



Customer Profile

The Hopkins Covered Bridge Farm owned by David and Helen Truitt is a 158 acre grain farm located in Sussex County near Lewes, Delaware. The farm was susceptible to development because of its close proximity to the rapidly expanding beach community of Lewes to the east of the property. Immediately west of the site is the permanently protected and historically significant, Hopkins Covered Bridge Farm District. The property also acts as a buffer to expansive farmland to the west. The neighboring Hopkins Covered Bridge Farm is also enrolled in the Nature Conservancy Program to monitor and protect endangered species inhabiting the farm. Purchasing these easements has further enhanced the species chances for survival.

*Source:
A Report on Delaware Farms Preserved with Natural Resources Conservation Service Funds - April 10, 1998,
Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Foundation*

Farmland Protection Program Delaware Summary

Overview The USDA Farmland Protection Program (FPP) helps farmers keep their productive land in agriculture. The program assists States, Tribes, local governments and non-profit organizations by purchasing conservation easements for the purpose of limiting conversion to non-agricultural uses. NRCS provides up to 50% of the easement cost to the cooperating entity, which acquires, manages, and enforces the easement. Landowners participate voluntarily, and protected farms remain in private ownership. Every protected farm operates under a conservation plan approved by the local Conservation District. Nationally, over \$52 million have been obligated to state and local entities since establishment of the program in 1996. Proposals were accepted in 1996, 1997, 1998, and 2001.

Accomplishments In Delaware, nearly \$3 million in FPP funds have been awarded to protect over 8,000 acres of valuable farmland on 18 working farms. Since the FPP was established in 1996, Delaware programs have requested over \$12.9 million to protect 15, 236 acres on 63 farms.

Applications for funding were received in each of the four years that funds were available. Proposals are selected through a competitive process to protect the most strategic farms that will help accomplish FPP and local land-use goals. The easements also protect entire working farms, woodlands, wetlands, important natural areas, and cultural resources.

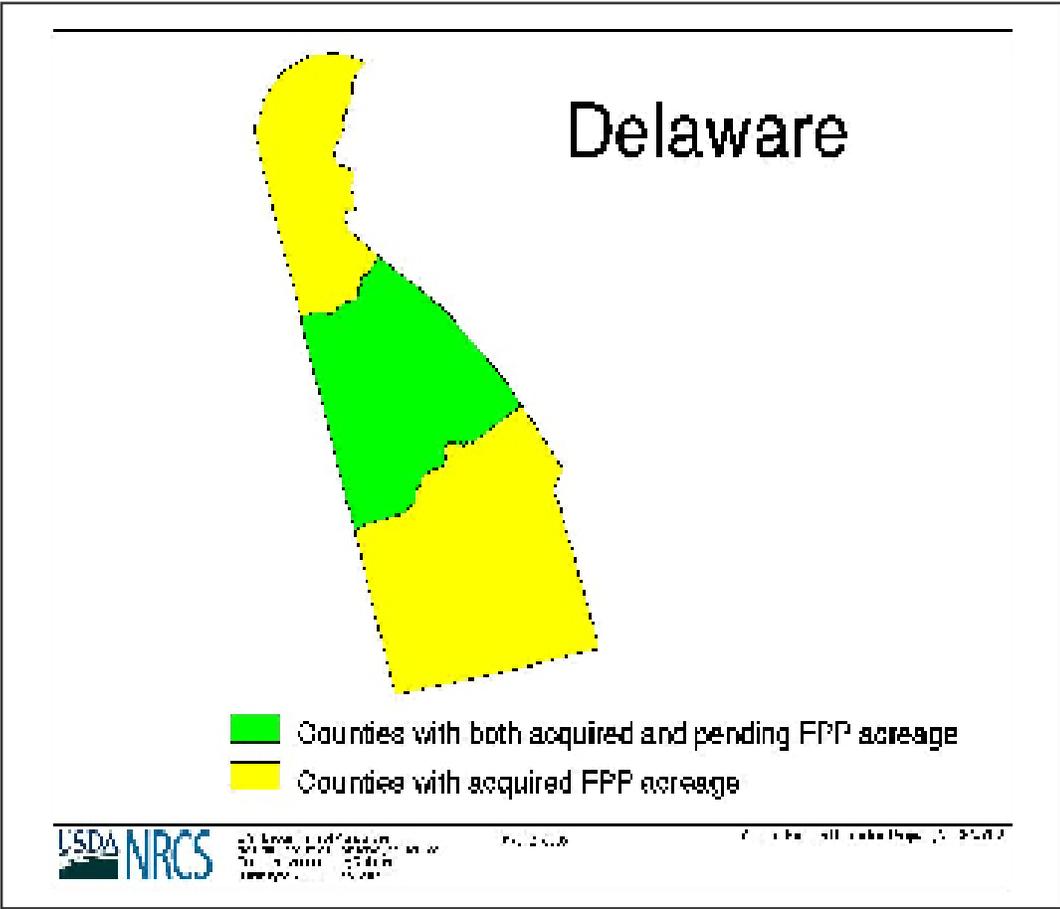
Outlook With interest in effective land-use planning on the rise, purchase of development rights is increasingly viewed as an effective tool to balance the demand for new development with the desire to preserve our best farmland, while meeting the needs of farmers. Because of the increasing development pressures, funds requested from the FPP have increased each year, with over \$5.7 million requested in 2001.



