



### A. Background

#### Existing Studies

##### The Role of Production Agriculture in the Greene County Economy (Pennsylvania State University, 2007)

Penn State Cooperative Extension and the Penn State University Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology completed a study on the role of production agriculture in the Greene County economy. In 2001, Greene County had 855 farms that consisted of a total of 140,500 acres. The study found that in 2001 the total value of agriculture production in Greene County was \$10,176,000. The leading product in 2001 was dairy with a total value of \$1,718,000, which is 17 percent of the total production value of agriculture.

The study also examined the difference between large and small agriculture producers in the County in terms of sales. In 1997, 129 farms or 21 percent had sales of at least \$50,000, with 13 of those farms having sales of more than \$100,000. However, 416 farms or 62 percent of the total number of farms had sales of less than \$5,000, which means that most agriculture operations are not providing the primary source of income for a household.

The study also examined agriculture's contribution to the total local economy in Greene County. The study states that when agriculture is an important part of the total local economy it produces ripple effects, such as farms that buy supplies and farm workers that will buy goods locally. This in turn provides additional jobs in the County. The study found that agriculture provides 874 jobs, which then leads into an additional 85 jobs in the total local economy. Agriculture also brings an additional \$3,542,962 into the county economy with the ripple effect.

#### Agricultural Resources

##### FFA of Greene County

The FFA (Future Farmer's of America) of Greene County belongs to the Pennsylvania FFA Association. The Pennsylvania FFA Association works with students to achieve success through an education in agricultural sciences. The Central Greene School District / Waynesburg FFA and the West Greene School District FFA Chapter's present an agricultural education award to recognize students who are successful in academics, leadership and a complete supervised agricultural experience program.

### Greene County Conservation District

The Greene County Conservation District (GCCD) is comprised of four farm directors, two public directors, and one county commissioner. The conservation district was formed in 1956 by the Board of Commissioners to provide for the conservation of soil, watershed and flood protection, preserve woodland and wildlife, protect public lands, provide technical assistance to public and private landowners, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people (Greene County Website, 2007). The following agriculture programs are offered at the County Conservation District:

- Agricultural Conservation Technician (ACT) – provide technical assistance for the County's agricultural community with the experienced NRCS field team for Washington, Greene, and Fayette Counties. Also provides conservation and grazing plans for resource management systems on farms throughout the tri-county area. Work cooperatively to provide survey design and layout for best management practice installation using NRCS engineering job approvals to certify practices that are installed to Pennsylvania technical guide standards.
- Grazing Group/Pasture Walks – promotes the Project Grass program to citizens and other farmers through field day events and helps educate farmers on pasture management and grazing problem solving.
- Educational Workshops – the GCCD provides numerous educational workshops, such as the following:
  - Technical – water systems, no till demonstrations, pasture walks, manure spreading procedures
  - Educational / Informational – grazing trends, marketing, soil quality, value added processing, business planning, grant writing, nutrient management topics
  - Organizational – Agricultural Security Areas (ASA), grazing groups, Future Farmers of America (FFA), and 4-H
- Farmland Preservation Program – dedicated to protecting farms from development. A Farmland Preservation Board was formed in 2005 to help with the purchase of agricultural land easements and the establishment of agricultural security zones.
- Mini-Grant Program – supplements state and federal grant and cost share program, specifically to offset costs associated with the implementation / installation of specific Best Management Practices (BMP) designed to prevent erosion, mitigate sedimentation, and generally improve downstream water quality.
- Nutrient Management – provide technical assistance and program administration for Act 38 Nutrient Management Law. The GCCD reviews and approves nutrient management plans, provides assistance for plan implementation and maintains a current list of certified planners for Greene County.
- Project Grass – focuses on increasing grassland productivity while minimizing the environmental impact from farming through a partnership between farmers and the conservation district.



- US Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) Farm Bill Programs – work cooperatively to promote and support Farm Bill programs which address soil and water conservation practices.

### Greene County Department of Economic Development

Greene County Department of Economic Development provides planning, development assistance and resources, promotes organizational ordination and collaboration, and along with the Greene County Conservation District and the Greene County Extension Service serve as the County's points of contact for economic development in the agricultural industry. Current priorities are 1) identifying potential strategies and resources to increase profitability of agriculture in Greene County and 2) promoting niche markets for food production and agri-tourism. The department is a member of the Washington/Greene Ag Economic Development Committee, a task force that has been created by Penn State Cooperative Extension to pursue projects in the area of agricultural economic development. Other members include the University of Pittsburgh Small Business Development Center Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence, Community Action Southwest, Washington and Greene County Tourism, Sustaining Greene County, township planners, and several agricultural producers. Other regional membership / partnerships relevant to implementing the established priorities include Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development area, which is a nine-county district in Southwestern Pennsylvania, R.C. and D., PASA, and the US Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS).

