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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WERNERSVILLE --- A 13.72 acre farm in North Heidelberg Township will become the second farm protected from development by Adopt An Acre Inc. and the first farm preserved under a Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Berks which places the county on the deed of easement as a co-grantee. The MOU, which was adopted in 2009, guarantees that the County will defend the conservation easement in perpetuity if ever challenged. No county funds will be used to purchase the easement. The Ludwigs will receive $1,250 per acre from Adopt An Acre Inc. A permanent deed restriction will be placed on the property which ensures it will remain in agricultural use.

Owned by George and Faye Ludwig, this farm is adjacent to two farms preserved by the Berks County Agricultural Land Preservation Board and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. These two farms, owned by the Hook family, total more than 90 acres.

"It is important to preserve the small parcels next to the farms protected by Act 43," commented Sheila Miller, Berks County Agricultural Coordinator and board member of Adopt An Acre Inc. "The integrity of the cluster of preserved farms is maintained for production agriculture as a result of Adopt An Acre's program that preserves small farms. If these farms are converted to other uses, there are more potential conflicts between farmers and non-farm neighbors who may not understand or appreciate the sounds and smells of normal farming operations."

The Ludwigs applied to the non-profit organization, Adopt An Acre Inc. in November 2010. Their application was reviewed and scored by the board and approved for consideration in January. The County Planning Commission staff reviewed the application and agreed that a preservation easement was appropriate and recommended on the Ludwig parcel and conveyed this in a memo dated April 7, 2011. The County Commissioners consented to join with Adopt An Acre Inc. as a co-grantee on the Ludwig property on Thursday, December 8, 2011 by a unanimous vote. Settlement on the parcel's conservation easement will take place at 4 p.m., December 14, 2011 at the offices of Sentry Abstract, 1025 Berkshire Boulevard, Suite 600, Reading, PA 19610.

Craig Dirks, President; Ted Noble, Vice President; Dorothy Geiling, Secretary; Tracy Bastian, Treasurer; Daniel Brennan, Tara Ebling, Chris Hartman, Victoria Kintzer, Sheila Miller, Adam Serfass, Dr. Barton Smith, and Greg Young

The Ludwigs lease their farmland to neighboring dairy farmer Ernest Gelsinger. They purchased the farm in May 1969. Since the farm was too small to qualify for the county's agricultural land preservation program, Adopt An Acre Inc. was able to step in to assist the Ludwigs in preserving their farm.

"This is a major milestone for our non-profit organization," said President Craig Dirks, a co-founder of Adopt An Acre Inc. which was organized in 2004 to preserve farmland. Currently, a twelve member Board oversees its efforts to save farms, especially those that are adjacent to others preserved by federal, state and local governments. It is headquartered at Wernersville, Berks County.

For more information or to make a contribution toward farmland preservation, contact Adopt An Acre Inc. at 610-927-4753. Check out the website at www.adoptanacreinc.com.

A special New Year's Eve fundraiser is planned at Toscani Events by ViVÁ, 1101 Rocky Drive, West Lawn, PA 19609 (off Van Reed Road in Spring Township, next to Giant). The dinner is from 7 - 9 p.m. and is an all-you-can-eat buffet which will include hors d'oeuvres, soup, salad, vegetables, beef, ham, fish, lasagna, and assorted desserts and non-alcoholic beverages. The cost for this fantastic evening of food and dancing, featuring the band Burning House, is $50 per person. The band will play from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. A portion of the ticket price can be used as a tax deduction. A cash bar will be available for those who wish to purchase drinks.