	1.95	60
	48.33%	26.67%	13.33%	5.00%	6.67%	0.00%		
Difficult family conversations	16	16	9	16	3	0	2.57	60
	26.67%	26.67%	15.00%	26.67%	5.00%	0.00%		
Perceived costs of professional services	5	14	11	19	9	1	3.27	59
	8.47%	23.73%	18.64%	32.20%	15.25%	1.69%		
Other	7	2	3	2	2	9	3.68	25
	28.00%	8.00%	12.00%	8.00%	8.00%	36.00%		
Operate on leased land	5	8	15	3	24	4	3.76	59
	8.47%	13.56%	25.42%	5.08%	40.68%	6.78%		
Access to professional services (legal, financial, insurance)	2	6	15	17	14	3	3.77	57
	3.51%	10.53%	26.32%	29.82%	24.56%	5.26%		

**Q20 There is opportunity for new agricultural operations/businesses (direct and/or nondirect sales) in the county.**

Answered: 68 Skipped: 12

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
13.24%	66.18%	8.82%	8.82%	2.94%	68	3.78
9	45	6	6	2		

**Q21 There should be designated areas of the county where agriculture will be encouraged as the primary source of economic development.**

Answered: 68 Skipped: 12

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
23.53%	54.41%	8.82%	8.82%	4.41%	68	3.84
16	37	6	6	3		

## Q22 If you answered “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” to Q21, WHERE would you designate agricultural economic development?

Answered: 44 Skipped: 36

Representative comments are provided below, in order of submission. 44 comments were submitted.

Representative Comments Submitted:

Ag Production designated areas should be in areas with preserved farms and best Ag soils. Ag Commerce designated areas could be almost anywhere (farmers markets, Ag auction spaces, etc.).
The Route 1 corridor in southern Chester County where Ag remains an important component of the economy and the base is already there.
Both where it already exists or pockets of open space in the more populated areas where small farms could provide education and products to local community.
Near populated areas-- put producers and markets near one another-- do not create a NIMBY system with Ag hidden far from Mc Mansions
It needs to be where agriculture will have the least resistance from urban/community/residential but is the land high quality there and the most feasible for agriculture use??? Usually farmland preservation encourages preservation of blocks of land thus providing an "agriculture" area if you would. So there may already be areas in place with that as a priority.
Northern Chester County as well as Southwestern Chester County
Good question. Maybe Oxford, but there are ample opportunities in more urban areas as well that should not be overlooked. Phoenixville, Kennett Square, West Chester, Downingtown, and Exton are all potential urban areas. It also depends on how we define agriculture - are we just growing crops/food, or are we including food processing and distribution, too? I'd say let's include it all, and then absolutely and there are many potential municipalities.
I would like to see space devoted to Ag Economic development as part of every township, no matter how small or large. In this way Ag will be respected on the same level as business and residential sectors.

## Q23 Finding skilled labor is difficult in Chester County.

Answered: 67 Skipped: 13

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
14.93%	47.76%	14.93%	22.39%	0.00%	67	3.55
10	32	10	15	0		

## Q24 Retaining skilled labor is difficult in Chester County.

Answered: 67 Skipped: 13

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
26.87%	38.81%	16.42%	17.91%	0.00%	67	3.75
18	26	11	12	0		



**Q25 The agricultural industry is as competitive as other industries. (wages, benefits, etc.)**

Answered: 67 Skipped: 13

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
2.99% 2	14.93% 10	17.91% 12	49.25% 33	14.93% 10	67	2.42

**Q26 Affordable housing is a concern for the majority of the agricultural workforce.**

Answered: 67 Skipped: 13

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
31.34% 21	43.28% 29	20.90% 14	4.48% 3	0.00% 0	67	4.01

**Q27 Goods movement is easy in our region.**

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
3.03% 2	59.09% 39	15.15% 10	15.15% 10	7.58% 5	66	3.35

**Q28 The cost of transporting goods has significantly increased in the last 10 years.**

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
16.67% 11	45.45% 30	28.79% 19	9.09% 6	0.00% 0	66	3.70