### Penn State Cooperative Extension

The Penn State Cooperative Extension is the primary source of agriculture production of information and education and it provides citizens with access to the resources of Penn State University through educational programs, publications, and events. Educational programs include vaccination protocols for beef stock, crop planning, and no-till cover crop demonstrations, and pesticide education. The main program offered is 4-H, a youth development education program for children between the ages of 8 and 19. The 4-H program in Greene County offers the following:

- Greene County Shooting Sports Club-members participate in safety sessions and learn how to shoot air rifles, air pistols, and shotguns. The Club participates in the State Achievement Days.
- Central Greene Sew-n-Sew Club-provides 4-H members sewing lessons and their projects are entered in the Greene County Fair.
- Greene County Rabbit, Market Steer, Market Swine, and Goat Clubs-4-H members raise the animals to sell at the Jacktown and Greene County Fair. Buyers have the choice of taking the animal's home, donating them back for resale by the club, or donating them back to the member.

- Greene County 4-H County Council- all clubs within the 4-H have a representative and they plan county activities
- Carmichaels Creative Kids Club-the club meets twice a month and participate in many different activities; vegetable and flower growing, learning to sew, and participating in various community service projects.
- Central Greene Horse and Pony Club- members conduct horse-related activities, demonstrations, and offer hands-on practice. Members show their horses at local fairs and participate in competitions.

The Greene County 4-H is also very active in the community. The 4-H Market Steer Club coordinated the 4-H American Cancer Society Relay Team for the past five years and raised approximately \$8,300.

The Master Gardeners of Greene County is also offered through the Cooperative Extension to educate residents on best practices in horticulture. Interested individuals receive training in the phases of gardening and then teach horticultural information to the public. The training includes education in landscapes, vegetables, fruits, herbs, soils, houseplants, beneficial and harmful insects, plant diseases, pest management, and composting. The Greene County program began in 1991 and projects completed to date include planting of flower baskets in Waynesburg, seminars on composting, answering gardening questions at the Greene County Fair, and giving demonstrations on starting plants from seeds.

### Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is a general farm organization providing legislative support, services and information to Pennsylvania's farmers and rural families since 1950. The Farm Bureau provides its farming members with representation in Washington and Harrisburg concerning farming legislation. The Farm Bureau is based on a grass roots structure whereby county Farm Bureaus and their leaders develop and implement policy to be determined at an annual meeting each year.

Issues which Farm Bureau has represented members on includes: farmland preservation, commodity pricing, tort reform, property tax reduction, health insurance reform, Sunday hunting, water rights and wildlife management.

Greene County has its own affiliate of the Farm Bureau with eight (8) active directors. The role is to shape agricultural policy at the county level on all issues relating to farming, preservation, and other agricultural issues.



### Waynesburg Livestock Auction

The Penna Live Stock Auction, Inc. runs a livestock auction in Waynesburg. This auction has economic impact to Greene County due to the amount of livestock that passes through on auction day.

In addition to organizations as agricultural resources, there is legislation in Pennsylvania that restricts the regulation of agricultural and farming operations and supports the preservation of existing farmland.

### Agriculture, Communities and Rural Environments (ACRE)

ACRE was passed in 2005 by the Pennsylvania Legislature to address conflicts between local ordinances and agricultural operations and establish odor management guidelines for concentrated animal feeding operations. ACRE creates a process for farmers to seek judicial review of ordinances believed to be restrictive of normal agricultural operations. Farmers will have the ability to request the Pennsylvania Attorney General to review an ordinance restricting agriculture that the farmer believes to be illegal. ACRE may also allow for the shifting of attorney's fees and litigation costs if the Court determines the suit was frivolous or brought without substantial justification that the ordinance was unjustified.

Best management practices for control of odor will be required of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) and concentrated animal operations (CAO) when they expand existing structures or construct new structures housing animals or storing manure. Concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) and concentrated animal operations (CAO) will be prohibited from spreading animal manure within 100 feet of streams, lakes and ponds, or within 35 feet of streams, lakes and ponds if the farm establishes a qualified vegetative buffer next to the waterway. Farmers can still perform many farming practices in the buffer areas.

As of August of 2007 there are no Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation in Greene County.

### Agricultural Security Area Security Law

The Agricultural Security Area Law was enacted in 1981 to encourage landowners and local municipalities to commit to preserving agricultural lands and to protect these important land classifications from incompatible uses on neighboring lands. The law establishes the authority for municipalities to identify areas of 250 or more acres to be voluntarily enrolled as an Agricultural Security Area (ASA). Land within the district may be owned by more than one person and does not have to be contiguous. The municipality acts as a partner with the landowner to identify and establish ASA's and must follow such criteria as the land having soils compatible with agricultural purposes, applicability of the ASA to the local municipal comprehensive plan, the current agricultural use or improvement, and the anticipated trends for that land area. An ASA application process

includes a proposal process, public notification, and a review of the ASA on a seven-year basis. Enrollment in an ASA provides limited protection against municipal regulations, eminent domain, and allows the landowner to participate in Pennsylvania's agricultural conservation easement program.

### Nutrient Management Act

The Nutrient Management Act was first enacted in Pennsylvania to place mandatory management controls on farm pollution in an effort to reduce environmental pollutants and improve water quality (DCED, 2003). The Nutrient Management Act regulates land application of manure in order to control non-point source pollution as well as setting standards for defining Concentrated Animal Operations (high animal density operations), as well as regulates the import / export and haulers of manure. The only operations regulated by this are Concentrated Animal Operations, although others can come in under the program as a volunteer.

