

Nonagricultural Uses

The restrictions in the Deed of Easement limit a preserved farm to agricultural uses. Once your farm has been preserved, no nonagricultural uses will be allowed, except if otherwise outlined in the Deed of Easement or if they occur within an exception area. Because nonagricultural uses are not related to agricultural production, they cannot continue unless recorded in a Schedule B in the Deed of Easement or contained within an exception area. Both of these options are designed to protect you and allow you to continue your nonagricultural use into the future.

Do you have a nonag use on your farm?

Some examples of a nonagricultural use include:

- An existing business, not related to your farm's agricultural production, located in your barn or home
- A lumber processing business that uses timber produced/grown by other farmers
- A facility used to process or sell agricultural products not raised on the farm or by the owner's farming operation
- A portion of your farm or structure on your farm that is rented or used by someone else for a use or business not related to the production of your farm (e.g., equipment, vehicle parking, office)
- A portion of your farm or structure on your farm that is used for the storage of agricultural products or materials not derived from or intended for use on your farm (e.g., grain/cold storage, parts, chemicals, fertilizers)

Schedule B Nonagricultural Use

This option allows you to continue your nonagricultural use following the preservation of your farm at the same scale and location it is at the time of preservation. Before appraisals and surveys are conducted, you will be asked to identify and describe any nonagricultural uses occurring on your farm. Details of the use(s), such as the type, frequency, intensity, size and location, will be recorded as a Schedule B and attached to the Deed of Easement. This document binds your use to its current parameters so that you cannot expand or change it in the future.

Although you will still be paid for the land under the use, this option provides you with little flexibility and no opportunity to expand the use, change the use, or start a new use in the future. Additionally, if the current nonagricultural use ceases at some point, you are not permitted to resume it in the future.

Nonagricultural Uses in Exception Areas

You also have the option of excepting out some of your land under and surrounding a nonagricultural use(s) from the Deed of Easement. This option provides you with maximum flexibility for your use in the future since the land in exception areas is not subject to the restrictions of the Deed of Easement. Although you will not be paid for the land in an exception area, you will be able to change, improve and expand your use within the exception area as you wish, subject to all applicable local and state regulations.

An exception area around a nonagricultural use is ideal if you can foresee the use or an area of your farm changing in the future. For instance, you may have an older barn that is becoming too small for modern tractors and your agricultural operation. Rather than razing it or allowing it to go into disrepair, you may want to rent this space out to a carpenter or other small business. By including the structure in an exception area, you maintain the flexibility to repurpose an agricultural structure and adapt to the changes of your farm.



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Division of the Premises

The Deed of Easement sets forth the legal restrictions that will apply to your farm once it is preserved. The survey metes and bounds description of your farm has the effect of tying all of your lots together as one preserved "premises." Although your farm may consist of multiple lots, after preservation they cannot be divided, transferred individually or conveyed to other owners without written approval of the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) and the easement holder, which may be the County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) or a non-profit agency.

To request approval to divide the preserved premises, you need to submit an application to the easement holder demonstrating that the division would meet both of the following tests:

The Agricultural Purpose Test

First, the proposed division must be for an agricultural purpose. The SADC considers enhanced agricultural production activities, such as agricultural expansion, diversification and/or intensification resulting from a division as typically meeting the agricultural purpose test.

The Agricultural Viability Test

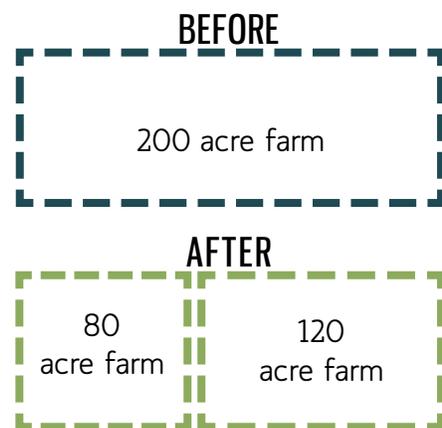
Second, the division must result in agriculturally viable parcels, each capable of sustaining a variety of agricultural operations that produce a reasonable economic return under normal conditions, solely from the parcel's agricultural production. So, the SADC would need to be confident that each newly created farm has sufficient agricultural resource value (soil quality, tillable land, size, etc.) to support a variety of agricultural operations into the future.

