

Broome County, New York

**Agricultural Economic
Development Plan**
(Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan)



**Broome County Agricultural
and Farmland Protection Board**

Shepstone Management Company
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County
Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development

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1.0 Why Agriculture Works for Broome County - The Top 10 Reasons

Farming is much more than a starting point on the development scale. It represents a fundamental economic opportunity that also pays dividends in cultural, environmental and social gains for Broome County. Consider the following:

1.1 Farming represents a \$99,158,000 business investment in Broome County.

Farming in Broome County involves some 511 business locations, both large and small, that generated sales of \$24,016,000 in 1997. According to the U.S. Census of Agriculture for 1997, the average value of land, buildings and equipment used in these businesses was \$194,046 for a total investment in the Broome County economy of approximately \$99,158,000, the equivalent, from an economic development standpoint, of several major manufacturing facilities. Market values averaged \$154,623 for land and buildings and \$39,423 in machinery and equipment. It must also be noted the Census of Agriculture, for those categories the Department of Agriculture and Markets also surveys on an annual basis, has under counted both farms and sales so the numbers are undoubtedly even higher.

1.2 Farming provides year-round business for other Broome County enterprises.

Agriculture is much more than farming. A substantial number of non-agricultural businesses supply the needs of farmers. These include processors, vehicle and equipment dealers and other enterprises. Broome County farmers, for example, own and must maintain and replace 394 mower/conditioners, 401 balers, 649 trucks, 1,248 tractors and numerous other pieces of farm equipment and machinery. They also, according to the Census of Agriculture, purchase \$660,000 of electricity, \$876,000 of petroleum products, \$1,430,000 in repairs and maintenance, \$1,460,000 of property taxes, \$2,007,000 of hired farm labor, \$5,047,000 of feed and approximately \$6,686,000 of other products and services from Broome County and other nearby enterprises, many of which would not be considered farm supply businesses (e.g. insurance and auto businesses).

1.3 Income from agriculture goes further than other sectors in helping the economy.

Agriculture produces much higher economic multipliers than any other sector of the Broome County economy. A report entitled "Economic Multipliers and the New York State Economy," (Policy Issues in Rural Land Use, Cornell Cooperative Extension, December 1996) indicates dairy production, for example, enjoys a 2.29 income multiplier compared to 1.66 for construction, 1.48 for services, 1.41 for manufacturing and 1.40 for

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retail and wholesale trade. Crops produce a multiplier of 2.28 and nursery and wood products yield 1.78 times sales. Applying these multipliers indicates agriculture represents a total contribution to the economy of approximately \$55,000,000, not including forestry enterprises, many of which take place on farms and all of which are part of agriculture.

1.4 Agricultural opportunities can actually increase with development of an area.

While development can, obviously, create conflicts for farmers, the leading agricultural county in New York is Suffolk County. It is home to 1.3 million people and one of the most highly developed suburban environments in the nation, suggesting not only that farming and urbanization can co-exist, but also that the local demand for agricultural products increases with the latter and raises the value of farming as an economic enterprise. Broome County's own experience demonstrates this.

The County has not been experiencing growth but there has been development outward from Binghamton and its existence as an urban center has opened opportunities for diversification and specialization not nearly as far along in many of the rural areas of the State. Farming will, therefore, become ever more important to the County as it continues to develop in the future, whatever the pace. This is particularly true for fruit and vegetable growers that depend so much on direct marketing and the rapidly developing nursery industry in the County (sales up 163% over 1987).

1.5 Farms lower taxes.

Farms are tax winners despite preferential assessments afforded by the Ag District Law. A 1995 study of nearby Tompkins County found "agricultural .. uses should be recognized as beneficial because they do not demand a large amount of services and provide other benefits such as employment." Data from the Costs of Community Services Study, Tompkins County by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, in fact, indicate agriculture typically produces \$1.00 in tax revenue for every 15¢ to 40¢ of town and school expenditures it generates, whereas residential development costs \$1.09 to \$1.56 per \$1.00 of taxes gathered. A similar analysis from the Schoharie County Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan, 2000 indicated agriculture produced \$1.09 to \$2.06 in tax revenue for every \$1.00 of municipal and school costs created.

These results are consistent with those of a number of other similar studies by American Farmland Trust, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Commonwealth Research Group, Inc. of communities in Dutchess and Oneida Counties in New York and various other Connecticut and New England areas.

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1.6 Farms create rural character and attract tourism.

Farms contribute to Broome County's rural character and protect open spaces essential to the quality of life for both permanent and seasonal residents. Any number of surveys of rural residents and second-home dwellers indicate the primary reasons people live in such areas have to do with their appreciation of the natural resources and open spaces offered, but the anecdotal evidence is perhaps even stronger and local tourism brochures provide examples. They include references not only to the County's recreational opportunities but also its "scenic beauty." They also speak of the "quiet valleys," "enchanted villages" and "quiet country settings" throughout the County as attractive features for visitors.

These facets are directly created by working farm landscapes in many instances. They help support some 217 bed and breakfast rooms offered throughout the County. There is, indeed, a direct relationship between farming and the attractiveness of Broome County as a place to both live and visit.

1.7 Successful farming limits suburban sprawl.

Preserving farmland discourages expensive suburban sprawl, steering development toward hamlets and villages with existing services. "Gasoline taxes and other user fees only cover about 70% of the direct cash costs of building and maintaining the nation's road system," according to a April 27, 1998 article on sprawl entitled "Who Pays for Sprawl?," in U.S. News and World Report. Hook-up fees for sewer systems within areas of sprawl often cover less than half the real costs of those extensions. These differences are attributable to the high costs of servicing development spread out along highways and the deficits must be made up by all taxpayers.

1.8 Farms and forests preserve natural environments.

Farms and forests provide working self-sustaining landscapes which preserve and enhance environmental quality. Use of New York City watershed lands in the West-of-Hudson region of New York State (including adjoining Delaware County) for largely farm and forestry uses have, for example, allowed Federal water drinking quality criteria for filtration avoidance to be met. The suburbanized Croton and other East-of-Hudson area watersheds, by contrast, cannot meet these same standards and demand extraordinarily expensive filtering processes to produce potable drinking water.

Forest land, which is a part of nearly every farm, "may reduce sediment, nutrient and other pollutant loadings by as much as 85% by minimizing soil erosion and filtering watershed runoff" according to a Watershed Agricultural Council publication. A recent study of land

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use and water quality along 100 Wisconsin streams also found that "watersheds with more than 20% of land in urban use had very poor biological diversity," according to an American Farmland Trust article in Land Works Connection. This is increasingly important as environmental requirements tighten.

1.9 Farms and forests support wildlife and sport hunting.

Farms support wildlife such as deer, turkeys and small-game and thereby sustain hunting as a source of tourism to the area. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation reports that the 1997 white-tail deer harvest was, in fact, some 3,027 deer with the largest takes being in Vestal, Windsor and Colesville, respectively. The 1996 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation estimated that \$154,450,000 in retail sales and \$575,535,000 in total economic output was generated for New York State as a result of deer hunting. This equals \$712 and \$2,654, respectively, for each deer harvested, yielding a \$8,034,000 deer hunting economy for Broome County.

1.10 Farmland is an invaluable resource for future generations.

Farmland is a valuable future resource for the County in providing for a healthy and plentiful local supply of food products and generating new sources of farm income. Urban residents of the County, as well as visitors, are seeking locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables and flowers, both organic and non-organic. A local organic pork producer also markets products over the Internet. The presence of five operating farmers markets (Binghamton, Deposit, Endicott, Johnson City and Vestal) in the County demonstrates just how important this activity is.

Likewise, the County's base of both small and mid-sized farms provides a foundation for exploring of new opportunities for added-value ventures and development of still more niche businesses. These resources offer tremendous economic potential for the future and, once again, Suffolk County provides an illustration. Its agricultural economy has been reinvented several times with urbanization but today yields well over \$167,000,000 in annual sales and its lead as New York's most valuable agricultural producer is lengthening because of the shift to these higher valued products.

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2.0 Agricultural Inventory

The following represents an overview and inventory of the agricultural industry sector of the Broome County, New York economy.

2.1 Natural Resources for Agriculture

Broome County surrounds the confluence of the Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers and extends east to the West Branch of the Delaware River, straddling two major eastern watersheds. It encompasses six major soil associations described in the Broome County Soil Survey depicted on the map following this page. These associations, in order of their magnitude within the County, are as follows:

Volusia-Mardin Association

This association makes up about 65% of the County. It is found in upland areas throughout the Susquehanna River watershed portion of the County. The soils found within it include Volusia (45%), Mardin (30%) and a group of minor soils such as Lordstown, Chippewa, Alden, Arnot and Tuller that represent about 25% of the association. They are typically characterized by low fertility, seasonal wetness, shallow rooting zones and slopes that limit their use for field crops. The Volusia-Mardin Association, however, does support forest growth and portions of it are quite usable for agriculture with some of the major farming area of the County found within the association. These include, for instance, much of the Town of Lisle and the Town of Triangle.

Lordstown-Volusia-Mardin Association

This association represents approximately 13% of the County. While it, too, includes Volusia and Mardin soils, at 30% and 20% respectively, Lordstown soils predominate at 40% with the remaining minor soils accounting for no more than 10%. The association is typically found in hilltop areas with the largest section of it located in the Binghamton-Conklin area on both sides of the Susquehanna. Limitations for crops include the low fertility, shallow rooting depth, stoniness, climate, seasonal wetness and slope. Selected species of trees do grow well in this association, however. Also, where slope is not an issue, all three major soil types are suitable for agriculture, the Lordstown soils gaining from typically being well-drained.

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INSERT SOILS ASSOCIATION MAP
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Cattaraugus-Oquaga-Morris-Culvers Association

This association makes up about 10% of the County and is found in the southeastern region along gentle slopes that rise up to ridge tops from narrow valleys. Cattaraugus soils make up 40% of the association with Oquaga soils accounting for 25%, Morris at 20% and Culvers representing 15%. Drainage is generally good and average participation is higher than the rest of the County with a cooler growing season that provides for excellent grasses. Forests also do well in this association. Its limitations for field crops include low fertility, higher elevation, stoniness, some steep slopes and a dense fragipan.

Chenango-Howard-Unadilla Association

This association, which represents 6% of the County, includes gravelly outwashes and stream terraces found along the Chenango River below its confluence with the Chenango. Chenango and Howard soils make up 65% of the association and Unadilla soils account for another 15%. This association constitutes some of the best farmland in the County but much of it is occupied by the City of Binghamton and other urban areas of the County. That area which is undeveloped supports dairying as well as garden crops. It is also well-suited to forestry. Significant areas of undeveloped Chenango-Howard-Unadilla Association are found in the Towns of Chenango, Colesville, Fenton and Lisle. These should be among the targets of any farmland protection plan.

Tioga-Chenango-Howard Association

This association represents another 5% of the County and is similar in many respects to Chenango-Howard-Unadilla Association being found in alluvial floodplains and outwash terraces along major streams and at stream junctures. Tioga soils account for 55% of the association with Chenango and Howard soils making up another 25%. The minor soils include Unadilla. This association of well-drained soils supports dairying and grows field crops such as silage corn, grain and hay. Some of it is also used for intensive crops such as vegetables and nursery stock. Finally, these soils are well-suited to forestry uses. Like the Chenango-Howard-Unadilla Association, they include agricultural areas of the County that should be the focus of farmland protection efforts. However, the floodplain status of much of the association already ensures some level of protection against further urban development of these areas.

Canaseraga-Dalton Association

This association accounts for only about 1% of the County. It consists of Canaseraga (50%), Dalton (30%) and other minor soils (Mardin, Volusia, Chenango, Howard and

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Unadilla found in scattered areas of sloping valley wall along the Susquehanna River in the Towns of Colesville, Conklin, Triangle and Windsor. There is some hazard of erosion with this association and seasonal wetness and slope can also present limitations. It grows field crops but can require intensive management to control erosion.

The Soil Survey also classifies individual soils by their suitability for agricultural and forestry uses. There are 8 different agricultural suitability classes but only Classes I through VII are found in Broome County. There are also 9 woodland suitability groups. Generally, in a County such as Broome, agricultural suitability Classes I and II represent good to excellent soils for production purposes. Classes III to IV have some severe limitations but are usable. Classes V through VII may be described as suitable for pasture or woodland uses only. In the case of woodland suitability, Groups 1 to 3 may be described as good for forestry, Groups 4 to 7 may be considered fair and Groups 8 and 9 as poor to unsuitable. The table found on the following page summarizes county soil conditions in terms of these characteristics:

All factors considered, Broome County's natural resource base for agricultural pursuits is a reasonably good one. It possesses more good to excellent soils than many areas of the Northeast. Moreover, it includes large areas of soils that grow excellent forage grasses and a number of areas suitable for intensive cultivation of vegetables and other small crops. Finally, it's important to realize that the types of agriculture on the rise in Broome County (e.g., greenhouse production) do not always depend on the natural resource base in the same way that traditional crops have.

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Table 2.1 - Broome County Soil Suitability for Agricultural Production

	Agricultural Suitability Classification	Woodland Suitability Group	Broome County Acreage
<u>Good to Excellent Soils</u>			
ChA Chenango and Howard gravelly loam, 0 to 5% slope	I	1	6,590
Tioga silt loam	I	1	7,490
UnB Unadilla silt loam, 0 to 5% slope	I	1	3,590
Br Braceville gravelly silt loam	IIw	1	300
CaB Canaservaga silt loam, 3 to 8% slope	IIe	2	1,100
CuB Culvers silt loam, 2 to 8% slope	IIe	1	1,270
LdB Lordstown channery silt loam, 0 to 5% slope	IIs	2	420
MhB Mardin channery silt loam, 2 to 8% slope	IIe	2	11,970
MmB Mardin channery silt loam, moderately shallow 2 to 8% slope	IIe	2	1,440
Ms Middlebury silt loam	IIw	1	4,640
Sc Scio silt loam	IIw	1	600
Tg Tioga gravelly silt loam, fan	IIe	1	2,510
	Classes I & II Sub-Total =		41,920
		=	9.2%
 <u>Fair Soils</u>			
Cac Canaseraga silt loam, 8 to 15% slope	IIIe	2	2,310
CcC Cattaraugus channery silt loam	IIIe	2	5,000
ChC Chenango and Howard gravelly loam, 5 to 15% slope	IIIe	1	6,980
CuC Cullvers channery silt loam, 8 to 15% slope	IIIe	2	3,090
DaB Dalton silt loam, 2 to 8% slope	IIIw	5	960
DaC Dalton silt loam, 8 to 15% slope	IIIe	5	840
LdC Lordstown channery silt loam, 5 to 15% slope	IIIe	2	17,170
MhC Marden channery silt loam, 8 to 15% slope	IIIe	2	53,390
MnC Mardin-Chenango channery silt loam, 5 to 15% slope	IIIe	2	480
MtB Morris channery silt loam, 2 to 8% slope	IIIw	5	2,100
MtC Morris channery silt loam, 8 to 15% slope	IIIe	5	5,650
OuC Oquaga channery silt loam, 5 to 15% slope	IIIe	2	1,250
UnC Unadilla silt loam, 5 to 15% slope	IIIe	1	1,120
VoA Volusia channery silt loam, 0 to 3% slope	IIIw	5	470
VoB Volusia channery silt loam, 3 to 8% slope	IIIw	5	34,540
VoC Volusia channery silt loam, 8 to 15% slope	IIIe	5	116,890
WA Wallington silt loam	IIIw	5	910
AcA Alden and Chippewa soils, 0 to 3% slope	IV w	8	1,230
ArD Arnot channery silt loam, 0 to 25% slope	IVe	6	1,490
CcD Cattaraugus channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	2	6,550
ChD Chenango and Howard gravelly loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	1	2,530
CpB Chippewa channery silt loam, 3 to 8%	IVw	8	860
CuD Culvers channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	2	1,340
LdD Lordstown channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	2	23,790
MhD Mardin channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	2	28,280
MnD Mardin-Chenango channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	2	310
OuD Oquaga channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	2	3,660
TuD Tuller channery silt loam, 0 to 25% slope	IVw	5	540
VoC3 Volusia channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	5	670
VoD Volusia channery silt loam, 15 to 25% slope	IVe	5	9,260
	Classes III & IV Sub-Total =		333,660
		=	73.4%

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**Table 2.1 - Broome County Soil Suitability for Agricultural Production
(Continued)**

	Agricultural Suitability Classification	Woodland Suitability Group	Broome County Acreage
<u>Poor Soils and Other Unsuitable Areas</u>			
Ad Alluvial land	Vw	9	6,110
CcE Cattaraugus channery silt loam	VIe	3	2,250
ChE Chenango and Howard gravelly loam, 25 to 40% slope	VIe	3	2,240
LoE Lordstown and Oquaga channery silt loam, 25 to 35% slope	VIe	3	15,130
MhE Mardin Channery silt loam, 25 to 35% slope	VIe	3	9,740
LrF Lordstown and Oquaga soils, 35 to 60% slope	VIIs	4	5,310
LsE Lordstown and Oquaga extremely stony, 0 to 35% slope	VIIs	7	14,310
MrF Mardin and Cattaraugus soils, 35 to 60% slope	VIIs	4	1,820
MuD Morris and Tuller very stony, 3 to 25% slope	VIIs	5	970
Pm Peat and muck	VIIw	9	240
CV Cut and fill, gravelly	-	9	3,040
CW Cut and fill, loamy	-	9	2,060
Cy Cut and silty	-	9	1,830
Mf Made land, sanitary land fill	-	9	410
Water			4,220
	Classes V & VII Sub-Total =		69,680
			= 15.3%
	Total - All Classes =		454,400
			= 100.0%

Note: Small letters indicate soil limitations, "e" representing risk of erosion, "w" suggesting wetness problems and "s" meaning stony or shallow.

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2.2 Agriculture Land and Districts

Broome County, like many others, has consolidated its New York State approved Agricultural Districts over the years for purposes of producing more efficient administration of the program. There are presently three such districts within the County, District No.'s 3, 4 and 5. The following table summarizes the salient facts regarding each:

Table 2.2 - Broome County Agricultural Disticts

	District No. 3	District No. 4	District No. 5	Totals
Next Renewal Date	2007	2008	2002	N/A
Acres	17,539	59,880	71,084	148,503
Towns	Sanford	Barker, Binghamton, Chenango, Colesville, Conklin, Fenton, Kirkwood, Maine Union, Windsor	Barker, Chenango Lisle, Maine, Nanticoke, Triangle	N/A
Farms				
Dairy	7	20	58	
85				
Grain	0	12	9	21
Vegetables	0	2	8	10
Livestock	2	49	45	96
Horticulture	3	12	10	25
Other	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
	12	100	130	242
Estimated Ag Sales	\$1,900,000	\$11,000,000	\$12,100,000	\$25,000,000
Capital Invested in 8 Years	\$850,000	\$8,000,000	\$5,965,000	\$14,050,000
% of Towns in District	30.4%	22.9%	60.7%	34.0%
Ag Land as District %	31.8%	32.8%	N/A	N/A
Development as District %*	44.2%	37.7%	N/A	N/A

* Developed = classified residential, commercial or industrial for real property tax assessment purposes.

The above table demonstrates that there is significant development pressure on agriculture, despite lack of growth in recent years. The existing development pattern within Agricultural Districts is distinctly mixed in character with residential uses interspersed among farms throughout.

The land use pattern countywide is depicted on the "Broome County Land Use Map" that follows. A separate "Broome County Agricultural Map" also follows to illustrate the location of agricultural parcels on a stand-alone basis. The latter illustrates that the bulk of agricultural activity is found in the northern and eastern panhandles of the County with

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concentrations in the Sanford (Ag District No. 3) area, the Colesville, Fenton and Windsor area (Ag District No. 4) and the Barker, Lisle, Nanticoke and Triangle area (Ag District No. 5). Forest uses are also concentrated in these same areas.

Many residentially classified properties, it must be noted, include open land that is vacant, held in forest use or made available for farming on a rental basis. The assessment data does not fully reveal the extent of this activity. Therefore, it tends to understate the impact of agriculture and forestry on the landscape. The land use analysis connected with the renewal of Agricultural District No. 4 in 2000 took note of this fact stating that "typically, vacant property and the more sizable residential buildings are the primary sources of agricultural rentals for pasturage, haying or other farming activity."

The availability of non-agricultural parcels for farm use is clearly a positive in maintaining the farmland base and reducing holding costs for agricultural production. Nevertheless, many forested areas are taken out of management for crop purposes by residential purchases. Also, there is no assurance such lands will be available over the long-term for agriculture. This demands continuing education of landowners on the benefits of forest management and farm use. Attention to the tax policy implications is also demanded because farmers dependent on large areas of rented land for production are not able to avail themselves of the same tax benefits that others can secure under New York State law.

