

Clean Ohio AEPP Advisory Board Scoring Guide

Role of Farmland Preservation Advisory Board

In order to evaluate the five essay questions within the Tier II portion of the ranking system, a Farmland Preservation Advisory Board was established. The Advisory Board's charge is to: 1.) analyze and score the AEPP essay portion of the applications, and 2.) present recommendations for funding to Ohio Agriculture Director Robert J. Boggs. *Please see Ohio Revised Code 901.23.*

While the Director will make the final allocation decisions, the role of the Advisory Board is a vital component to the decision-making process.

There are five Tier II essay questions which summarize both the landowners' and local governments' investment in the economic, social and agricultural framework. The Advisory Board reviews these essays and designates a score based upon the information provided. The narratives will vary greatly throughout the state; however, there are certain characteristics differentiating applicants. The Clean Ohio AEPP scoring methodology is intended to assist in providing a framework for decision-making regarding the selection of applications for funding.

Tier II is a qualitative measuring of the following five areas:

- Agricultural infrastructure, support services, and facilities specific to the farm's agricultural activities.
- Estate, farm succession and business management plan and other long-term investments made on the farm.
- Potential for the farm to be a good demonstration or showcase project for the promotion of farmland preservation in Ohio.
- Public commitments to farmland preservation taken by the local government.
- Examples of sustainable agriculture on the farm.

Each of these topics is worth up to 10 points each and applicants have the ability to use a maximum of 1300 characters to discuss each subject. The application describes this section to the applicants as follows:

"These questions are designed to give you the opportunity to showcase the unique characteristics of your land or operation. It is a chance for you to explain what makes your application special (in ways that might not be evident in the straightforward answers to Tier I questions). Evaluations are based on the thoroughness of your responses, NOT on writing style."

Advisory Board Member's Role

Your role as an Advisory Board member is to provide a neutral and consistent ranking to the essay portion of the AEPP application. Please do not score any applications from

your county, sponsored by an organization of which you are a member, or a property of which you may have an ownership interest.

On each application that will be scored, the landowner's name and personal information will be eliminated from the essay portions that you will be assessing, and only the county and acreage will be revealed. Because there is a large volume of responses to be read, 30 of the highest Tier I applicants will be provided to you prior to the advisory board meeting. Please read and score these applications, using the attached score sheets, prior to the Wednesday, June, 18 meeting and bring the completed applications with you to the meeting.

Do not hesitate to contact Kristen Jensen, Program Manager with any questions or concerns, 614-728-4203 or kjensen@agri.ohio.gov.

Clean Ohio AEPP Scoring Methodology

As a reminder, the scoring methodology attached is offered to assist you in developing a framework for evaluating the five Tier II questions of each AEPP application and to allow for a consistency across all members' scoring. Each question is below as it appears on the application along with a general guideline for scoring.

16A: Provide some specific information about the property in this application. In particular, list or describe: (1) the kinds of agricultural activities conducted on the property; (2) the essential agricultural support services and facilities used in the operation; and, (3) the distance of those essential support services and facilities from the property. *(Maximum Points = 10.0)*

CRITERIA	STRONG RESPONSE (10-8 POINTS) Strong response in all areas	AVERAGE RESPONSE (7-4 POINTS) At least one of the factors is avg or above	WEAK RESPONSE (3-0 POINTS) All of the factors are weak or unresponsive
AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES (max of 4 points)	Give detail on agricultural activities, that includes information on livestock and crops; Information on the operation in terms of economic impact	Mentions some activities on the farm, but gives little or no detail regarding the operation	Vague on the types of agricultural activities conducted on the farm
AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES (max of 3 points)	Gives detail on agricultural support services that the farm utilizes, identifies each type of entity; the number of services for the county which is an important factor that indicates the stability, success and ultimately longevity of the agricultural infrastructure for that farm.	Mentions some agricultural support services and facilities but gives little detail on the variety within the region	Unresponsive to question and provides little detail.
PROXIMITY (max of 3 points)	List of a variety of support services and facilities, complete with distances; Close proximity to the farm indicating less than 10 miles.	Lists services and facilities, lists proximities which are beyond 10 miles.	Lists a few support services and facilities, but not a variety within the county; does not list proximity measurements.

16B: Discuss the management and future of the property in this application. In particular, describe: (1) what sort of estate plan is in effect for the property; (2) what sort of business plan is there for the operation of the farm; and, (3) what, if any, long-term investments have been made on the property. (*Maximum Points = 10.0*)

CRITERIA	STRONG RESPONSE (10-8 POINTS) Strong response in all areas	AVERAGE RESPONSE (7-4 POINTS) At least one of the factors is avg or above	WEAK RESPONSE (3-0 POINTS) All of the factors are weak or unresponsive
ESTATE PLAN (max of 4 points)	Give detail on an existing will or trust, that includes information on beneficiaries, line of succession for farm, or trustee duties, showing strong evidence farming will continue after death of owners; Information on the operation of will or trust is helpful to determine whether adequate steps have been taken to ensure farm's future and intent that farm be tended in the future.	Mentions will or trust or intent to create will or trust, but gives little or no detail regarding beneficiaries, succession of farm, or trustee duties.	Does not mention will or trust, existing or intent to create; No documented plan for future succession of farm or what is to happen with farm. Answers that indicate intent for farm to go to son or daughter, for example, without documentation or detail; Unresponsive to question.
BUSINESS PLAN (max of 3 points)	Gives detail on operation, management structure, and if the farm is incorporated, what type of entity; Entity structure and management/structure/duties are all important factors that indicate the stability, success and ultimately longevity of the farm.	Mentions how it is incorporated but gives little detail on management structure, type of entity, etc.	No-plan or mentions plan in passing with no detail; Unresponsive to question.
LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS (max of 3 points)	List of capital improvements, new equipment purchases, land or infrastructure purchase or improvements, complete with cost amounts; Other improvements to the farm or land that indicate a firm, long-term monetary commitment to the farm.	Lists some improvements or purchases, but does not necessarily list costs or indicate when such purchases were made; Plans for future investments are not an indication of what has actually been invested in the farm.	No improvement mentioned or lists a few improvements, but no cost amount or time when purchased; Statements about what owner would like to do with farm infrastructure or intends to do with farm; Unresponsive to question.