Nutrient Management Plans are one requirement of the Nutrient Management Act. A nutrient management plan helps to establish best management practices for agricultural operations. Among the topics included in a plan are crop rotation and tillage, and manure testing, storage, and spreading procedures. A nutrient management plan will outline the actions that a farmer will follow to comply with the Nutrient Management Act. Such regulations include identifying balanced application rates for manure and other nutrients based on soil tests and crop removal rates, establishing minimum standards for manure storage, and record keeping requirements.

### Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Program

The Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Program allows farmers and businesses to earn tax credits in exchange for planning, sponsoring or implementing "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) on agricultural operations that will enhance farm production and protect natural resources. Farmers can also receive tax credits for conversion or upgrading to a No-till cropping system. Applications are received annually and run on a first come first serve basis.

### Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program

The Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program was established under the Agricultural Area Security Law (1981). The agricultural easement provides the option for a landowner to sell the development rights to dedicate their land to agricultural use. The land remains titled to the landowner, but may not be developed for any non-agricultural use. Every county, with an approval program, has the responsibility of administering the conservation easement program, which is operated under the oversight of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. An agricultural conservation easement program establishes a perpetual restriction on the land securing the agricultural land for



future generations. Funding to purchase agricultural conservation easements is provided by state, county, and at times, local municipal allocations and private revenue. The Greene County Conservation District is in the early stages of establishing a conservation easement purchase program. At this time, the Board has been developed and the bylaws are in place.

### Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act

The Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act of 1974 established a level of tax relief for agricultural landowners. The Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act, also known as Clean and Green, is a tax program that assesses land based upon its use value not fair market value. The goal of the Clean and Green program is to preserve agricultural lands by reducing the tax burden on property owners. This land conservation program is an enrollment program where the property owner agrees to keep their land dedicated to Agricultural Use, Agricultural Reserve Use, or Forest Reserve Use for an indefinite period if the land is to be eligible for the lower property tax assessment level. Should a property owner elect to leave the program and convert their land they may be obligated to pay back taxes along with interest.

There are specific requirements for landowners to enroll in the Clean and Green program. For instance, the owner must dedicate the land for the production of an "agricultural commodity" or "soil conservation" (DCED, 2003). If the land is eligible to enroll in the Clean and Green program under the classification of Agricultural Reserve, the land must be noncommercial open space lands used for recreational and outdoor enjoyment and open to the public for that use" (DCED, 2003). The Forest Reserve Classification is ten or more acres that are capable of producing timber or other wood products. Assessment values are determined by the Department of Agriculture and are based upon soil classifications.

### Pennsylvania Construction Code Act

The Pennsylvania Construction Code Act (1999) and the Uniform Construction Code (2007) sets limitations on construction standards and does not apply these provisions to agricultural buildings.

### Right to Farm Act

The Right to Farm Act (enacted in 1982) protects Pennsylvania farmers and their right to the practice of agriculture. The Right to Farm Act was enacted in response to nuisance laws from neighboring land owners who claimed that a farmer was creating a private or public nuisance by interfering with the property owners use of their property or by threatening the public safety. The act limits the ability of private landowners to file suit by setting state-wide policy to "Conserve, protect, and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural land for the production of food and other agricultural product" (Right to Farm Act, 1982). In addition to limiting nuisance suits, the act prohibits

municipalities from identifying farming practices as nuisances or restricting the sales of agricultural goods through zoning ordinances. The act protects normal agricultural operations, which are defined as "the customary and generally accepted activities, practices and procedures that farmers adopt, use or engage in year after year in the production and preparation for market or poultry, livestock and their products and in the production and harvesting of agricultural, agronomic, horticultural, silvicultural and aquiculture crops and commodities and is not less than ten contiguous acres in area or less is less than ten contiguous acres in area but has an anticipated yearly gross of at least \$10,000" (Right to Farm Act, 1982).

### Sewer and Water Line Assessment Exemptions Act

The Sewer and Water Line Assessment Exemptions Act (1976) provides exemptions to farmers who do not want to tap into newly installed lines because they are using the land for agriculture. The land must have been used for agricultural production for three years prior to the installation of water or sewer lines.



### Agricultural Snapshot

Agriculture is classified as land being used for agricultural purposes, defined as the commercial production and preparation for market crops, livestock and livestock products and the production, harvesting and preparation for market or use of agricultural and similar crops and commodities. In the earlier 1900's Greene County was the largest producer of Merino wool in the country. The terrain of the County is well suited for raising sheep and today the County is the fourth largest producer of sheep in the state. However, the number of sheep farms have been steadily declining. One reason for the decline is the repeal of the National Wool Act of 1954, which occurred in 1995. The National Wool Act of 1954 offered direct payments for wool and mohair and incentives were greater for producers who received higher market prices as a way to encourage the production of high quality wool. The program also provided payments for unshorn lambs equal to payments received from shorn lambs. After the repeal of the National Wool Act, many sheep farmers quit producing lamb and wool because without incentives it was no longer profitable.



Agriculture in Greene County (Mackin, 2006)

With the decline of sheep farming, cattle production has become one of the top agriculture producers in Greene County. In 2002, the county had 17,049 cattle and calves, ranking 34<sup>th</sup> in Pennsylvania out of 67 counties. Roughly 38,849 acres of forage crops are harvested in Greene County, placing it 18<sup>th</sup> in Pennsylvania counties in this category. Row Crops are not grown in Greene County successfully due to steep slopes. Out of 67 counties in Pennsylvania, Greene County ranked 59 in terms of the value of crops, including nursery and greenhouses. While the biggest agriculture products in the County are sheep and cattle, the county still ranks low in terms of the value of livestock, poultry, and their products, with a ranking of 55 out of 67.

