

World Population and Food Security

- ❑ Only 1/32 of the Earth's surface can produce food
- ❑ Demand for food exceeds supply
- ❑ China and India
- ❑ No more food surpluses
- ❑ Homeland / Food Security
 - Strawberries from Mexico
 - Recent Tomato Scare
 - Trend: Local Farm Markets



As evidence that the world is not over populated, it's been stated that the entire global population could fit into the State of Texas. This is meaningless; however, since the state could not sustain them. In fact, the whole U.S. could not. In fact, the North American continent could not sustain them.

Only a small fraction (1/32) of all the land in the world is arable. The rest has been into cities/towns or is inhospitable to grow crops. While population increases, that small portion of land must continue to support the world's population.

The United Nations reports that the demand for food today, has exceeded supply. Developing nations such as China, India and African countries are increasing their food consumption. We no longer enjoy the food surpluses of the recent past. Food is a Homeland Security issue – just like energy.



Preserving Kent County's Prime and Unique Farmland

A report on the past five years of the PDR Program and a plan
for the future.

August 28, 2008

Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board

Gary Rolls, Chairperson

Dennis Heffron, Vice Chairperson

The 154 acre Robinson dairy farm.
Sparta Township. Preserved in September 2007.

History of the Kent County PDR Program



The Urban Sprawl Subcommittee Report of 2001 called for the creation of a greenspace preservation program that included farmland protection. A citizen workgroup of 25+ members developed the PDR Ordinance and Draft Scoring Process.

The PDR Ordinance was adopted in 2002. The Ag Preservation Board was appointed in 2003. The Kent/MSU Extension Land Use Educator and GVMC were appointed to provide staff support.

Purpose of the Kent County PDR Program



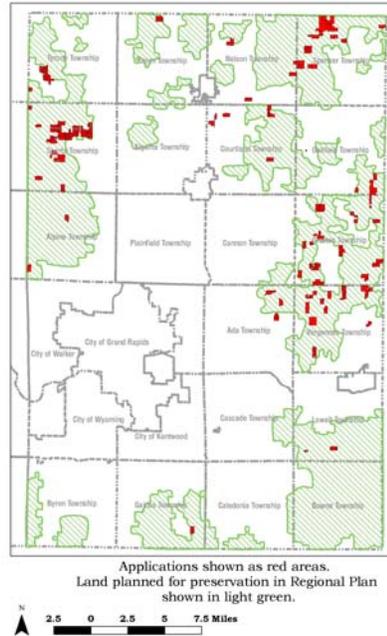
The primary purpose of the Kent County PDR Program is to maintain a long-term business environment for agriculture. Lack of a land base is a threat to the industry. Lack of land for young farmers is also a threat. PDR protects the land base and helps make land affordable to young farmers.

Other purposes of PDR include: preserving the rural character and scenic attributes of the county, creating a sustainable source of local food, open space preservation, enhancing important environmental benefits of farmland and maintaining the quality of life of county residents.

2003 – 2008 Kent County PDR

Applications

- Average number of applications per year = 36
- Average number of acres per year = 3,250
- 46% of applicants have chosen not to re-apply. This represents over 1,230 acres.



Most applicants have chosen not to re-apply due to the lack of funding for the program.

List of Kent County Preserved Farms

1. **Howard Farm**, Vergenens Township. 106 Acres. Preserved in 2005.
2. **Flanagan Farm**, Grattan Township. 145 Acres. Preserved in 2006.
3. **Heffron Farm**, Grattan Township. 75 Acres. Preserved in 2007.
4. **Bradford Farm**, Sparta Township. 80 Acres. Preserved in 2007.
5. **Seif Farm**, Grattan Township. 141 Acres. Preserved in 2007.
6. **Robinson Farm**, Sparta Township. 154 Acres. Preserved in 2007.
7. **Merriman Farm**, Lowell Township. 57 Acres. Preserved in 2008.
8. Total Preserved Acres = **758 Acres**

Other Preserved Farms in Kent Co.