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EXISTING LAND USE MAP
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INSERT AG LAND MAP
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2.3 Land Use and Development Trends

Broome County's population has been stable to declining over the last two decades, yielding only limited development pressures on a few specific areas of the County. The northern portion of the County along Routes 11, 79 and I-81 has exhibited limited growth over the last ten years but in the preceding decade had expanded quite rapidly. This suggests there could be a resurgence of growth in coming years within this area. The Town of Lisle, in fact, has grown by a third since 1980 and it is one of the prime farming areas of the County with over 50% of the land area in agricultural use.

There has, in any case, been a significant loss of farmland within the County, about 6.6 acres per day between 1992 and 1997, some of which reflects new commercial and residential development.¹ The County's rather extensive highway system has played a role in some of this, particularly in the Dickinson area. This factor is likely to be even more important in the future and may continue to spur growth outside the Triple Cities area.

Growth within the Triple Cities area has obviously been negatively influenced over the last ten years by the downsizing of the IBM operations in the County but this impact will fade over time and some new growth can be expected. It is most apt to occur in the northern part of the County due to availability of good highway access. Also, the southern areas bordering Pennsylvania face problems attracting growth because of the tax differentials between the two states. This will put some more pressure on farmland in the northern area.

Growth patterns within the County are more fully revealed in Table 2.4, which indicates that the towns in the northern sections of the County (Barker, Lisle, Nanticoke and Triangle), are the fastest growing over the long-term. The Town of Windsor had also experienced some growth until the 1990's and development along Route 79 may be expected to continue. It is impossible, however, to describe any section of the County as rapidly growing.

Overall, the County has lost population since 1980 while New York State made very small gains (4.5% since 1990 and 8.1% since 1980). Farmland conversion pressure, therefore, has been limited to selected areas. The general loss of farmland can probably be attributed more to other factors such as low profitability and shifts to less land intensive forms of agriculture.

¹ Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

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Table 2.3 - Population Growth, 1980-2000²

<u>Town/City</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>% Chg.</u> <u>80-90</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% Chg.</u> <u>90-00</u>	<u>% Chg.</u> <u>80-00</u>
<u>Northern Broome Area</u>						
Barker	2,244	2,714	20.9%	2,738	0.9%	22.0%
Lisle	2,039	2,486	21.9%	2,707	8.9%	32.8%
Nanticoke	1,425	1,846	29.5%	1,790	-3.0%	25.6%
Triangle	2,618	3,006	14.8%	3,032	0.9%	15.8%
SUB-TOTALS	8,326	10,052	20.7%	10,267	2.1%	23.3%
<u>Triple Cities Fringe Area</u>						
Chenango	12,233	12,310	0.6%	11,454	-7.0%	-6.4%
Conklin	6,204	6,265	1.0%	5,940	-5.2%	-4.3%
Fenton	7,400	7,236	-2.2%	6,909	-4.5%	-6.5%
Kirkwood	5,834	6,096	4.5%	5,651	-7.3%	-3.1%
Maine	5,262	5,576	6.0%	5,459	-2.1%	3.7%
SUB-TOTALS	36,933	37,483	1.5%	35,413	-5.5%	-4.1%
<u>Triple Cities Urban Area</u>						
Binghamton City	55,860	53,008	-5.1%	47,380	-10.6%	-15.2%
Binghamton Town	5,007	5,006	0.0%	4,969	-0.7%	-0.8%
Dickinson	5,594	5,486	-1.9%	5,335	-2.8%	-4.6%
Union	61,179	59,786	-2.2%	56,298	-5.8%	-8.0%
Vestal	27,238	26,733	-1.9%	26,535	-0.7%	-2.6%
SUB-TOTALS	154,878	150,019	-3.4%	140,517	-6.3%	-9.3%
<u>Eastern Broome Area</u>						
Colesville	4,965	5,590	12.6%	5,441	-2.7%	-5.2%
Sanford	2,635	2,576	-2.2%	2,477	-3.8%	-15.5%
Windsor	5,911	6,440	8.9%	6,421	-0.3%	8.6%
SUB-TOTALS	13,511	14,621	-3.8%	14,339	-1.8%	-5.7%
TOTALS	213,648	212,160	-0.7%	200,536	-5.5%	-6.1%

² Town data includes Village portions.

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2.4 The Economics of Broome County Agriculture

Some 85,804 acres of Broome County is farmed, approximately 19% of the land mass. About 28,800 acres or 34% of this land is wooded, in addition to 229,200 acres of other forested land, meaning that fully 70% of Broome County is in farm or forest use and this accounts for its character outside the Triple Cities and complements the urban area.³ There were 336 farms generating sales of at least \$2,500 in 1997 and 165 of these produced \$10,000 or more of product. Altogether, these farms produced some \$24,016,000 in sales in 1997, of which \$19,347,000 or 81% was livestock-related. These various products accounted for 633 full or part-time jobs (including 241 owner-operators primarily occupied with farming). This is the agricultural economic base of Broome County. It is very diverse with a fairly strong dairy sector composed of both small and large size farms.⁴ Table 2.4 and the chart following provide further data.

Table 2.4 - Market Value of Broome County Agricultural Products, 1997

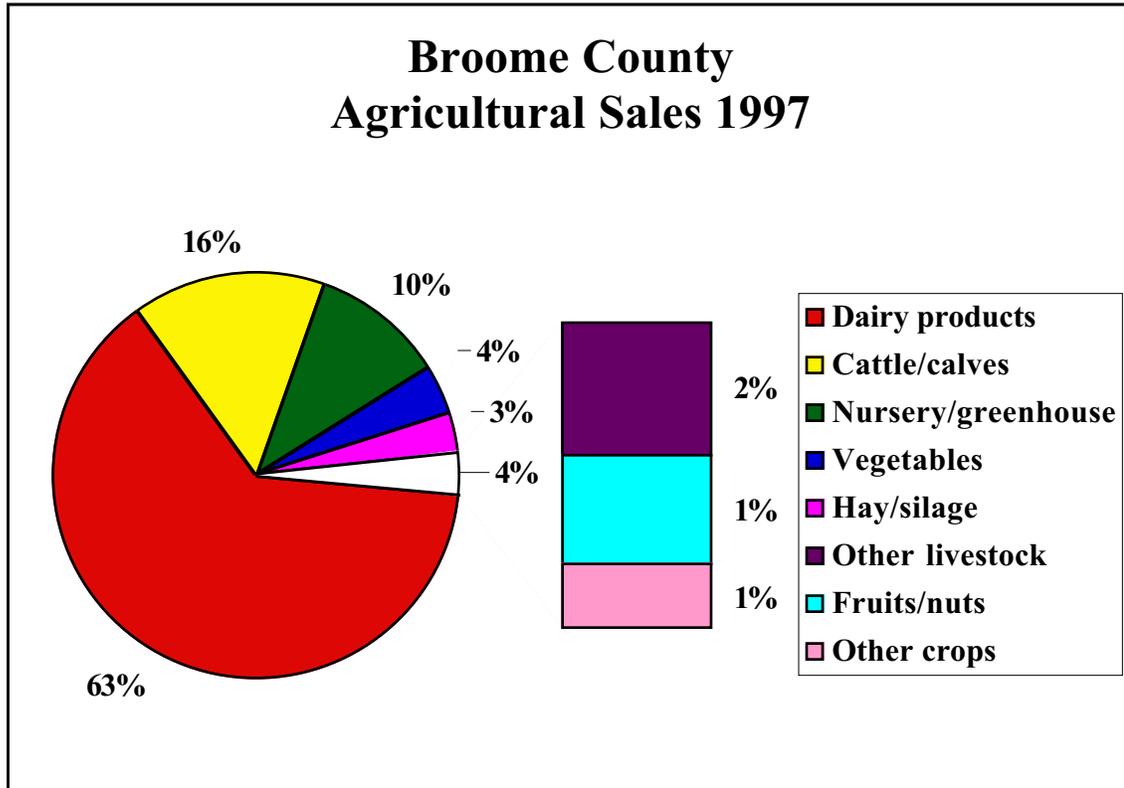
<u>Agricultural Products</u>	<u>1997 Cash Receipts</u>	<u>% of Category</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>No. of Farms</u>
Dairy products	\$15,229,000	78.7%	63.4%	88
Cattle/calves	\$3,746,000	19.4%	15.6%	244
Other livestock	\$373,000	1.9%	1.6%	104
Livestock Sub-total	\$19,348,000	100.0%	80.6%	304
Hay/silage	\$771,000	16.5%	3.2%	174
Nursery/greenhouse	\$2,507,000	53.7%	10.4%	62
Fruits/nuts	\$301,000	6.4%	1.3%	19
Vegetables	\$914,000	19.6%	3.8%	28
Other crops	\$175,000	3.7%	0.7%	40
Crops Sub-total	\$4,668,000	100.0%	19.4%	264
Total Agricultural =	\$78,665,000	100.0%	100.0%	511

³ Source: USDA Forest Service [Northeastern Forest Industry Analysis](#).

⁴ Source: 1997 U.S. Census of Agriculture. It must be noted that State Agricultural Statistics Service surveys indicate significantly higher numbers for various categories (e.g. 610 farms in 1997 versus the 511 counted in the Census). This is attributable to the State's more frequent data analysis and follow-up. Nevertheless, Census numbers are more complete overall and, therefore, more suitable for planning purposes. Totals may not agree due to rounding, however, and because multiple products are often produced from the same farm, numbers of farms overlap and cannot be directly totaled.

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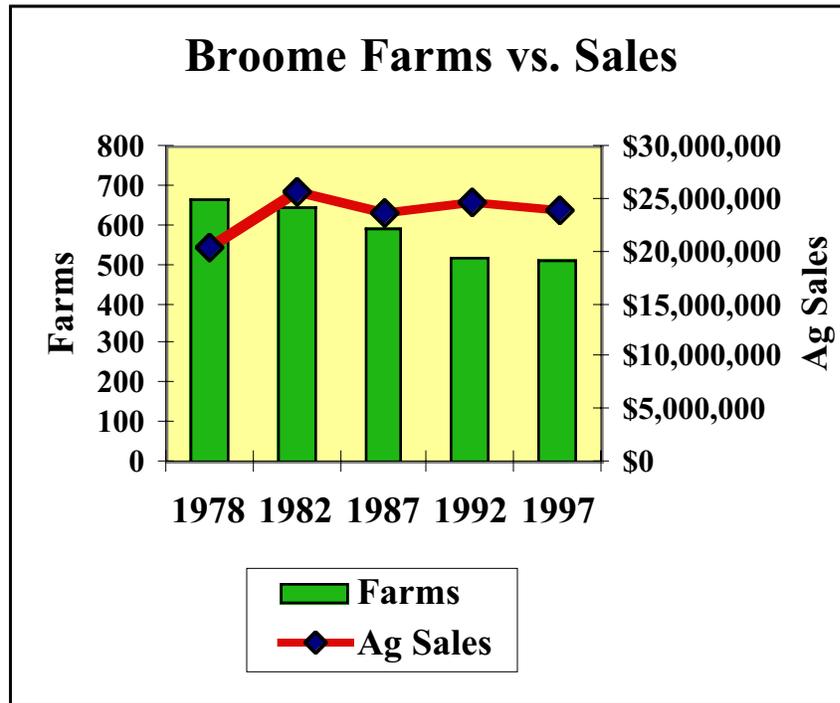


Because Broome County has been very successful in developing alternative and niche agricultural businesses, many of which are small cash-based enterprises, much of the agricultural activity is not recorded in either the Census of Agriculture or by the New York Agricultural Statistics System. Nevertheless, the latter is more up-to-date and more inclusive. The 1998 data, for example, indicates there were 615 farms in the County generating sales of \$24,956,000. Vegetable sales were estimated at \$1,331,000, some 46% higher than the Census from one year earlier and even this figure is believed by Cooperative Extension Service personnel to be very low compared to actual activity. Fruit sales were recorded at \$324,000, some 8% higher. Dairy and hay/silage/field crop sales were 10% and 16% higher, respectively.

The charts following illustrate additional trends with respect to sales of dairy and other agricultural products. Sales of agricultural product increased by 1% between 1987 and 1997 (before adjustment for inflation). Vegetable sales gained 249% and nursery and greenhouse crops grew by 163%, a major expansion in activity. Crop sales as a whole increased by 80%. Cattle and calf sales gained 26% and miscellaneous livestock operations (e.g., exotics, goats, rabbits, etc.) increased by 89% for the decade. Notwithstanding these increases, dairy sales declined by 14% and field crop sales lost 8%, although the latter experienced significant gains between 1987 and 1992.

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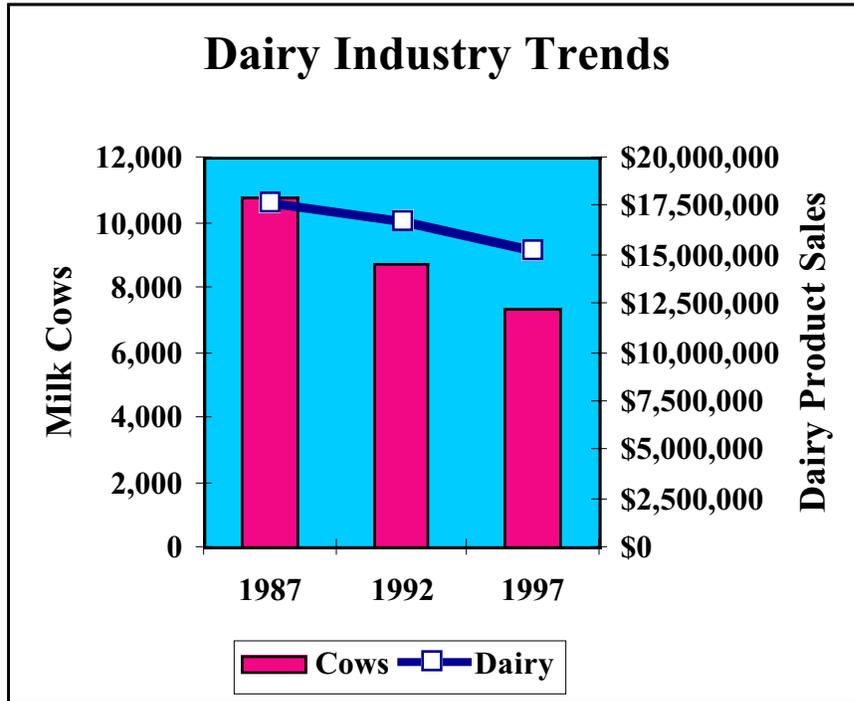


New York is one of the top states in the nation in milk production and Broome County is, in fact, ranked 267th out of 2,563 producing counties in the U.S. for dairy sales. It is also ranked 254th nationwide in corn silage acreage, 304th in nursery acreage and 319th in horses and ponies sold. It ranked 7th and 12th statewide, respectively, in horse and pony sales and nursery acreage. Horse and pony sales were recorded as \$213,000 in 1997 and are estimated to have grown substantially since then as the County has attracted breeding operations where a single horse can sell for more than this figure.

Sales of dairy products in the County have, as the chart below demonstrates, declined much more slowly than cow numbers have declined. There has been substantial consolidation in the dairy industry both nationally and within the County and price fluctuations have had a major impact in driving out less efficient producers. The positive side is that the producers who remain are much better positioned to compete with Western dairy farmers operating with 3,000 cows or more per farm. There are, in fact, some major dairy farms in Broome County. There were two growing 500+ cow operations in 1997, another four dairy farms with 200+ cows and an additional eight farms with 100+ cows. The future of the dairy industry will largely rest on these farms. There were no 500+ cow herds in 1987 and today there is at least one herd with 1,450 milkers and 900 young stock.

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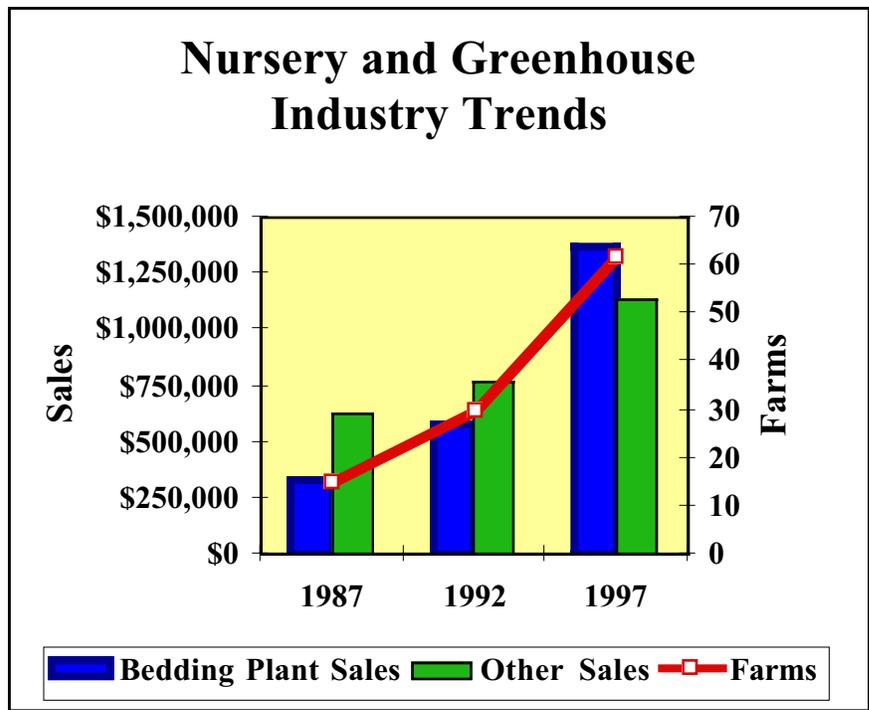
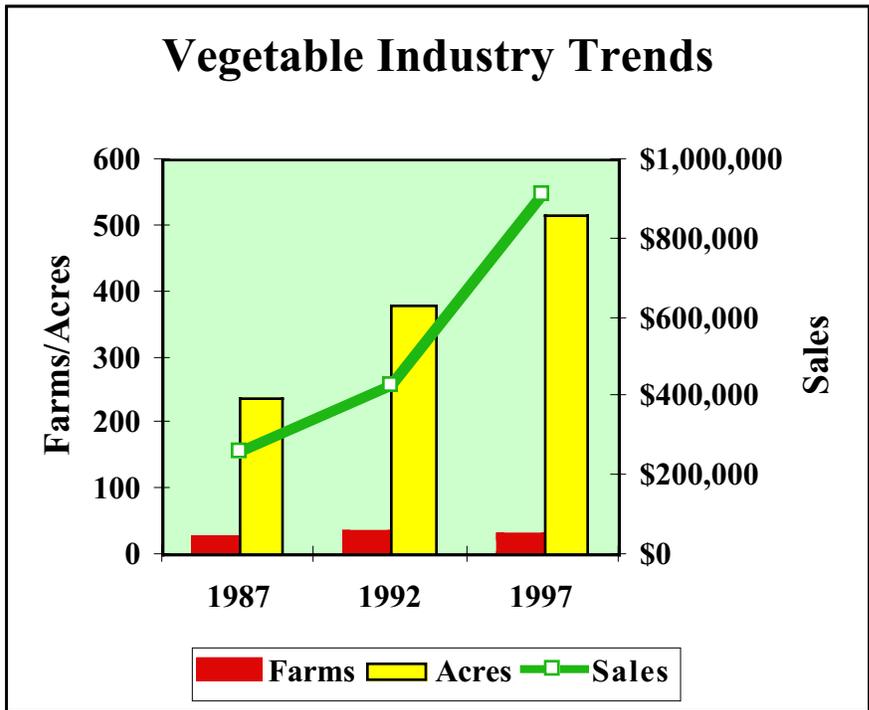


Vegetable and nursery production are growing Broome County strengths with potential to expand significantly due to the presence of an urban base, several farm stands and farm markets and a good highway system. The acreage used for vegetables more than doubled between 1987 and 1997 (growing from 236 to 515 acres). Vegetables commercially produced include cucumbers, garlic, herbs, peas, peppers, pumpkins, squash, sweet corn and tomatoes. There was growth in nearly all categories since 1987. Sweet corn, a very profitable crop, is now grown on some 22 farms and consumes 360 acres versus the 157 used for this purpose in 1987.

