

Is Your Town Planning for Agriculture?

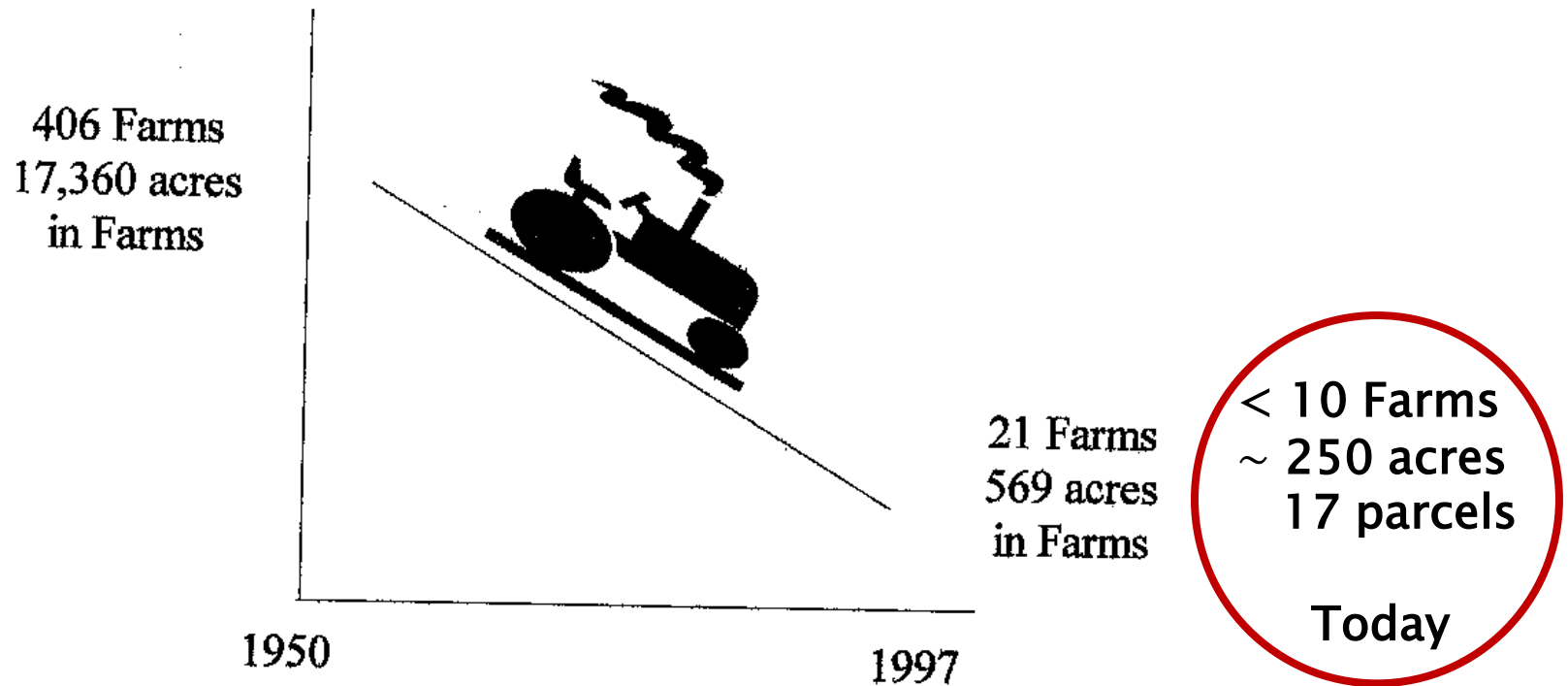
*Establishing and Implementing Local Public
Policy to Support and Protect Agriculture*

Jeff Kehoe 518-457-4626
Division of Land and Water Resources:
Agriculture Protection Unit



