

The Cecil Township Agricultural Security Area

Purpose

Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) is a tool for protecting our farms and farmland from non-agricultural uses. To establish an ASA, a petition is submitted to the township supervisors by the landowners and, once accepted, recorded at the Washington County Recorder of Deeds Office. Petitions are re-evaluated every seven years; however, new parcels of farmland may be added to an established ASA at any time and parcels can be removed in the same manner. A combined minimum of 250 acres is required for the establishment of an ASA.

An ASA may include non-adjacent farmland parcels of at least 10 acres or be able to produce \$2,000 annually from the sale of agricultural products such as livestock, timber, or crops.

Participants receive special consideration regarding:

- Protection from local ordinances and nuisance lawsuits affecting normal farming activities.
- Review of farmland condemnation by state and local government agencies.

An ASA qualifies land for consideration under the farmland preservation program at the owner's request if the ASA has at least 250 acres enrolled.

(https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Plants_Land_Water/farmland/asa/Pages/default.aspx)

History

The ASA in Cecil Township was established in Cecil Township by Ordinance 8-1993 pursuant to Act 43 of 1981 (3 P.S. 901 et seq.) known as the Agricultural Area Security Law. Ordinance 8-1993 set forth a minimum of 10 acres per tract to participate at no cost to subscribers. Non-adjacent properties can participate in the ASA however, all activities associated with the application to join the ASA must net a minimum of \$2,000 per year for farm related activities. 51 parcels totaling 3,935.19947 acres established the ASA in 1993 and later additional parcels were added. Ordinance 8-1993 was recorded in the Washington County Recorder of Deeds Office in Deed Book 2556 Page 276 on October 28, 1993.

Ordinance 3-1995 added 16 additional parcels totaling 261.3571 the existing ASA and amended Ordinance 8-1993 by deleting Paragraph 3 and replacing it with:

“Applicants for inclusion in the Agricultural Security Area shall submit the necessary applications to the Township on or before that last day of May and the last day of January.”

Recorded in Deed Book 2690, page 168 on May 3, 1995, bringing the total number of ASA participants to 67 and total acreage covered by the ASA to 4,196.5565 acres.

The remaining ordinances added additional parcels and acreage as follows:

- Ordinance 6-1995 – Two parcels with 75.3 acres
- Ordinance 3- 1998 – Four parcels with 76.374 acres
- Ordinance 4-1999 – Five parcels with 152. 7 acres
- Ordinance 10-2000 – One parcel with 40.9 acres
- Ordinance 8-2003 – One parcel with 12 acres

On February 20, 2014, three proposals for three separate parcels were recorded with the Washington County Recorder of Deeds Office and added a total of 173.182 acres to the existing ASA. However, no Ordinances were prepared, considered by the Board of Supervisors and/or made a part of the record for these three parcels. Only the proposal forms were recorded as evidence of ASA participation.

Total participants in the Cecil Township ASA as of July 30, 2021, is 75. Total acreage is 4,727.0125 acres.