- ❑ Peter M. Wege Conservation Easement Donation
 - 577 acres preserved, Vergennes Township, Dec 2007

- ❑ State PDR Program
 - Keech Farm, Courtland Township, 109 acres
 - Bull Farm, Tyrone Township, 153 acres

- ❑ Grattan Township Open Space Ordinance
 - 3 farms totaling 170 acres, permanently preserved

Total Preserved Farmland Acres in Kent County

1,540 acres

State and Federal Grants for PDR

- Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund
 - \$511,097 Total
 - Two grants: 2005 and 2006
 - Supported Bradford and Robinson Farms

- USDA Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program
 - \$1,069,475 Total
 - Two grants: 2003 and 2004
 - Supported Flanagan, Heffron, Howard, Merriman, Seif Farms

Local Foundation Grants for PDR

□ Dyer-Ives Foundation	\$15,000
□ Frey Foundation	\$207,500
□ Grand Rapids Community Fdn	\$100,000
□ Inst. For Systemic Change	\$50,000
□ Lowell Area Community Fund	\$50,000
□ M.E. Davenport Foundation	\$100,000
□ Steelcase Foundation	\$400,000
□ Urban Cooperation Board	\$25,000
□ Wege Foundation	<u>\$602,178</u>
	\$1,549,678

*Note: Some of these funds were not able to be used.

Other Contributions

▣ Kent County Farm Bureau	\$20,000
▣ Daverman Fund at GRCF	\$2,000

Kent County Farm Bureau issued two challenge grants that were to be matched by county funds. These grants were not accepted.

In addition, several other foundations and donors have offered matching grants and challenge grants to be matched by county funds that were not accepted.

Township Contributions for PDR

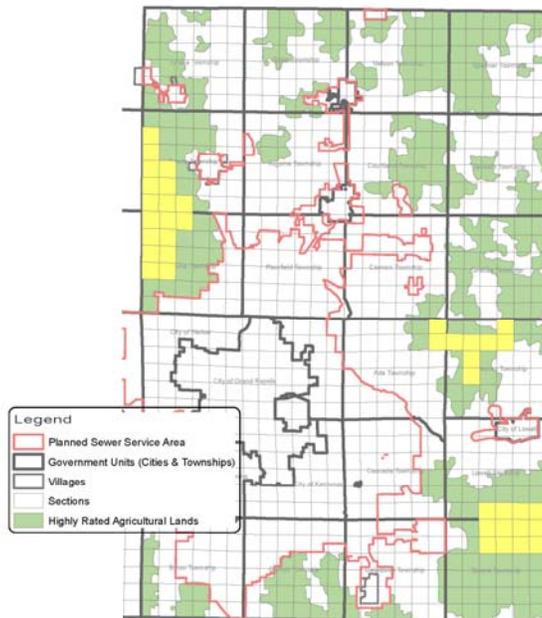
▣ Ada Township	\$23,813
▣ Alpine Township	\$1,500
▣ Bowne Township	\$5,000
▣ Caledonia Township	\$40,000
▣ Grattan Township	\$54,000
▣ Nelson Township	\$2,400
▣ Vergennes Township	<u>\$500</u>
	\$127,213

*Note: Some of these funds were not able to be used.

Contributions from Property Owners

▣ Bradford Family	\$40,000
▣ Cranmer Family	\$65,000
▣ Merriman Family	\$51,341
▣ Robinson Family	\$79,176
▣ Wilcox Family	<u>\$10,000</u>
	\$245,517

- The goal of the Kent County PDR Program, as stated in the ordinance adopted in 2002, is to **protect 25,000 acres by the year 2013.**
- 25,000 acres is represented by the yellow squares on the map.
- 25,000 acres is 4.6% of Kent County's total land area.



25,000 is only 15% of the total amount of farmland in the county, and only about 4.6% of the county's total land area.

In 2002 (the last Ag Census data), there were 173,381 acres of farmland in Kent County.