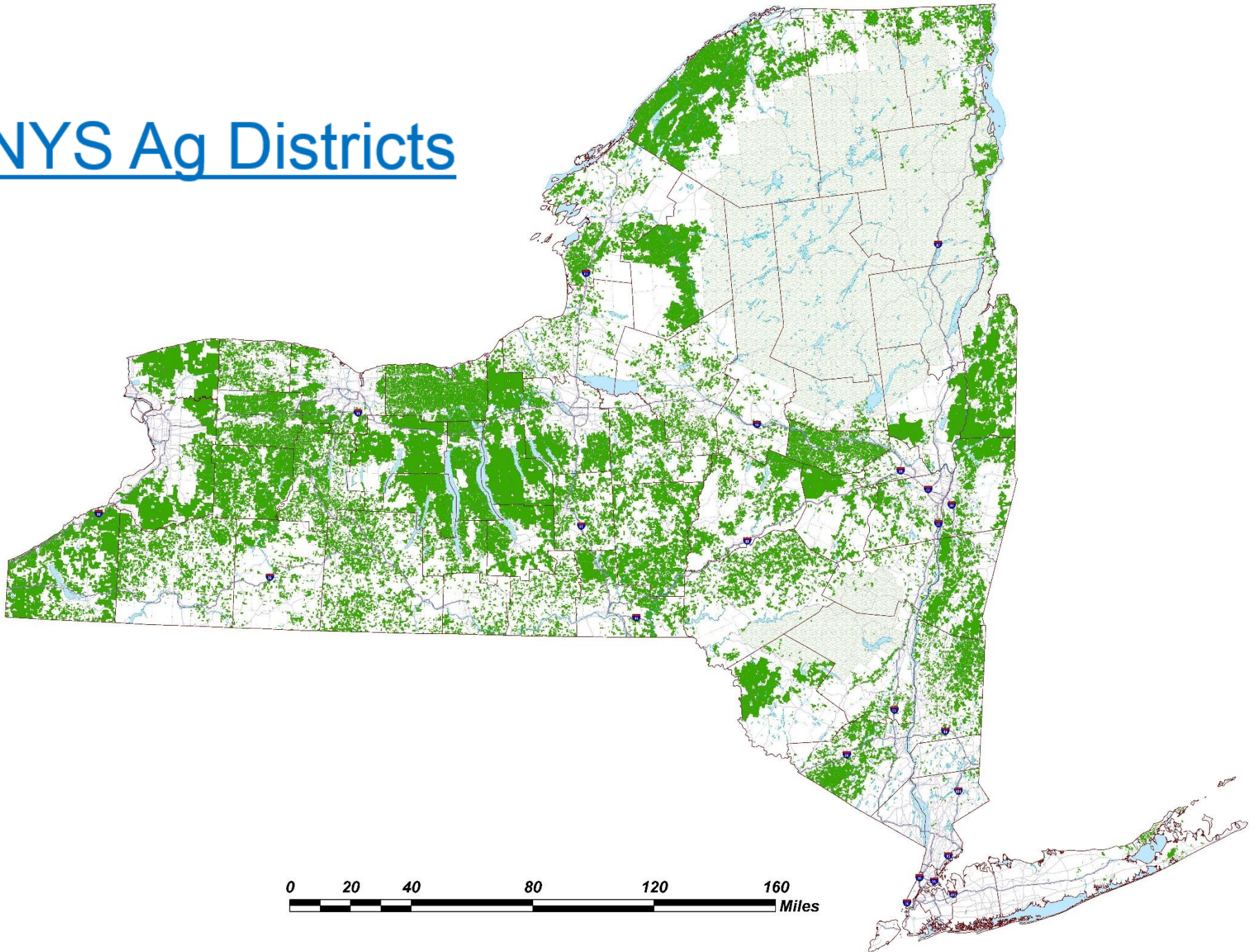
Department of
Agriculture and Markets

“Agriculture: If you ignore it, it will go away.”