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### B. Data & Analysis

#### Agricultural Land Use

As discussed in Chapter 10: Land Use, over 41 percent of the land use in Greene County is classified as agriculture determined using land cover data from Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC). Agriculture is classified as land being used for agricultural purposes-the commercial production and preparation for market crops, livestock and livestock products and the production, harvesting and preparation for market or use of agricultural and similar crops and commodities. Land use data was also derived from the Greene County Tax Assessment data, with agriculture making up over 45 percent of the land in Greene County. Tax data also classifies land in the Clean and Green program, with over 36 percent of the total land enrolled. Using tax assessment data, land classified under Agricultural and Clean and Greene totals 81 percent of the total land use. *Figure 11-1: Agricultural Land Use* depicts both agricultural lands as classified by the tax assessment data and the land cover data per SPC.

The discrepancies in the data sets are due to the way the land use information was derived. The Tax Assessment Office classifies a land use based upon the entire parcel of land, whereas SPC land cover data examines how the land is currently being used-not how it is taxed. Therefore, the SPC data shows more open spaces, forests, and agriculture than the tax assessment data. Land enrolled in the Clean and Green Program could be either agricultural or forest, tax records do not differentiate between the two.

#### Agricultural Industry

To more accurately depict how the agricultural industry affects land use in Greene County, information was collected from the United States Department of Agriculture and the Pennsylvania Cooperative Extension (2002 and 2005-2006). Tables 11-3 through 11-4 use the south-western portion agricultural statistic district in comparison analysis, which includes Allegheny, Fayette, Greene, Somerset, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties. Table 11-1: Agriculture Industry Statistics for Greene County and Peer Counties (2002) shows that Greene County has a smaller total number of farms than its surrounding counties in Pennsylvania but more than neighboring West Virginia Counties. Since 1997, Greene County experienced a two percent increase in the number of farms. The average size of a farm in Greene County is larger than that of any comparison county with an average size of a farm at 161 acres. Greene County has fewer farms than Fayette County, but greater acreage in farms.

**Table 11-1: Agriculture Industry Statistics for Greene County and Peer Counties, 2002**

	Number of Farms	Change of Farms (% from 1997)	Land in Farms (acres)	Acre change from 1997	Average Size of Farms (acres)
Greene County	881	2%	141,684	0	161
Fayette County	978	-3%	125,034	5%	128
Washington County	2506	44%	261,139	28%	104
Marion County, West Virginia	464	13%	50,153	8%	108
Marshall County, West Virginia	706	5%	90,568	1%	128
Wetzel County, West Virginia	336	no change	49,154	-12%	146

Source US Department of Agriculture--Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service, 2002

The economic impact of the Agriculture Industry is described in Table 11-2: Greene County Economic Impact of Agriculture, 2002. For relevant data comparison purposes, Greene County is shown only with its neighboring counties in Pennsylvania. The total value of all agricultural products sold in Greene County is far below that of Fayette County or Washington County; Greene County ranks 58th out of 67th. Interestingly, Greene County ranks fourth in the total number of Sheep and Lambs.



**Table 11-2: Greene County Economic Impact of Agriculture, 2002**

	Total Value of Agricultural Products Sold	State Rank	Value of Crops	State Rank	Value of Livestock / Poultry	State Rank	Top Livestock Inventory Items	State Rank	County Employment *Bureau of Economic Analysis Data includes forestry
Greene County	\$7,197,000	58	\$2,224,000	59	\$4,973,000	55	sheep/lambs	4	917
Fayette County	\$21,344,000	46	\$8,795,000	34	\$12,549,000	42	pheasants	4	1162
Washington County	\$30,166,000	37	\$13,773,000	26	\$16,393,000	36	sheep/lambs horses/ponies	1 4	2018

Source US Department of Agriculture-Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service, 2002 & Penn State Cooperative Extension

Both the high ranking of Greene County for Sheep and Lamb and the number of employed persons in agriculture beg that steps be taken to capitalize upon this market strength. Such efforts would be further strengthened if undertaken in cooperation with Washington County.

Table 11-3: Greene County Crop Summary, 2005-2006 describes the number of acres harvested, the yield, the production and the value of production for Dry All Hay, Dry Alfalfa Hay, and Corn for Silage. In 2005, Greene County harvested approximately 37,000 acres of Dry All Hay, which yielded 1.46 tons, at a value of \$6,999,000. In 2006 the production increased significantly, by more than half. However, in terms of the rest of the southwestern agricultural district, the County ranked fifth out of six in terms of tons produced and value of the production. Comparing it to production of Dry All Hay in the entire state, Greene County's production value was low but relevant to meet agricultural needs in the local economy. This is a commodity relevant to agricultural sustainability countywide.

