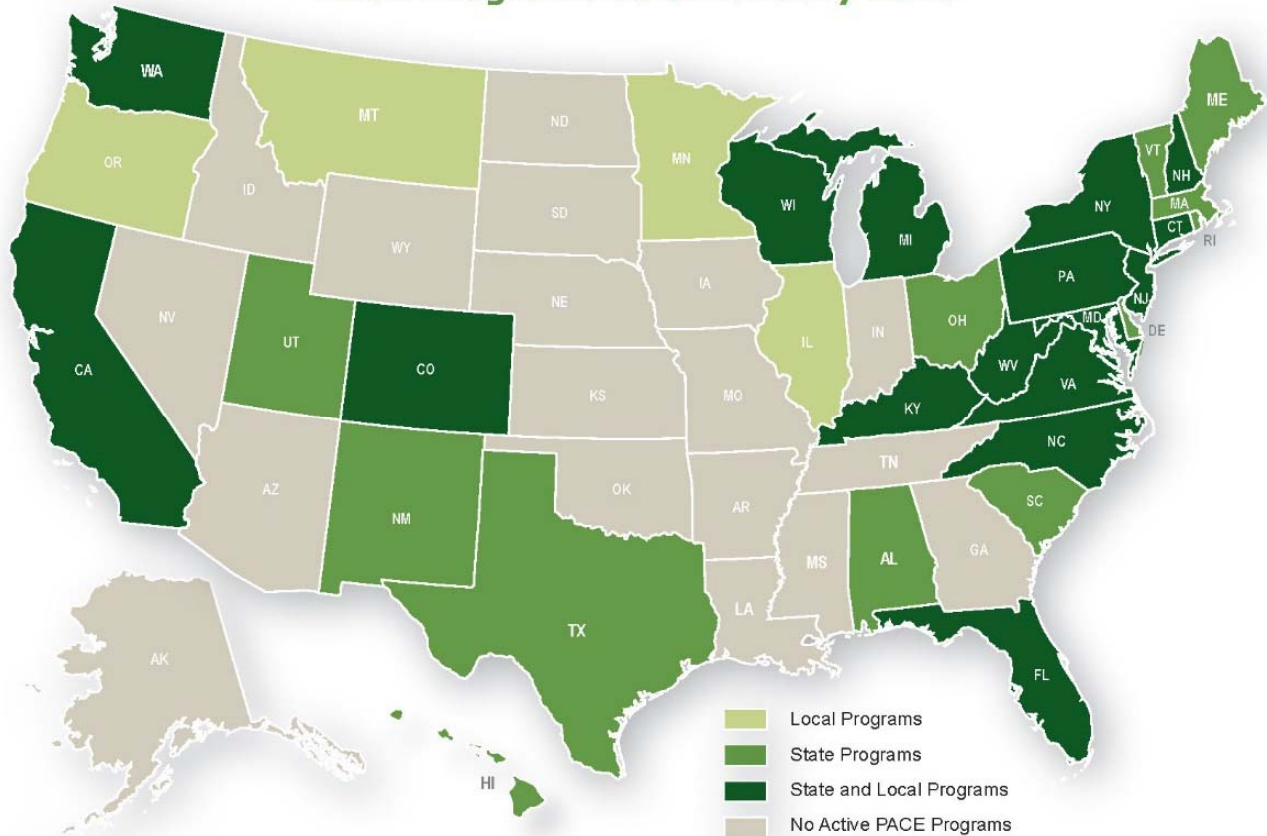


## PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAMS

### BACKGROUND

- Purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) programs use public funds to compensate property owners for keeping their land available for agriculture. PACE is known as Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) in some locations.
- As of January 2015<sup>1</sup>, at least 28 states have state-level PACE programs. Of these, 16 also have local PACE programs. Four additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Montana and Oregon) only have PACE programs at the local level. This activity is depicted in the PACE map. Montana's **state** PACE authority expired in 2003. Its previous activity appears on the state PACE table. Three more states (Arizona, Georgia and Missouri) have authorized programs but have not yet purchased agricultural conservation easements.