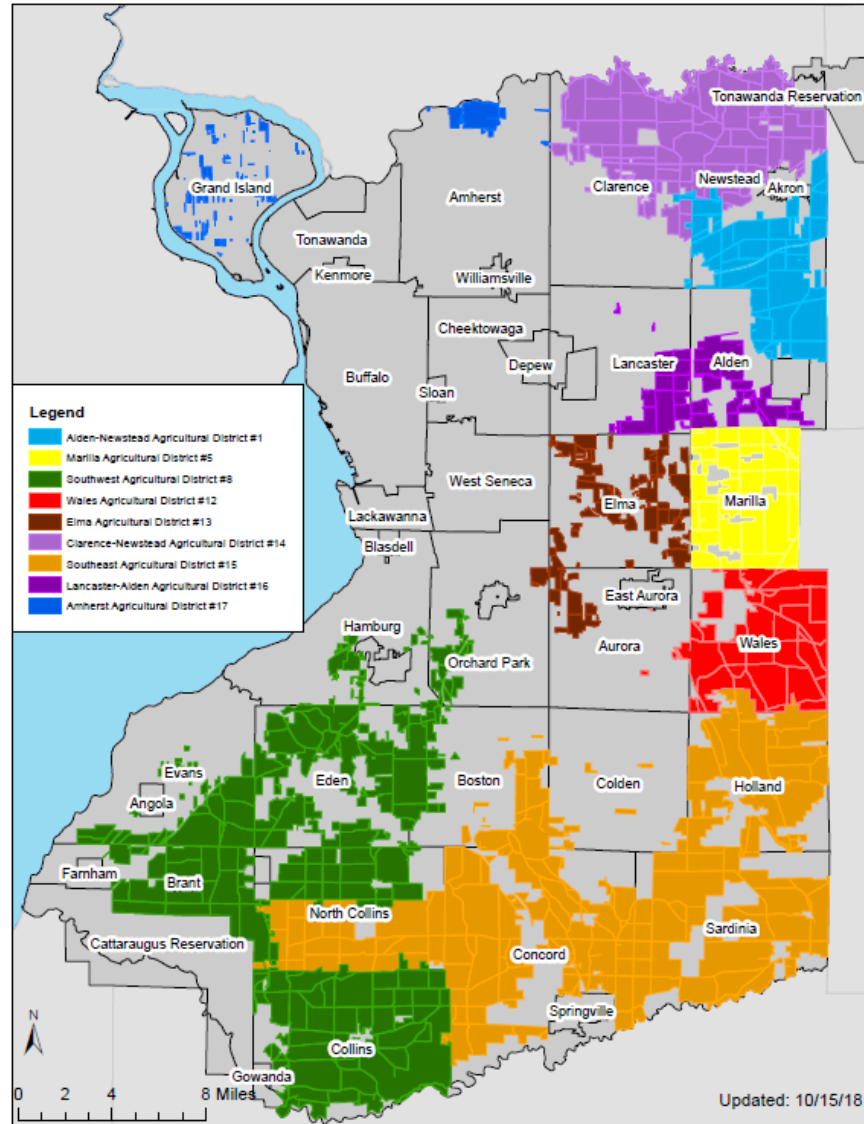
Rockland County Agriculture
1950 - 1997

NYS Ag Districts



Erie County Agricultural Districts

Erie County Agricultural Districts



Agricultural Districts

How do Ag Districts help local planners make good land use decisions to protect agriculture?

- Identifies concentrations of agricultural resources
- Helps Towns craft zoning to accommodate agricultural practices and activities
- Where to limit sewer/water (Lateral Restrictions)

How Do Agricultural Districts Work?

Ag. & Markets can protect sound agricultural practices from

- Unreasonably Restrictive Local Laws
- Private Nuisance Complaints

If...

- Landowner voluntarily applies to be in Ag District
- Parcel passes a “viability test by County Legislature
- Part of a Farm Operation
- Practices are safe, legal and commonly accepted
- LO must exhaust resources locally

Then AML 25AA applies on a case-by-case basis.

Is your Town Planning for Agriculture?

Does your Town have a vision for agriculture?

...identify areas where it wants to protect agriculture? (AD parcels, prime & unique soils, gateway, UGB)

...have a strategy for protecting its best farmland? (*What LU tools in your toolbox?*)

... understand the economic benefits of agriculture?

(Cost of Community Services, Agritourism, Multiplier Effect \$1 » \$1.42 (typically local) GDP=\$.89)

Does your Town...