Nursery and greenhouse operations have grown from 15 in 1987 to 62 in 1997, a 313% increase with most of the gains being in the greenhouse and floral foliage end of the business. The production area under glass has grown from 172,089 square feet in 1987 to 327,778 in 1997 and open acres have expanded from 16 to 985 over the same period. Bedding plant sales alone grew from \$326,000 in 1987 to \$1,374,000 in 1997. There was also, in 1997, some \$1,135,000 of sales in foliage plants (including \$736,000 in potted flowering plants) and \$132,000 in Christmas tree sales. Actual nurseries contributed only \$49,000 in sales and this is clearly an area of additional potential. The charts following demonstrate the growth in nursery and greenhouse business as an agricultural category.

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One must also consider the substantial multiplier effects connected with farm sales when evaluating the size and nature of an agricultural economy. Farmers typically purchase most of their goods and services from within a 20-25 mile range of the farm, while their product is marketed outside the region. This export of product and import of dollars puts them on the high side of multiplier scales according to a Cornell University study.⁵

That Cornell research, conducted for 1991, indicates the following range of multipliers, by sector of the New York State economy, for both total income and full-time equivalent jobs:

Table 2.5 - Economic Multipliers by Sector, New York State, 1991

	<u>Total Income</u>	<u>Employment</u>
<u>Production Agriculture Industries</u>		
Dairy	2.29	1.52
Crops	2.28	1.51
Nursery and wood products	1.78	1.39
Poultry and livestock	1.64	1.37
<u>Agricultural Manufacturing Industries</u>		
Dairy processing	2.61	3.53
Grain processing	2.16	2.58
Fruits and vegetables processing	1.67	2.09
Meat processing	1.65	1.99
<u>Other Economic Sectors</u>		
Construction	1.66	1.57
Services	1.48	1.39
Manufacturing (non-food)	1.41	1.62
Retail and wholesale trade	1.40	1.30
Finance, insurance and real estate	1.19	1.54

⁵ Department of Agricultural, Resource and Managerial Economics, Policy Issues in Rural Land Use, December, 1996, "Economic Multipliers and the New York State Economy."

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2.5 Relationship to Other Planning

Broome County is now in the midst of developing a countywide Comprehensive Plan for Sustainable Economic Development that is expected to incorporate much of the input from this Plan. It is being funded under New York State's Quality Communities Demonstration Program. The plan of work identifies agriculture as a "critical segment of the County's economic base" and notes that the industry is in a state of transition. It also discusses some of the County's economic development and planning initiatives including the establishment of a New York State Economic Development Zone in the Town of Union, Johnson City and Endicott areas and the Susquehanna Heritage Area (a tourism development effort). There are agricultural implications with respect to both. Open space protection is also identified as a goal with the results of this Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan expected to influence final recommendations.

A previous report along this line was prepared in 1993 by Economic Research Associates. Entitled Economic Development Overview and Strategy Considerations for Broome County. It includes essential background data on the local economy and sets forth several specific strategies for dealing with Broome County economic development problems. However, it takes a relatively narrow and negative view of agriculture, focusing only on dairy enterprises and mostly on the decline in farm numbers. It also incorrectly indicated that Broome County had "no businesses which produce dairy products," ignoring the Crowley operation. Among the observations and strategies included in the report are the following items relevant to agriculture:

- "Quality of life factors are also becoming more important to firms establishing location criteria." Agricultural and forestry landscapes contribute significantly to that quality of life and should be recognized for these contributions.
- "A large proportion of the growth of any economy will stem from expansion and diversification from within..." Diversification is already taking place in the agricultural sector and should be able to benefit from County initiatives in this regard.
- "Expand existing entrepreneurial training." Clearly, farmers are in great need of such training to make the shift from being "price takers" to "price makers."
- "Establish a library of market research materials for selected sectors." Marketing is also the key to agricultural economic development and the agricultural sector should be part of such efforts.
- "Prepare and publish a data base on Broome County firms to promote local

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procurement." This, too, can be important to the agricultural sector, particularly in regard to opening up institutional food markets.

- "Market bus tour companies and develop package tours." Agricultural tourism in combination with bed and breakfast promotions presents obvious possibilities.

There is some planning work relative to agriculture taking place under the leadership of the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Board and the local Resource Conservation and Development District. The former has assembled the recommendations of various county agricultural and farmland protection plans into one document, for instance. The latter has recently co-sponsored a Northeast Agroforestry and Carbon Conference in Binghamton to explore the potential for development of new agroforestry income crops and use of carbon sequestration credits as a source of funding for maintaining working landscapes in forestry and related uses.

There has also been a considerable amount of comprehensive planning work taking place at the municipal level in Broome County. An example is the Town of Kirkwood, which has recently developed a draft plan update working together with Binghamton University staff.. The Town's goals, as laid out in this draft plan include "rural-based quality of life that balances modest growth and improved residential and commercial districts with protection of the natural environment and some agricultural land."

It is also stated in the Kirkwood Plan that "farming has become very limited and is in decline across the State of New York." This is an incorrect statement. Cash receipts from farming in the State are growing and up 9% since 1994. New York was the No. 2 producer of apples in the U.S. in 1998 and was No. 3 in dairy and sweet corn production. It was No. 6 in onions and potatoes and No.7 in greenhouse and nursery production. Some of these types of products, too, are growing rapidly in sales within Broome County. Nursery and greenhouse operations, in fact, more than quadrupled in number between 1987 and 1997 and gained 313% in sales between 1987 and 1997 (see Section 2.4).

Regardless of the inaccuracy, Kirkwood's draft indicates that "effort must be made to protect farm land but, at the same time balance new residential development of varying densities." This is a generally positive statement but demonstrates the need for incorporation of valid agricultural data in plans. Kirkwood does have potential for agriculture but it is probably not the type of farming that most residents think of as farming. Much of it is small scale activity that can easily complement residential development. This situation is likely to be found in other towns as well.

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2.6 Agricultural Industry Trends

The single greatest challenge facing agriculture today is low profitability. Finding the right niche market in which to make a decent living is every farmer's battle. Some have chosen to leave the farm for other opportunities but recent innovations and trends offer hope for keeping them on the land. These include the following:

- New generation farm cooperatives are being formed across the country to market agricultural products and purchase supplies. These are taking shape around the original concept of cooperatives, which was to serve the narrow but compelling interests of small groups of producers united by specialized needs. An example of the new generation version is Catskill Family Farms in nearby Delaware County which has been formed with the help of the Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) to market specialty produce (e.g. fingerling potatoes) grown on Whole Farm Planned farms within the Watershed to New York City restaurants. It secures growing contracts in advance, advertises and promotes using a collective theme and by operating from a narrow scope is able to focus its efforts on highly profitable lines of business. WAC anticipates additional such cooperatives may be formed, for instance, to market meat or forest products.
- Small-scale agriculture, farm diversification and specialization are also regaining favor in some quarters as farmers realize the opportunities to earn high margins off small enterprises and niche lines of business. Specialization can increase profits and is the answer for many farmers but when it is used solely for the purpose of increasing production without corresponding management to lower the costs of inputs, the market can quickly become flooded with too much product. Only price supports and farm consolidations have allowed farmers to earn reasonable incomes under such conditions and they are now ever more subject to the whims of governmental policies and market prices on a relatively few products.

Dependence on the market price of a single commodity can lead to financial ruin but diversity can help to spread the risk and allow a farmer to address niche opportunities. Indeed, specialization works best in synchronization with diversification (e.g. a beef stocker who also raises vegetables). Specialization also allows opportunities for diversification in the form of strategic alliances among farmers where one will grow grain and/or mix rations for another in return for rented crop land as an example. Small farmers in other counties (e.g. Wyoming) have, in fact, been able to prosper in relationships of this sort with larger farmers.

- Adding value to farm and forest products before they leave the County is also a

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method increasingly being used by farmers and others to increase profitability. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Sullivan County, for example, recently conducted a symposium on mini-dairy operations. There are various international and other firms marketing on-farm equipment that can put a dairy farmer in the business of producing yogurt, ice cream, butter and other added value products. With proper marketing and exploitation of access to the New York City market, this could offer dairy farmers a means of becoming “price-makers” rather than “price-takers.” New York State's farm tax breaks and the Broome County IDA’s Tax Abatement Program for industrial value-added businesses could be used to further enhance these opportunities.

- A corollary to the above trends is more and more emphasis on direct marketing of farm products. Farm stands have gained in popularity. They create variety and through linking to other tourist attractions, offer opportunities for local farmers to earn extra income. Some farmers within the region already depend on direct marketing for their entire income by selling vegetables, poultry and other farm products to the New York City and other green and live markets.
- Green-labeling of farm products is another trend which is of particular import to Broome County because it sits on the edge of the largest environmentally conscious market in the world - the New York City metropolitan area. The County is also poised, of course, to tap the much nearer Albany market. Green-labeling in this context can take many forms. It can include organic products, produce grown on Whole Farm Planned farms, fresh produce, pastured poultry, natural beef or firewood taken from forests managed under environmentally friendly conditions.

There are examples and/or opportunities for each of these in Broome County. One of the challenges, of course, is to avoid diluting the value of the green-label by employment of lax standards, balancing this concern against setting standards so high that small farmers cannot participate. The organic food industry faces such a challenge at the moment with too many farmers claiming to be organic who are really not. Proposed Federal standards threatened to worsen the problem by setting unrealistic standards, rather than remedying it as was hoped although that may now be in the course of being remedied. A similar problem existed with New York State’s Seal of Quality program. It’s new “Pride of New York” program, however, appears much more workable and is now being used by some 180 producers across the State.

A good example of very specific green-labeling is the Chesapeake Milk program launched by Penn State University, EPA, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and others. It labels milk, produced under water quality programs designed to protect the Bay, with an environmental certification and then adds a 5¢ per half-gallon premium onto

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the price. That premium is returned to participating farmers as a profit share and for use in covering the costs of environmental improvements.

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2.7 The Forestry Sector

Trees represent a distinct agricultural crop for Broome County and one of significant importance to the regional economy. Their value, however, is often underrated because the crop rotation period is so long and opportunities to claim income are relatively infrequent. Some 253,000 acres or 56% of Broome County is considered timberland. Sawtimber represents 122,300 acres with the remainder consisting of seedlings, saplings and pole timber.⁶ A total of 92% of the timberland is owned by farmers or private individuals. It is a valuable income-producing asset for these landowners. Private corporations and the forest industry own another 8,900 acres of woodland. The State also owns 10,900 acres of forested land in Broome County.

The following is a breakdown of privately owned woodland in the County by forest type:

**Table 2.6 - Broome County
Private Timberland by Forest Types, 1993**

<u>Forest Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
White-red pine	29,100 acres
Oak-pine	9,600 acres
Oak-hickory	36,200 acres
Maple-beech-birch	162,200 acres
<u>Aspen-birch</u>	<u>15,800 acres</u>
Total Timberland	253,000 acres

These largely (88%) hardwood forests produce high quality timber and spectacular fall foliage that attract tourism throughout the Northeast. The Forest Service studies indicate the most common species, in terms of numbers of live trees, are Soft Maple, Ash and Hard Maple. Significantly, some 185,800 acres or 73% of Broome's timberland is considered by the Forest Service to be either fully stocked or over-stocked and, altogether, the County's timberland represents 386,400,000 cubic feet of growing stock.⁷ This timberland includes an estimated 1,026,300,000 board feet of sawtimber and is growing by 28,900,000 net

⁶ The source of all forestry data, unless otherwise indicated, is the USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Station, "Northeastern Forest Inventory and Analysis Project," 1993 and 1996. Unfortunately, although this is the only official source of the data available, it is based on sampling of a mere 51 plots and is often prone to error as a result. Therefore, great caution must be exercised in using the data to make any definitive specific conclusions regarding the industry. The information is used herein general analysis purposes only.

⁷ Growing stock generally refers to all usable portions of trees, those portions that exceed 4" in diameter.

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board feet per year.⁸ The following table compares Forest Service estimates of growth compared to average annual removals of sawtimber:⁹

**Table 2.7 - Broome County Average Net Annual Growth and
Average Annual Removals of Sawtimber by Species Group, 1993**
(All figures, except percentages, are in board feet)

<u>Species Group</u>	<u>Sawtimber Base Volume</u>	<u>Annual Growth</u>	<u>Annual Removals</u>	<u>Cutting Rate</u>
Eastern White - Red Pine	20,700,000	2,000,000	0	0.0%
Eastern Hemlock	183,600,000	6,500,000	300,000	0.2%
Other Softwood	10,300,000	500,000	100,000	0.9%
Total Softwoods =	214,600,000	9,000,000	400,000	0.2%
Select White Oak	47,700,000	1,200,000	400,000	1.3%
Select Red Oak	97,700,000	2,900,000	2,000,000	2.0%
Other White Oak	11,400,000	400,000	800,000	7.0%
Other Red Oak	8,200,000	400,000	0	0.0%
Hard Maple	72,000,000	3,800,000	1,300,000	1.8%
Soft Maple	290,000,000	10,100,000	1,600,000	0.6%
Ash	76,800,000	2,400,000	600,000	0.8%
Aspen	81,200,000	3,400,000	1,200,000	1.5%
Basswood	22,800,000	800,000	0	0.0%
Beech	54,300,000	1,100,000	200,000	0.4%
Other Soft Hardwoods	32,400,000	1,500,000	400,000	1.2%
Other Hard Hardwoods	17,200,000	900,000	100,000	0.6%
Total Hardwoods =	811,700,000	28,900,000	8,600,000	1.1%
All Species =	1,026,300,000	37,900,000	9,000,000	0.9%

The estimated 1,026,300,000 board feet of sawtimber suggests average production of 4,057 board feet per acre of forestland. Moreover, managed stands, according to regional industry representatives, typically produce no more than 2,000-3,000 board feet per acre and the Forest Service numbers, therefore, may well overstate yields for Broome's largely

⁸ Sawtimber refers to the net volume of saw logs in trees.

⁹ Average annual removals refers to the net growing stock harvested, killed in logging operations, cleared or reclassified from forest to non-forest land. Totals may not agree, due to rounding.

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unmanaged woodlands. Moreover, annual growth in the case of managed stands is about 100 board feet per year per acre. This suggests a gain in sawtimber of roughly 25,000,000 board feet per year as compared to Forest Service estimate of 39,700,000 board feet. Annual growth, nevertheless, does appear to exceed removals.

The Forest Service data indicates cutting rates within the County are just slightly above New York State's 0.8% average and below those of neighboring Pennsylvania (1.0%) and the New England region (1.3%).¹⁰ The rates for most species are sustainable, with the exception of White Oak. Indeed, the ratio of annual growth to removals as well as other evidence, indicates a continually maturing forest.

Neither hardwoods nor softwoods are being harvested to the extent they could be. This is not good for wildlife management, the long-term vitality of woodlands or the forest industry. Too many large trees crowd out the understory vital to regeneration and to the animal populations for cover and as food. More timbering using best management practices would create a healthier forest for the long-term.

There are, nevertheless, serious concerns with the harvesting patterns that have been taking place throughout much of the hardwood-rich Northeast. The trend has been to "high-grade" forests to remove the better quality trees while leaving behind the less-valuable stock. This is what is happening with the Oak. It is a result of the general lack of demand for low-grade logs and species, particularly since the Proctor and Gamble facility in nearby Mehoopany, Pennsylvania, stop taking this material, importing Brazilian pulpwood as a substitute.

There is a threat that local forests will be taken over by low grade species if markets are not identified for them as well. Development of markets such as the OSB plant in Deposit, employment of sustainable forest management practices, deliberate efforts to cull or market low-grade materials and commercial thinning can all help to address high-grading issues but they will remain a challenge for the industry in this region.

Hardwood lumber production Statewide is up 50% since 1990. Hardwood lumber is also a niche business from a world-wide perspective. It is less affected by cheap softwood imports from South America, plus little cutting of hardwoods is allowed on Federal lands, giving eastern producers some opportunities. Broome County is a good source and the contributions of the industry to the County economy, if not up to potential, are significant. The following table summarizes some estimates of economic impact based on the FIA 1996 report on roundwood production in Broome County:

¹⁰ Source: "Cutting Activity in New York's Forests," USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Radnor, PA.

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Table 2.8 - Broome County Roundwood Production, 1996

<u>Species Group</u>	<u>Saw Logs (MBF)</u>	<u>Stumpage Price*</u>	<u>Value</u>
Hemlock	1,113	\$50	\$55,650
Red Pine	1,298	60	77,880
White Pine	1,239	90	111,510
Other Softwoods	668	75	50,100
Ash	747	350	261,450
Aspen	335	50	16,750
Basswood	248	200	49,600
Beech	1,257	70	87,990
Yellow Birch	117	150	17,550
Other Birch	107	100	10,700
Black Cherry	331	1,080	357,480
Elm	20	90	1,800
Hickory	17	110	1,870
Hard Maple	1,518	740	1,123,320
Soft Maple	1,528	230	351,440
Select Red Oak	863	670	578,210
Other Red Oak	12	335	4,020
Select White Oak	188	280	52,640
Other White Oak	171	140	23,940
Black Walnut	12	440	5,280
Yellow Poplar	4	150	600
Other Hardwoods	<u>95</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>7,125</u>
TOTALS	11,188	\$290	\$3,246,905
Pulp/Composite	11,660 cords	\$8	\$93,280
Firewood	18,035 cords	\$9	<u>\$162,315</u>
TOTAL SALES			\$3,502,500

* Per thousand board feet (MBF) on the stump based on NYS-DEC Stumpage price report for Winter, 2000. Does not include income from harvesting or processing.

The economic multiplier for wood products, as indicated earlier, is 1.78 and this suggests the \$3,502,500 in estimated sales (in rounded prices on the stump) generates a minimum annual economic impact for Broome County of \$6,234,450 (some \$2,731,950 of additional

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activity from related enterprises). These numbers are more than substantiated by County Business Patterns - 1998 data from the Census Bureau, indicating that the County had 10 lumber and wood products manufacturers, employing 318 individuals and with a combined payroll of \$7,876,000. Two of those manufacturers were sawmills with some 40+ of the employees represented, yielding an estimated minimum payroll of \$990,000.

The Empire State Forest Association reports, based on 1992 data, that New York State forest-related enterprises produced \$2.25 in valued-added for every dollar of payroll generated, suggesting total additional impact from wood manufacturing in the area of \$2,230,000, almost exactly the same figure as the multiplier data indicates. Not included are the 29 non-employers with receipts of \$1,240,000 according to the 1997 Economic Census. These self-employed individuals could well represent persons engaged in the firewood processing business, for example, that represents still additional economic activity. Altogether, the forest industry represents a total of at least \$7,500,000 not including the secondary manufacturing facilities that employ another 250-280 persons, independent loggers or forestry support services (e.g. consulting foresters).

The combined value of the County's timber assets (what they represent in total at any given point even if only a portion is cut in any given year) is also worth considering. The following table illustrates this for major species, based on current stumpage prices:

Table 2.9 - Broome County Sawtimber Value

<u>Sawtimber Species</u>	<u>Base Group</u>	<u>Stumpage Price</u>	<u>Total Value</u>
Eastern Hemlock	183,600,000	\$50	\$9,180,000
Select White Oak	47,700,000	280	13,356,000
Select Red Oak	97,700,000	670	65,459,000
Hard Maple	72,000,000	740	53,280,000
Soft Maple	290,000,000	230	66,700,000
Ash	76,800,000	350	26,880,000
Aspen	81,200,000	50	4,060,000
Basswood	22,800,000	200	4,560,000
Beech	54,300,000	70	3,801,000
Other Species	100,200,000	75	7,515,000
All Species =	1,026,300,000	\$248	\$254,791,000

Altogether, the County's forests represent a natural resource with a current value of over

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one-quarter billion dollars. While cutting of this entire stock at once is, obviously, not desirable, it is self-replenishing and, with sustainable management practices, can actually be enhanced in value even as it is being removed, a feature of almost no other natural resource.

The forest industry as a whole can fairly be described as somewhat underdeveloped but these statistics indicate it is, nonetheless, a significant economic asset to Broome County. Moreover, below average cutting rates for certain species within the County suggest there is additional harvest potential. The quality is relatively good at present with 75% of hardwoods rated as Grade 3 or better, just slightly below the State average of 76%. The County's hardwood stock also primarily consists of lighter-colored woods which have been more in demand in recent years. It represents a self-replenishing resource if managed correctly. Farm and woodlot owners in the County can, if they want to do so, generate income from it and this, in turn, benefits the tourism industry by helping to maintain the County's appealing character.

Much like the remainder of the agricultural sector, Broome County's forest industry would benefit by the development of additional secondary processing and value-added industries that would utilize locally produced wood. Niches could include specialty products for marketing to nearby metropolitan areas (e.g., fence boards, quality dimension lumber, wood flooring, wooden lawn furniture). Prefabricated wooden building manufacturing is already done in the County and this is an illustration of the possibilities. The nearby Mills Pride company manufactures solid wood doors for the ready to assemble market and is another excellent example.

