

**Farmland Protection: The Role of Public Preferences for Rural Amenities.**

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**Abstract**

Public amenities provided by a rural agricultural landscape, arising from open space and farm activity, are important to many citizens and policymakers. Widespread development of farmland in some parts of the country has spawned an expanding array of farmland protection programs by county, State, and Federal governments, as well as by nonprofit organizations. To investigate the relative importance of preserving different amenities, this report examines the enabling legislation of these programs across the 48 contiguous States, and the implementation of these programs in five Northeastern States (Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Vermont). The report also assesses how farmland protection programs fit into the broader array of rural land conservation programs.

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