

Direct Easement Purchases

How They Work Landowners sell the development rights on their farmland directly to the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC). When landowners sell their development rights — also known as development easements — they retain ownership of their land, but agree to permanent deed restrictions that allow only agricultural use.

Application Landowners may apply at any time directly to the SADC.

Farms must be eligible for Farmland Assessment. Priority is given to those farms that have been impacted by the 1999 drought. Other farms must be of superior quality and (1) likely to be developed or (2) of statewide or regional importance.

Criteria The SADC considers the following factors in evaluating farms for this program: percentage of high-quality soils; percentage of tillable acres; suitable boundaries and buffers, such as other adjacent preserved farms and open space; the local commitment to agriculture (e.g., right to farm ordinances, financial support); size of the farm; agricultural density of the area, and imminence of development.

Valuation The SADC will negotiate a purchase price with the landowner subject to the recommendations of two independent appraisers and a review by a state review appraiser.

For More Information Contact the State Agriculture Development Committee at (609) 984-2504.