Unfortunately, Mills Pride chose to locate in Sayre, Pennsylvania rather than New York due to taxes and other considerations. Nevertheless, it does provide an outlet for regional wood products of the sort needed. Other Pennsylvania manufacturers also look to the Southern Tier of New York for logs and this suggests the opportunity to do more value-added processing locally.

The key is to approach development from the standpoint of the market first and the resource second. Nevertheless, the resource is available locally and, therefore, Broome is a natural location for these industries if the County is willing to provide tax incentives to level the playing field with neighboring lower-taxed Pennsylvania. An appropriate vehicle is the Broome County IDA's tax-abatement program. It offers new assemblers, manufacturers, processors and distributors five years of 75% real property tax abatements on improvements, five more years at 50% and another five years at 25%, such that the property wouldn't be fully taxable until the sixteenth year.

While finding additional uses for low-grade sawtimber is a challenge (and a necessity), there

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are some distinct opportunities given the large quantity of growing stock available. These include pallet manufacturing, firewood, wood pellets and wood chips for sale to Western Pennsylvania pulp and paper mills or OSB manufacturing facilities such as the one in Deposit. Mulching facilities are another possibility and the County's geography puts it within reasonable trucking distance to all the major metropolitan markets that would purchase the product. Export opportunities also exist in high-grade products if enough volume can be identified and marshaled on a regular basis.

There are, too, a number of possibilities for using forest land to develop recreational attractions. If such activities are constructed as recreational leases they also hold the potential to generate added income for forest owners and, thereby, help the industry. Forest land is ideally suited to mountain biking, wilderness camping, hunting and other similar endeavors. If promoted properly in conjunction with area bed and breakfasts and restaurants, such activities can contribute in substantial ways to the economy. Nearby forest industry owners in Cayuta and Hancock, for example, typically lease their regional land holdings for hunting to help off-set the average \$9/acre/year holding costs associated with the timberland.

Unfortunately, New York has been a high tax state and, while many recent reforms have helped to lower taxes on farmers, seniors and other residents, forest land is still often taxed at rates that exceed the annual income which can be derived from forest management.¹¹ This can produce poor stewardship when farmers and other landowners are forced to do quick harvests to pay taxes. This has, in turn, led to some backlash efforts by individual municipalities to regulate all forest activity with very negative impacts on the industry. The best approach probably involves encouragement of sustainable forest management practices, combined with right-to-forest protection and positive tax relief.

Section 480(a) of the Real Property Law provides a measure of relief for participating landowners, but there is a strong disincentive to promote this program because the tax "costs" (savings to individual landowners) must be made up within the municipality and the strings attached in terms of management are too entangling. Clearly, there are no compelling reasons for private owners to hold onto forest land except for speculative purposes and this poses a substantial threat to long-term maintenance of forest land uses.

A better solution for taxing forest property would be to collect at the time of harvest based on a percentage of sales or some similar measure of productivity. This is a matter that should be pursued by the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, working together

¹¹ A recent analysis of real estate taxes on private forest land in the Catskill counties of New York State indicated annual tax rates of \$7-\$33/acre compared to forest revenues averaging less than \$5/acre. Local timber managers indicate the cost is approximately \$9/acre and needs to be less than half that.

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with organizations should as Farm Bureau and the Empire State Forest Association. At a minimum, more training for local assessors and more effective programs for determining the real economic value of forest land are needed.

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2.8 Broome County Agriculture - Marketable Comparative Advantages

Considering the foregoing, Broome County possesses several marketable comparative advantages for agricultural economic development. These include the following:

- Broome County offers an appealing blend of urban and rural environments in very close proximity, providing multiple high quality lifestyle options for prospective investors in agribusiness ventures.
- Broome County's urban areas and five established farm markets provide outlets for agricultural niche products, including fruits, vegetables, nursery stock, greenhouse plants and ethnic specialties.
- Broome County's agricultural sector, because of the presence of these markets, has already both diversified and specialized, providing opportunities for additional producers to build on this organizational infrastructure, which includes several already established CSA's and the State NOFA offices.
- Broome County's location, history and working landscapes, combined within initiatives such as the Susquehanna Heritage Area and greenway system of trails offer an opportunity to engage in agricultural tourism and package direct marketing efforts with other tourist attractions.
- Broome County's urban population and large number of wealthier households, combined with nearby farmland make it an excellent location for equine operations of various types.
- Broome County's industrial parks, vacant brownfield sites and economic incentive programs (including multiple EDZ benefits) combined with locational advantages, make it an excellent place for agricultural processors and distributors. The Hansmann's Mills food processing operation provides an excellent example of the potential.
- Broome County's valley soils are excellent for the types of niche agricultural products showing promise for future development.
- Broome County, as the home of IBM, possesses a number of high-technology resources, plus it is the location of Binghamton University, offering prospective agribusinesses a source of both skilled labor and supportive research capacities. It is also a central rural/urban location for research symposiums such as the recent "Northeast

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Agroforestry and Carbon Conference" sponsored by Cornell, Penn State, the SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry at Syracuse and the USDA National Agroforestry Center.

- Broome County's Aurora Project, a business recycling initiative, could provide the organizational infrastructure for an urban waste wood recycling program, also taking advantage of sawmill wastes from many nearby mills to produce composite wood products. An OSB plant already using some of the sawmill waste products is located in Deposit.
- Broome County, as the I-81 gateway to the Finger Lakes, Leatherstocking, Catskill and North Country regions of New York captures some 6,000 daily visitors at the Kirkwood Welcome Center. This is an ideal place to both directly and indirectly farm products.

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3.0 Agricultural Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been established for Broome County's agriculture development and farmland protection program. These are based on the results of detailed surveys of agricultural producers summarized in Appendix 5.1 of this report as well as public meetings conducted by the Broome County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board. The goals are intended to be multi-year in nature and reflect the basic policies of the County for agricultural development and farmland protection, while the objectives spell out more specific criteria by which policy performance can be measured. Measures of success are also suggested. Major specific recommendations may be found in Section 4.0 of this Plan.

3.1 Goal: Create new economic incentives for the development of agricultural enterprises, particularly local suppliers of needed support services.

Objectives:

3.1.1 Specifically promote the Broome County IDA's tax abatement program as a complement to Section 483 of the New York State Real Property Tax Law (10 year property tax exemption on newly constructed or reconstructed agricultural structures), using it as a basis to solicit agri-businesses such as feed mills, farm machinery dealers, other farm suppliers, agricultural processing operations and farm marketing buildings.

Measure: Development and distribution of written materials explaining the existing tax-abatement program and use of the same to solicit increased use of the program by local and new agri-businesses.

3.1.2 Develop a program to purchase or lease development rights, financed through tax-abatements or by a realty transfer tax with respect to new development, on the most valuable farmland so as to allow those farmers to capture their equity, reduce their carrying costs and continue farming.

Measure: Number of farmers participating and acres of farmland preserved.

3.1.3 Provide more developed and zoned communities within the County with education regarding the potential for Transfer of Density Rights (TDR) programs as vehicles for creating private markets for these rights that allow farmers to sell them and raise capital to continue in farming.

Measure: Number of educational programs and materials developed and number of

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communities considering TDR programs.

- 3.1.4 Develop and promote the availability of financing programs that can provide capital for farm diversification and modernization as well as agri-business ventures, doing so in cooperation not only with farm agencies, but also the County Industrial Development Authority and other economic development entities.

Measure: Dollar volume of loan capacity available to creditworthy farmers. and number of institutions and programs available to help.

- 3.1.5 Establish and/or promote revolving loan programs specifically targeted at agriculture by working with Southern Tier East.

Measure: Establishment of program, dollars committed and number of participants.

- 3.1.6 Strongly encourage the streamlining of procedures for obtaining USDA Rural Development loans and grants for new agricultural ventures so as to reduce the time and paperwork involved in securing such assistance.

Measure: Reduction of time, paperwork and restrictions affecting new applications.

- 3.2 Goal: Add value to agricultural products by ensuring quality, encouraging maximum participation of the farm community in State and industry quality assurance programs and supporting the further processing of agricultural products at the farm or locally.**

Objectives:

- 3.2.1 Assist farmers in pursuing specific added value initiatives such as on-farm dairy processing or training in the use of marketing tools that add value (e.g. adding a ribbon to ornamental corn).

Measure: Number of farmers participating and volumes of added value products sold.

- 3.2.2 Increase Broome County farmer use of the Pride of New York label as a means of capturing more intrastate as well as tourist sales, combining this initiative with the development of a regional branding program for Broome, Tioga and, perhaps, other adjacent counties under the umbrella of the Susquehanna River or Twin Tiers region.

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Measure: Development of a regional branding program as a marketing foundation and an increase in the number of Pride of New York program participants to a minimum of 50.

- 3.2.3 Increase participation in other statewide and national quality certification programs, specifically including beef farm involvement in the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program and similar endeavors.

Measure: Number of farmers participating in quality assurance programs.

- 3.2.4 Assist farmers in organizing to deliver local farm products for regional institutional use, adding value by addressing quality and packaging standards that will facilitate use of these products by schools and others.

Measure: Number of farmers participating and volumes of products purchased by regional institutions.

- 3.2.5 Develop a livestock marketing map and brochure that promote local freezer trade and other livestock businesses in the context of the County's strong natural image using colorful photography and trading off the ability of local farmers to raise quality meat animals.

Measure: Development and distribution of brochure and the number of farmers participating and volumes of added value products sold.

3.3 Goal: Build a foundational farm, community and consumer relationship that supports the continued development of the local food system.

Objectives:

- 3.3.1 Support the continued development of Consumer Supported Agriculture (CSA) organizations that reach out into new markets, through the provision of technical assistance and training.

Measure: Number of CSA's operating within County and participation by both farmers and consumers.

- 3.3.2 Assist farmers with outreach to unfamiliar but developing ethnic markets by offering guidelines and training in the nuances of dealing with these groups.

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Measure: Number of farmers participating in training programs and hours of training provided.

- 3.3.3 Assist farmers in evaluating and fully understanding their customers wants and needs, and vice-versa, so as to build the permanent level of trust necessary to grow their markets on a firm foundation.

Measure: Surveys conducted, hours of training offered and volumes of products sold to developing markets.

- 3.4 Goal: Promote the development of new specialty crops, the establishment of new markets for all Broome County agricultural product, including non-dairy enterprises, and the general diversification of all agriculture within Broome County.**

Objectives:

- 3.4.1 Provide additional training and technical assistance to farms to develop the entrepreneurial skills for marketing agricultural products, including the establishment and support of additional CSA's, identification and/or development of new outlets (e.g. the Kirkwood I-81 visitors center), pricing strategies and new promotional themes that can be employed with regard to Broome County agricultural products.

Measure: Hours of specialist training and technical assistance provided and volumes of new products marketed.

- 3.4.2 Expand farm-based tourism by cross promoting with Bed & Breakfast operators, increasing farm-stand activity, creating additional and more vital farmers markets in downtown locations and adding to the variety of offerings with more attractions.

Measure: Number of farm-based tourism enterprises, number of Bed & Breakfast visitors and farm-stand sales.

- 3.4.3 Continually identify new alternative agricultural/agro-forestry product lines (including organic products), opportunities for new agricultural industries and areas where value can be added to existing products to encourage diversification, addressing the interests of the many farmers surveyed who stated that they wished to do so.

Measure: Number of educational programs conducted to disseminate this data and

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number of diversification ventures initiated.

- 3.4.4 Work with locally owned/operated food stores to market local produce and develop new products such as specialty cheeses produced on a local dairy farm using an on-farm processing facility.

Measure: Number of local or regional stores handling Broome County products and number of farmers producing for them.

- 3.4.5 Establish shared agricultural economic development or marketing staff to work with both farm and non-farm agencies in promoting new farm and agri-business ventures.

Measure: Creation of an Agricultural Economic Development Specialist position serving Broome County.

- 3.4.6 Encourage the State to reduce regulatory barriers to the development of on-farm processing and direct marketing operations in New York State (particularly with respect to milk), patterning these efforts after the very successful Farm Winery Act.

Measure: Streamlining of State regulations regarding milk processing.

- 3.4.7 Conduct continuing market research on evolving consumer tastes and provide this information to farmers in the form of technical assistance so as to better enable them to respond to markets and devise their own strategies for meeting consumer demand.

Measure: Number of studies completed and/or disseminated and hours of technical assistance provided.

3.5 Goal: Develop more strategic alliances among farmers and agri-businesses to expand markets, decrease costs and increase the profitability of farm operations.

Objectives:

- 3.5.1 Encourage the formation of additional marketing and purchasing groups, including cooperatives for financing new ventures, shipping point markets and similar entities; electricity and insurance being two group purchasing options with great potential for obtaining better rates given appropriate technical assistance with negotiations.

Measure: Number of Broome farmers participating in such cooperatives or groups.

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- 3.5.2 Form less formal bargaining groups to jointly purchase farm supplies, cooperatively advertise farm products, provide better outlets for cull-dairy cows and facilitate use of custom services.

Measure: Number of farmers participating in such bargaining groups.

- 3.5.3 Use Cornell Cooperative Extension to continually maintain lists of product sources for purposes of promoting intra-county purchases, similar to the State's "hayfinder" program but extending the concept to other forages and products.

Measure: Lists of products, number of farmers who participate and amount of products sold through lists (consider using the Internet to offer the lists).

- 3.5.5 Maintain similar lists with regard to custom services and labor pools (e.g. relief milkers).

Measure: Lists of services, number of farmers who participate and amount of services and labor acquired through lists.

- 3.5.6 Help develop new labor sources (e.g. migrant labor) and better utilize existing sources by providing technical assistance in accessing labor pools, developing lists of relief farm workers and training farmers in the use of immigrant labor.

Measure: Quantitative and qualitative growth in the farm labor pool.

3.6 Goal: Increase the profitability of all farm enterprises and ability of farmers to deal with vacillating prices in a changing marketplace.

Objectives:

- 3.6.1 Get Broome County into the USDA demonstration program and train farmers in the use of the Dairy Futures Program, forward pricing and similar mechanisms as means of stabilizing milk and other farm prices and securing greater farm control over costs of farm inputs.

Measure: Hours of training provided and number of farmers who participate.

- 3.6.2 Provide farmers with general information and research findings on innovative and alternative farming practices that can lower the costs of inputs and/or improve quality for a greater return (e.g. rotational grazing, direct commodity purchasing and

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other least cost feeds programs).

Measure: Hours of training provided and numbers of farmers using methods.

- 3.6.3 Annually conduct an intensive training programs for farmers on the availability of farm tax relief under both New York State and Federal law, including agricultural assessments, exemptions and refunds offered to farmers unaware of many of them as well as information on estate planning.

Measure: Hours of training provided, number of farmers who participate in training and proportion of farmers who take advantage of programs.

- 3.6.4 Integrate agriculture into a County economic development strategy geared toward the development of additional commerce and industry that will help to achieve a more balanced tax base and reduce the burden on farm land.

Measure: Specific inclusion of agriculture in strategy, development of an expanded commercial/industrial tax base in appropriate communities and lowered taxes for farmers in these communities .

- 3.6.5 Encourage extension of the Northeast Dairy Compact to New York State.

Measure: Passage of required legislation.

- 3.6.6 Encourage use of bargaining cooperatives as a device to negotiate over-order milk premiums and higher prices for other agricultural products on the basis of quality and volume.

Measure: Number of groups organized and over-order premiums secured.

- 3.6.7 Develop "train the trainer" programs for farm agricultural advisors (including bankers, accountants, lawyers and agency personnel), in relation to business and financial planning so that all such advisors are capable of offering farms good advice on issues of taxes and business management.

Measure: Hours of training provided and number of farm advisors who participate.

- 3.6.8 Conduct an annual agri-business forum for farmers, bankers, Farm Credit, agencies, and others engaging in serving the farm community to exchange information of

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programs, industry trends and opportunities.

Measure: Establishment of annual forum and number of participants.

- 3.6.9 Encourage more on-farm specialization within farm industries (e.g. raising high-bred cattle for export) as well as diversification among farm industries (e.g. combining dairy and beef operations).

Measure: Number of farmers adding profitable new lines of business.

- 3.6.10 Encourage greater use of recreational leasing as a means of supplementing farm incomes.

Measure: Number of farmers engaged in recreational leasing.

- 3.6.11 Professionalize real property assessment operations through consolidation and training so as to apply agricultural assessment and tax benefits more properly.

Measure: Hours of training provided, number of assessors who participate.

- 3.6.12 Train farmers in labor management to reduce employee turnover and related costs.

Measure: Hours of training provided and number of farmers who participate.

- 3.6.13 Directly train more farmers in the use of business planning methods and develop a comprehensive list of financing resources both within and outside the agricultural mainstream to help increase farmer awareness of financing opportunities.

Measure: Hours of training provided, numbers of farmers who participate and the development of a financing sources brochure.

- 3.6.14 Establish a farm manager development program along the line of those employed in other states to create a core of professional farm managers with the requisite skills in those aspects of farming designed to enhance profitability.

Measure: Development of a Farm Manager Development curriculum and enrollment levels in such program.

- 3.6.15 Promote energy conservation measures on the farm to reduce demand and lower costs.

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Measure Hours of training provided.

3.7 Goal: Achieve higher levels of management of farm woodlands for additional profit as secondary crops.

Objectives:

- 3.7.1 Encourage, through landowner education, greater use of best management practices for farm woodlands as a means of increasing value and returns.

Measure: Hours of training provided and number of farm wood lot owners who participate.

- 3.7.2 Create additional markets for wood products in the County by providing economic incentives for the development of new primary and secondary wood processing ventures (including on-farm enterprises).

Measure: Incentives provided and volume of products processed.

- 3.7.3 Make additional forestry-related technical assistance available to landowners.

Measure: Man-hours of technical assistance provided to Broome County forest owners and number of farm wood lot owners who participate.

- 3.7.4 Promote the timber industry and professional management of forest resources, including providing help to municipalities interested in ensuring use of best management practices but avoiding over-regulation of the industry.

Measure: Number of promotional materials and/or advertisements developed and sales of forest products.

- 3.7.5 Develop a technical assistance and training program on effective deer control with respect to both agriculture and forestry.

Measure: Numbers of hours of training provided and number of participants.

- 3.7.6 Promote agro-forestry enterprises and crops such as ginseng, goldenseal, and mushrooms that can take advantage of the County's extensive forest resources.

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Measure: Workshops conducted and agro-forestry enterprises established..

3.8 Goal: Protect and promote the abilities and rights of farmers to engage in all sound agricultural management practices.

Objectives:

- 3.8.1 Increase the participation of farmers and agri-business owners in local government and, specifically, on town planning boards by getting all towns with significant agricultural activity to appoint agricultural members under the authority of § 271.11 of the Town Law. Also, conduct regular training programs for local officials on agricultural planning issues and develop an agricultural planning guide to assist in this regard.

Measure: Number of Planning Boards with designated agricultural members, hours of training provided and production and use of Agricultural Planning Guide.

- 3.8.2 Increase the level and frequency of farm community communications with the non-farm community by conducting more shared events, use of additional publications and employment of public service announcements and advertising.

Measure: Number of communications to non-farm community and number of non-farm participants in events.

- 3.8.3 Encourage more positive interaction among farmers and their non-farm neighbors by using newsletters to provide examples of successful efforts (e.g. neighborhood pig roasts, free sweet corn, pre-notification when emptying manure pits, etc.) and offering guidelines regarding how to avoid conflicts.

Measure: Number of articles distributed.

- 3.8.4 Specifically address the lack of public knowledge regarding animal agriculture by promoting farm tours, utilizing videos such as "Feeding the Green Machine" and conducting educational sessions.

Measure: Numbers of showings and tours conducted and number of participants.

- 3.8.5 Streamline town land use and zoning measures to simultaneously accommodate both agricultural activities and development, incorporating the latest elements of State law affording protection for farmers and agri-businesses.

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Measure: Number of towns with specific provisions in their land use regulations to not only allow but also protect agricultural enterprises.

- 3.8.6 Encourage development of sewer and water infrastructure within town centers rather than agricultural areas so as to ensure development within and adjacent to agricultural zoning districts is fully compatible with farm activities.

Measure: Number of towns with strong incentives for hamlet and village development and disincentives for strip development.

- 3.8.7 Adopt a Right to Farm Law for Broome County and encourage major agricultural towns to adopt similar or complementary measures at the local level.

Measure: Adoption of Broome County Right to Farm Law and level of participation by towns.

- 3.8.8 Encourage Federal and State agencies to provide small farmers more time to react to changing pesticide rules and develop alternative remedies through research and application.

Measure: Favorable changes in time limits and numbers of alternative remedies developed.

