

July 7, 2009

To: State Board of Agriculture, President  
County Boards of Agriculture, Presidents  
County Agriculture Development Boards, Administrators  
New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Division Directors  
Rutgers Cooperative Extension  
New Jersey Farm Bureau  
First Pioneer Farm Credit  
New Jersey Agricultural Leadership Development Program  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey  
USDA Farm Service Agency  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
USDA Rural Development

From: Susan E. Craft

Re: Agricultural Mediation Program Update

As you know, the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) administers an agricultural mediation program to help farmers and others resolve agricultural disputes quickly, amicably, and in a cost-effective manner.

The program is available to help resolve Right to Farm disputes, USDA program disputes, and other farm-related issues. The program has also sponsored conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution workshops and activities.

At the SADC's June 25, 2009 meeting, SADC staff provided the Committee with an update on the program (summary attached). The Committee discussed the program, recertified its roster of mediators, and reiterated the program's benefits, noting also the need for additional outreach to the agricultural community.

In moving forward to improve the effectiveness of the Agricultural Mediation Program, we would like to reach out to all members of the agricultural community to increase their awareness of the program and seek their input. In particular, we are interested in your ideas for additional activities that the program could coordinate/facilitate that would fit within the program's overall scope –

i.e., helping farmers be more productive and viable through the prevention and resolution of agriculturally related disputes. A few possible ideas are mentioned in the attached summary.

Please share your ideas for any conflict-prevention or conflict-resolution related projects by contacting David Kimmel, Agricultural Mediation Program Manager, at 609-984-2504 or [david.kimmel@ag.state.nj.us](mailto:david.kimmel@ag.state.nj.us). We are looking to have a more formal plan for these activities by the end of the summer.

Thank you for any assistance you can provide.

Enclosures