

Study Identifies Public Values for Land Preservation

Issue (Who cares and why?)

Debate continues over whether purchase-of-development-rights programs (PDR) are targeting the qualities of preserved land that the public most wants. To serve the public good, it is essential to determine what value the public places on such attributes such as environmental protection, agricultural use, growth control and open space.

What has been done?

Food and Resource Economics economists at the University of Delaware conducted a study to determine the attributes of preserved land most desired by the public. A sample of 129 respondents, resulting in 1806 usable pair wise comparisons, was obtained by intercept-interview methods in public places.

Impact

Research revealed that in Delaware marked preferences exist for the agricultural and environmental attributes. State-level preferences based on the sample suggest 33 percent of public support for Delaware's PDR program is associated with the agricultural attribute. Following in importance are the environmental (27 percent), growth control (21 percent), and open space (18 percent) attributes. A comparison of the qualities of these attributes shows that the public favors agricultural land preservation because it protects a rural way of life, which also is seen to protect environmental quality.

Funding

Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station

Contact

Joshua M. Duke
Legal Studies
Food and Resource Economics
University of Delaware
205 Townsend Hall
Newark, DE 19717-1303
Phone (302) 831-2512
Fax (302) 831-6243

E-Mail Address

duke@udel.edu