- 3.8.9 Develop technical support services to assist all farmers with environmental compliance measures and maintain a vigilant approach to the monitoring of new and enforcement of existing regulations, pressing for consideration of the potential negative impacts on agriculture and the appropriate modifications thereof to avoid such problems.

Measure: Numbers of farmers assisted and successes in modifying regulations to address impacts on farm operations.

- 3.8.10 Promote the use of Agricultural Data Statements and local law authority by towns to put land buyers and home builders on notice that they are locating within an agricultural area where sound management practices can produce odors, slow moving traffic and other consequences.

Measure: Numbers of towns employing procedures comparable to those used by the Town of Fenton to issue such notices.

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3.9 Goal: Develop agriculture as a valued career path within Broome County.

Objectives:

- 3.9.1 Develop more broad-based public education efforts, promotional materials and other programs designed to specifically increase public awareness of the value of agriculture as an industry to Broome County and as a career opportunity for Broome County youth and those pursuing second careers.

Measure: Numbers of programs conducted, materials developed and non-farm participants.

- 3.9.2 Work with schools and their guidance counselors as well as work force development program leaders to add agriculturist training tracks wherever possible and promote the "Ag in the Classroom" curriculum. Develop programs to expand and train the supply of agricultural workers.

Measure: Number of agricultural-related training programs available, number of participants and number of trained workers available.

- 3.9.3 Encourage more participation in 4-H programs by broadening outreach into both rural and urban areas of the County, increasing the range of offerings to emphasize the high-tech nature of modern agriculture, promoting different forms of membership and extending the opportunities to join.

Measure: Numbers of participants.

- 3.9.4 Arrange for more on-farm demonstrations to emphasize the high-tech nature of modern agriculture, promoting these to both the farm and non-farm communities as a means of demonstrating the science involved in agriculture, thereby also creating farm tourism opportunities for visitors to the area who are seeking to fill out their day with events.

Measure: Numbers of demonstrations and participants

3.10 Goal: Maintain Agricultural Districts throughout the prime farming areas of the County as a means of both protecting farms and highlighting the value of agriculture to the County.

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Objectives:

3.10.1 Identify Broome County's most valuable farmland for purposes of providing regulatory protection, defining agricultural districts, purchasing or leasing development rights and offering other incentives to stay in farming.

Measure: Maps produced (Ag District and otherwise) for local government use.

3.10.2 Encourage towns with zoning to enhance agricultural districts by developing agricultural zoning districts to provide for compatible forms of development within these districts.

Measure: Number of communities employing these measures in their zoning laws (if they have such laws).

3.10.3 Encourage farm landowner participation in the Agricultural Districts program by identifying candidate properties and specifically soliciting those persons through regular paid advertisements, FSA and Cornell Cooperative Extension newsletters and other techniques that allow the benefits of districts to be touted.

Measure: Number of landowners asking to be included in Agricultural Districts.

3.10.4 Encourage all towns with significant areas of Agricultural District within their borders to participate in an annual agricultural economic development and land use forum where the evolving aspects of agriculture can be discussed and participants can learn about the latest issues and the importance of protecting farmland and the application of farm practices.

Measure: Number of towns participating.

3.11 Goal: Assist Broome County's larger farmers in compliance with Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) regulations and other demands of water quality management connected with farming.

Objectives:

3.11.1 Work with the Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District to provide farmers with technical assistance in responding to CAFO and other environmental regulations at all levels now and in the future, potentially turning these practices into profit through participation in water quality certification programs such as the

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"Chesapeake Milk" model tested in the Pennsylvania portion of that watershed.

Measure: Hours of training provided, number of farmers who participate in training and/or water-quality certification programs.

- 3.11.2 Provide farmers with greater financial assistance in responding to CAFO regulations by encouraging New York State to participate in the Chesapeake Bay Program and both the State and the Federal government to make EQIP and related funding available on a more equitable basis across watersheds throughout the County.

Measure: Dollars available in all watersheds to make CAFO improvements.

- 3.11.3 Work with small and large farmers alike to encourage greater use of economical and environmentally friendly practices such as agricultural environmental management, rotational grazing as well as complementary management practices, including pasture fertilization programs, planting of turnip crops and similar strategies aimed at reducing costs and increasing yields.

Measure: Funding applications made and resulting increase in dollars available for promotion of rotational grazing and related or similar practices.

3.12 Goal: Facilitate intergenerational farm transfers among and between families.

Objectives:

- 3.12.1 Promote intergenerational farm transfers by: promoting use of the Farm Link program, conducting intensive educational sessions, providing top-level legal and financial technical assistance in estate/business planning and identifying and/or establishing sources of start-up capital for young farmers; simultaneously providing for the retirement needs of older farmers.

Measure: Hours of training and technical assistance provided, number of participants and number of successful farm transfers.

- 3.12.2 Encourage Federal and State governments to eliminate all capital gains and estate taxes, particularly in regard to farm transfers, as these taxes disproportionately impact upon farm operations, most of which are family owned, even if very large in size.

Measure: Elimination of capital gains and estate taxes on both the State and Federal

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level.

- 3.12.3 Develop a leased development rights program in return for abatement of local real property taxes as a means of decreasing the cash flow required during the early years while a farm is being purchased and lowering taxes as a cost of doing business for farmers.

Measure: Development of an LDR program and number of farmers participating.

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4.0 Action Program - Major Agricultural Initiatives

Agriculture, like any industry, has to change with the times if it is to keep growing. New markets, new products, new ways of doing business and new partnerships are ever needed. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board can assist the industry in meeting these challenges. Substantial payoffs in tourism, quality of life and the long-term growth of the Broome County agricultural economy will result if it does so. The success of the nearby Finger Lakes wine industry provides a superb illustration of the possibilities. The preceding Goals and Objectives set forth a comprehensive program in this regard. The following represent six major initiatives that should serve as an action program for the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board and cooperating agencies over the next 5+ years.

4.1 Added Value Enterprise Initiative

As a center of commerce surrounded by rural farm areas and major highway crossroads, Broome County is an ideal location for added-value agricultural processing operations. Additional efforts should be made to target these industries for solicitation and development, through creation of improved sites, promotion of tax abatement programs and use of other incentives.

Short-term incentives should be used to initially attract such enterprises to Broome County. These must be competitive with other regions and help to off-set some of the capital costs relating to investment by these new businesses in Broome County. The most important incentives, however, are inherent. They relate to location, availability of labor, access to raw products and markets and relatively inexpensive land. Documenting and promoting these marketable competitive advantages is essential. While this is largely the task of Broome County's economic development agencies, the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board must be an active partner to ensure that added-value agricultural processing get the attention they deserve.

Such enterprises are already to be found in the County, indicating that attracting new similar businesses is feasible. It, too, suggests the potential for strengthening and growing existing industries. They include the Crowley dairy processing operation, the Frito-Lay plant, two food distributors and some wood processing facilities. Pennfield Feeds had proposed to locate in the Conklin Industrial Park but faced zoning obstacles related to building height. A meat fabricator also proposed to locate in the park but ultimately decided not to come to Broome County because it wanted to concentrate more on Mid-Atlantic than Northeast markets.

The County IDA offers a 15 year tax-abatement program that phases in real property taxes

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for industrial projects at 25% of normal for the first 5 years, 50% for the next 5 years and 75% for another 5 years, transitioning to taxation at 100% of value in the 16th year. State law requires that IDAs apply uniform policies but separate abatement schedules can be adopted for different classes of industries. Broome County, indeed, offers a reduced program of benefits (50% abatement for the first 5 years and 25% for another 5 years) for commercial projects such as wholesale and office projects.

The following are the specifically recommended elements of this initiative:

- **A continuing education program to help farmers identify and capitalize on opportunities in various new products that can be produced on-farm (e.g yogurts) should be launched by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County.** This should include a combination of seminars, field trips and consultations designed to equip farmers with the knowledge to know what types of on-farm processing may be economically feasible as well as the skills to be successful should they pursue these opportunities.

- **The County Industrial Development Agency should, in consultation with local taxing authorities, develop a special tax-abatement program to promote investment in new or expanded agricultural enterprises.** This is necessary because many businesses, particularly those next door to Pennsylvania, are tempted to relocate out of New York State due to high taxes. Additionally, many farm-related enterprises engaging in retail services are excluded from agricultural tax benefits in New York State and are also outside the mainstream of manufacturing activity. While Broome County's existing program is generous, one of similar nature targeted to agriculture, will allow the County to more effectively market to agricultural industries by showing that it values the industry enough to create a special program for it. Individually negotiated abatements cannot substitute because they cannot be promoted. The IDA might well consider a targeted tax abatement program with an abatement schedule similar to the following:

Possible Agricultural Industry Tax Abatement Program

<u>Years</u>	<u>% Taxes Abated</u>	<u>% Taxed under PILOT*</u>
1-5	100%	0%
6-10	50%	50%
11-15	25%	75%

* PILOT = Payments In Lieu of Taxes

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This schedule is very similar to the existing one but designed to provide maximum benefits during the period of time when an agri-business is paying off equipment and start-up loans and, therefore, will be of direct aid in capitalizing these businesses. Other counties have used comparable incentives. Sullivan County, for example, has a similar program already used by feed and farm machinery dealers to expand their operations, increasing their commitment to that County as a place of business. An aggressive program is required to get attention and market the County as a location with a valuable competitive advantage. This program should, wherever possible, also be combined with Empire Zone benefits to leverage the economic incentives.

- **The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should work with Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board to encourage use of its EDA Title IX Revolving Loan, Rural Micro Loan and Regional Revolving Loan Trust Funds by County agribusiness.** These funds can be used for agricultural and forestry processing projects as well as other agribusiness ventures. A "Funding for Farm and Agri-business Projects," brochure should also be developed by STERPDB. It should be distributed by the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County to promote various funding sources available to assist agri-businesses and farms. It would differ from existing handouts in that it would be more focused on agriculture and also identify additional programs not available to non-farm entities. It should, for instance, include programs such as those offered by Empire State Development Agency, the Department of Agriculture and Markets and USDA Rural Development. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should also meet with local financial institutions to explore ways to enhance this fund with leveraged below-market rate or market rate financing that would help to meet their Community Reinvestment Act obligations.
- **The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should also work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Broome County Planning and Economic Development Department, USDA Rural Development and the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board to pursue grant funds for agricultural economic development.** The agricultural sector of the economy needs to be brought into the mainstream of development efforts. Securing grant assistance from non-agricultural as well as conventional funding sources for agricultural economic development initiatives should be part of that.
- **As the County develops additional industrial sites it should designate a portion of these for potential agricultural use with special attention to removing any local zoning or restrictive covenant barriers such as those Town regulations that**

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blocked the Pennfield Feed plant from locating in the Conklin Industrial Park. Ontario County provides a model in this regard. It offers agribusiness sites within a designated agricultural industrial park designed to attract food processors and similar industries that use regional farm products. A significant obstacle to the development of additional sites will be the limited sewer and water infrastructure capacity within those areas where large processors would have to locate today. A meat processing facility that was considering the County as a location, for example, would have consumed all the remaining capacity available to the site it was considering. This forces the County to be very selective in choosing tenants, focusing on job creation criteria that may not favor agricultural enterprises despite their high income multipliers. Therefore, it is essential to both extend the sewer and water infrastructure to additional sites and expand the capacity of existing systems to be in a position to accept agricultural processors interested in Broome County. County studies are now underway for this purpose.

Implementation Period: 2002

Responsible Parties:

- 1) Broome County IDA
- 2) Southern Tier East Reg. Planning Dev. Board
- 3) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County
- 4) Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
- 5) Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District

4.2 Direct Marketing Initiative

It is recommended that Broome County initiate a coordinated advocacy effort to market more farm products and develop the skills needed within the farm community to do so on a continuing basis. The first step in this program should be to create an Agricultural Marketing Specialist position. This person should lead a coordinated effort by the Broome County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County, the Industrial Development Agency (IDA), Southern Central East and the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development to implement the recommendations of this Plan. He or she should help to identify new markets for agricultural products and services and be assigned to provide technical assistance on a circuit-riding basis to farmers and agri-businesses in selling to those markets.

The person hired could be employed by any one of the above organizations but should be assigned specific responsibilities to both the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development and the County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board as a resource person. The shared responsibilities are essential to highlighting the value of

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agriculture and forestry to the local economy and further integrating agriculture into the County's economic development program. Funding for this position could come from a variety of sources including the County but, initially, this endeavor should be approached as a demonstration project. It should be possible to secure grant funds from State and/or Federal sources to help launch the project. The position should, however, be designed to be at least partially supported by producers and agri-businesses over the long-term on a fee-for service or cooperative basis.

The tasks of this Agricultural Marketing Specialist should include, but not be limited to the following projects:

- **Development of new markets, both within and outside the County, for Broome County's farm products.** This should include direct/technical assistance to farmers, agri-businesses and farm organizations (including cooperatives) in selling, promoting and structuring the distribution of these products as well as the development of new lines.

One example might include establishing a permanent farmers market in downtown Binghamton. A market within the Kirkwood I-81 Visitors Center would offer excellent opportunities to market products and there are several successful examples of such markets to draw upon for experience. This Visitors Center should, at a minimum, be used as a location to promote Broome farm products with brochures/maps and displays.

A concerted effort should also be put into the creation and support of additional Consumer Supported Agriculture (CSA) groups serving both the Binghamton and New York City metropolitan areas.

Still another possibility that should be explored is the creation, on either a public or private sector basis, of a livestock shipping point market where cattle and other animals can be pooled for shipment to New York City area meat processors serving certain ethnic and niche markets.

- **Training farmers and agri-businesses in marketing practices, including direct marketing, Internet sales and exporting.** There are significant opportunities in each of these areas. The presence of an urban market within the County suggests the potential for direct marketing is large. Moreover, the resident population includes many upscale buyers with IBM managerial positions. Some farmers are already using the Internet to sell product from websites and much more can be done in this area by helping to develop those websites on a cost-effective basis.

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Special opportunities abound because New York State can supply more demand for a niche product than found for ordinary products in most states. The skills required to tap these markets need developing, however, because much of agriculture has been commodity driven where farmers have essentially been "price-takers." They must be converted to "price-makers," though better marketing.

- **Identifying opportunities for adding value to existing farm products before they are sold.** Forestry products for instance, offer possibilities to craft patio furniture, storage sheds and wooden novelties in the manner of so many Lancaster, Pennsylvania enterprises. On-farm dairy processing of cheeses, yogurts and ice cream also offers opportunities. The Triple Cities market is immediately accessible to such producers if someone can help them exploit it. Additional work is involved but, when combined with quality assurance and relatively low-key marketing, farmers can deliver added value to customers for higher income and better cash flow. The key is to establish relationships with end-users, vertically integrating the industry wherever possible.
- **Disseminating information on market opportunities.** A key element in development of new markets is the communication of information on demand, supply and prices. No market is forever and farmers need to continually adapt and respond to developing opportunities. These include, for example, growing demands for dairy/beef crosses at nearby Taylor Packing, as well as meat goats for the ethnic market buyers at livestock auctions. Publication of market data from livestock auctions is also important. There is, too, a demand for technical information and Extension support for growing niche businesses.
- **Promoting sales of existing Broome County farm products.** A Broome County Farm Markets Brochure and Map (or section on the existing Chamber of Commerce map) should be created to promote local farm products. Additionally, too few of the County's producers are making use of the Pride of New York label. Despite heavy demand for "Made in New York" products - there are only four Broome County participants. The Agricultural Marketing Specialist should be helping to develop the enterprises appropriate for these programs and soliciting participation in them.

Implementation Period: 1) Start-up 2002
2) Demonstration period 2003-2006

Responsible Parties: 1) Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
2) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County
3) Broome County Dep. of Planning & Economic Dev.

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4.3 Agricultural Tourism Initiative

A more extensive Broome County agricultural and natural resources tourism industry needs to be developed with linkages to downtown Binghamton (e.g. to the "Gorgeous Washington" project) and other attractions such as the Botanic Gardens at the offices of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County. Also, Route 79 is a particularly picturesque highway, with a great deal of agriculture along the way, that could be developed into a trail of agricultural tourism activities. There is a group working on designating it (and connected routes) as a New York State Scenic Byway and this could present a tremendous opportunity to promote agricultural tourism. The following are some essential elements of the recommended initiative:

- **Professional marketing is needed to package attractions with local bed & breakfast offerings, farm tours, visits to farm markets and downtown attractions to create variety and interest.** The potential for making tourist attractions out of farm enterprises is considerable. However, many of the County's farmers are not aware of the tourism assets they possess and more effort needs to be put into assisting farmers in developing this potential. One of the most important assets in this regard is the fact most of the farms are family operations. Family history is a great marketing device of much interest to visitors who like to take home plants, fruits, crafts and vegetables they can tell others they purchased at a little family-owned farm in Upstate New York. Visitors want to not only buy the farm product but also to see how it's made and know who's making it.
- **The County also needs to concentrate on creating a better family tourism image for the area with the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board taking the lead with respect to farm-related activities.** These might include corn mazes, equine activities, pond or fee-fishing and farm visits, for example. Other farm-related tourism could include tours of a modern high-tech farm. The County tourism brochure should include farm market information and opportunities for farm tours so that visitors can better understand present-day agriculture. There is great interest in how working dairy farms, for example, operate today.
- **Many farms with tourism potential don't promote because they see no profit in it and, therefore, the Agricultural Marketing Specialist (and others) should work with these farmers to create things to sell.** These might include an admittance, merchandise or schooling, but if a price is not charged then the tourism is just apt to be a bother as an opportunity for the farmer. Many farmers are simply unaware of the level of interest in their activities or the fact that tourists will pay for it. They will,

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however, and there are good examples in nearby counties including "Herb Camps" and "Draft Horse Schools." Similar opportunities exist with recreational leases for hunting and fishing, petting zoos and other activities. These all present profit potential that should be explored with interested farmers. Also, rural landowners are often unsure how to manage liability issues and need additional education and technical assistance in this regard.

- **Packaging should also involve linking the attractions under a common theme such as "Broome County - The Crossroads Where Farm and City Meet."** This is a major challenge for Broome County because it is a crossroads rather than a widely recognized region like the Finger Lakes, Catskills or Mohawk Valley. A Scenic Byway along Route 79 could help but it will always be difficult to create an image of Broome County that does not center on the Triple Cities. They do enjoy some name recognition and the best approach is to embrace them and build on this asset with linkages between the farm and city aspects of the County. A permanent farm market downtown to complement the Gorgeous Washington project with cross-promotion of the participating farm locations ("come and visit us at the farm, too") makes a great deal of sense and illustrates the importance of a comprehensive economic development strategy for the County that looks to both urban and rural needs and ways to jointly meet them. Vestal, because of its wealthier demographic profile, is another excellent location for creating a permanent indoor farm market. The Johnson City market has appeal as an ethnic marketplace only possible in an urban environment. It illustrates the advantages Broome County offers for certain types of agricultural enterprises.
- **The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should provide the initial leadership in developing an ag tourism program by assembling a task force of representatives from the farm community, South Central New York RC&D, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chambers of Commerce and local lodging places to identify the best opportunities and the measures needed to stimulate interest by providers.** From this a conceptual plan for ag tourism promotion purposes can be developed. Providers can then be solicited and an advertising campaign launched. It need not be expensive. Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for example, does a very effective job with a plain paper booklet advertising several dozen sites and combines this with a website where such attractions are packaged with bed and breakfast accommodations. This is the type of program Broome County needs.

Summarizing, the keys to a successful agricultural tourism program are two-fold: 1) having enough activities to attract interest and package with other activities, and 2) establishing a price that connects with each activity to generate income.

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Implementation Period: 2003

Responsible Parties:

- 1) Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
- 2) Broome County Conference & Visitor Bureau
- 3) Broome County Dep. of Planning & Economic Dev.
- 4) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County
- 5) Broome County Chamber of Commerce
- 6) South Central New York RC&D

4.4 Forest Management Initiative

Broome County's forest industry offers significant additional profit potential for farms and is extremely important to the County as a whole. Needs that the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board can help address include the following:

- **Secondary processors of wood products, particularly the smaller enterprises, need to be encouraged with the same financial incentives offered agribusinesses.** These include woodcraft industries, cabinet-makers, manufacturers of storage buildings and outdoor patio furniture and similar enterprises. Another critical need at the present time is assistance in developing new markets for low-grade timber (e.g. firewood or pallet manufacturers). Financing and tax incentives for both small and large manufacturers are needed, from woodcraft shops to sawmills.
- **Forestry presents significant possibilities for generating additional tourism to the area.** Recreational leasing of forest property for hunting and fishing is the most obvious economic opportunity but there are also possibilities in hiking trails, bird-watching and eco-tourism. Links to eating places, bed & breakfasts and other activities where landowners can earn an economic return are needed. Additionally, education regarding liabilities and insurance is needed to gain the interest of farmers in recreational leasing. Group purchases of insurance should be possible. Marketing will, too, be essential and this is an area for the proposed Agricultural Marketing Specialist.
- **Forestry processors are typically large users of electricity and need help in negotiating special utility rates.** This need is shared with the agriculture sector and can be addressed by organizing farmers and forestry enterprise owners as purchasing cooperatives or consortiums. Consultants who specialize in such negotiations should be made available to these groups to assist.
- **The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should work with the South**

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Central New York RC&D District to create a regional Wood Products Directory. Data on primary and secondary wood product manufacturers in the area should be gathered, transferred to a brochure or website with follow-up work to establish communications among buyers and sellers. Other types of promotion are also needed. Small wood processors engaged in producing crafts and furniture, for example, could be jointly marketed using a simple brochure giving products, prices and directions. This is done very effectively in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, for instance, where many similar enterprises flourish.