16C: (1) What makes the property in this application a good showcase for the promotion of farmland preservation in Ohio? (2) List ideas for making this property a better showcase. (3) Describe any awards received in these areas, if any. (*Maximum Points = 10.0*)

CRITERIA	STRONG RESPONSE (10-8 POINTS) Strong response in all areas	AVERAGE RESPONSE (7-4 POINTS) At least one of the factors is avg or above	WEAK RESPONSE (3-0 POINTS) All of the factors are weak or unresponsive
DEMONSTRATION OR SHOWCASE PROJECT (max of 5 points)	Gives details on present activities regarding the demonstration or showcase of agricultural operation to a variety of audiences, shows strong evidence of community involvement regarding the promotion of agriculture	Applicant provides a few or vague examples of how the farm is a good demonstration or showcase project	Applicant does not provide any examples of how the farm has been a demonstration project in the past or present of farmland preservation
IDEAS TO IMPROVE DEMONSTRATION (max of 3 points)	Gives details on potential activities and ideas regarding the demonstration or showcase of agricultural operation to a variety of audiences, shows strong evidence of community involvement regarding the promotion of agriculture	Applicant provides a few or vague examples of how the farm could be a good demonstration or showcase project in the future	Applicant does not provide any examples of how the farm could become a demonstration or showcase project of farmland preservation
AWARDS (max of 2 points)	Provides detailed information on nominated or received awards reflecting a good showcase for the promotion of farmland preservation in Ohio	Provides some or vague information on nominated or received awards reflecting a good showcase for the promotion of farmland preservation in Ohio	Does not provide any information on nominated or received awards reflecting a good showcase for the promotion of farmland preservation in Ohio

16D: What has your local government(s) done to (1) establish an agricultural preservation board; (2) fund an office of farmland preservation; (3) provide steady revenue to purchase agricultural easements; (4) create or support a land trust; or, (5) demonstrate other public commitment to farmland preservation. (*Maximum Points = 10.0*)

CRITERIA	STRONG RESPONSE (10-8 POINTS) Strong response in all areas	AVERAGE RESPONSE (7-4 POINTS) At least one of the factors is avg or above	WEAK RESPONSE (3-0 POINTS) All of the factors are weak or unresponsive
CREATE A AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD or OFFICE FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION (max of 4 points)	Gives detail on an existing local governmental actions, creation of a agricultural preservation board and office/personnel dedicated to farmland preservation; adequate steps have been taken to ensure the agricultural infrastructure and landowners are intended to be part of the county's land use and economic future.	Mentions some governmental actions regarding farmland preservation, such as the creation of a farmland preservation task force report, or personnel dedicated to farmland preservation but gives little or no detail regarding other governmental actions.	No documented farmland preservation board or government personnel dedicated to farmland preservation efforts; answers indicate no intention by the elected officials to protect the agricultural infrastructure; Unresponsive to question.
ESTABLISHMENT OF A REVENUE STREAM (max of 3 points)	Gives detail on the establishment of a revenue stream; Entity structure and management/structure/policies are all important factors that indicate the stability, long-range goals of the program.	Mentions attempts at establishment of a revenue stream.	No revenue stream in the county or region.
CREATION/SUPPORT OF A LAND TRUST (max of 3 points)	Details creation or support of local land trust within county or region; identifies number of easements held or commitment as a local sponsor towards application.	Intent to create or support a land trust, but gives little or no detail regarding timeline for establishment.	No established land trust in the area; no private commitment towards farmland improvements; Unresponsive to question.

16E: Explain the ways in which the property in this application demonstrates sustainable agriculture. List all programs (governmental or your own) you have entered into to address the following:(1) soil erosion, (2) water quality, (3) wetland protection/restoration, and, (4) wildlife habitat enhancement. *(Maximum Points = 10.0)*

CRITERIA	STRONG RESPONSE (10-8 POINTS) Strong response in all areas	AVERAGE RESPONSE (7-4 POINTS) At least one of the factors is avg or above	WEAK RESPONSE (3-0 POINTS) All of the factors are weak or unresponsive
ADDRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOIL EROSION • WATER QUALITY • WETLAND PROTECTION/RESORATION • WILDLIFE HABITAT ENFORCEMENT (max of 10 points)	Applicant provides evidence of addressing all four mentioned resource concerns positively if the issues apply. (Example: wetlands may not apply)	Applicant provides evidence of addressing at least two of the four mentioned resource concerns if applicable.	Applicant provides at least one of the four mentioned resource concerns if applicable.