Economics of Agriculture in Michigan

- ▣ \$63 billion impact per year.
- ▣ Ranked #2 industry. Expected to be #1.
- ▣ 1 in 4 jobs in Michigan is linked to Agriculture.



25% of Michigan's land base is productive agricultural land. This represents 10 million acres.

Michigan is the 2nd most diverse in terms of crops grown in the U.S.

West Michigan companies utilizing our diverse crop base include: Kellogg's, Herbrucks, Gerber, Yoplait and many others.

Economics of Kent County Agriculture

- Second largest economic sector in the county.
- 36% of the County is farmland.
- #1 in the state for apple production, #9 in the nation.



Kent County is the state's top apple producer. McDonald's apple dippers come from Kent County apples.

Other large Kent County agricultural businesses include Country Dairy and the West Michigan Turkey Co-Op, both in Wyoming.

Average farm size in Kent County was 143 acres in 2002.

Emerging Trends in Agriculture

- ▣ Argi-Tourism
- ▣ Local Food and Organic Food
- ▣ Renewable Energy
- ▣ Nutraceuticals



According to the Michigan Dept. of Agriculture, there are 4,000 agri-tourism businesses in Michigan and 33 agricultural fairs/festivals in West Michigan.

Nationally, the market for organic foods has been expanding by 20% per year for the past several years. The Select Michigan campaign increased sales of local produce by 111% in the Grand Rapids market in 2003.

Renewable energy sources that have a direct connection with agriculture include: biodiesel, corn and cellulose based ethanol, biomass to electricity and wind energy. The Sparta area has been identified by the US Dept of Energy as a potential supplier of wind energy. Zeeland Farm Services is a leading producer of soy-based biodiesel, which can be used in any diesel engine today.

Nutraceuticals are fruits and vegetables sold as vitamin supplements to improve health. Graceland Fruits in Frankford is the largest single provider in the world. Kent County has the potential to be a key supplier of the fruits and vegetables needed to produce this growing sector of the pharmaceutical industry.

Protecting the Environment



The Ag Board is also focused on making sure the farms we are preserving are contributing toward environmental protection. When federal funds are used, which was the case for 6 out of the 7 preserved farms, a Resource Management System level conservation plan is required. This is somewhat like a farm receiving “LEED” certification. It is a very comprehensive plan the property owner must follow to protect water, air and wildlife. USDA monitors if property owners are abiding by the plan on an annual basis.

Just to give you an idea of how powerful PDR can be as a tool to protect the environment, in Allegan County, the DEQ is working with the local agricultural preservation board to use EPA grant funds to contribute towards PDR on a farm along a river to protect the quality of the river system.

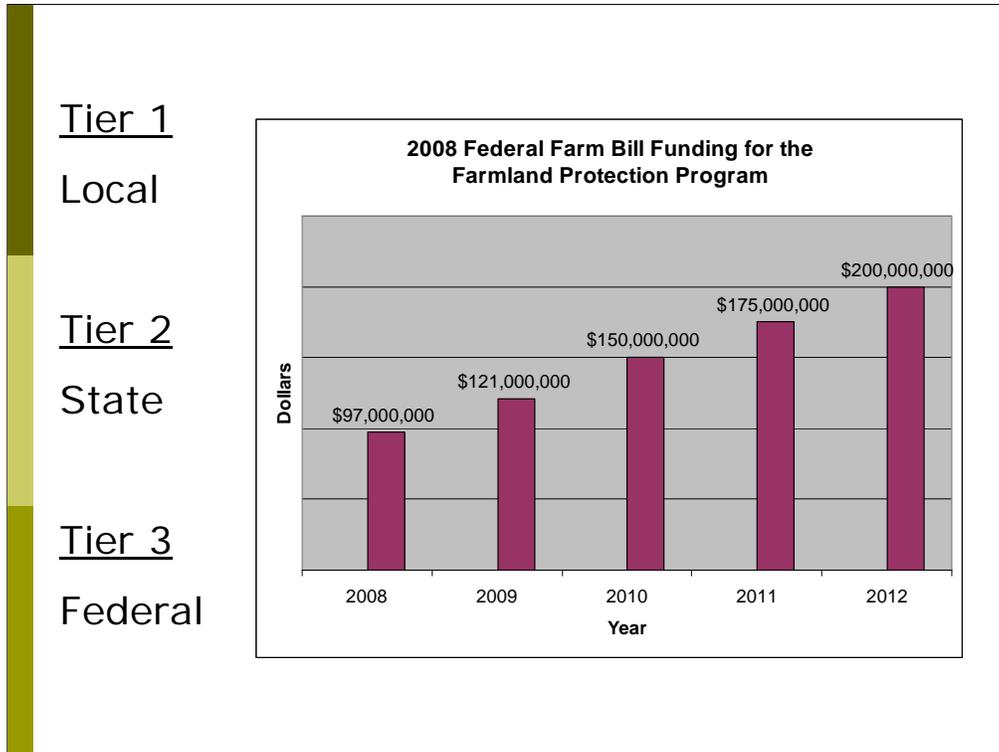
In addition, when biosolids are injected into the soil, there is reduced run-off from phosphates and nitrogen compared to typical fertilizer application. Biosolid application can actually help protect water quality.