- **A comprehensive marketing study is needed on a regional basis to attract users of low-grade forest products by validating the flow of supply within the region.** This involves quantifying the regional supply of wood chips, other mill residues and low-grade standing trees available. It also demands research to identify different products that can be manufactured from these resources including minimum wood requirements, break-even sizes of potential commercial operations, utility requirements, market evaluations, studies of the competition, probable pricing, financing required and analysis of siting options. An independent forestry marketing consultant should be used to do the study but either South Central New York RC&D or Southern Tier East could manage it. Trade Adjustment Assistance Program funding may be available if a loss of business to imports can be documented (as is the case with nearby P&G).
- **Woodlot management skills need developing.** Many farmers and most new landowners in the County lack understanding of sound forestry management practices. Accordingly, continuing education efforts (Forest Owner Workshops) in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and New York State Forest Owners Association are necessary. Both general education and advocacy type technical assistance for landowners and mill owners in finding and developing markets for products is required. There is a particular need for forestry awareness education for consumers to illustrate that sustainable forest management involves harvesting.

Implementation Period: 2003 (Continuing)

Responsible Parties:

- 1) Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
- 2) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County
- 3) South Central New York RC & D Council
- 4) Broome County IDA
- 5) New York State Dep. of Environmental Conservation
- 6) New York State Forest Owners Association

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4.5 Agricultural Planning Initiative

Although Broome County is facing little development pressure in the classic sense, it is already both urban and rural. This has created numerous conflicts between agricultural enterprises and residences, particularly in those communities on the immediate periphery of the Triple Cities. They are, despite declines in population, experiencing both commercial and residential growth as households and commercial enterprises move outward and household sizes shrink.

New "Smart Growth" land use regulations are appropriate in some of these circumstances. Such regulations typically encompass mechanisms such as "conservation subdivisions" that concentrate growth in selected areas in return for preservation of open space, including valuable farmland. The selected growth areas are typically those near existing centers where infrastructure exists to accommodate new development. The Department of Planning and Economic Development promotes "Smart Growth" and the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should do the same.

However, there is more to the issue. Local officials in urbanizing communities often lack knowledge and experience with agricultural issues. New niche agricultural enterprises also don't fit the model many officials have in mind when they plan for agriculture. Regulations intended to control "hog factories" can also prevent small greenhouses that should be able to locate almost anywhere. Setbacks written to deal with manure issues can render small properties completely unusable for enterprises that generate little or no manure. Limitations on selling retail products not produced on the farm can make it unfeasible to sell those that are.

As a general matter, farming can be either greatly helped or greatly hurt by land use regulations, depending on how well agricultural interests are incorporated in the land use planning which undergirds those regulations. Education to ensure the former, and not the latter, takes place and to reinforce the value of land use regulation as a tool for agricultural protection is demanded. Recommendations in this regard are outlined below:

- **Where zoning laws exist within the County, the zoning laws should include agricultural zoning districts generally matching the New York State Certified Agricultural Districts within those borders.** The Agricultural Farmland Protection Board should, with the Planning Department, develop a model set of district regulations for this purpose. The regulations should permit a wide range of uses in such districts but only at densities compatible with farm activities so that adequate buffers can be provided and reduce potential nuisances suits. Permitted uses should also be limited to

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compatible activities like campgrounds, farm resorts, light manufacturing and other activities where the potential for conflict with agriculture is minimized. Residential development of any intensive nature should be discouraged.

The districts should discourage activities that will require the extension of sewer and water lines into active farm areas but encourage "conservation" or "farm-friendly" subdivisions that allow the area to develop in a reasonable and compatible manner and permit farmers to secure extra income from sale of equity in land not essential to their farm operations. Such subdivision regulations typically require clustering of housing and development along the edges of properties or wooded areas to avoid using up valuable farm fields. Some sample language along this line might be as follows:

"Proposals for subdivision of parcels including active farm or crop land within New York State Agricultural Districts shall include delineation of proposed building sites on each lot, which sites shall be located outside of or along the edges of the active farm and crop lands. Subdivisions of five (5) lots or more shall ordinarily be required to employ conservation subdivision or clustering techniques which provide for preservation of active farm and crop land without reducing overall density of development."

Some caution must be exercised, however, in planning developments of this nature to avoid creating conflicts between homeowners and farmers engaged in normal agricultural practices such as manure spreading, weed spraying and cattle pasturing. Density of development and buffering are both factors that should be considered in this regard.

- **Local zoning laws should also provide for new small and niche type agricultural enterprises outside conventional agricultural zoning districts and New York State Certified Agricultural Districts.** Many new agricultural enterprises, small greenhouse and crops in particular, can take place on tracts of 2-5 acres with little or no impact on neighbors. The community impacts, in fact, can be quite positive in terms of reinforcing rural character and offering convenient shopping opportunities. These need to be provided for in non-agricultural zoning districts as well as traditional farm areas.
- **Local officials and, particularly, planning board members, require continuous education on planning issues in general and agricultural law.** Many planning board members often come from non-farm backgrounds and are unaware of farm issues and the law as it pertains to agriculture. They also need instruction on "Smart Growth" and "Growing Greener" planning options that concentrate growth near existing centers and infrastructure. An Agricultural Planning Guide to assist planning officials with these and related issues is attached as an Appendix hereto. Planning schools, seminars

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and resource materials for local officials should also be prepared and/or conducted to help them understand how the Agricultural Districts Law works and the considerations they should give to development adjacent to farms.

- **A concerted effort is needed to get members of the agricultural community involved in local government and planning.** As an example, Section 271.11 of the New York State Town Law specifically provides towns with the authority to appoint to Planning Boards one or more agricultural members who earn at least \$10,000 per year in gross income from agricultural pursuits. Such members can be in addition to the other members the Law specifies each Board must have. All major agricultural towns should take advantage of this provision to designate additional farm members. Such members are more effective in the long-term than simple appointments of farmers to regular planning board positions because there is no guarantee with the latter that farmers will stay on the boards in the case of reappointments over the years. Getting towns to make such appointments will demand not only some initial persuasion but also continued follow-up and technical assistance.
- **Right to farm laws should be encouraged in all of Broome County's major agricultural towns.** A suggested model is included as an Appendix to this Plan and representatives of the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should meet with local officials of these towns on an individual basis over the next two years to explain the benefits of agriculture and propose the adoption of this model or a close facsimile. It is town government that typically receives agricultural complaints and takes responsibility for mediating these conflicts. Towns also control building and development and, therefore, are the logical entities to administer Right to Farm laws.

Right to Farm laws, it should be noted, are intended to complement the New York State Agricultural District Law and provide a means for resolving farm-neighbor conflicts. They do so by protecting the rights of farmers using sound agricultural practices to continue those practices and to grow and expand within the community. They establish a policy which recognizes agriculture as a priority land use and puts the burden of proof that a farm practice constitutes a nuisance squarely upon those who would oppose such practices.

The model law establishes specific criteria which broadly define the nature of a sound agricultural practice and make it extraordinarily difficult for such practices to be declared nuisances. The real strength of such laws, however, is that they create a mechanism to discuss problems, educate the parties and resolve conflicts on a local level. They also serve to establish a statement of town policy which, it is hoped, will carry over to other aspects of local government.

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Implementation Period: 2002-2007 (Continuing)

Responsible Parties:

- 1) Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
- 2) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County
- 3) Broome County Dep. of Planning & Economic Dev.
- 4) Broome County Farm Bureau

4.6 Agricultural Awareness Initiative

A major concern of virtually every farmer in Broome County is maintaining a good relationship with farm neighbors. Farmers are worried about complaints regarding odors, noise, slow-moving traffic and the use of pesticides. Some have opted to buy as much land as possible to buffer their activities, others have informal arrangements to notify neighbors when they plan to spread manure and still others invite their neighbors to barbecue events or provide free vegetables as good will offerings.

- **More important than anything is consumer education.** Broome County's largely urban population obviously includes large numbers of residents who have not visited a farm in recent years (or ever). Many have a nostalgic view of farming that is totally at odds with the reality of agriculture as a heavily diversified and often high-tech business. These individuals need exposure to the agriculture industry, the practices it involves, the science it requires and the practical difficulties of farming, if they are to be expected to sympathize with the attributes of the farm next door. This requires regular events such as Sullivan County's "Down on the Farm Week" and Tioga County, Pennsylvania's "Farm-City Day." Tours, farm maps, school presentations and other techniques need to be continually offered to schools, visitors and adult groups.
- **An annual publication similar to Saratoga County's "Saratoga Farms" resource guide to farms in the County should be developed to map Broome farms and promote agriculture in general.** This might simply be a Farm-City Day newspaper insert or it could be done in the manner of a "Business Journal" publication. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board could also develop such a publication on an annual basis as the vehicle for agricultural promotion. It should include not only the map but also economic data on agri-business and farming, excerpts from this plan, descriptions of all significant farms in the County by category, advertising and promotional material. The goal should be to use the piece for education of both the farm and non-farm community and to instill pride among members of the industry. Numerous parties who attended hearings on this Plan commented that they never knew before just how much agriculture contributed to the County.

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- **Another very effective tool for good neighbor relations is New York State's Agricultural District program.** Location in an Agricultural District provides farmers with the protection of the State's right-to-farm legislation. Municipalities cannot impose standards that unreasonably restrict farm activities. The same provisions also offer Department of Agriculture and Markets assistance in fighting nuisance suits directed at what are ordinary and sound agricultural practices. Most importantly, sales of property within Agricultural Districts or near farms located in such Districts are subject to a notice requirement. Purchasers receive an Agricultural Data Statement telling them they are in an agricultural district where farm practices creating odors and other impacts are routinely conducted. It also establishes a legal foundation for farming and helps to eliminate causes of action by neighbors against farmers. This feature of the legislation discourages litigation and encourages resolution of disputes by other means that respect the interests of both parties.

- **Broome County's Agricultural District program, is, therefore, extremely important and participation by every farmer is essential.** Public education regarding the value of the Districts must be a continuing process. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should increase their efforts to solicit farmers to join existing Agricultural Districts as they come up for renewal. All landowners within a district undergoing review should receive a direct mailing that includes the renewal form and a fact sheet concerning Agricultural Districts. The Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board should also develop and distribute Fact Sheets regarding the program.

- **The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should work with local educational institutions to place more emphasis on agricultural career development.** This includes introducing agricultural education at some level in all schools. Agricultural vocational training in BOCES and local high schools is also important. The "Feed the Green Machine" video is a place to start. From this base, a program of seminars and courses should be developed, particularly in the areas of agricultural diversification and specialization with emphasis on the high-tech nature of agriculture today and the many applications of science that it involves. The "Agri-Core" curriculum programs used in Cortland, Ontario and Cayuga Counties are also excellent models.

Implementation Period: 2002-2007 (Continuing)

Responsible Parties:

- 1) Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
- 2) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County
- 3) Broome County Farm Bureau
- 4) Broome County Dep. of Planning & Economic Dev.

Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan Results of Public Hearing on Draft Goals

Three public hearing were held in July, 2001 by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County and the Broome County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board to gather public input for the assembly of recommendations to be included in the County Agricultural Economic Development Plan. Farmers, agri-businesses, local officials and the general public were invited to attend the meetings. Each was preceded by a review of preliminary findings and a presentation of draft goals and objectives. The following is an outline summary of the comments received:

Binghamton Hearing - CCE Auditorium July 11, 2001 - Approximately 12-15 attendees

- 1) The Town of Kirkwood has updated its Comprehensive Plan to provide for additional agricultural uses. Local officials indicated the Town wants to preserve its rural character and would like to see agriculture expand with additional farms stands and other enterprises.
- 2) There is a need to zone towns so that small greenhouses can be established in otherwise residential areas.
- 3) Broome County has already achieved considerable success in developing niche agricultural businesses. One example is a garlic grower marketing over the Internet.
- 4) Networking new smaller agricultural enterprises with resources such as Cornell Cooperative Extension is important both to assist them and to gain an understanding of the depth and breadth of the industry.
- 5) The Kirkwood I-81 rest area presents a tremendous agricultural marketing opportunity with its 6,000 daily visitors. Establishing a market there and making more use of this resource to distribute information on Broome County agricultural enterprises should be a major recommendation of the Plan.
- 6) The Cornell Cooperative Extension botanical gardens provide an example of successful agricultural tourism that can be expanded upon.
- 7) The Town of Union has a landowner interested in establishing a greenhouse and bark chipping operation in an area properly zoned for such enterprises but which is also experiencing high-valued housing development. The residential neighbors are very opposed to the project and making it difficult to secure some variances needed for some aspects of the operation. This is an illustration of the conflicts that can develop and the need for more education of local officials and general public on the nature of agriculture and how to handle these issues.

**Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan
Results of Public Hearing on Draft Goals**

- 8) Another town wanted to require 200' setbacks for farm fences, providing further illustration of the need for agricultural planning education for local officials, another potential major recommendation. These officials need help in understanding the industry, how to provide for it and how to protect the rights of farmers.
- 9) IBM divestitures of open spaces near residents who thought they would be "forever wild" has exacerbated residential concerns about development, but may also help to illustrate the role of farms in preserving open space.
- 10) The on-going relationship between agricultural and residential uses is a critical issue in general for Broome County. It needs constant work.
- 11) A local banker and agricultural appraiser indicated that most of Broome County farm transfers in the last 15 years represented situations where the farms stayed in agriculture as compared to other counties where more farms went into non-agricultural uses upon transfer.
- 12) A greenhouse operation in the Town of Maine faced local opposition at first but has become well accepted as people have learned about the operation and how nice it is. This illustrates the value of agricultural awareness programs.
- 12) The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board should be encouraging all towns to use Comprehensive Plan updates as opportunities to plan where and how to allow for growth of new and expanded agricultural enterprises.

**Colesville Hearing - Town of Colesville Town Hall
July 17, 2001 - Approximately 10-12 attendees**

- 1) There have been problems in some towns (including Colesville) with respect to barn heights exceeding building height limits in local zoning laws, illustrating the need for more planning education on agricultural issues.
- 2) Many New York City and New Jersey in-migrants to the area want the farm environment but not the associated smells and other problems.
- 3) The Town of Fenton has developed a local agricultural notice program targeted to builders and realtors. This may be an appropriate major recommendation in the Plan.
- 4) It is important to get towns to support agriculture, giving the industry the ability to grow

**Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan
Results of Public Hearing on Draft Goals**

- in size and compete with the outside world.
- 5) A local bank employee indicated the general public is ignorant about what agriculture involves and this needs to be addressed. The emphasis needs to be on the changing nature of agriculture, using the County's two large dairy farms as examples of evolving high technology in the industry.
 - 6) The Johnson City School District has been working with local cider producers to market more local products, develop new flavors and export these concepts to new areas. It is a very successful program that should be emulated.
 - 7) Federal regulations prohibit schools from restricting their purchases to New York State grown crops.
 - 8) More young people need to be directed to agricultural job opportunities and emphasis needs to be placed on raising the image of agriculture as a career opportunity.
 - 9) Agriculture needs to be afforded more of the same tax abatements, energy breaks and job credits that other industries get in New York State. Empire Zone benefits, particularly in the labor category, also need to be extended to farms and agricultural enterprises.
 - 10) A Town of Fenton strawberry grower has faced conflicts with neighbors over spraying, noise from irrigations pumps and dust, illustrating some of the conflicts that need to be managed.

**Whitney Point Hearing - Whitney Point Village Hall
July 18, 2001 - Approximately 12-15 attendees**

- 1) The County has both organic garlic and organic pig producers.
- 2) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County believes the agricultural economy is underestimated due to large numbers of small and unidentified producers, the real sales number being approximately \$30,000,000 per year.
- 3) Town of Lisle representatives state that they are getting pressure from residential homeowners to the effect that banks don't like lending in agricultural zones and would prefer residential zoning for mortgage purposes.
- 4) There is a great need to educate local officials about proper techniques of agricultural zoning. Example and illustrations are needed.

Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan
Results of Public Hearing on Draft Goals

- 5) Several attendees commented that they had not appreciated the breadth, depth and economic importance of agriculture until hearing the presentation.
- 6) A Town Board member expressed concerns with agricultural tax exemptions that might get extended to things like sawmills.
- 7) Conflicts (real or imagined) exist among Lisle officials and farmers as to the proper amount of agricultural zoning in the Town.
- 8) More communication between the farm and non-farm communities is needed and more education to deal with agricultural issues. Planning boards need education and support from the industry. Agricultural awareness is critical.
- 9) An Agricultural Planning Guide for local officials (on the order of Schoharie County's but tailored to Broome County) is needed to address the challenges of providing for small diversified agricultural businesses. This should be a major recommendation.
- 10) The Town of Fenton agricultural notice program, which tells residents "you'll see cows" is a good model.

Broome County, New York

**Agricultural
Planning
Guidelines**

October 2001

Prepared by:

**Broome County Agricultural and
Farmland Protection Board**

In cooperation with:

**The Broome County Department Planning and Economic Development
and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County**

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This publication is based on a similar guide developed by Thomas J. Shepstone, AICP and Alan J. Sorensen, AICP, for the Schoharie County, New York Planning and Development Agency and the "Is your town farm friendly" survey developed by Gary Matteson for the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service and the New Hampshire Coalition for Sustaining Agriculture (see <http://coopext1.unh.edu/sustainable/farmfrnd.cfm>).

Broome County, New York Agricultural Planning Guidelines

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This publication has been prepared to help guide local planning board members, agricultural and farmland protection board members and elected officials in their review of development applications that affect farmlands.

The regulation of land use within agricultural areas requires balancing of growth with protection of prime farmland and, even more importantly, the rights of farmers to engage in sound agricultural practices. Good planning can help avoid future conflicts, allowing agriculture itself to grow and develop.

Land use planning and zoning with regard to agriculture cannot be rigid - the flexibility to adapt based on circumstances is critical. Many large farming operations involve a variety of land uses that may include housing for farm workers, the manufacturing of agricultural products, trucking operations, machinery repair, warehousing, or retail sales of farm products.

The impacts of a particular farming enterprise will depend the intensity of the activity, the nature of the land involved and the amount of buffer area between agricultural and residential activities. Arbitrary standards common to other commercial, industrial and residential uses, therefore, don't work well in dealing with agricultural issues.

Section 305-a of New York State Agricultural Districts Law prohibits towns from employing land use regulations to unnecessarily restrict the operation of farms within locally adopted agricultural districts. It also provides for the preparation of an *Agricultural Data Statement*

if the proposed action “ involves a special use permit, site plan application, use variance, or subdivision application on a property within an agricultural district containing a farm operation or on property with boundaries within five hundred feet of a farm operation located in an agricultural district.”

These provisions demonstrate a commitment by the State to agricultural protection. While they restrict local government from over-regulating agricultural activities, they also offer a mechanism for avoiding conflicts between farm and non-farm neighbors, that towns might otherwise have to arbitrate, by means of prior notification.¹

Use of Agricultural Data Statements in connection with a proposed subdivision adjacent to a large dairy farm, for example, will put prospective homebuyers on notice that spreading of manure on adjacent fields may create smells during certain parts of the year that a one-time visit to the site may not reveal. It will also inform them that this is an ordinary and sound practice to be expected in an agricultural area.

The primary function of the Agricultural Data Statement is to ensure notification at the front end.² It also, however, allows a Planning Board to consider and suggest alternatives to the conventional subdivision. These include use of conservation subdivision techniques where

1 Such actions are also required to be referred to the County Planning Board for advisory opinions pursuant to Section 239 L, M, and N of General Municipal Law.

2 Farmers are protected by the requirement that, prior to the sale of land within an agricultural district, the buyer must be informed that adjacent farm operations may generate certain noise, dust and odors. Disclosure prior to sale offers farmers a defense to private nuisance lawsuits.

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smaller residential lots are permitted in exchange for the preservation of open space between the two uses. This is further explained in Section 4.1 of this report.

