

STRATEGY 1: ADVANCE FARMLAND PROTECTION AND SOIL HEALTH

Our ability to slow climate change and withstand its inevitable effects is tied to the health of our ecosystem, and our ability to produce the food we need within our own region. The Climate Action Plan will outline strategies and policies to advance farmland protection, discourage sprawl, support the viability of the farm economy, and encourage agricultural practices that protect the soil and ecosystem health, including providing opportunities for increasing carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction.

STATEMENT	HORIZON	SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	LEAD COUNTY ENTITY	PARTNERS
Support the development of the Evans Agribusiness Park and encourage the use of locally-farmed products in its operations.	Short-term	Direct	DEP	WNY Regional Food System Initiative
Encourage siting of large-scale renewable energy projects so that prime farmlands are not negatively impacted.	Ongoing	Indirect	DEP	Municipalities, AFT Municipalities, Educational institutions, CCE, Alliance Farm Butchery
Encourage the use of agrivoltaics (i.e., sheep, beehives, etc.) in renewable energy developments.	Short-term	Indirect	DEP	
Establish a renewable energy siting policy (i.e., PILOT, Community Benefit Agreement) that protects farmland while supporting renewable energy development.	Short-term	Direct	DEP	RPS, Law Dept. GBUG, FPC, CCE, Erie County Farm Bureau, NYS Farm Bureau, NOFA
Promote and increase the use of soil integrity pledges (i.e., GBUG and NOFA) to protect soil and improve climate resilience.	Short-term	Indirect	DEP	
Ensure the protection of farmland through a succession planning process that enables new and beginning farmers to find and steward the land.	Short-term	Support	DEP	CCE, AFT
Support the creation of an incubator farm.	Ongoing	Direct	DEP	CCE, SWCD NRCS, SWCD, WNY Soil Health Alliance, CCE, EC Farm Bureau, LEWPA
Outreach, education to agricultural producers, and implementation of soil health, tillage health, and programs that benefit soil health and practices.	Ongoing	Indirect	DEP	
Outreach and education to municipal officials	Ongoing	Direct	DEP	Municipalities, UBRI
Discourage use of farmland for residential housing	Ongoing	Indirect	DEP	Municipalities, NYFB
Advance Agricultural Nutrient Management	Ongoing	Support	DEP	NRCS, CCE, SWCD
Adopt Soil Health Practice Systems	Short-term	Support	DEP	Municipalities, NRCS, CCE, SWCD
Monitor and Benchmark Agricultural GHG Emissions	Ongoing	Support	DEP	NYSDAM, SWCD
Advocate for increased EPF funding for FNG Program	Ongoing	Indirect	EC Legislature	CCE, AFT, WNYLC
Enforce full compliance with NYSDAM construction and mitigation guidelines for solar on farmland	Ongoing	Indirect	DEP	Municipal code enforcement officers, NYSDAM
Consider the use of "red" threshold limits for farmland impacts	Ongoing	Indirect	DEP	Municipalities

Design and implement market mechanisms to encourage broad adoption of dual use; invest in and reward innovation	Medium-term	Support	DEP	NYSDAM, NYSERDA
Expand impact mitigation payments to smaller renewable energy projects (i.e., those with smaller acreages)	Short-term	Direct	DEP	NYSDAM
Support the NYSERDA Build-Ready Program.	Short-term	Support	DEP	NYSERDA
Explore opportunities for carbon-offset funding.	Medium-term	Indirect	DEP	Non-profits
Training, employment, beginning farmer programs, land access and tenure support, helping farm workers establish equity interests in farms, appropriate compensation.	Medium-term	Indirect	DEP	FPC, NYFB, CCE, NYSDAM
Provide resources, support, incentives, and promotion of farmers to encourage food production methods, such as sustainable and organic practices, to increase their customer base.	Short-term	Indirect	DEP	FPC, NYFB, CCE
Support municipal and county-wide efforts and policies to implement composting facilities.	Short-term	Direct	DEP	NYSDEC, Municipalities
Build support for and recommend changes to policies, zoning and health codes that support and encourage food waste recovery infrastructure and diversion.	Short-term	Support	DEP	FPC, NYSDEC, Municipalities
Secure EPF funding for conservation practices such as setbacks to minimize nutrient runoff and wildlife corridors to encourage biodiversity.	Ongoing	Indirect	DEP	NRCS, WNYLC
Increase the protection of productive farmland with conservation easements	Ongoing	Support	DEP	WNYLC

DEFINITIONS

Short-term: By or before 2030

Medium-term: By 2040

Long-term: By 2050

Direct: County can directly control the action - relating to County operations and infrastructure

Indirect: Regional agencies and municipalities have control and/or County can support/influence

Support: State or Federal policies and programs