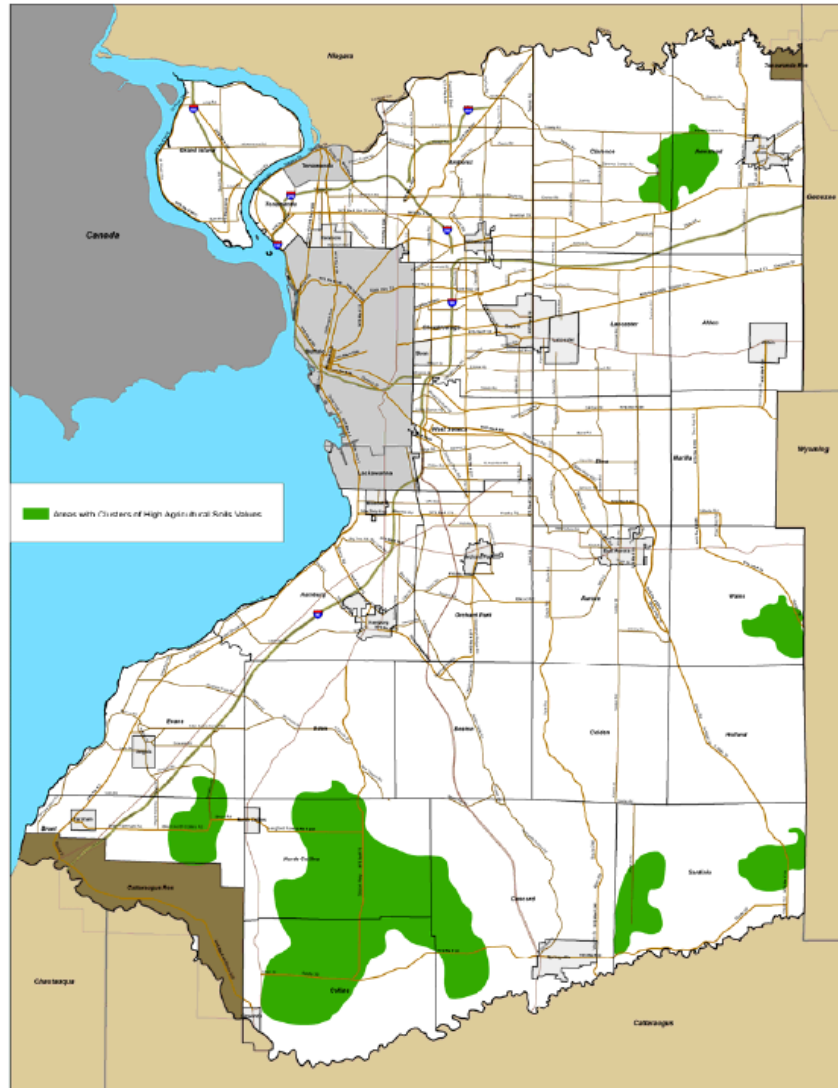
...allow agriculture uses in more than one zoning district?

...allow Ag Support Services in your Ag Zone?
(farm stands, equipment dealers, home businesses)

...have an Ag Zoning that limits the impacts of new developments on farms?
(buffers/ screening, mitigation options, ID prime soils)

