

**Minutes of September 22, 2025**  
**Somerset County Agriculture Development Board Meeting**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the September 22, 2025, of the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (SCADB) Meeting began at 8:23 A.M. This meeting was held in person in the Commissioner's Meeting Room at the Somerset County Administration Building in Somerville, N.J.

**Open Public Meetings Statement**

Vice Chairperson, Debbie Norz, reported the meeting had been duly advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act as follows:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 *et seq.*, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided. The date and time information for this meeting was published in The Star Ledger and the Courier News. The agenda for this meeting was also posted on the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board's website.

**Roll Call**

Roll call was taken. There was a Quorum.

**Members in Attendance:**

Debbie Norz, Vice Chair  
Jimmy Abma- Arrived at 8:36 am  
John Lima  
Joanne Powell  
Laura DePrado, Secretary  
Robert Schultz  
Matt D'Alessandro, Soil Conservation District  
Kate Brown- Rutgers Extension Agent

**Members Not in Attendance:**

Mark W. Kirby, Chair

**Somerset County Staff:**

Kate Katzer, Somerset County Agriculture Development Board Manager  
Sarah Fitzpatrick, Esq., Deputy County Counsel

**Public Members Present:**

Elise Cavicchi, NJ Conservation Foundation

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the August 25, 2025, meeting were approved. The motion was made by Joanne Powell and seconded by John Lima. A roll call vote was made, and the motion was passed.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT & PRESENTATIONS:**

No current comments and presentations.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

#### **1. SADC Meeting –Update**

Kate Katzer shared that the SADC had closed on the first property utilizing the formula, and closings are no longer on hold. The SADC is now holding regular meetings with the CADB Administrators – and it has been helpful.

#### **2. County /State Boards of Agriculture – Update**

Joanne Powell shared that the New Jersey Farm Bureau Annual Meeting is coming up in November, as well as the Board of Agriculture's Annual Meeting to be held at Suydam Farms. The 2026 Ag Convention information is now live on the website for sign-up. Debbie Norz reminded everyone that Temple Granden would be speaking at the convention and that tickets are limited.

#### **3. Staff Comments**

Kate Katzer shared that Imani Carrillo, Administrative Assistant and staff to the Board, had a little girl. Mom and baby are doing well. The Board requested a congratulations card for the next meeting.

### **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:**

*The following items were presented to the Board by Somerset County Agriculture Development Board Manager, Kate Katzer:*

#### **1. Axcel Farm- Hillsborough**

Staff completed a site visit to the farm with the Soil Conservation District. This matter will be discussed further during closed session.

#### **2. Naturally Nurturing- Hillsborough**

Kate Katzer shared that she spoke with Dave Clapp about the status of the soil testing that occurred during the summer. This matter will be discussed further during closed session.

#### **3. RTF Howard Farm- Montgomery**

Staff shared that there was a complaint filed by a neighbor of the Howard Farm stating that non-agricultural activities were occurring onsite. This matter will be discussed further during closed session.

#### **4. Monitoring 2025**

Kate Katzer shared the monitoring documents for 2025 and passed around the schedule for Board members to sign up to attend. Monitoring will begin on October 22, 2025, and go until early December.

#### **5. Closed Session**

At 9:02 a.m. a motion to go into closed session was made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Joanne Powell. A roll call vote was made, and the motion was passed.

#### **6. Results and Actions from Closed Session**

At 9:48am a.m. a motion to come out of closed session was made by Joanne Powell and seconded by John Lima. A roll call vote was made, and the motion was passed.

A motion was made to send a letter to Axcel Farm landowners stating that the property is still in violation and that the remaining milling material needs to be removed by December 30, 2025. Additionally, the landowner is required to respond in writing by October 31, 2025, to indicate which material will be utilized on the roadway once the millings are removed and a plan for the installation of that material. The motion was made by Joanne Powell and seconded by Laura DePrado.

A motion was made to set up a site visit to the Howard Farm to investigate the claims made in the formal complaint by the neighbor. The motion was made by Joanne Powell and seconded by Laura DePrado.

#### **7. Adjournment**

At 9:51 a.m., a motion was made to adjourn by Laura DePrado and seconded by Joanne Powell. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by,

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Laura DePrado  
SCADB Secretary

*The Next SCADB meeting will be held on Monday, October 27, 2025, at 8:15 am.*