What follows is an overview of agricultural planning principles coupled with some specific examples of how to address various land use conflicts associated with agricultural practices and non-farm uses in agricultural areas.

2.0 JUST HOW FARM FRIENDLY IS YOUR TOWN?

The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service and the New Hampshire Coalition for Sustaining Agriculture have developed a checklist to help towns evaluate just how farm friendly they are. A modified version tailored to Broome County is offered below:

Planning Questions

- Does your Comprehensive Plan specifically provide for agriculture or only rely upon vague statements about "preserving rural character?"
- Does your Plan document the breadth, depth and value of agriculture to your town, including not only traditional farming and crops but also greenhouses, farm stands and specialty enterprises?
- Does your economic development strategy address agricultural opportunities and is the industry represented on these committees?
- Does your Plan recognize the open space and natural resource protection benefits of agriculture, encourage, Agricultural District participation and promote techniques such as conservation easements to preserve farmland?
- Does your Plan avoid calling for infrastructure extensions in a near farmland that might encourage incompatible development or raise the carrying costs of agricultural land too high?

Zoning Questions

Does your town zoning law:

- Allow agricultural uses in more than one or two zoning districts, especially small crop, nursery and greenhouse activities?
- Provide simpler design standards and site plan review procedures for seasonal agricultural businesses such as farm stands and Christmas tree sales?
- Offer flexibility to accommodate the unique need of agricultural businesses in regard to temporary signage, hours of operation, access, parking and storage?
- Require buffers between new residential uses and existing agricultural uses?
- Provide for agricultural use of mandated open spaces in new developments as an option?
- Allow off-site signs to attract and direct farm stand customers to seasonal or permanent business locations?
- Allow ancillary agricultural businesses such as equipment dealers, feed mills and veterinarians in the same areas as other agricultural activities are permitted?
- Allow on-farm processing and retail operations, farm stands and pick-you-own operations by right as principal permitted or accessory uses?
- Incorporate broad and inclusive definition of agriculture and agricultural accessory uses that include niche businesses, storage, repair, processing and sales activities?
- Allow farm stands to sell produce purchased elsewhere to complement those products grown or manufactured on-site?
- Provide for the large and unusual structures needed in agricultural operations (e.g., high grain elevators, large riding arenas, manure storage facilities)?
- Establish site plan review criteria for non-farm uses in agricultural districts that encourage houses to be located away from productive cropland, upwind of farm activities and in such manner as to not interfere with agricultural operations?

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Other Questions

- Have you taken advantage of Town Law authority to appoint an additional Planning Board member to specifically represent the agricultural industry?
- Do you, in reviewing development applications, require the use of Agricultural Data Statements to notify prospective home-buyers of nearby agricultural activities?
- Have you adopted a Right to Farm Law to protect the use of sound agricultural practices?
- Is farmland being properly assessed within your town? Are your assessors knowledgeable regarding exemptions for certain farm structures and other benefits?
- Is there any annual event within your town, such as a Farm Festival, to highlight the contributions of agriculture?

3.0 THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF AGRICULTURAL PLANNING

Some of the basic principles of agricultural land use planning and zoning are as follows:

3.1 Farming is More Than Raising Animals and Crops.

Agricultural enterprises, by their nature, often comprise a variety of land uses. Given the low profit margin of most agricultural operations, farms often include accessory commercial operations intended to supplement the primary sources of farm income.

Farms may include sand and gravel operations, firewood production, feed manufacturing, farm stands, tourism features, slaughterhouses, wineries and assorted other complementary activities, depending on the type of the operations.

These accessory activities assist in stabilizing

farm incomes by allow farmers to add value to farm products and direct market them for additional profit. This, in turn, helps preserve working landscapes offering valuable open space to the community.

Therefore, broad latitude to allow these uses is required. The intensity of these uses should be the basis for determining whether they should be regulated.

Traditional family farm stands, for example, should be permitted as accessory uses to the farm operations as a matter of right although a building permit application for a larger commercial farm market might warrant site plan review.

Reasonable regulation to address issues such parking and access is appropriate. The key is not to exclude ancillary agricultural activities from on-farm locations.³

The best way to accomplish this is to encompass broad definitions of agriculture and agricultural accessory activities in the text of any land use or zoning regulations. Such a definition follows:

³ A recent example from another County illustrates the point. A large landowner near a hamlet operated a vineyard and a small retail farm market operation adjoined by recent homebuyers delighted with the open space. However, when the owner decided to put up a winery on the farm, these same neighbors took the position that this was a commercial use that "belonged in town." The municipality could have avoided this conflict if it had broadly defined agricultural to include on-farm processing and ancillary agricultural activities. A reasonable standard might be that at least one-third of the raw product must be produced from the farm on which it is located or of which it is a part (farms can include multiple unconnected properties).

Agriculture - Any activity connected with the raising of crops, livestock or production of livestock products, including but not limited to field crops, fruits, vegetables, horticultural specialties, livestock and livestock products, furs, maple sap, Christmas trees, aquaculture products and woody bio-mass. This shall encompass any activity or use now permitted by law, engaged in by or on behalf of a farmer in connection with farming including, but not limited to; housing for farm workers; stables and other tourist activities; the collection, transportation, distribution and storage of animal and poultry waste; storage, transportation and use of equipment for tillage, planting, harvesting and marketing; transportation, storage and use of fertilizers and limes, and legally permitted insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides; construction of farm structures and facilities, including farm wineries and other on-farm food processing; construction and maintenance of fences and other enclosures; and the use and/or maintenance of related pastures, idle or fallow land, woodland, wetland, farm ponds, farm roads and certain farm buildings and other structures related to the agriculture practices. Agriculture shall also include the processing and wholesale and retail marketing, including U-pick sales, of the agricultural output of the farm and related products that contribute to farm income, including the sale at the owner's farm stand of agricultural products so long as a substantial portion of the annual gross sales of the farm stand have been grown on said farm.

3.2 Buffers Between Farm and Residential Uses Are Essential

Residences placed too close to farms can create unnecessary conflicts with farming activities over noise, dust and odors. These potential conflicts, however, can be greatly mitigated with the provision of open space buffers between the uses. Buffers also provide farmers with protection from adverse impacts associated with adjacent residents driving off-road vehicles into crop areas, other trespassing impacts, stormwater runoff, broken bottle litter problems and similar problems.

When residential subdivisions are proposed in close proximity to a farming operation, the responsibility of providing a sufficient buffer between the proposed home sites and the farm should be placed on the developer, not the farmer. This can be accomplished by substantially increasing minimum lot sizes for

residential development within agricultural zones, requiring greater setbacks of residences along side and rear lot lines and limiting the range of residential uses allowed in these areas. These measures help to increase the separation distances between farm and residential uses.

A number of Pennsylvania, Maine and Maryland communities, for example, have required that dwellings be setback a minimum of 100 feet from land in any designated agricultural zone or tract. It is not uncommon for this distance to be increased to as much as 500 feet in the case of dwelling units proposed adjacent to intensive livestock operations within designated agricultural districts.

There are also a number of communities that have enacted agricultural protection zoning (APZ) regulations sharply limiting subdivision activity within specified prime agricultural areas. Minimum lot sizes of as much 25 acres have been imposed in these areas to effectively prevent subdivision for other than farm purposes.

More typical, however, is a sliding scale formula that provides for a maximum number of dwellings decreasing proportionally as the size of the tract increases. This is usually accompanied by a requirement that the house lots themselves be restricted in size to avoid consuming too much farm land.

The overall impact of such regulations is to keep both the total number of dwellings created from a given farm and the land consumption associated therewith as low as possible. This concept works well with the "conservation subdivision" approach discussed below.

A simple but practical approach is also

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incorporated in the following sample language:

Farm and Residential Buffers - New residences within or adjacent to agricultural districts shall be limited to single-family dwellings setback a minimum of 100 feet from all rear and side lot lines shared with a farm tract lying within the district. The Planning Board may require that this buffer area be increased to as much as 300 feet and planted with trees where the proposed dwelling adjoins any existing intensive livestock, agricultural processing or manure disposal operation.

Other uses within agricultural districts should be limited to support and complementary activities. Ag zoning district boundaries should generally follow those of New State State Agricultural Districts. The following is a list of uses appropriate in such districts:

Agricultural Protection District

Principal Permitted Uses

1. Agriculture (see definition)
2. Cemeteries
3. Forest uses
4. Greenhouses and nurseries
5. Single-family dwellings (see special standards)
6. Wildlife preserves

Special Uses

1. Bed and breakfast operations
2. Campgrounds
3. Clubhouses
4. Communications towers
5. Farm equipment sales and repair
6. Farm and feed stores and feed manufacturing
7. Houses of worship
8. Kennels
9. Tool and die and other light manufacturing uses
10. Outdoor recreation facilities
11. Sawmills
12. Veterinary offices and animal hospitals

Accessory Uses

1. Home occupations
2. Signs
3. Other uses customarily incidental to Principal Permitted and Special Uses

The above list can be modified to add or delete uses as appropriate to individual communities but it is representative of those uses that are generally compatible with agriculture.

The agriculture uses can also be broken down into Principal Permitted, Special and Accessory Uses. This provides municipalities with somewhat more control but can easily become confusing when incidental activities not specifically listed are proposed. It also runs the risk of conflicting with the New York State Agricultural District Law. A simple approach that broadly defines all agriculture in one category is usually more appropriate. Towns can always reserve the right to require site plan review of specified activities that pose particular health and safety concerns. Some communities, indeed, classify intensive livestock operations as Special Uses so as to have the authority to require special setbacks.

Communities have to very cautious, however, in enacting any land use regulations imposing special requirements on agricultural uses. If the located in an official Agricultural District, the proposed use is subject to Section 305-a(1)(a) of the Agriculture and Markets Law (and 283-a of the Town Law) that states local governments cannot "unreasonably restrict or regulate farm operations...unless it can be shown that the public health or safety is threatened."

Regulations brought to the attention of the Department under this provision are evaluated on the basis of whether they are reasonable on their face and as applied to a particular situation. This means a given rule found reasonable in one situation may still be found unreasonable in another, depending on the nature of the individual circumstances.

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nature of the individual circumstances.

or farmland.⁴

Such problems can be avoided by: 1) permitting the broadest possible range of agricultural uses possible within agricultural districts and 2) applying needed setback and buffer requirements on the new non-farm uses proposed within the district. Should standards be proposed for particular application to agricultural uses they should first be reviewed with the Department of Agriculture and Markets.

For example, if a 100 acre parcel is zoned for a minimum lot size of 2 acres, a developer could create 50 residential lots from it, assuming no environmental constraints. If the developer used a conservation subdivision approach, however, the 50 lots would be clustered on perhaps 25 acres (one-half acre each), leaving seventy-five (75) acres as open space. This land could then be available for crops and other agricultural uses that would actually complement the residences by preserving the open space setting attracting them to the area. A portion of the open space could, of course, also be used to buffer the two uses.⁵

3.3 Prime Farmland Should Be Protected from Development

The American Farmland Trust is the best overall source of information available on farmland protection. They have offer technical assistance and excellent publications on a wide variety of approaches including conservation easements, purchase or lease of developments rights and the agricultural protection zoning discussed above. There are, nevertheless, certain measures that are wholly within the province of municipal planning authorities to employ.

This technique, where a farm operation is included as an integral component of the subdivision plan, can be an effective means of preserving prime agricultural lands. Good examples include subdivisions designed to surround beef or horse farms and productive fields in the manner of a golf course. Such subdivisions also help maintain the viability of adjacent farms by providing additional crop and pasture land they can lease. Care must, of course, be taken to ensure appropriate deed restrictions are put in place to protect the continuation of the farming operation. Additionally, homeowners must be informed of potential odors, noises and dust in the manner of Agricultural Data Statements.

These include "conservation subdivision" techniques (also known as "cluster development") designed to accommodate residential growth while ensuring that prime agricultural soils remain in production. Under conservation subdivision provisions, a landowner is allowed to develop a property to the same density as allowed under present zoning, and sometimes even higher with bonuses for additional farmland protection. However, smaller lot sizes are permitted in exchange for the preservation of the open space

Most farms contain a variety of soil types with the least productive soils used for pasture and the most productive soils for crops. If farms within a town are being acquired for residential development, the Planning Board

4 See Section 278 of New York State Town Law.

5 See Section 4.1 for illustration.

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should consider encouraging or even requiring conservation subdivision techniques that preserve the prime soils and allow continuation of farming as an approved open space use.

This would provide many farmers with the opportunity to recover some of their equity in the land for retirement or other purposes while keeping the best farmland in agriculture.

Sample Subdivision Regulation Provision
Requiring Protection of Farmland

Proposals for subdivision of parcels including active farm or crop land within New York State Agricultural Districts shall include delineation of proposed building sites on each lot, which sites shall be located outside of or along the edges of the active farm and crop lands. Subdivisions of five (5) lots or more shall ordinarily be required to employ conservation subdivision or clustering techniques that provide for presentation of active farm and crop land without reducing overall density of development.

Another technique available to communities is known as Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's). This is a method of removing the right to develop or build (expressed in dwelling units per acre or floor area) from land in one zoning district (e.g. agricultural) and transferring that right to land in another zoning district.

If the farm is in a TDR sending district (where credits are assigned using the zoning or local ordinance) the farmer can sell these credits to a developer in a TDR receiving district (zone where rights can be purchased). TDR credits have value because a developer who purchases TDR credits can increase the permitted density of development on their site.

In an area with water and sewer, the increased density allowed with the TDR credits could significantly increase the profit margin for the

developer. For the farmer, the sale of TDR credits can be a means to secure needed capital to make necessary improvements to their farm without losing valuable farmland. TDR can also help to ensure that the prime agricultural soils in a community are preserved for future generations.

Due to their legal complexity, TDR's are not right for every community. An active real estate market is also necessary. TDR's benefit, however, is that it doesn't demand public funding to acquire development rights.⁶

Additional information on both these techniques are available through American Farmland Trust and by contacting the County Planning and Development Agency.

3.4 First, Do No Harm to Agriculture

The Hippocratic Oath taken by medical doctors begins with an admonition to "first, do no harm" to the patient. If agriculture is truly a priority industry within a community then a similar policy should apply to actions that could hurt or kill off farming.

Towns should, for example, consider using Municipal Home Rule authority to restrict their Zoning Boards of Appeals from granting use variances within an agricultural district. Such a provision should, in addition to the four (4) part test established in New York Law for granting such variances, require that use variances within agricultural districts must not conflict with agricultural practices or farming. Sample language is offered below:

⁶ See Section 261-a of the New York State Town Law for authority.

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Sample Limit on Use Variances within Agricultural Districts

The Town hereby exercises its authority under Section 10 of the New York State Municipal Home Rule Law to supersede Section 267-b(2)(b) of the New York State Town Law so as to require that, in addition to items (1) through (4) thereunder, all applicants for use variances within Agricultural Districts shall demonstrate that the proposed use shall not in any way conflict with agricultural practices, the conduct thereof by persons engaging in agricultural industries or the purposes of Section 283-a of the Town Law pertaining to coordination with the Agricultural Districts program.

As farms are modernized with new facilities farmers should also be allowed to reuse old farm buildings and other facilities with great flexibility. The conversion of old barns into residences or offices provides a unique opportunity to maintain the rural landscape while preserving the unique architectural history of the community. Converting old barns to residences may also provide a unique housing alternative for farm workers. Old silos can be reused for cellular tower locations which is one means of preserving this vanishing symbol of the American farm. As an incentive, the reuse of farm buildings should be allowed as-of-right without the need for variances provided that such uses meet building code requirements.

Farmers can also be adversely impacted by storm water runoff and sedimentation from adjacent residential development causing long-term damage to valuable farm lands. New roadways for proposed subdivisions should follow the natural topography and avoid excessive grading of the site that can lead to erosion. Storm water management facilities associated with new developments must be designed so as not to adversely impact adjacent farmland. The preparation of a detail erosion and sediment control plan by a qualified

engineer, should be required for applications requiring site plan or subdivision approval.

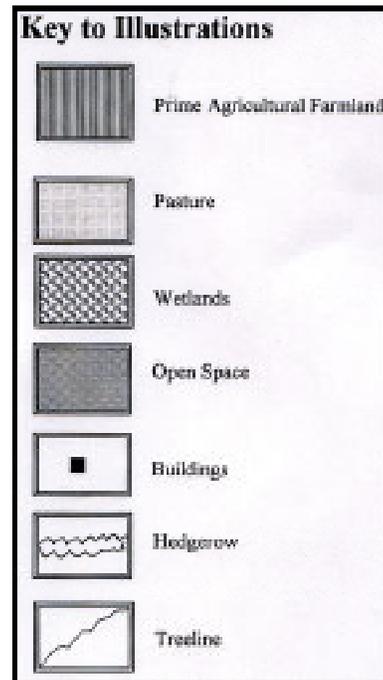
4.0 SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF AGRICULTURAL PLANNING

The following illustrative examples of agricultural planning principles are offered for planning boards:

- 1) conservation subdivision,
- 2) farmstand site planning,
- 3) planning for other farm facilities.

Each example includes a description of a proposed action and an analysis of issues that local boards should be considering when reviewing applications. The examples also include recommendations planning boards may want to consider.

The following is a key to all the illustrations that follow:

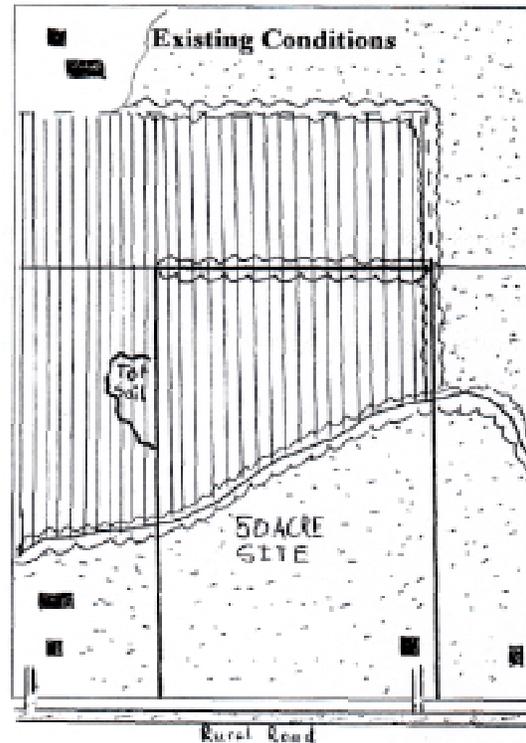


4.1 Conservation Subdivision

The following examples compare conventional and conservation subdivision techniques as applied to farm situations:

Existing Parcel

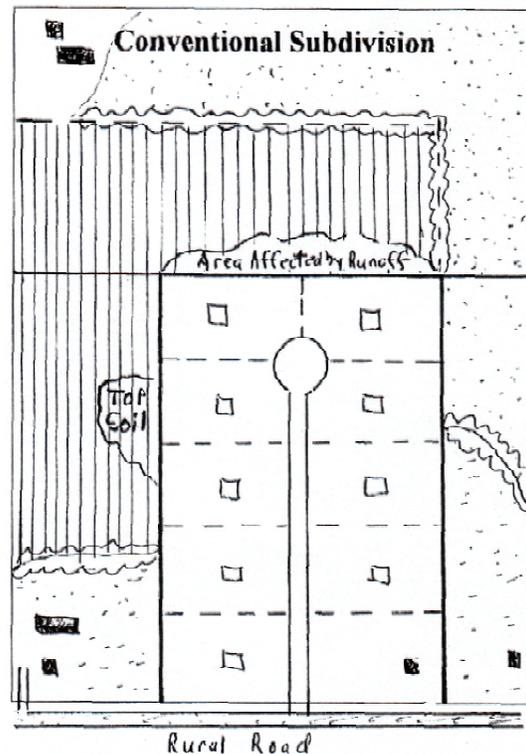
This 50-acre parcel consists of 25 acres of prime soils and 25 acres of gently sloping Pasture that overlooks the cultivated fields. The existing farmhouse and outbuildings are located adjacent to a local road and on the edge between the pasture and cultivated fields.



Conventional 5-acre Subdivision Plan

Under the existing zoning, the 50-acre parcel could be developed into 10 single-family lots of five acres each.