Additionally, any parcel not meeting the minimum eligibility criteria for new applications to the program set forth in the SADC regulations will not be approved.

Major SADC Considerations

- Total Tillable Acreage
- Quality of Soils
- Configuration of New Parcels
- Historical Agricultural Uses
- Existing Agricultural Infrastructure
- Proximity to Other Farms/Preserved Farms
- Proposed Agricultural Uses
- Benefit to Production Agriculture

Diagram of a Division



The SADC's objective is to retain large masses of viable agricultural land. Agricultural parcels may become less viable if reduced in size. Therefore, the SADC will carefully consider the criteria to evaluate whether a permanently preserved farm should be divided.



Why might an application for a division of the Premises be denied?

- Each parcel does not meet the minimum eligibility criteria on its own - for example, the newly created farms may not be of sufficient size or may have a lack of tillable acres on at least one parcel.
- Large wooded areas or areas of marginal soils render the tillable land of one parcel insufficient or unable to support a variety of agricultural production activities
- Lack of a concrete plan for agricultural production for one or both of the new parcels to be created
- The purpose of the division is speculative resale of one or multiple preserved parcels
- The purpose of the division is to accomplish "estate planning" or to only provide for retirement of the current owner with no agricultural purpose

Division Procedure

1. Submit completed application and required maps to the CADB or designated easement holder
 2. The easement holder will ensure that the application is complete and evaluate it based on the Deed of Easement and the agricultural purpose and viability tests
 3. If approved, the easement holder will forward the application to the SADC for further review (the SADC will only review applications approved by the easement holder)
 4. The SADC will review the application and evaluate it based on the Deed of Easement and the agricultural purpose and viability tests
 5. If approved by the SADC, new surveys and legal descriptions may be required as a condition of approval. In addition, the SADC may request to review any deed which transfers a portion of the Premises to a new owner. Upon review and approval of all necessary documents the SADC will record its approval resolution with the appropriate County Clerk's office
- Application and additional information can be found at <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/rules/> under Policies,

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Exception Areas

An exception is an area free from the farmland preservation Deed of Easement restrictions that will apply once the farm is preserved. It is very important to consider exception areas prior to preservation because they will not be granted, moved or expanded once the farm is preserved.

Types of Exceptions

There are two types of exceptions: non-severable and severable.

Non-severable Exceptions:

A non-severable exception is an area of the farm which is excepted from the easement restrictions but remains tied to the farm and cannot be subdivided, transferred or conveyed separately from the farm.

Severable Exceptions:

A severable exception is an area that can be subdivided and sold separately from the farm provided it meets local subdivision requirements. It is not necessary to sever (subdivide) a severable exception prior to preservation.

A landowner will not be paid for areas designated as a severable or non-severable exception because the Deed of Easement restrictions will not apply to the area(s).

Why should I take an exception area?

- Do you wish to provide a building lot for a child?
- Do you have a barn where you might want to operate a business that might not be permitted under the farmland Deed of Easement (i.e. a nonagricultural use)? Would you like to have the flexibility to replace your home without farmland preservation program approvals? Perhaps you are entertaining the idea of operating a Bed & Breakfast in the main farmhouse someday?

These are just a few common reasons why landowners choose to take exception areas. If your plans for future uses of the premises include any nonagricultural production based activity you should consider an exception area.

Although nonagricultural uses existing and recognized at the time of preservation are allowed, did you know they cannot be expanded in the future unless they are within an exception area?

Locating an Exception Area

It is very important to consider the number, size and location of exception areas. Exception area requests which negatively impact the farm or are found to allow excessive housing around the agricultural operation may not be approved. Therefore, balancing landowners' needs with a sensitivity to the agricultural operation, now and into the future, is important. The SADC considers the following in evaluating exceptions:

- Number of exceptions requested - is it excessive?
- Size of exception(s) - is it a very large area of the farm?
- Purpose of the exception(s) - will future uses negatively impact the farm?
- Location and planned use of the exception area - sensitive to the farming operation?



