

Franklin Township

In Somerset County



Purchasing and General Services

Municipal Building

475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ 08873-6704
Phone: 732-873-2500, Ext. 239 Fax: 732-873-1059
joyce.miller@twp.franklin.nj.us

For Immediate Release.

For more information, contact:

John Loos

732-422-4326, saveland@jloos.com

Franklin Preserves one of Township's Oldest Farm

Franklin Township. March 25, 2008. Papers were signed today preserving the more than 130-acre Suydam Farm, one of the Township's oldest.

The purchase of the development rights on the family-owned Suydam Farm, located on State Highway 27 and Cortelyous Lane, makes this the sixth farm that the Township has preserved in the last year. The farm, bordered to the west by the 3,000-acre preserved Six Mile Run Reservoir Site, dates back over 300 years.

Ryck Suydam is part owner and operates the farm with his wife, Dee Jay Suydam, and their four children, Matthew, Jenna, J. Paul and Lucas. Suydam said "We are pleased to be farmers in Franklin and extremely glad that our farm will remain a part of New Jersey agriculture forever."

When a farm is preserved, the development rights are purchased so the property can never be developed. The cost of preserving the Suydam farm was \$12,354,218.00. Of that, the Township paid \$6,282,000, Somerset County contributed \$2 million, and the State Agricultural Development Committee contributed \$4,072,218.

Through the 13 generations of Suydams, the farm has accommodated changes in both the market demands and the surrounding community. In 1960 Suydam Farms won an award recognizing them as having the "Highest Production Herd in the US."

Part of Suydam family history includes tales of George Washington marching his troops at least four times across the farm while traveling from New Brunswick, Princeton and Trenton.

“Our family’s goal is to keep the farm viable and an asset to our community,” said Suydam. “We welcome all to come see a 300 year old working farm in beautiful Somerset, New Jersey. Feed the chickens, talk to the lambs, and bring your friends and family. You will be glad you did.”

Bob Puskas stated, “As Chairman of Franklin Township’s Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), I am pleased that this farm is now preserved. In 2001, the Township applied for, and received, a PIG grant from the State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC). We knew that the State’s financial contributions, when paired up with the Township’s Open Space Fund, would likely result in significant farmland being preserved. With yesterday’s purchase, the Township now has preserved 15 farms totaling over 567 acres.”

Recently, the Township adopted a new Farmland Preservation Element of its Master Plan that outlines new preservation strategies and targets preserving another 25 farms totaling over 1,100 acres.

John Loos, the Township’s Land Preservation consultant, stated: “The addition of this farm to the other preserved farms continues Franklin Township’s and its funding partners’ commitment to preserving land so that all may enjoy the beautiful landscape that still exists here in the Township.” Currently 9,106 acres in the Township are preserved, either as open space, parks or farmland. This is 33% of the Township’s land base.

A map showing the location of the Suydam Farm is attached. The Suydam Farm website is found at <http://suydamfarms.net>.

30-30-30

March 25, 2008



Abe Suydam, with his attorney George Hendricks, signing papers that permanently preserves the Suydam farm located in Franklin Township.