**PACE Programs as of January 2015**



<sup>1</sup> PACE data are from the 2015 PACE survey, which tracks activity in calendar year 2014.

# FARMLAND INFORMATION CENTER

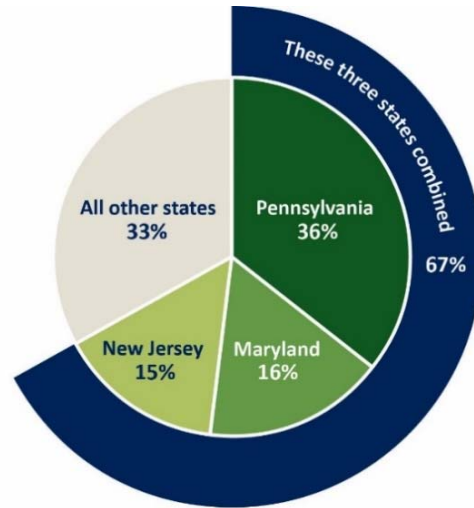
## EASEMENTS AND ACRES

- As of January 2015, 28 state-level programs had acquired 14,541 easements to protect 2,579,878 acres of farm and ranch land. Programs acquired 5.5 percent more easements and protected 54.1 percent more acres in 2014 than 2013.
- For every acre protected by state PACE programs, we converted nearly 10 acres of agricultural land to other uses.
- During 2014, state programs acquired 560 easements covering 125,176 acres.

States that have acquired the most easements to date	
Pennsylvania	4,732
Maryland	2,752
New Jersey	2,303
Massachusetts	874
Delaware	808

States that have protected the most acres to date	
Colorado	675,990
Pennsylvania	502,757
Maryland	378,193
New Jersey	212,748
Vermont	149,300

- Pennsylvania accounted for 35.7 percent of all easements purchased.
- Maryland accounted for 16.4 percent and New Jersey accounted for 14.8 percent of all easement purchases.
- Together, these three states acquired **67 percent** of the agricultural easements purchased by state programs in 2014!



## FARMLAND PROTECTION SPENDING

- State PACE programs invested nearly **\$3.9 billion** since 1979<sup>2</sup> to save farm and ranch land—vital agricultural infrastructure. States have leveraged this investment with nearly \$2.5 billion in additional funding from federal programs, local governments, land trusts, foundations and individuals.
- In 2014, state programs spent \$105 million to protect farm and ranch land. This spending leveraged additional funding totaling more than \$25 million.

States that have invested the most in farmland protection to date	
New Jersey	\$1,018,628,563
Pennsylvania	\$913,000,000
Maryland	\$721,279,102
Massachusetts	\$217,973,534
Colorado	\$184,669,410

State programs that have invested the most on an average annual basis	
New Jersey	\$35,115,385
Pennsylvania	\$33,954,285
MD Rural Legacy Program	\$16,039,000
MD Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation	\$13,275,860
Great Outdoors Colorado	\$9,233,471

<sup>2</sup> The year of the first acquisition by a state program.

## FARMLAND PROTECTION SPENDING (CONTINUED)

- Currently, for every dollar invested to save farmland—critical agricultural infrastructure—states spent more than \$1,000 on highways. Or, for every penny invested to save farmland, states spent more than \$10 on highways.
- In just *one year*, states spent nearly **\$108 billion** on highways—more than 1,000 times recent spending on farmland protection.
- All 50 states spent money on highways, but only 28 states have farmland protection programs, and in 2014 only 19 programs spent money on easement purchases.
- Spending in 2014 was down 69 percent from the \$336 million reported in 2009 and represented an eight-year low. If state programs had kept up the 2009 level of spending, we estimate they could have purchased 3,565 additional easements protecting 632,504 additional acres.



(Sources: FIC 2014 PACE Survey and U.S. Department of Transportation State Disbursements for Highways–2012)