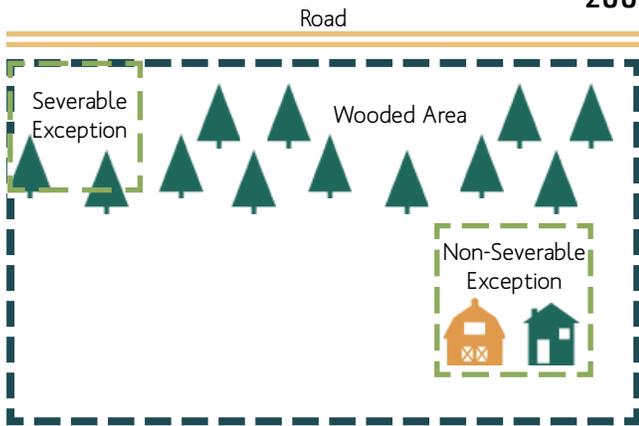
Locating an Exception Area continued...

If you are requesting an exception for a future housing opportunity, you are strongly encouraged to thoroughly explore the feasibility of that location including septic suitability, ability to obtain water, road access, wetlands, wetland buffers and special regulations that may apply in your area, such as the Highlands or Pinelands. If the access to an exception area is used exclusively for nonagricultural purposes, the access must also be included in the exception area. Residential use is not considered a nonagricultural purpose, so, if the exception is being used for a residential use the driveway does not have to be included within the exception area.

Remember - you must make decisions about exceptions at the time of application, prior to appraisals being conducted. If you change your mind during the preservation process, this could result in delays in processing your application.

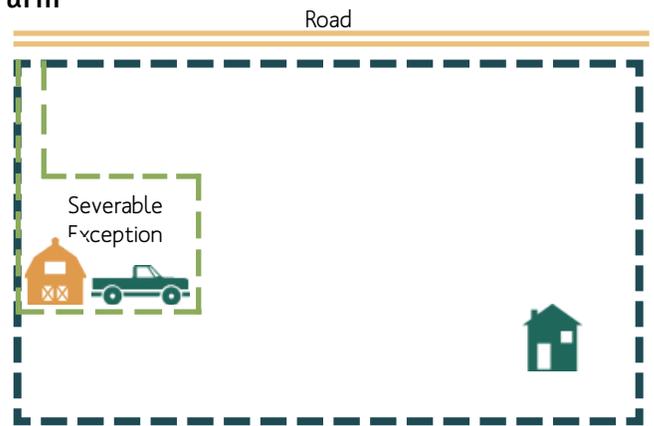
Sample Exception Area Layouts

200 Acre Farm



Example #1

A 200 acre farm with a non-severable exception around an existing barn and house and a severable exception along the road for the landowner's child to subdivide and own separate from the farm.



Example #2

A farm with a severable exception around a nonagricultural use and driveway, and a house on the farm outside of an exception area.

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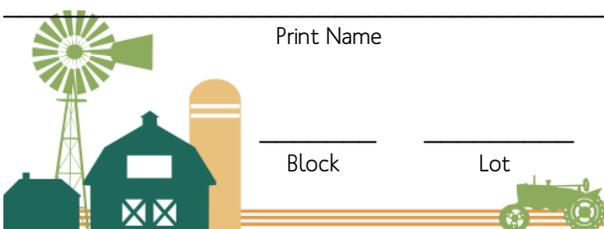
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Division of the Premises (For Farms with Non-Contiguous Parcels)

A farm containing Lots that are not located adjacent to each other may be preserved as one farm.

The example in the photograph on the right shows one farm with two noncontiguous Lots.

When the Deed of Easement preserving a farm is recorded, it binds all Lots together as one farm, even though they may not be contiguous. This is referred to as the Premises.

Although your farm may consist of multiple Lots, after preservation you or any future owner may not divide and/or sell any portion of the Premises separately without written approval of the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) and the easement holder. The easement holder may be a County Agricultural Development Board (CADB) or a non-profit agency.

**Preserved Farm with
"Non-Contiguous" parcels**



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