

Fulton County, New York

Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan

VI - Groups Responsible for Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection in Fulton County

The following agencies and organizations play important roles in agricultural development and farmland protection in Fulton County:

1) **Fulton County Farmers**

Farmers themselves bear the most responsibility for implementation of this Plan because it is based primarily on agricultural economic development that requires individual farmers to take risks, change practices and invest in new initiatives. This Plan is intended to stimulate private sector revitalization of the industry and, therefore, the private sector has to make it work.

2) **Fulton County Board of Supervisors**

The Board of Supervisors is ultimately responsible for all County government policy with regard to agriculture in Fulton County. This Plan is that policy.

4) **Fulton County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board**

The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board is responsible for advising the Board of Supervisors with regard to agricultural policy and implementing various programs set forth in this Plan and under the Agriculture and Markets Law, particularly those relating to farmland protection and Agricultural Districts.

5) **Agricultural Economic Development Specialist**

The proposed Agricultural Economic Development Specialist (see Recommendations) will be shared with Montgomery County under the auspices of Cornell Cooperative Extension and coordinate and focus all involved agencies on agricultural promotion within Fulton County.

Fulton County, New York

Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan

5) Cornell Cooperative Extension

Cornell University's cooperative extension program is operated with the support of Fulton and Montgomery County governments and provides a combination of education in agriculture and related fields with technical assistance and training to farmers. It will continue in this role using the proposed Agricultural Economic Development Specialist to pursue agricultural development initiatives growing out of these efforts and others.

6) Fulton County Planning Board

The Fulton County Planning Board has specific responsibilities to advise the County Planning Department, municipalities and the Board of Supervisors in reviewing projects and policies that impact upon agriculture and related land use issues. The Board also plays an oversight role with respect to the Fulton County planning initiatives and, because of its broad areas of interests, is in an excellent position to ensure that agriculture is integrated with other planning and economic development activities of the County.

7) Fulton County Planning Department

The County Planning Department is responsible for Agricultural District maintenance and assistance to municipalities with comprehensive planning issues that impact on agriculture. It also supports the operations of the Industrial Development Agency and Economic Development Corporation, both of whom bear responsibility for incorporating agriculture into their economic development programs and ensuring the proper incentives are available to the this industry in the same manner they are available to others.

8) Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation District

The Soil and Water Conservation District offers many complementary programs for agricultural development and farmland protection, including assistance with nutrient management planning and securing financial assistance for farmland preservation through the Conservation Reserve Program and others.

Fulton County, New York

Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan

9) **Fulton County Farm Bureau**

Farm Bureau describes itself as a "non-governmental, volunteer organization financed and controlled by families for the purpose of solving economic and public policy issues challenging the agriculture industry." Policy development begins at the county level with problem identification and, therefore, Fulton County Farm Bureau is the organization best equipped to go before governmental bodies to directly advocate policies important to Fulton County farmers and the implementation of this Plan.

10) **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service, NRCS plays a supportive technical role in assisting the Soil and Water Conservation District and farmers with conservation and nutrient management practices. It can also help to access funding for these programs.

11) **New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets**

The Department of Agricultural and Markets is an advocate for agriculture within State government. It also administers the Agricultural District program and provides financial support for both purchase of development rights and agricultural economic development initiatives. It also plays a regulatory role in the industry, provides technical assistance with exports, documents the contributions of agriculture and does quality control promotion with its Pride of New York program.

12) **Fulton County Chamber of Commerce**

The Chamber is the organization chiefly responsible for tourism promotion in Fulton County. It plays a critical role in helping to promote farm products sold at farmers' markets and in identifying farm stands and agricultural tourism attractions. It also offers business support services to farm businesses as well as others.