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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CARROLL COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION OPENS NEW APPLICATION CYCLE

WESTMINSTER, MD – February 3, 2012 - The Carroll County Agricultural Land Preservation Program has announced it is accepting new applications from landowners for the sale of agricultural land conservation easements now through April 17. Applications are available by calling 410-386-2214 or by visiting the Carroll County Government website at <http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg>. Click on the “Government” tab and scroll to “Agencies A-D” to find Agricultural Preservation.

Applicants who receive an offer for a conservation easement in 2012 will have two payment options: the Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA) option in which the purchase price will be received in twice-yearly payments of tax-free interest for 20 years, with balloon payment of the purchase price at end of the period; and lump-sum option – full purchase price paid at settlement.

Properties must be 50 acres in size unless they adjoin a preserved farm, and must meet soil and land use qualifications.

“We are pleased to open a new application period, this year with two payment options – tax-free interest installments and lump-sum payment,” said program manager Ralph Robertson. The program was restarted following the Commissioners’ concurrence, in December, with the Agricultural Land Preservation Task Force that gave a thumbs-up to the county program.

The county has preserved, to date, 61,807 acres and 554 farms throughout the county, but mostly in the county’s northwestern region. The region was designated by the county as the Little Pipe Creek Rural Legacy Area, which receives both state and county funding for land preservation. Carroll ranks 4th in the nation for acres preserved in a farmland preservation program.

The new application cycle, however, will involve county funding only, Robertson said. There is no further funding available through the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation for this fiscal year, and funds awarded to Carroll County through the Maryland Rural Legacy Program have been committed.

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CARROLL COUNTY

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