As for producing corn for grain, Greene County decreased production from 2005-2006 and had the least amount of bushels in 2006. The low crop production illustrates that Greene County is not able to meet the local demand for crops or to export crops to other counties or states. Counties that have a significant crop production are able to meet local demand and export surplus, which contributes to the total economy. Lower corn production in Greene County is attributed to better forage management practices, which are reducing the need for corn because sufficient nutrition is being provided by forage, rather than necessarily by the inherent inability to produce corn. Practices such as intensive grazing, no-till agriculture, nutrient management, and warm season grass establishment, among others, can eliminate the need for grain supplement entirely.

Table 11-3: Greene County Crop Summary, 2005-2006								
	2005				2006			
	Harvested (Acres)	Yield (tons)	Production (tons)	Value of Production	Harvested (Acres)	Yield (tons)	Production (tons)	Value of Production
Dry All Hay	37,200	1.46	54,200	6,999,000	41,200	2.48	102,100	N/A
Dry Alfalfa Hay	4,200	1.9	8,000	1,224,000	4,200	2.31	9,700	N/A
Corn for Silage	700	16.1	11.30	305.10	700	16.6	11.6	319.00
Corn for Grain	700	85.6 (bushels)	59,900 (bushels)	131,780	700	80 (bushels)	56,000 (bushels)	N/A

Source USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service-PA Office, 2005-2006



Table 11-4: Greene County Livestock Summary, 2005-2007 lists the numbers of cattle, hogs, and sheep in Allegheny, Fayette, Greene, Somerset, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties between 2005 and 2007. Greene County ranked 5th out of 6th in the amount of cattle and hogs making this sector of agriculture not profitable or competitive for farmers.

Table 11-4: Greene County Livestock Summary, 2005-2007									
	Cattle			Hogs			Sheep		
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007
Allegheny	2,700	2,500	2,100	300	400	N/A	800	900	800
Fayette	19,400	19,300	18,900	1,600	1,500	N/A	1,100	1,200	1,100
Greene	17,700	17,500	16,600	400	400	N/A	4,000	4,200	4,000
Somerset	51,500	51,300	47,200	1,600	2,000	N/A	2,100	2,600	2,600
Washington	36,300	36,200	33,500	1,600	1,500	N/A	8,600	10,200	9,500
Westmoreland	26,400	26,200	23,200	2,500	2,300	N/A	2,600	2,800	2,800

Source USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Pennsylvania, 2005-2007

The production, yield, and crop value statistics in Greene County illustrate that crop production is not a strong agricultural market in the County. While Greene County has soils within Prime Farmland Classifications, incentives to grow locally are not available but would increase crop growing substantially. Efforts should also be focused on increasing livestock numbers, especially sheep and cattle, to increase profitability of the agricultural industry in the County. Identification of niche markets for Greene County agricultural products could also increase profitability for County agricultural producers.

## Agritourism

Agritourism is the act of visiting a farm or any other agricultural or horticultural business for the purpose to relax, be educated, or be involved in agricultural activities. A study was completed by researchers from California University of Pennsylvania for The Center for Rural Pennsylvania to learn more about the agritourism industry of Pennsylvania in 2004. The study showed that the Laurel Highlands/Southern Alleghenies section, which includes Greene County, comprises approximately ten percent of the agritourism market in Pennsylvania. Agritourism is more prominent in the eastern part of the state in the Hershey/Gettysburg area and the Leigh Valley area. The study classified agritourism activities in Pennsylvania into four different categories: farm retail/dining, agri-entertainment, agri-education, agri-lodging.

The largest category of agritoursim is farm retail/dining, accounting for about 78 percent, which includes roadside stands, farmers markets, Christmas tree farms, "U-pick" operations, and wineries.

Agri-entertainment was the next largest category at 11 percent, which includes rodeos, agricultural fairs, petting zoos, horseback riding, haunted houses, and outdoor recreation.

Agri-education, which makes up two percent, includes school tours, farm-related museums, garden tours, winery tours, agricultural exhibits, and crop identification programs.

Agri-lodging is accommodations provided on a currently operating or historic farm and currently makes up nine percent of the agritourism industry in Pennsylvania. This would include bed and breakfasts, dude/guest ranches, country inns, hostels, and camping/campgrounds.

The study found that the average spending by agritourists is \$120 per visit and visitors researched their trip online. The barriers to attracting agritourists include remote location, high marketing costs, a lack of marketing experience, lack of awareness of agritourism in Pennsylvania, and development is causing crowding and commercialization in rural regions.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture- Bureau of Market Development is promoting agritourism through their Blue Ribbon Passport. The Blue Ribbon passport is a way to see Pennsylvania's agricultural hotspots, such as markets, fairs, cover bridges, wineries, farm markets, and farm tours. The Blue Ribbon Passport is separated into three districts. Greene County falls into the Interstate 79 South district and only the Greene County Fair is listed in the Blue Ribbon Passport. Other potential agritourism sites that should be listed in the Blue Ribbon Passport are the Jacktown Fair, covered bridges throughout the county, and the Waynesburg Farmer's Market.

