



*News from*  
**SALEM COUNTY**  
Office of Public Information

---

Mr. Robin B. Weinstein, Public Information Officer  
Office Phone: (856) 935-7510 ext. 8202  
After Hours: (856) 297-5433

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 19, 2010

**INSPECTIONS INCREASE RATABLES**

(SALEM, NJ)—Salem County Tax Board President Steve Caltabiano today announced that, as a result of inspections conducted on Salem County farms 12 acres or less, the County's ratable base increased by over \$5,000,000 due to property no longer eligible to receive the reduced farmland assessment.

"The County Tax Office did an excellent job in their educational and instructional approach to this issue," said President Caltabiano. "It is important for everyone that the tax policies setup by the state are administered fairly. The increase to our ratable base is helpful during the difficult economic times we face."

The Tax Board started its educational approach by presenting a seminar to municipal Tax Assessors that reviewed the basics of the Farmland Assessment Act and re-emphasized the rules and procedures that are required. The next effort was an informational breakfast meeting for all municipal elected officials and employees about Farmland Assessment and the responsibilities of both the property owner and the tax assessor, including the required farm inspection that must be done every three years.

"We also invited farmers who cultivate or raise livestock on approximately 4,200 farm qualified parcels to workshops held throughout the County," said Tax Board President Caltabiano. "With the help of Bob Bruch from the Department of Agriculture, we reviewed their responsibilities in maintaining their preferential property taxation offered by the Farmland Assessment Act. The farmers were assured that we, the Board of Taxation and the Municipal Tax Assessors, would be working in partnership with them over the next three years to insure compliance and avoid denial of farmland qualification."

The final stage of the program involved municipal Tax Assessors implementing the statutory requirement of the three year inspections for all qualified farms. During this first year of inspections, the Tax Assessor focused on those farms that have twelve (12) acres or less. This having been accomplished, the larger farms that remain will be inspected over the next two years- 2010 and 2011.



*News from*  
**SALEM COUNTY**  
Office of Public Information

---

Mr. Robin B. Weinstein, Public Information Officer  
Office Phone: (856) 935-7510 ext. 8202  
After Hours: (856) 297-5433

Of the 1,536 farms inspected, 135 were denied:

- forty-four (44) farms did not have sufficient farming activity;
- forty (40) had less than five (5) acres being actively devoted to agriculture/horticulture and it was not possible for them to reconfigure buffer areas or obtain additional acreage in the near future;
- twenty-seven (27) were removed from farmland assessment and moved to a slightly higher value as meadows/wetlands;
- seven (7) were requests from the property owners who determined that they did not qualify or chose not to expend the time and effort to remain in the program; and
- the remaining denials were due to failure to file or file in a timely manner or due to insufficient income.