

APPENDIX B

Excerpts from the Monroe County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan - 1999 Recommendations for Municipalities

Monroe County completed an Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan in 1999. The Plan included goals were to preserve farmland and promote the agriculture industry. The Plan includes an inventory and analysis of farmland and agriculture and recommended a set of actions to achieve the Plan's goals.

The following narrative summarizes the recommendations that were proposed to be carried out by municipalities.

Farmland Preservation and Protection

- Encourage farmland owners to enroll their land in Agricultural Districts at the time of district renewal.
- Target Class I soils and the leading Class II soils for both protection and profitability efforts when the landowner wishes to participate in such efforts.
- As required by State Agricultural Districts Law (Article 25AA), Town Law, and Village Law, ensure that zoning regulations applying to farming and agriculture are consistent with Article 25AA.
- As required by Article 25AA, Town Law, and Village Law, ensure that municipal comprehensive plans and related policies that apply to agriculture are in conformance with Article 25AA and also take into consideration the recommendations in this plan.
- Municipalities currently using farmland preservation techniques such as PDR, conservation easements, cluster development, and comprehensive plans promoting agriculture, should continue to do so.
- Evaluate purchase of development rights (PDR) programs. If PDR programs are established, consider placing emphasis on purchasing the development rights on field crop land, vacant agricultural land, and truck crop land, and on other lands containing Class I and the leading Class II soils where owners of these lands which to participate in this program. Conservation easement programs are another option for protecting these lands from nonfarm development.
- Evaluate the potential to use other farmland preservation techniques such as conservation easements and cluster development.
- Utilize LESA to identify wetlands, floodplains, open space, historic sites, land in conservation easements, and land involved in PDR. When feasible as part of a communitywide development strategy, take this into consideration when zoning land for

agricultural use and when identifying land for agricultural use in comprehensive plans to help “round out” areas for agriculture, and help provide a buffer between farm and nonfarm development. Meet with core farmers in the community to obtain their input on proposals.

- When feasible as part of a communitywide development strategy, zone lands adjacent to agricultural districts for the types of industrial use which are deemed most compatible with farming operations.

Economic Development/Viability/Marketing

- Support efforts to insure an adequate labor supply, including improvements to the Federal Guest Worker Program, and, if feasible, the development of local programs to help increase the supply of trained local labor.
- Evaluate the benefits of undertaking cost of community service studies using the methodology incorporating economic multiplier effects, and use the results to assist in land use planning.

Education

- Inform community residents of municipal efforts to preserve and promote farmland, and “package” efforts into a coordinated, pro-active program;
- In conjunction with Monroe County, promote public awareness of agriculture by placing signs at town boundaries indicating, for example, “An Agriculture-Friendly Community”; and
- Encourage assessors to attend educational and training programs related to assessment and classification of agricultural land.
- support efforts to develop training opportunities for assessors to improve understanding of agriculture-related assessment practices.

In addition, the following educational programs were recommended to be established or continued by Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Monroe County Farm Bureau:

- Agricultural awareness - to inform officials and the public of the benefits of the industry and the implications resulting from the loss of the industry.
- Promote coalitions between the environmental and farm communities.
- Compatible highway development - to inform highway officials of the importance of roads to farming operations, and to develop coordination on such matters as access to farm fields, drainage, and participation in design of proposed highway improvements in farming areas.

- Good neighbor relations - to advise farmers on what they can do to promote better relations with their nonfarm neighbors in an effort to reduce nonfarm neighbor complaints.
- Farmland preservation techniques - to create a better understanding amongst municipal officials and farmers of the various techniques available to preserve and protect farmland (ideally, offered prior to initiating agricultural zoning, PDR and other preservation programs).
- Include representatives of such organizations as the American Farmland Trust, Genesee Land Trust, Mendon Foundation and others to explain the role non-profits can play in farmland preservation.
- Agricultural districts and agricultural assessment programs - to make farmers more aware of the benefits of and differences between the programs.
- Estate and business planning for farmers.