The 2008-2009 Greene County Visitor's Guide prepared by the Greene County Tourist Promotion Agency notes a plethora of Agri-Tourism events that are currently planned or are being organized for the future. They include the following:

1. The Waynesburg Farmer's Market
2. The Washington and Greene Covered Bridge Festival
3. The Rices Landing Pumpkin Festival
4. The Waynesburg Sheep and Fiber Fest
5. The Greene County Agricultural Fair
6. The Jacktown Fair
7. The Greene County Museum Annual Harvest Festival
8. Mason-Dixon Ramp Festival
9. Enlow Fork Wildflower Walk
10. Buckin B' Cattle Company's Championship Bull Riding Competition
11. Save A Horse Riding Stable and Orndorff's Belgians Horse Farm
12. Thistelwaites Vineyard
13. Greenhouses and Nurseries in Spraggs, Waynesburg, Carmichaels, Lippincott, and Wind Ridge
14. Pennsylvania Livestock Auction, Inc.
15. Farm Tours at Lippencott Alpacas and Strath an De'Farm
16. Farm Stay at So'Journey Farm
17. Locally Grown Produce in Graysville, Waynesburg, Prosperity, Holbrook, and Wind Ridge
18. Tree Farms in Clarksville, New Freeport, Spraggs, and Jefferson



### Agricultural Fairs & Festivals

#### Greene County Fairgrounds

The Greene County Fairgrounds is located in Franklin Township between State Route 21 and State Route 188. The fairground is owned by the county and consists of 26 acres. The fair is operated by the Fair Board and is held the first week of August. There are six barns that can hold 240 horses, two show arenas, two pole barns to house rabbits and goats, and various other buildings that house offices. Events include harness racing, demolition derby, tractor pulls, horse halter shows, 4-H rabbit, cattle, steer, and lamb shows, and horse and pony pulls.

#### Jacktown Fairgrounds

The Jacktown Fairgrounds is located in Wind Ridge, Pennsylvania. The first fair was held on October 3 and 4, 1866, making it the nation's oldest continuing fair. The fair was organized by the Richhill Agricultural Horticultural and Mechanical Society. The fair is held the third week in July. Events include horse pulls, rabbit show, truck pull, tractor pull, livestock judging, tractor driving contest, demolition derby, rabbit/goat sales, mud bog, parade, float contest, and bands.

#### Sheep and Fiber Festival

The Sheep and Fiber Festival, organized by Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful, in 2003 celebrates the heritage of sheep, wool and fiber in Greene County. Festivities are held in May in Waynesburg and include sheep sheering, hands on exhibits of sheep, shepherding dogs and alpaca, children's activities, lamb cook-off, and the selling of wool crafts.



Sheep and Fiber Festival [Source: Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful (<http://www.waynesburgpa.org/Events/sheep.html#>.)]

## Waynesburg Farmers Market

Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful sponsors a local farmers market every Wednesday in May through October on 303 West High Street-First Baptist Church Parking Lot in Waynesburg.

Penn State Cooperative Extension in Greene County performed a rapid market assessment on the Waynesburg Farmer's Market on August 23, 2006. A rapid market assessment was conducted to learn consumer motivation for shopping, average money spent, willingness to spend, and the total volume of market traffic. Products sold included general produce, peaches, vegetables, plants, hydroponically grown tomatoes, meat products, baked goods, jam/jellies/sauces, lavender, and other value-added items. Market attendance was estimated at 624 adults with actual market sales of \$2,403, which did not include food vendors. Fifty four percent of the shoppers spent \$10 or less and average spending per shopping group was \$11.98. Customers stated that they visited the farmers market to buy farm products and to support the continuation of the market.



Waynesburg Farmer's Market (Source: Mackin, 2006)



### "Buy Local" Campaign

Promoting a "buying local" campaign is key to the agricultural industry in Greene County. Food loses not only taste but also nutrients and dollar value. Eighty cents of every dollar spent on food pays for marketing inputs such as labor, packaging, and transportation. Most of the money spent on food does not go either to the farmer or to support the community where the food is produced. People, therefore, are also joining the local food movement for reasons of nutrition, social justice, and solidarity. They want to become part of a local and regional food system that values nutritious food, environmental sustainability, small farms, and strong local economies. The biggest barriers to organic production are the high cost of certification and a weak local market. Reasons to "Buy Local" include the following (<http://www.buylocalpa.org/why.php>):

#### Exceptional Taste & Freshness

Local food is fresher and tastes better than food shipped long distances from other states or countries. Most fresh fruits and vegetables produced in the U.S. are shipped from California, Florida, and Washington. Fruits and vegetables shipped from distant states and countries can spend as many as seven to fourteen days in transit before they arrive in the supermarket. Most fruit and vegetable varieties sold in supermarkets are chosen for their ability to withstand industrial harvesting equipment and extended travel not taste. This results in little variety in the plants grown. Local farmers can offer produce varieties bred for taste and freshness rather than for shipping and long shelf life.

Locally grown fruits and vegetables are usually sold within 24 hours of being harvested. Produce picked and eaten at the height of ripeness has exceptional flavor and, when handled properly, is packed with nutrients. By choosing local produce at farm stands, farmers markets, pick-your-own farms and grocery stores, you pay for taste, not transportation and packaging. Local farmers often grow a large assortment of unique varieties of products to provide the most flavorful choices throughout the season.

#### Strengthen the Local Economy

Buying local food keeps your dollars circulating in your community. Local family farmers spend their money with local merchants. The money stays in town where it benefits everyone and builds a stronger local economy. Independent, family-owned farms supply more local jobs and contribute to the local economy at higher rates than do large, corporate-owned farms. Local farmers who sell direct to consumers receive a larger share of the profit for their food.