**Q29 Producers need to transport inputs and outputs from further distances than 10 years ago.**

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
12.12% 8	42.42% 28	34.85% 23	10.61% 7	0.00% 0	66	3.56

**Q30 Moving machinery/equipment on roadways is difficult.**

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
33.33% 22	48.48% 32	9.09% 6	9.09% 6	0.00% 0	66	4.06

**Q31 The use of technology and/or innovation in agriculture in the county has increased significantly over the past 10 years.**

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
27.27% 18	57.58% 38	10.61% 7	3.03% 2	1.52% 1	66	4.06

**Q32 Farming operations in the county must embrace technology and/or innovation to stay viable.**

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
25.76% 17	56.06% 37	7.58% 5	9.09% 6	1.52% 1	66	3.95

### Q33 The public understands the importance of the use of latest technology to keep farms viable.

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Weighted Average
4.55%	19.70%	16.67%	40.91%	18.18%	66	2.52
3	13	11	27	12		

### Q34 How are you involved with the agricultural industry? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 66 Skipped: 14

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Student	1.5%	1
Other elected official	1.5%	1
Agriculture infrastructure / support business	9.1%	6
Municipal official	13.6%	9
Other	24.2%	16
Agriculture service provider	25.8%	17
Outreach and advocacy	34.8%	23
Producer	43.9%	29
Member of an agricultural association	54.5%	36
Someone who eats	83.3%	55

### Q35 Any additional comments.

Answered: 16 Skipped: 64

Representative comments are provided below, in order of submission. 16 comments were submitted.

Representative Comments Submitted:

The Hispanic community helps keep Ag strong - they are the backbone to our success. Labor is a challenge. Lack of affordable housing could really hurt our industry going forward. It will also hurt other industries in CC. Employment of Police, librarians, teachers, hospital workers, etc.

Chester County has the best non irrigated soils in the US, at least. Once lost, they cannot be replaced. While it is true that we can feed more people on less land, it is also true that the inputs to achieve that are increasing. The rate of increase has not been equal to the increase in population, so the loss of land compounds the problem.

Public outreach in the form of an annual or bi-annual county-wide farm tour would be awesome (kind of like art/garden/wine trail types of things). They do such a thing in a county in Virginia in spring and fall, and it is wildly popular. But we need an umbrella organization for arranging and promotion activities. Chester County had LOTS of

very interesting farms...activities like this could be very well-attended by the public, the media, and government officials as a means of making local Ag seem much more real and important to everyone. I'd love to work with others on this!

Prime agricultural soil should be given the respect that it deserves. Houses and shopping centers continue to be built on top of prime farmland. Southeastern PA is fortunate to have some of the best agricultural soils in the state. Our true, longer term, sustainable wealth is in our soils, if managed properly. Farm preservation in prime agricultural regions should be a bigger priority. Our farm is 90% direct retail sales through farmers markets and CSA. Our experience over the last 7 years with our customers has us believing that the general public is greatly unaware of the consequences of losing our farmland. They are ignorant to the realities of agriculture in general, but have a high desire for high quality agricultural products. However, I find that most people are open to learning, and do truly want farmers to succeed. Another major problem is increasing the diversity in types of farms. There are not enough produce farms that could be supplying major institutions (our schools, hospitals) with healthy foods. There is much work to be done in making viable business connections between local producers with local institutions. Many young people are eager to farm, but they cannot afford farmland in Chester County, which is another huge problem. Retiring farmers are not being replaced by younger generations, which often results in selling out to developers. We lease our farmland from the Brandywine Conservancy. Farmland preservation is the only way that it is possible for us to farm in this county. We are huge supporters of farmland preservation, and the opportunities it can provide for the next generation of farmers. We are one of the few vegetable farms in the county that leases from a land trust. The farm that we lease is in permanent protection. We feel that our current lease model can provide valuable insight into what is possible with farm preservation, beyond just leasing to corn/soy farmers. We are happy to discuss at greater length for anyone that is interested.