

Gilson Family establishes land easement in North Perry

PAINESVILLE – Lake County Soil and Water District made application on behalf of the Gilson Family to protect its land in North Perry Village with an agricultural conservation easement. The application was accepted so Mark and Kristine Gilson have become the fifth family in North Perry Village to protect their farmland with an agricultural conservation easement in the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP).

As the owners of Gilson Gardens, Inc. a third generation nursery and garden center in Lake County, they lead the way as the first nursery business in the country to create an easement that protects nursery stock production land. The Gilsons work to promote the nursery industry in Lake County and the state of Ohio and they have now preserved 18 acres of prime Lake County farmland, roughly the original footprint of Gilson Gardens.

The FRPP is a voluntary federal conservation program that provides matching funds to purchase conservation easements on farm and ranch land in the United States. The FRPP was created in 1996 for the long-

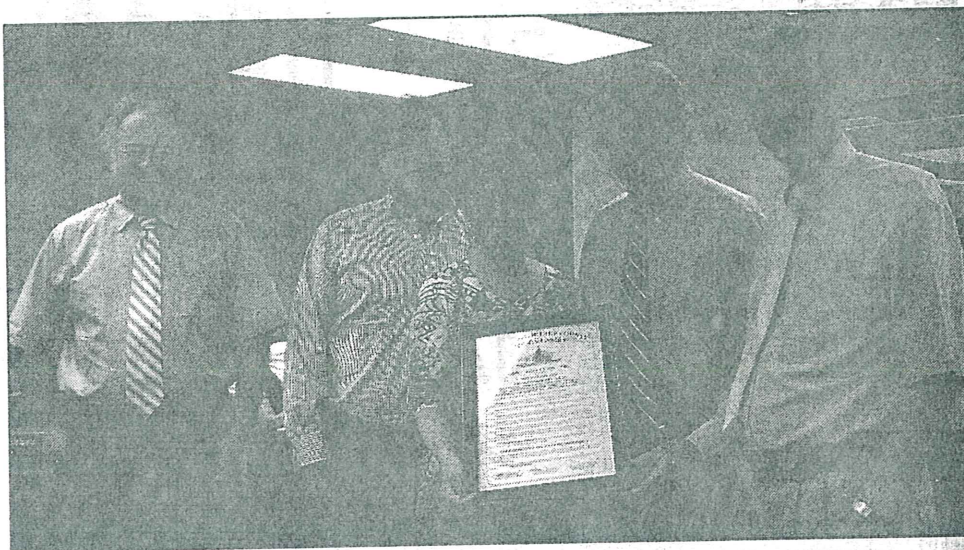


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Lake County commissioners Dan Troy, Ray Sines and Bob Aufuldish present a resolution to Mark, second from left, and Kristine Gilson for their partnership with North Perry Village and the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District to preserve 18 acres of their agricultural land in North Perry.

term conservation of agricultural lands. The FRPP will pay up to 50 percent of the cost of the easement for successful applicants; the local government must provide a match of 25 to 50 percent. The landowners granting the easement donate the remaining value to complete the easement transaction.

North Perry Village has provided the match for all five easements, and has established a farmland easement

district within the village.

The first three FRPP easements in Lake County were established in North Perry Village in 2005 preserving 97 acres of locally important farmland.

With the addition of a fourth easement in 2008, the preservation of the Gilsons' nursery land in 2012 brings the total to 139 acres of unique agricultural soils preserved in North Perry Village.

Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District will hold and steward the easement.

The nursery industry in Lake County provides employment of an estimated 1,327 people and brings estimated sales of \$87.5 million to the local economy and \$57.8 million in sales nationwide, according to a survey conducted by LCSWCD and the Ohio State University Extension in 2009.