#### Support Endangered Family Farms

There's never been a more critical time to support your farming neighbors. With each local food purchase, you ensure that more of your money spent on food goes to the farmer. Family farms are an important part of the American tradition of self-sufficiency, forming the bedrock for communities across the U.S. Since 1935, the U.S. has lost 4.7 million farms and fewer than one million

Americans now claim farming as a primary occupation. Farmers in 2002 earned their lowest real net cash income since 1940, meanwhile corporate agribusiness profits have nearly doubled (increased 98%) since 1990. Large corporations increasingly dominate U.S. food production: four large firms control over 80 percent of beef slaughter, 59 percent of pork packing, and 50 percent of broiler chicken production.

### Safeguard Family's Health

Knowing where your food comes from and how it is grown or raised enables you to choose safe food from farmers who avoid or reduce their use of chemicals, pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, or genetically modified seed in their operations. Buy food from local farmers you trust. Eating locally grown, healthy food strengthens your family and community.

### Protect the Environment

Local food doesn't have to travel far. This reduces carbon dioxide emissions and packing materials. Buying local food also helps to make farming more profitable and selling farmland for development less attractive.

## Agricultural Conservation Lands

Counties have been charged to consider agricultural lands when completing a comprehensive plan and prepare a plan for preserving and enhancing that land. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) specifies that when preparing a comprehensive plan a county "shall identify a plan for the preservation and enhancement of prime agricultural land and encourage the compatibility of land use regulation with existing agricultural operations" (p. 13). The MPC was amended in 2000 through Act 67 and Act 68 to encourage multi-municipal planning and intergovernmental partnerships. Through a coordinated approach, counties and local municipalities have the authority to dedicate public funds in certain areas so that other land areas may be preserved as rural resource areas. Additionally, multi-municipal planning and zoning can provide for agricultural land uses within a reasonable geographic area and be protected against exclusionary zoning challenges.

Approximately five percent of land in Greene County is classified as a prime agricultural soil. These soils are scattered around the county with denser deposits in the eastern portion of the County and along South Fork Ten Mile Creek. Prime Agricultural Soils are in areas where there are fewer slopes of 25 percent or less and happen to be where most development has occurred.

The classification of Prime Agricultural Land includes active farming of land to extend the definition beyond the narrow description of soil classifications. Prime agricultural soils are mapped on *Figure 11-2: Prime Agricultural Lands*. The definition of "prime agricultural land" in Pennsylvania, according to Executive Order 2003-2 signed in 2003, is as follows:

- a) In active agricultural use (not including growing timber);



- b) Lands devoted to active agricultural use the preceding three years; and
- c) Fall into at least one of the categories of land – State agencies shall provide protection to “prime agricultural land” under this Executive Order based upon the following levels of priority:
  - 1) Preserved Farmland (Highest Priority)
  - 2) Farmland in Agricultural Security Areas (Second Highest Priority)
  - 3) Farmland enrolled in Act 319 of 1974, As Amended (Clean and Green) or Act 515 of 1996, As Amended (Third Highest Priority)
  - 4) Farmland Planned for Agriculture Use and Subject to Effective Agricultural Zoning (Fourth Highest Priority)
  - 5) Land Capability Classes I, II, III, and IV Farmland and Unique Farmland (Fifth Highest Priority)

As development pressures begin to increase, Greene County farmers may find it more lucrative to develop than to farm. Pennsylvania legislators have recognized the challenges faced by the agriculture industry and have taken steps to strengthen and protect this important economic sector. Pennsylvania leads the nation in the number of acres of farmland preserved; 400,000+ as of August 2008. Greene County preserved farmland for the first time in 2008, with the 108-acre farm owned by William and Lura Ann Cree, as shown on *Figure 11-2: Prime Agricultural Lands*.

### Clean & Green Lands

As of August 2007, Greene County has 148,057 acres enrolled in Clean and Green, of which 37,786 (25.5%) were classified as Agricultural Use, 30,915 (20.9%) as Agricultural Reserve, and 79,356 (53.6%) as Forest Use. Almost half of the County's land is enrolled in Clean and Green, which significantly lowers the tax base for the county, school districts, and local municipalities.

### Agricultural Security Areas

In Greene County there are 4 approved ASA and one pending application:

- Center Township - 1643.7 Acres with 7 landowners (Application Pending)
- Cumberland Township - 582.77 Acres enrolled with 2 landowners
- Greene Township – 547 Acres with 3 landowners
- Washington Township - 2,195 Acres enrolled with 24 landowners
- Wayne Township - 1,977.9 Acres with 6 landowners

These areas are delineated on *Figure 11-2: Prime Agricultural Lands*.

