

Department of Agriculture and Markets Fact Sheet

Division of Land and Water Resources

The mission of the Division of Land and Water Resources is to help protect and enhance New York State's natural resources and working landscapes.

The Division is specifically responsible for two broad program areas designed to support and serve farmers, homeowners, communities, local governments, organizations and businesses. The two programs are Agricultural Protection and Soil and Water Conservation.

Agricultural Districts: The purpose of agricultural districting is to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production. The Program is based on a combination of landowner incentives and protections, all of which are designed to forestall the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. Included in these benefits are preferential real property tax treatment (agricultural assessment and special benefit assessment), and protections against overly restrictive local laws, government funded acquisition or construction projects, and private nuisance suits involving agricultural practices.

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Program: The Agricultural and Farmland Protection program helps counties and municipalities plan for the future of agriculture in their communities; it then funds programs to implement those plans to keep agriculture strong and farmland in production. The Farmland Protection Planning Grant program, or FPPG, assists county and municipal governments in developing agricultural and farmland protection plans which recommend policies and projects aimed at maintaining the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry and its supporting land base. The Farmland Implementation Grant Program, or FPIG, assists local governments, land trust organizations, and soil and water conservation districts in implementing farmland protection plans, including those created through FPPG. The Land Trust Grant program is directed at land trusts to encourage activities that will assist counties and municipalities with their agricultural and farmland protection efforts.

New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee: The mission of the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee is to promote a comprehensive natural resource program for New York State by supporting local Soil and Water Conservation Districts to develop and implement projects and programs that will preserve, protect, and enhance the wise use of the state's soil, water, and all related resources. Responsibilities include serving as an information and idea exchange between member agencies and groups, establishing policy to guide the programs of New York's 58 County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and to help Soil and Water Conservation Districts organize, develop and carry out their programs.

For more information, call (518) 457-3738.