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The Truitt Farm



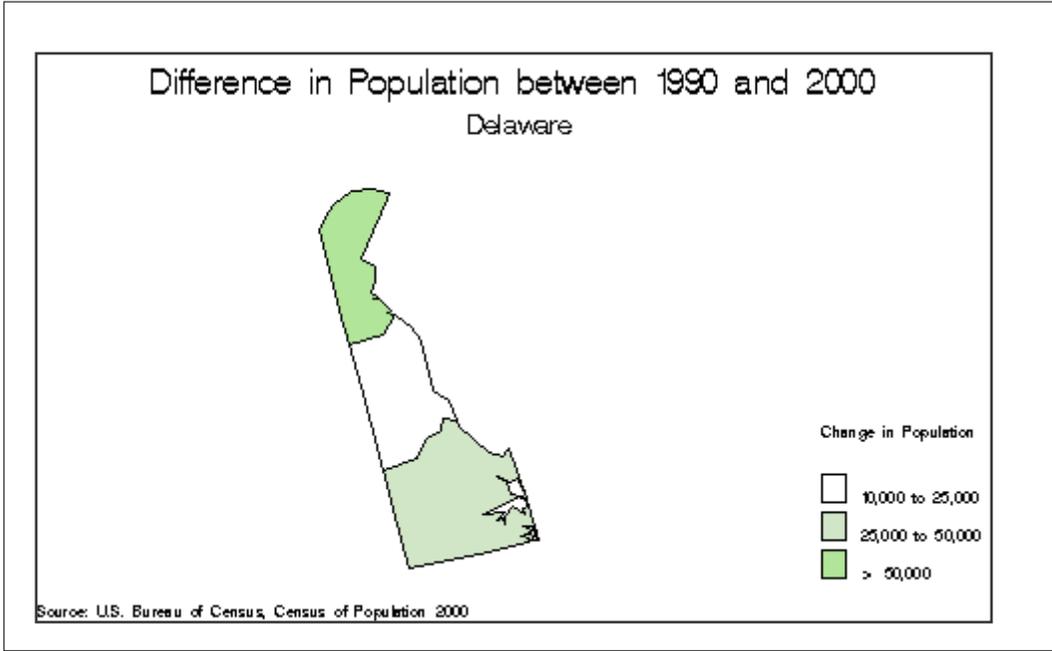
**Farmland Protection Program
Delaware Easements
(As of December 2001)**

County: Kent
Acres: 5,633
Total Easement Cost:
 Dollar Amount: \$4,305,116
 Average per acre: \$764
Federal Payment:
 Dollar Amount: \$1,673,299
 Percentage: 39%

County: New Castle
Acres: 587
Total Easement Cost:
 Dollar Amount: \$1,105,077
 Average per acre: \$1,883
Federal Payment:
 Dollar Amount: \$442,032
 Percentage: 40%

County: Sussex
Acres: 1,906
Total Easement Cost:
 Dollar Amount: \$1,898,146
 Average per acre: \$996
Federal Payment:
 Dollar Amount: \$806,869
 Percentage: 43%

DELAWARE TOTALS:
Acres: 8,126
Easement Costs:
 Dollar Amount: \$7,308,339
 Average per Acre: \$899
Federal Payment:
 Dollar Amount: \$2,922,200
 Percentage: 40%



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