

July 13, 2007

EDITORS: The following information is for immediate release. You are invited to cover the press conference. If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Milshaw, staff member at the Chester County Economic Development Council at 610 458-5700, ext. 239.

**Chester County Economic Development Council,
Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture
form strategic alliance to aid agriculture in Southeastern PA**
Kickoff event will be in Kennett Square on July 13

EXTON _ The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) and the Chester County Economic Development Council today announce they are forming a strategic alliance to strengthen the economic success of local farms and overall positive impact of local food systems for communities in southeastern Pennsylvania.

“Agriculture is a vital component of business in Chester County and throughout the region,” said Gary Smith, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Economic Development Council. “We are partnering with a great organization, the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture. The partnership will provide greater resources for our farming community.”

The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, or PASA as they are better known, is a statewide membership organization for farmers and farming enthusiasts who believe that economic viability of farms can be achieved while such farms also improve the natural environment and serve the communities in which they are situated. PASA is one of the largest and most active organizations in the United States operating in support of sustainable farming systems. For more information, see www.pasafarming.org.

“Perhaps nowhere in the country do we have the extreme urgency to save productive farmland in conjunction with the great potential for farmers to succeed by serving local markets as we see here in Chester County and elsewhere in this part of Pennsylvania,” said Brian Snyder, Executive Director of PASA. “We will be working with the Economic Development Council to give residents of southeastern Pennsylvania the opportunities they need to help local farmers while also improving the quality of life for everyone.”

To kickoff the alliance, an event and press opportunity will take place from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. today, Friday, July 13, 2007, at the Genesis HealthCare Headquarters, Lower Level, 101 East State Street, Kennett Square, where the Economic Development Council also operates a satellite office.

For more information and to R.S.V.P. for the Kennett Square event contact Suzanne Milshaw of the Economic Development Council at (610) 458-5700, ext. 239 or email her at smilshaw@cceconomicdevelopment.com.

Also, the Kennett Square Farmers’ Market, located directly outside of the Genesis building on Friday afternoons until 6:00 p.m. will feature a *Buy Fresh, Buy Local* Festival. *Buy Fresh, Buy Local* is a national campaign supported by PASA in Pennsylvania to highlight fresh, locally grown products. Other representatives of the *Buy Fresh Buy Local* effort, both locally and nationally, will be on hand to answer questions and help celebrate. Several Pennsylvania governmental officials have also been invited to participate.

Later this year, PASA will be hiring a Southeastern Pennsylvania Program Director who will be located within the Economic Development Council’s office at 737 Constitution Drive, Exton.

The new PASA staff will provide regional support for PASA’s ongoing initiatives including the *Buy Fresh, Buy Local* campaign, hosting of field days and educational opportunities for farmers and advocating

for sustainable agriculture. The Economic Development Council will continue to grow their economic development services, including low-interest lending, to the agriculture sector. The complimentary services provided by each organization will allow the organizations to better serve agriculture in southeastern Pennsylvania.

The Chester County Economic Development Council is a private, non-profit economic development organization that has been nurturing economic growth in Chester County and the surrounding region for more than 40 years. The Council's portfolio of business growth services includes: low-interest financing, small business lending, workforce training, retention and expansion, customized international business assistance, land and building site selection, brownfields consultation and remediation, urban redevelopment, and agricultural economic development. The Council also offers state-of-the art conference and training facilities at its brand new facility in Eagleview. For more information, see www.cceconomicdevelopment.com.