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### C. Development Strategies

#### GOAL: Strengthen the agricultural industry

- Strategy:** Promote agricultural conservation in areas that fall outside of identified growth areas as shown on *Figure 10-3: Future Land Use Plan* and as allowed by the PA MPC...
- Strategy:** Integrate an agricultural marketing strategy into the County's overall economic development plan.
- Strategy:** Assist farmers in developing highly productive, innovative, or unusual operations to increase productivity, sustainability, and profitability, by identifying niche markets such as vegetables, fruits, flowers, free range turkeys, goats, rabbits and ducks.
- Strategy:** Promote agricultural legislation to protect farmland from the impacts of mining, (loss of water), and gas well development occurring on land that has productive agricultural potential. Provide educational opportunities to producers on how to continue farming during active resource development and beyond.
- Strategy:** Partner with Washington, Fayette, Monongalia, and Preston Counties to develop cluster activities to support niche markets.
- Strategy:** Organize an active support program for those participating in the agricultural industries.
- Strategy:** Attract a USDA-certified poultry processing plant to Greene County.
- Strategy:** Legislate the timber industry as an agriculture commodity, a crop is produced, harvested, reproduced, and reharvested.
- Strategy:** Promote and publicize the Waynesburg Farmers Market through the Greene County Cooperative Extension mailings and other available agricultural mailing lists.
- Strategy:** Assure that the Conservation District and Extension Services are represented on the Board of the Farmer's Market.
- Strategy:** Support the establishment of additional farmers markets throughout the County.
- Strategy:** Develop and implement a "Buy Local" campaign to promote local farmers and produce. Potential slogan is "A Taste of Greene County."

**Strategy:** Support agricultural education / FFA in the public schools throughout the county.

**Strategy:** Support a Farm to School initiative for the public schools, university and other institutions in the county, by sourcing locally produced food products.

**Strategy:** Develop a program geared towards new and beginner farmers that focuses on the business planning and marketing aspects of getting started in an agricultural enterprise.

**Strategy:** Provide workshops at the Fairgrounds for farmers regarding:

- Farmer's Market
- Farm to Market
- Technical Assistance on production of different Crops
- Agricultural Support Services available
- Organic growing techniques
- Alternative Energy
- Consumer Education

**Strategy:** Develop a community food system. A community food system is a food system in which food production, processing, distribution and consumption are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a particular place. Four aspects distinguish community food systems from the globalized food system that typifies the source of most food Americans eat: food security, proximity, self-reliance and sustainability.

- Food security is a key goal of community food systems. While food security traditionally focuses on individual and household food needs, community food security addresses food access within a community context, especially for low-income households. It has a simultaneous goal of developing local food systems.
- Proximity refers to the distance between various components of the food system. In community food systems such distances are generally shorter than those in the dominant or global food system. This proximity increases the likelihood that enduring relationships will form between different stakeholders in the food system – farmers, processors, retailers, restaurateurs, consumers, etc.
- Self-reliance refers to the degree to which a community meets its own food needs. While the aim of community food systems is not total self-sufficiency (where all food is produced, processed, marketed and consumed within a defined boundary), increasing the degree of self-reliance for food, to be determined by a community partnership, is an important aspect of a community food system.
- Sustainability refers to following agricultural and food system practices that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their food needs. Sustainability includes environmental protection, profitability, ethical treatment of food system workers, and community development. Sustainability of the food and



agriculture system is increased when a diversified agriculture exists near strong and thriving markets, when non-renewable inputs required for every step in the food system are reduced, when farming systems rely less on agri-chemical fertilization and pest control, and when citizen participation in food system decision-making is enhanced.

### GOAL: Preserve agricultural lands

**Strategy:** Continue directing funding and support to the Greene County Agricultural Land Preservation Program through local and state funding.

**Strategy:** Educate residents on the guidelines, benefits, etc. of the Greene County Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

**Strategy:** Petition the state legislature to provide more funding directed towards the agricultural conservation easement purchase program.

**Strategy:** Direct money received from Growing Greener II towards protecting high priority and endangered farmland through proper site assessment.

**Strategy:** Encourage local municipalities to enact zoning ordinances to protect high priority and endangered farmland by restricting development to agricultural uses only.

**Strategy:** Ensure that the requirements and stipulations of the Clean and Green Program are being followed by the owners of enrolled lands.

### GOAL: Capitalize on the history of sheep farming

**Strategy:** Expanding and promote the Sheep & Fiber Festival.

**Strategy:** Partner with Washington County to establish regional marketing efforts and support regional production of sheep and wool products (*note: Washington County still has a Wool Pool – Greene does not*).

**Strategy:** Educate and assist local farmers to expand their livestock market, particularly sheep and cattle, into profitable businesses.

**Strategy:** Develop a specialty wool products industry.

**GOAL: Promote agritourism as an economic development tool**

**Strategy:** Expand Greene County's role in the Blue Ribbon Passport program that is operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, to include, at a minimum:

- Jacktown Fair
- Waynesburg Farmers Market
- Covered Bridges

**Strategy:** Educate farmers on ways to enter into the agri-tourism industry.

**Strategy:** Develop and market a Greene County Farm / Agricultural Tour.

**Strategy:** Update County website to include agricultural industry, promotion of, etc.

**Strategy:** Maintain an inventory of highly productive, innovative, or unusual operations for tourism and education purposes. For example Alpaca farms, dairies that also produce cheese, and an operation that uses solar pumps to water stock or use of other alternative energy systems.

**Strategy:** Develop a Farm to City day / week to educate the citizens on the variety of agricultural products produced in the county and traditional farm oriented activities (examples include tractor driving, bale tossing, butter churning, etc.). Greene County Conservation District, Penn State Cooperative Extension, 4-H, FFA and local businesses should partner to promote this activity.