Farmland will be a valuable local resource when the federal government starts regulating green house gas emissions in the next few years. Manufacturing businesses that emit greenhouse gasses will be able to purchase offset credits to stay in compliance. Offset credits can come from a variety of sources, including farmers who use no-till and grass planting practices. The Chicago Climate Exchange is currently paying farmers \$6 per acre to enroll in the offset program. This price will likely increase when regulations take affect.

The Future of the Kent County PDR Program



The 80 acre Bradford farm.
Sparta Township. Preserved in May 2007.



This three tiered system starts with local funds. A program cannot get to the federal matching level until the Tier 1 and 2 funds are secured.

The 2008 Farm Bill provides an increasing amount of funding for purchase of development rights in future years. In order to apply for these federal grant funds, local PDR Program's like Kent County's have to secure 50% of the development rights value BEFORE the time of application.

This means we have to pay for an appraisal and secure 50% of the development rights cost locally – which can include state grant funds.

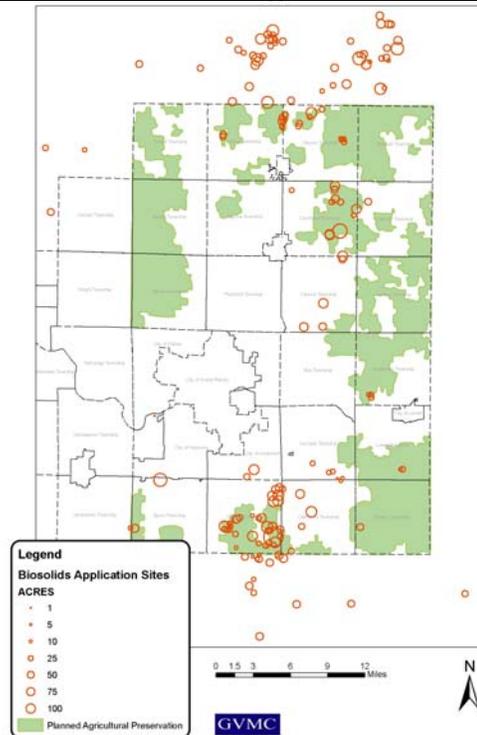
Possible Long-Term Funding Solutions

- ❑ A portion of the \$100,000 grant from M.E. Davenport Foundation to create a PDR Endowment Fund.
- ❑ Contributions from Property Owners at PDR Closing
 - Cost of appraisal + 50% of closing costs
 - Estimated contribution value = \$5,500
- ❑ Future Large Donors/Donations

Purpose of the Endowment Fund is to provide a sustainable funding source for appraisals, closing costs and possible preservation.

Regional Biosolid Application Sites

- The Clean Water Plant land applies biosolids from Clean Water Plant on 12,000 – 15,000 acres of area farmland.



The Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board is pursuing a partnership with the Grand Valley Regional Biosolid Authority. The Biosolid Authority is interested in preserving farmland for the disposal of biosolids. Biosolids are a fertilizer that is in high demand by the local farming community.

It's a win-win for all parties. It keeps disposal costs low to the taxpayer. The biosolids are recycled naturally. Farmers use as natural fertilizer, saving money and keeping production costs lower.

Once the City of Grand Rapids biosolids come online, the demand for farmland for biosolid application will only increase.

Ag Preservation Board Goals



In addition to developing a partnership with the Grand Valley Regional Biosolids Authority, the Ag Preservation Board is working on developing a database of local food manufactures (such as King Milling, Kellogg's, Gerber, and Country Dairy) to begin connecting with them about farmland preservation.

The Ag Board also hopes to work with local Future Farmers of America groups to conduct needed research on PDR best practices.

Beginning in 2009, the Board hopes to work on streamlining the closing process, in partnership with our state and federal funding partners, as well as publicizing tax incentives for PDR and conservation easement donations.

Common PDR Misperceptions



The Ag Board is working to provide education on some of the common misperceptions about PDR. One misperception we often hear is that PDR is not worthy of public investment because the public can't access the property. Keep in mind we are not buying parkland, we are buying an asset. Unlike parkland, the property continues to pay taxes for essential county services and subsidizes local infrastructure.

Even though the public can't walk on the property, there are still many public benefits for preserved farmland (i.e. food production, biosolid disposal, water and air purification, and the fact that PDR can encourage development in areas served by public services such as water, sewer, roads and schools).

Preserved farmland stays in private hands and on the tax rolls and can still be sold – often as premium farmland.

There are many public investments that the public can't access. We spend tens of millions of the county's budget on public safety, computer systems, administration, health care, etc. But there are still many public benefits for these investments.

Businesses, Organizations and Authorities That Support Some Type of County Funding for PDR:

- Ada Township
- Algoma Township
- Bradford Dairy Farms
- Business Solutions of West Michigan, Inc.
- Grand Valley Biosolids Authority
- Grattan Township
- Green Valley Agricultural, Inc.
- Home Ownership Resources
- Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF)
- Land Conservancy of West Michigan
- Lowell Charter Township
- Oakfield Township
- Ridge Economic Agricultural Partners
- Schreur Builders
- Steffens Orchards, LLC
- United Growth for Kent County, Inc.
- Vergennes Township
- Zeeland Farm Services

We were interested in trying to check the pulse of the community on county investment towards PDR.

There Are 106 Individuals That Support Some Type of County Funding for PDR:

This includes:

Jonathan Bradford, ICCF President and CEO
Brandon Dillon, Kent County Commissioner
Peter M. Wege, Chairman of the Board, Wege Foundation
Bryan Harrison, Caledonia Township Supervisor
Jim Talen, Candidate for 16th District County Commissioner
George Heartwell, City of Grand Rapids Mayor
Harold Mast, Kent County Commissioner
Jack Boelema, Kent County Commissioner
Gary Rolls, Kent County Commissioner
Paula Blumm, Lowell Township Supervisor
Mark Lessens, Lowell Area Schools Board of Education President
Jeff Remtema, Director of Sustainability, Progressive AE
Sharon Steffens, Landowner and Alpine Township Trustee
E. Alan Rumbaugh, Grattan Township Planning Commission Chairperson
Mari Stone, Vergennes Township Clerk
Richard Davies, Cannon Township Trustee
Bonnie Blackledge, Cannon Township Clerk
Judy Bigney, Algoma Township Clerk
Thomas Noreen, Nelson Township Trustee

A portion of the 577 acre Peter M. Wege Conservation Easement.
Vergennes Township. Donated for preservation in December 2007.



The Bradford Family

“The land was not given to us by our parents, it was lent to us by our children.”

-Abraham Lincoln



The Howard Family



Rep. Ehlens, USDA Rep. and Tim Howard



Rep. Hoekstra



Signs provided by the Wege Foundation



The Robinson Family

Thank you!