Priority Farmland

Clusters of Parcels with High Agricultural Soils Values



Generalized boundaries adapted from
ESRI Hot Spot Analysis

Appendix

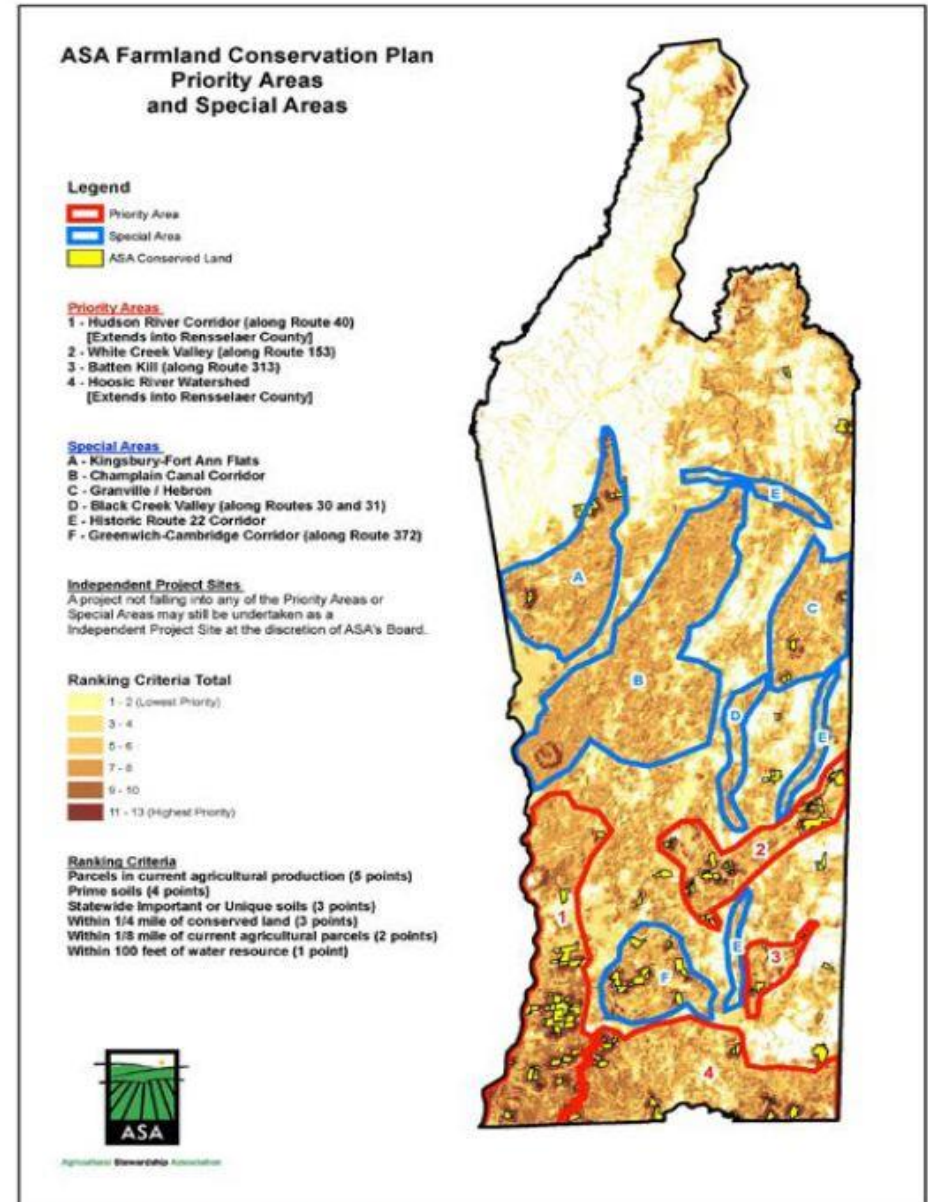


Figure 21. Map of Farmland Ranking Criteria

Is Your Town Concerned About...

- Agritourism

(Tourism initiatives that promote agriculture)

- Industrial Scale Solar Arrays

(NYS Solar Guidebook: NYSERDA.ny.gov)

- Farm Brewery/Distillery/Winery

(State Liquor Authority: ABC Laws)

- Community Character/ Open Space

Ag & Farmland Protection Plan

All Towns Eligible!

- Up to **\$25K** per Town

\$1,700 Cash Match

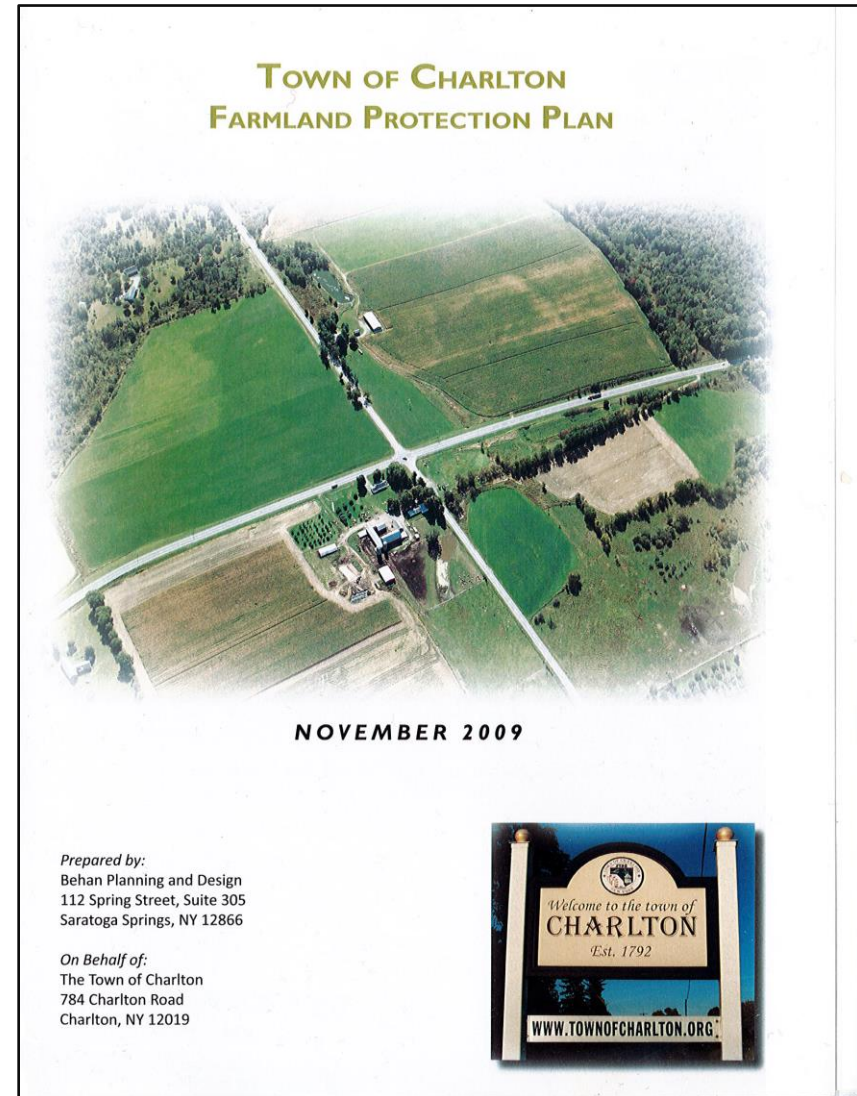
\$6,700 In-Kind contributions from..

