



Participating in AEM Tier 5A

This document outlines the options for completion of AEM Tier 5A Evaluation. A farm that has not progressed beyond Tier 2, where the Tier 2 Assessment is at least three years old and there is a need to update the Tier 2 information on the farm may participate in Tier 5A. Updates on other farm assessments that achieve comparable environmental reviews to AEM Tier 2 (i.e. - Farm*A*Syst, NYC Environmental Review/Problem Diagnosis, etc.) should be considered Tier 5A Evaluations and not a new Tier 2 Assessment.

Requirements for AEM Tier 5A Evaluation

Meeting or exceeding the following minimum requirements will be the basis for acceptable utilization of state and federal AEM funding.

Tier 5A Evaluation Procedure

Update Tier 1 Questionnaire, Tier 2 Worksheets and Tier 2 Summary Reports

1. Determine if there have been any changes to the farming operation.
 - a) Update the Tier 1 Questionnaire with the farmer and compare it to the previous Tier 1.
 - b) Identify any changes or verify that there have been no changes.
 - c) Record Tier 1 changes in the *AEM Tier 1 Data Management System*. Update any cross reference form so you can identify your farms to match them with the proper data.
 - d) Keep the updated Tier 1 in the cooperator file.
2. Establish the date that the most recent Tier 2 Assessment Worksheets were done with the farmer.
 - a) Note the worksheets that were completed.
 - b) Note the concerns identified in the *Tier 2 Summary Report*.
3. Compare the previously completed worksheets and the identified concerns with the changes noted from the updated Tier 1 Questionnaire.
 - a) Identify the Tier 2 Worksheets that need to be updated and/or new worksheets to be completed due to change in operation, practices implemented or new worksheets available.
4. Complete the Tier 2 Worksheets identified in step 3 above with the farmer.
 - a) Prepare an updated *Tier 2 Summary Report*.
 - b) Review the report with the farmer.
 - c) Keep a copy of the report in the cooperator file and note the task in the Assistance Notes of the case file.
5. Determine what level of Tier 3 Planning is needed to address the priority concerns on the farm.
6. Update your Tier 2 information in your county based data management system.

Deliverables – Tier 5A

1. Utilize the *AEM Tier 1 Data Management System* to update changes in Tier 1 for each farm.
 - a) Report farms by identification number only, not by name.

- b) Provide updated information to the NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee (SWCC).
- c) Fill out or update the cross reference form if needed and file it in a safe location so you can identify yours farms to match them with the proper data.
- d) Document each farm that completes Tier 5A on the Final Report Form, and record the time spent in completing each Tier 5A in the Time Log. These forms will be reviewed and approved by your AEA at program close-out, and the Final Report will be submitted to the SWCC. **Note** – There is not a separate reporting category for the update of a Tier 1 Questionnaire; it is included as part of the Tier 2 updated and reported as Tier 5A.