

Painting series highlights Delaware's oldest farms

Photos are available for media use on [Flickr](#).

DOVER – The Delaware Department of Agriculture and landscape artist Mark S. Reeve are partnering on a year-long project to preserve the images of historic First State farms.

The Delaware Century Farm Portraits Project will feature approximately 10 paintings of the First State's oldest Century Farms, agricultural properties that have been owned by the same family and farmed continuously for more than 100 years. The painting series will highlight some of Delaware's oldest family farms, with Reeve interviewing owners and researching historic materials to tell their stories. The original oil paintings will be exhibited May 1-June 30, 2015, at the Delaware Agricultural Museum & Village, with a special event scheduled for May 14 at the museum.

"The state's richly historic farms, and the heroic families who have sustained them through centuries and generations, are very compelling subjects to help communicate agriculture's impacts," said Reeve, of Milford. "I'm keenly interested in supporting Delaware's economic health, and the pivotal role that agriculture plays in Delaware's economy cannot be overlooked."

"These paintings will showcase and highlight Delaware agriculture's rich economic and cultural heritage," said Secretary of Agriculture Ed Kee. "We look forward to seeing how Mark's research and vision explores and portrays farming's long history in the First State."

Reeve has been represented in galleries throughout Maryland and Delaware since 1998. In 2001, he had 27 paintings depicting northern Delaware's wetland and agricultural beauty

accepted into the University of Delaware's permanent art collections. A member of the Mispillion Art League, he has won two Best of Show awards in its members' shows.

There are 121 Century Farms in Delaware, with awards presented annually by the Department of Agriculture since 1987. Century Farms must have been farmed by the same family for at least 100 years and must include at least 10 acres of the original parcel or gross more than \$10,000 annually in agricultural sales.

Corporate sponsorships will be available as part of the Delaware Century Farm Portraits project, proceeds from which will help defray exhibition costs as well as support the Department of Agriculture's Young Farmers Program. For more information regarding project details, contact Mark Reeve at 302-841-8379.

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