*AFPB, SWCD, CCE, NRCS, Your County,
Land Trusts, Farm Bureau, Ag Schools...*

WNY Ag. Plans in process:

North Collins, Amherst, Grand island

*Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, & Wyoming
Co.'s*



TOWN OF CHARLTON FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN

NOVEMBER 2009

Prepared by:
Behan Planning and Design
112 Spring Street, Suite 305
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

On Behalf of:
The Town of Charlton
784 Charlton Road
Charlton, NY 12019



“If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it.”

- Poor or minimal planning has led to a significant loss of active farmland.
- Traditional zoning tools do not protect agriculture
- Multiple mechanisms needed to protect Ag. (toolbox)
- Sewer/water extensions into productive farmland are a *major* threat to farm viability. (Smart Growth, concurrency)
- Ag protection is most effective locally... How?

Simple Local Actions

- Update Agriculture Related Definitions
- Adopt a Right to Farm Law (*local conflict mediation*)
- Agricultural Zoning (*limit growth inducing land uses*)
- Ag Vision Statement
- Include Ag in Comp Plan
- Lateral Restrictions
- Ag Data/ Ag Disclosure
- Draft an Ag Plan!



Ag Protection Planning Tools

- Ag Protection Overlay District (*see below, Warwick, NY*)
- Purchase/ Transfer/ Lease of Development Rights
- Cluster Development/ Conservation Design *for Agriculture*
- Infill Development / Smart Growth / Form Based Code?



