



For immediate release... **Monday, December 10, 2012** 6 pp.

Contact: Rich Higginson 908.213.1971 or Pete Furey 609.393.7163

## **NEW JERSEYANS SUPPORT FARMING INITIATIVES**

According to a recent statewide poll by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind and co-sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau, more than eight in ten (83%) New Jersey residents support the continuation of public funding for the preservation of open space and farmland. Those in the Northwest region of the state (88%) are more likely than those in the Northeast (76%) to support the funding. "New Jersey may be among the most densely populated states, but that doesn't mean Garden Staters don't value the protection of open space," said New Jersey Farm Bureau President Ryck Suydam.

Residents are not as certain, however, as to how the land preservation should be funded. Provided with two choices, half (53%) say a voter approved bond referendum should be put forth to provide several years of funding. About a third (30%) say it should be funded with long-term allocation of existing tax revenues, and one in six (17%) are not sure how the preservation should be funded. Those in the Northeast (66%) are more likely than those from the Northwest (49%) or Central NJ (47%) to support the bond referendum. "New Jerseyans have long supported the preservation of open spaces to keep the Garden State green, but the bottom line is funding has decreased significantly over the past few years," Suydam said. "This may be the impetus to drive additional resources."

Residents overwhelmingly favor (81%) state-funded research programs for food production and farming methods at Rutgers University that benefit New Jersey's farming and agriculture. The study found no differences exist across the regions of NJ. "The strong support for this type of program should inform the Christie administration and legislature about the importance of such funding in the upcoming state budget," said Suydam.

New Jerseyans favor (55%) an agricultural visa worker program which would permit NJ farmers to temporarily hire workers from other countries to harvest fruits and vegetables before returning to their home country at the end of the growing season. Only two in five (38%) would oppose such a program. Those in the Northwest (67%) and South (65%) are most likely to support such a program. "We take note of this support for an agricultural visa program for temporary foreign workers, which is in line with similar surveys in other states," said Suydam. "If a domestic workforce for agricultural labor is lacking or does not exist, we need to have a legal means of recruiting workers."

Residents offer positive appraisals concerning the treatment of livestock by New Jersey farmers. About three in five (57%) believe farm animals are treated humanely. Fewer than one in ten (7%) say they are not treated humanely, but more than a third (36%) are uncertain as to how the animals are treated. Those from South Jersey (68%) are more likely than those from the Northeast (51%) or Central part of the state (54%) to believe farmers treat their livestock well. "There are well-defined guidelines at

the state Department of Agriculture and other organizations to ensure farm livestock are treated humanely in accordance with best management practices,” Suydam noted. “The NJ Farm Bureau is highly confident that NJ farmers follow these guidelines,” he added.

Finally, about half (51%) of the respondents say they or someone in their household has visited a NJ farm in the past 12 months for activities such as pick-your-own fruit or pumpkins, hay rides or corn mazes. Those in the Northwest (61%) are more likely than those in the Northeast (42%) to have visited a farm. “We always believed that New Jerseyans understood the importance farming has in the state and the collective results from this survey confirm that our residents fully support farmers and agriculture in the great Garden State,” Suydam concluded.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll was co-sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and conducted by telephone using both landlines and cell phones from October 26 through October 29 and again from November 12 and November 16 using a randomly selected sample of 600 New Jersey adults aged 18 and over (Polling was suspended for approximately 2 weeks due to hurricane Sandy). The margin of error for a sample of 600 is +/- 4 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence.

*Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>*

*Radio actualities at 201.692.2846*

*For more information, please call 201.692.7032*

## Methodology, Questions, and Tables

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone using both landlines and cell phones from October 26, 2012, through October 29, 2012, and again from November 12 through 16, using a randomly selected sample of 600 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 600 randomly selected respondents is +/- 4 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers.

PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a land-line phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

As you may or may not know, public funding for land preservation in New Jersey will soon be depleted. Do you favor or oppose the continued efforts of the New Jersey government to preserve land for open space and active farmland?											
	All	Party			Gender		Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women	North East	Urban Core	North West	Central	South
Favor	83%	89	80	76	80	86	76	82	88	84	83
Oppose	11%	8	13	15	16	6	13	13	7	11	12
D/K	6%	3	7	9	5	8	11	5	5	6	5

*Northwest: Sussex, Hunterdon, Warren, Morris and Somerset Counties*

*Northeast: Passaic and Bergen Counties*

*Urban Core: Hudson, Essex and Union Counties*

*Central: Ocean, Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Middlesex Counties*

*South: Cape May, Atlantic, Cumberland, Gloucester, Camden and Salem Counties*

Which best describes your thoughts on how the state should fund land preservation programs?											
	All	Party			Gender		Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women	North East	Urban Core	North West	Central	South
Voter approved bond referendum	53%	54	55	46	52	54	66	58	49	47	51
Long term allocation of tax revenue	30%	30	34	25	34	26	15	22	40	35	32
D/K	17%	16	12	28	14	20	19	21	11	18	17

Do you favor or oppose an agricultural visa worker program, which allows New Jersey farmers to hire employees from other countries to work on farms temporarily in order to harvest fruits and vegetables and return to their home country at the end of the growing season?

	All	Party			Gender		Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women	North East	Urban Core	North West	Central	South
Favor	55%	57	59	47	59	52	44	54	67	51	65
Oppose	38%	37	37	43	36	40	52	37	29	41	27
D/K	7%	6	4	9	5	8	4	9	5	7	8

To the best of your knowledge, do you believe that livestock farmers in New Jersey, including those that raise cows, sheep, goats, pigs, and other animals, treat their animals humanely?

	All	Party			Gender		Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women	North East	Urban Core	North West	Central	South
Yes	57%	57	61	55	59	56	51	59	60	54	68
No	7%	9	5	3	6	8	7	5	8	8	5
D/K	36%	33	34	42	35	37	42	36	32	37	27

Do you favor or oppose state funded research programs at Rutgers University related to food production and farming methods that will benefit farming and agriculture in New Jersey?

	All	Party			Gender		Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women	North East	Urban Core	North West	Central	South
Favor	81%	89	76	76	79	84	78	85	82	81	79
Oppose	10%	5	17	12	14	7	11	10	11	8	14
D/K	8%	6	7	13	8	9	10	5	7	11	7

In the past 12 months, have you or someone in your household visited a New Jersey farm for entertainment purposes such as pick-your-own fruits or pumpkins, hay rides, corn mazes, wine tasting, or another activity?

	All	Party			Gender		Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Men	Women	North East	Urban Core	North West	Central	South
Yes	51%	51	55	45	48	54	42	47	61	54	46
No	48%	48	45	54	51	46	56	53	38	45	54
D/K	1%	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	0

**Contacts:** Rich Higginson 908.213.1971 or Pete Furey 609.393.7163

**Results are also available on the web at:** <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

**For more information, please call** 201.692.7032

###

## Exact Question Wording and Order

Now I'd like to ask you about farm related issues in New Jersey.

Farm 1- To begin, do you favor or oppose state funded research programs at Rutgers University related to food production and farming methods that will benefit farming and agriculture in New Jersey?

- 1 Favor
- 2 Oppose
- 9 Unsure/DK

Farm 2 - As you may or may not know, public funding for land preservation in New Jersey will soon be depleted. Do you favor or oppose the continued efforts of the New Jersey government to preserve land for open space and active farmland?

- 1 Favor [ASK Farm3a]
- 2 Oppose
- 9 Unsure/DK

Farm 2a - Which of the following best describes your thoughts on how the state should fund land preservation programs? RANDOMINZE

- 1 Through a voter approved bond referendum for several years of funding
- 2 Through a long term allocation of existing tax revenue
- 9 Unsure/DK

Farm 3 - To the best of your knowledge, do you believe that livestock farmers in New Jersey, including those that raise cows, sheep, goats, pigs, and other animals, treat their animals humanely?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Unsure/DK

Farm 4 - In the past 12 months, have you or someone in your household visited a New Jersey farm for entertainment purposes such as pick-your-own fruits or pumpkins, hay rides, corn mazes, wine tasting, or another activity?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Unsure/can't recall

Farm 5 - Do you favor or oppose an agricultural visa worker program, which allows New Jersey farmers to hire employees from other countries to work on farms temporarily in order to harvest fruits and vegetable and return to their home country at the end of the growing season?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Unsure/DK

**Sample characteristics****Gender**

Male	50
Female	50

**Age**

18-29	12
30-44	26
45-59	31
60+	30
Refused	2

**Race/Ethnicity**

White	67
Black/African-American	14
Latino or Hispanic	8
Asian	5
Other/refused	6

**Public employee household**

Yes	23
No	75
Unsure/refused	2

**Party identification**

Democrat/Lean Democrat	50
Independent/DK/refused	21
Republican/Lean Republican	28