Emerging Topics in Ag Protection

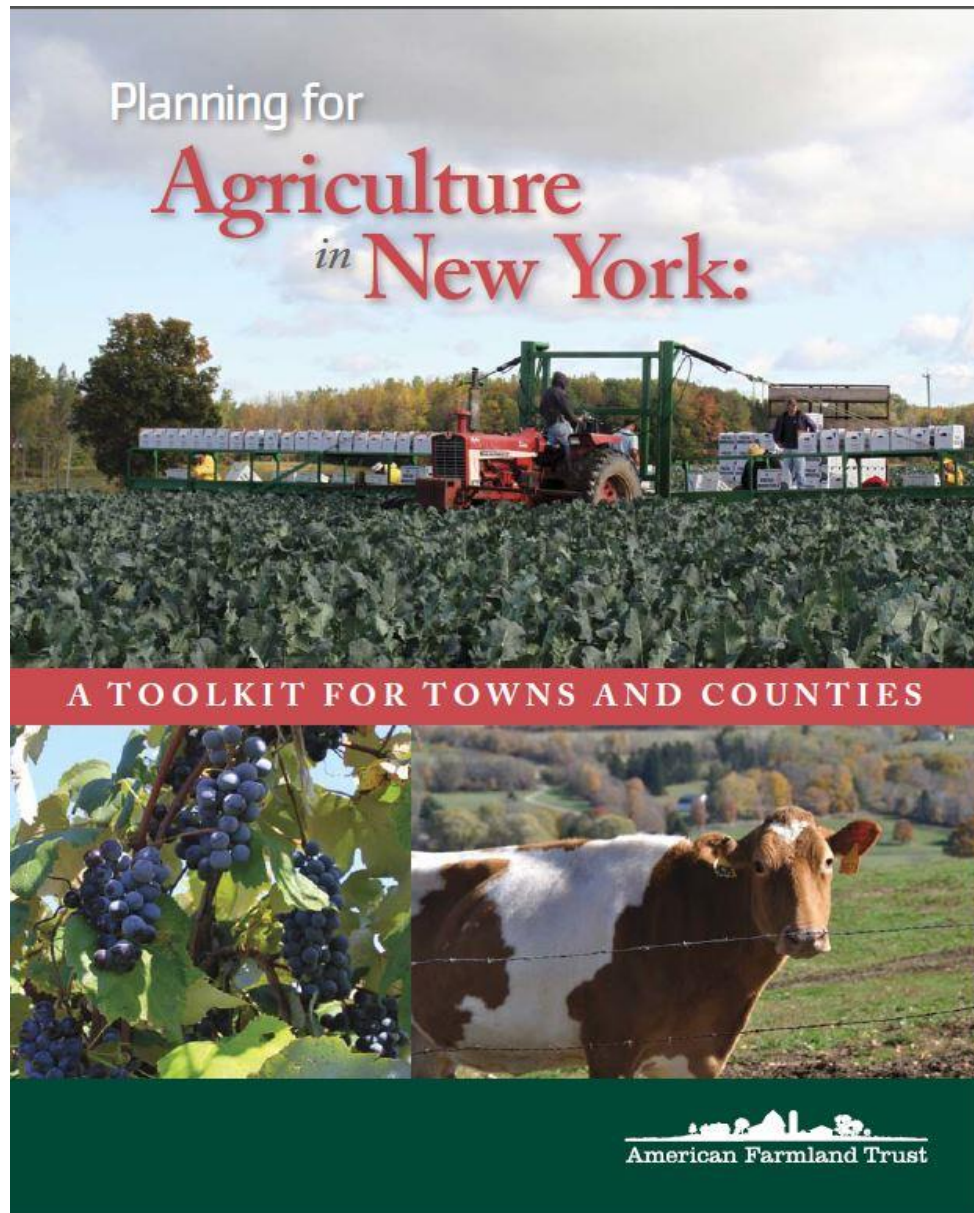
- Farm Friendly Local Laws
- Solar Siting Off Prime Soils
- Agritourism
- New and Beginning Farmers
- Land Access/ Affordability
- Urban Agriculture/ Specialty Crops_(Grand Island)
- Farm to Schools/ Institutions (www.finys.com)

Ag. Protection Success Stories

How has your town supported agriculture in the last 12 months?

- Erie County!
(Eden, Clarence, N. Collins, Grand Island, Amherst)
- Town of Cazenovia: Amended Local Laws
- Town of Warwick: Ag. Protection Overlay District
- Oneida County – Farm Friendly Initiative
- Ag Navigators (Schoharie, Dutchess, Otsego)
- Town of Ballston- TDR Law (in process)
- Town of Wallkill- PDR/ CE held by Town
- Land Trusts Grants: Outreach/ Appraisals
- Solar Siting laws avoid Soils Group 1-IV: Farmington

www.farmlandinfo.org



NYSDAM Funding Opportunities

- **Implementation Grants up to \$2,000,000**

- Dairy Transitions, PDR's, Donation of Development Rights
- Option Agreements, Farm Friendly Initiatives

- **County Ag & Farmland Protection Planning Grants up to \$50,000**

- Ag Economic Development Recommendations
- Resource Guides for Municipalities, Solar Siting on Farmland

- **Town Ag & Farmland Protection Planning Grants up to \$25,000**

- Ag Planning Tools in the Toolbox, Farm Friendly Audits
- Comprehensive Planning, Lands To be Protected

- **Land Trust Grants up to \$50,000**

- Collaborate with Land Trusts to implement farmland protection strategies via Outreach Activities, Land Inventories and Screening Tools

- **Implementation Grants 2020?... Stay Tuned**

- What are your Thoughts?

Thank You!

Any Questions?



Jeff Kehoe (518) 457-4626

Ag Protection Planner | Ag Districts Manager

jeffrey.kehoe@agriculture.ny.gov



Department of
Agriculture and Markets