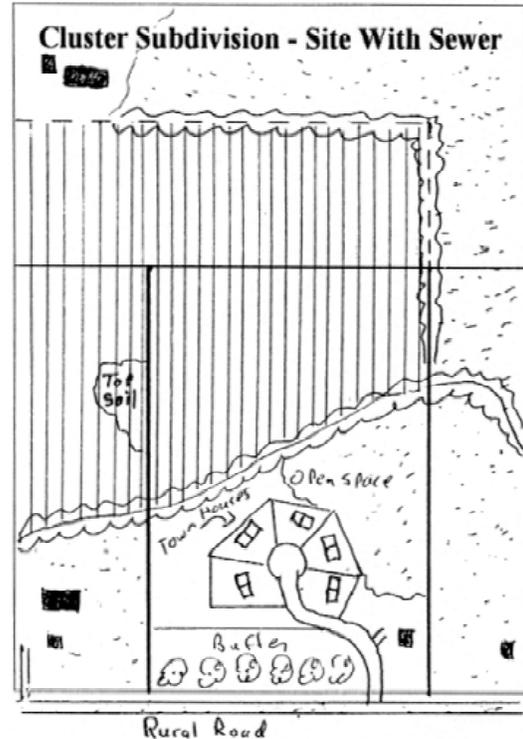
Notice that under the conventional subdivision, the entire site is broken up into development lots leaving none of the prime agricultural soils available for development. Furthermore, by fully developing this 50 acre property, the rural landscape along the road is disrupted and three (3) adjacent farm operations are potentially adversely impacted. With some flexibility of the reviewing board, these potential adverse impacts can be avoided. Alternatives to the conventional subdivision are illustrated on the following page.



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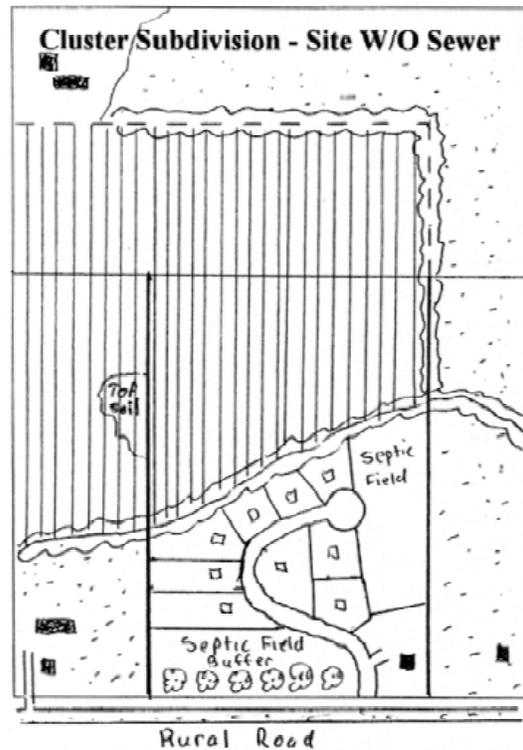
Agricultural Protection Analysis

There is, in this example, significant agricultural value to be protected. The 25 acres of prime soils should be preserved for future cultivation. The adjacent farmer could lease these fields, for example, and the farm use would complement the proposed development by providing open space. Also, note the conflicts in land use that conventional subdivision (previous page) creates. Residential lots abut active farming operations, including pasture land and a top soil operation, and no buffer is provided between these uses. Furthermore, the impervious surface connected with the new cul-de-sac to serve these homes will increase storm water runoff and involves the partial removal of a hedgerow and stone wall.⁷



Conservation Subdivision Alternative

Prime soils are preserved in this conservation subdivision. Moreover, many of the potential conflicts between the existing farm operations and new residences are avoided. Clustering the lots near the existing roadway eliminates the need to remove a large portion of the hedgerow and stone wall. Additionally, the preservation of the open fields provide a buffer between the residences and the neighboring farm operations. Clustering has, too, allowed the developer to strategically place units in an area of the site least likely to be impacted by noise, odor, or dust generated from agricultural uses and has helped to preserve the working rural landscape.

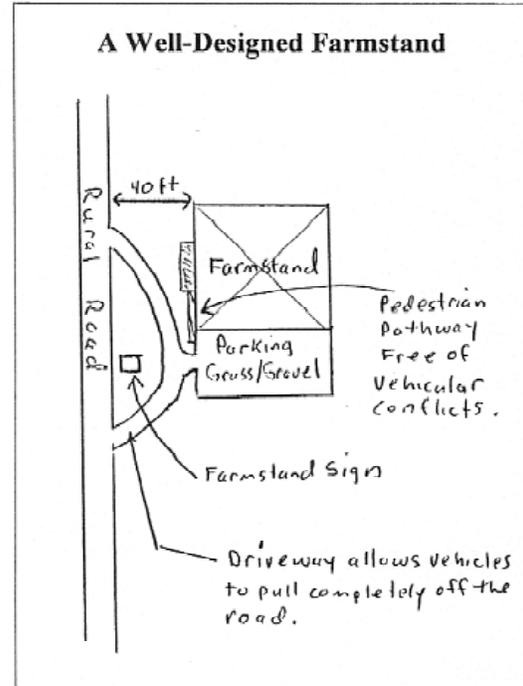


⁷ Farmers should, however, be permitted to remove hedgerows for the purpose of expanding fields or pasture.

4.2 Farmstand Site Planning

Farmstands are the type of traditional accessory farming activity that should be allowed as-of-right, however, there are some basic guidelines that should be followed to ensure such activities do not create safety concerns or conflicts with local vehicular traffic. The following guidelines are suggested for consideration:

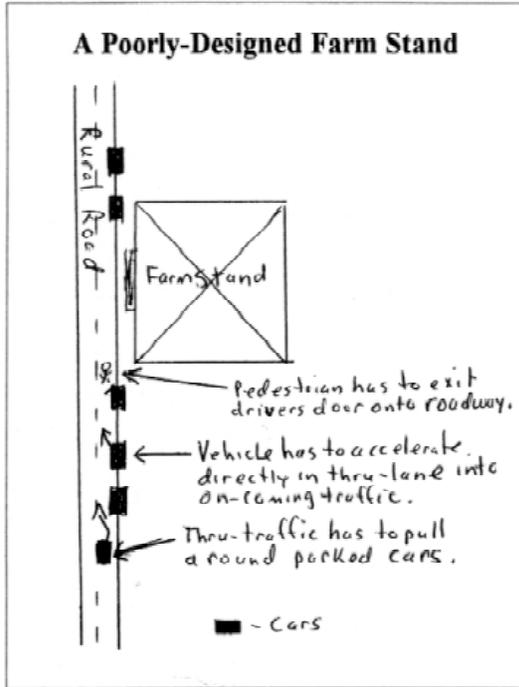
- (1) The farmstand should be located no closer than thirty (30) feet to the edge of the public right-of-way and no closer than ten (10) feet to any side property line.
- (2) Access to the public highway should be limited to existing driveways or to new driveways established pursuant to permits from the Town, County, NYSDOT. All new uses, including dwellings, are typically required to secure such permits for driveway curb cuts. It is important to notify farmers that these permits are required to avoid future hassles in trying to secure a permit after the fact. However, towns can ease the burden by providing for a simple process with minimal improvements required for such seasonal uses.
- (3) Customer parking spaces should be provided on site, and the vehicle maneuvering area should be maintained out of the public right-of-way.
- (4) Signage should be limited to a single sign, not greater than twelve (12) sq ft in area and located not less than five (5) feet from any street line.



Site Plan Analysis

In the illustration above, the farmstand has been setback from the road by forty (40) feet which allows for sufficient driveway length into the site so that vehicles are not parking along side the road. When vehicles park on the side of roads, pedestrians come into direct conflict with through traffic by stepping out of their cars onto busy highways and this needs to be avoided.

The farmstand driveway illustrated above provides adequate space for multiple vehicles to pull off the roadway and safely into the site. The designated parking area (grass or gravel) directs customers to a safe area to get in and out of their vehicles and out of the way of vehicles entering the site. The small farmstand sign also effectively advertises to the motoring public that the farmstand is open for business.



When Is A Farmstand No Longer One?

There are some useful indicators that may help a planning board determine if a proposed farmstand may be more retail in nature and should perhaps be subject to a more stringent review.

For example:

- Is the farmstand operation year- round?
- Is the structure designed for year-round use?
- Are full-time employees proposed?
- Are there extended hours of operation?
- Are the goods primarily produced off-site?

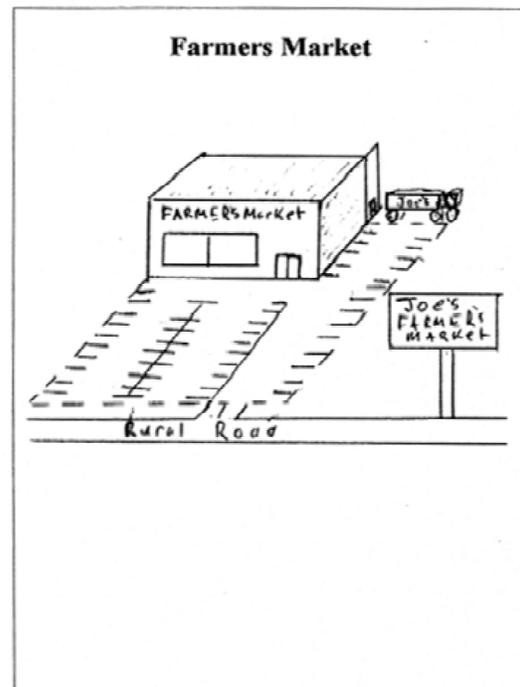
YES answers to more than one of these questions may indicate that the proposed use would be better regulated as a retail establishment and subjected to site plan review although it may still be appropriate in an agricultural area.

Site Plan Analysis

In this example, the farmstand is located too close to the roadway which forces customers to park along the roadside. Notice the multiple conflict points that are created between both vehicle and pedestrians in this example.

Since there is no room to park on-site, multiple cars have been stacked up along the roadside. Conflicts are created between vehicles trying to get back on the road and those trying to park for the farmstand. Making matters worse, pedestrians are trying to get safely to and from their vehicles.

The other negative aspect of this type of layout for a farmstand is that it impacts the level-of-service along an area roadway. Vehicles trying to drive through are forced to slow down and stop for cars pulling on and off the roadside and pedestrians who should not be on the road.



4.3 Planning for Other Farm Facilities

CAFO Compliance

Several other farm facilities raise particular planning issues. The following are general planning guidelines with regard to some of the most prevalent:

Farm Worker Housing

- (1) The provision of housing for farm workers in either multiple dwellings or mobile homes, should be a permitted use on a farm.
- (2) The housing should be supported by water supply and sewage disposal facilities in accordance with the standards of the Health Department or other controlling authorities.
- (3) The housing should be in compliance with the provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.
- (4) The housing should be located on the farm parcel no closer to any property line than the minimum setback requirement for a principal dwelling in the zoning district.
- (d) The housing should be immediately moved from the site upon cessation of farm operations and not allowed to be occupied for non-farm purposes. The property owner should be required to specifically acknowledge this standard, in writing, prior to the issuance of a building permit or certificate of occupancy for the intended building or use. This will eliminate future conflicts for the town.

There are now Federal and State manure management requirements applicable to concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) farms. Towns should not attempt to replicate these ever-changing regulations but may want to insist upon evidence of compliance insofar as new building or expansion projects are concerned. Attempts to develop local standards would also certainly run into conflicts with the CAFO regulations and could prevent the application of the latest technology to a given situation. Communities are better served by allowing farmers the flexibility to meet the Federal and State requirements in the most environmentally and economically effective manner.

Slaughterhouses

Custom slaughterhouse operations are often part of farm operations and can be completely unobtrusive if properly designed. The key considerations are the locations of any animal holding areas, the offal disposal arrangements and the volume of business in terms of traffic. Most custom slaughterhouses generate only minimal traffic and involve no outside activities. All are subject to State or USDA regulation.

Towns may wish to require that such facilities be setback a reasonable distance from property borders (say 100 feet) and that some percentage of the volume (say 5%) be raised on the farm where the facility is to be located so as to be able to distinguish the operation from a purely commercial facility. Nevertheless, a custom slaughterhouse is a very appropriate use to a farm and should be protected as a farm operation.

Breweries and Wineries

Breweries and wineries can also be normal parts of farm operations in New York State. The State is a major wine producer and has experienced tremendous growth in farm winery activity. It was also a major hops producer many years ago and is a logical location for micro-brewery operations designed to appeal to the young urban markets in the Northeast.

The key factor with regard to these operations is traffic. The commercial traffic is seldom significant but a facility offering wine tasting, for example, can be a major tourist traffic generator. This is a generally good effect but municipalities need to address access and parking.

This type of facility, too, should be encouraged as part of a vineyard or farm operation. It may be appropriate, once again, to specify that a portion of the raw product be produced on the farm where the facility is to be located but it should be minimal (say 10%) because most operations of this sort have to buy and sell grapes from a number of suppliers to obtain the proper varieties to meet customer demands and address seasonal crop production. This is why the New York Farm Winery Act only requires that the grapes used be New York State grown - they do not have to be grown on the farm where the winery is located.

Similar approaches to these are warranted for cider mills.

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Section I: The Farm Operation

1) What is your farm operation's acreage?

18,287	Total Acres
223	Average Acres

Land Owned	Total Acres	Average
Total acres owned	17,031	230
Tillable acres capable of being cropped	10,240	174
Crop acres (continually rotational)	4,932	130
Permanent pasture	3,248	49
Woodland	5,166	80

Land Rented	Total Acres	Average
Total acres owned	3,053	134
Tillable acres capable of being cropped	2,465	130
Crop acres (continually rotational)	1,904	173
Permanent pasture	267	38
Woodland	192	64

2) Have you sold any Agricultural zoned land owned in Broome County in the last 10 years?

22	Yes
56	No

1794	Acres Sold
82	Average

What happened to the land you sold?

7	Being developed for homes
4	Sold to a non-farmer, rented to a farmer
3	Idle
3	Sold to a farmer
1	For son's home
1	For use as a single horse farm
1	Gave to daughter to build her house
1	Pasture; hay cut
1	Sold land to lumber company
1	Still being cropped
1	Stone quarry
1	Timberland
1	Town needed land for building and parking
1	Town of Barker "Barn"

Reason for selling property?

10	Not good for farming
7	Supplement income
1	Capital to expand
1	Cutting back operation
1	Estate sale
1	Family
1	Had to pay the high taxes
1	reduce capital gains tax
1	Sold dairy cows
1	Town need "Salt" barn
1	Town needed land
1	Wanted to seel building

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3) Have you purchased any Agricultural land in Broome County in the past 10 years?

17	Yes
64	No

1517	Acres Purchased
82	Average

Year Purchased	
1991	1
1992	2
1994	1
1995	2
1997	1
1998	4
1999	2
2000	2

Reason for purchasing property?

9	Needed more land to farm
9	Buffer from encroaching non-farm neighbors
4	Real estate investment
1	To prevent encroachment on well

4) Is your farm located within an Agricultural District?

69	Yes
6	No

5) Did you raise any crops during the 1999/2000 calendar year?

62	Yes
19	No

6) Please indicate how much of each crop you grew during the 1999/2000 calendar year.

	Acres	Average
Alfalfa	1,837	77
Other hay	5,754	113
Corn/silage	1,310	69
Corn grain	302	34
Small grains	262	19
Fruit	13,000 bushels	13,000
Timber	540	180
Timber Sales (\$)	124,200	15,525
Pasture	1,420	65
Potatoes	50 bushels	50
Maple syrup	370 gallons	185
Vegetables (including sweet corn)	1,580 bushels	316
Pumpkins	100,000 pounds	100,000

7) Did your farm produce any milk in 1999/2000?

8	Yes
---	-----

12,058,687	pounds total
1,507,336	pounds average

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

8) Did you raise any livestock for business purposes?

47	Yes
29	No

9) How many animals listed below were in your farm operation in the 1999/2000 calendar year?

	Number	Average
Cow dairy	2,981	186
Replacement heifers	2,455	153
Beef	806	30
Hogs	61	20
Sheep	578	96
Horses/ponies	280	18
Goats	108	36
Aquaculture	50	50
Poultry	580	116
Rabbits	140	70

wool #

10) Did you house or board any livestock during the 1999/2000 calendar year?

17	Yes
51	No

11) How many of the following livestock did you board or house in 1999/2000?

	Number	Average
Beef cattle	173	19
Dairy cattle	530	265
Heifers	500	500
Sheep	3	3
Swine	4	4
Chickens	130	65
Goats	40	40
Horses	64	8
Turkeys	45	45
Geese	30	30
Ducks	20	20

12) Did your farm provide or sell any services in 1999/2000?

Farm tours	\$8,100
Equipment sales	\$21,000
Equipment repairs	\$1,000
Custom machine work	\$18,720
Trucking	\$2,000

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13) In 1999/2000, did you sell any:

	No.	Tons	Sales
Sand	1	14,000	\$10,000
Stone	2	10,000	\$11,000
Gravel	3	50,000	\$58,000

14) With regard to your farm's principal product, please answer the following:

	Average
What percentage of your total dollar sales are DIRECT?	58.4%
What percentage of your total dollar sales are DIRECT WHOLESALE?	45.1%
What percentage of your total dollar sales are TRADITIONAL WHOLESALE?	70.5%

**15) Which of the following
DIRECT market channels
do you use to sell your products?**

Your own roadside stand	14
Other farmers	9
Pick-your own	9
Farmers markets	5
Mail-order	4
Community supported agriculture	3
NONE	20

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

16) Where do you sell your agricultural products?

What percent of your primary agricultural products do you sell that way?

Outlet	Products	No.	Average %
Co-op	Milk	5	100%
Direct marketing	Beef	14	50%
	Hay	6	
	Vegetables/fruit	8	
	Lamb	4	
	Hogs	2	
	Christmas trees	2	
	Milk	2	
	Others	8	
Wholesale	Beef	3	49%
	Hay	2	
	Christmas trees	2	
	Milk	2	
	Others	6	
Auctions	Beef	14	57%
	Calves/cull cows	9	
	Lambs	2	
	Others	6	
Retail	Miscellaneous	4	75%
Farmers' markets	Miscellaneous	2	51%
Mail-order	Miscellaneous	2	8%
U-pick	Miscellaneous	3	34%
Groceries	Miscellaneous	3	37%
Restaurants	Miscellaneous	1	5%
Other	Miscellaneous	3	58%

17) Approximately what percent of your agricultural products are sold outside Broome County?

Less than 1%	14
1 to 24%	13
25 to 50%	8
51 to 75%	4
More than 75%	26

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18) Where do you sell your agricultural products? What percent of your products do you sell there?		No.	Avg. %
		Broome	21
Chenango	12	32%	
Tioga	7	64%	
New York	6	79%	
Tompkins	4	56%	
Otsego	4	50%	
Canadaigua	2	65%	
Bronx	2	100%	
Cortland	2	18%	
Westchester	1	25%	
Nassau/Suffolk	1	25%	
Cayuga	1	70%	
Delaware	1	5%	
Mixed Counties, NYS	2	30%	
Bradford, PA	1	30%	
Lancaster, PA	1	30%	
Outside of NYS	1	57%	

19) What are some of the reasons that you sell your agricultural products outside Broome County?	No market(s) for products in Broome County	22
	Selling prices are higher	17
	Customers reside there	3
	Milk hauler	2
	Casual sales	1
	Demand stronger with larger farms in the West	1
	Dependent upon where person lives	1
	Developed through roadside sales	1
	Live close to County line	1
	Local stores bias and lack of information	1
	Mail order	1
	No auction houses	1
	On demand	1
	Standing hay sold to neighbor in Tioga County	1
	Take product to auctions	1
	When someone needs hay	1

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

20) About percent of ALL your marketable products were NOT sold in 1999/2000? 28%

21) What were the reasons for this?

	Lack of markets	11
	Poor quality/damaged	6
	Kept for own use	6

22) Where do you purchase your farm supplies?
Please estimate the percentage you purchase from each of the following for a typical year.

	No.	Avg. %
Broome County	64	58%
Cortland	40	44%
Chenango	18	41%
Tioga	9	36%
Mixed counties	7	36%
Delaware	5	27%
Otsego	3	8%
Seneca	3	17%
Greene	1	50%
Madison	1	90%
Monroe	1	60%
Onondaga	1	20%
Sullivan	1	25%
Wayne	1	50%
Outside of NYS	22	38%

23) In the past five years, have you considered.....?

	Adding new crops or animal species	25
	Entertainment farming or agri-tourism	13
	Organic production	13
	Providing custom services	11
	Producing high-value crops	9
	Value-added products	7

24) Are you interested in your farm business growing and/or diversifying?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Growing	37	22	13
Diversifying	18	16	17

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

25) What alternative enterprises, if any, have you explored?

Can you also tell us what happened?

Custom work

Hay sales

Goats, but limited market for meat; to market cheese and milk

Weaving business was very successful but no can't compete with Chinese

Wholesale Christmas ornaments very successful; but shipping too high

Trucking

Custom cropping

Raising steers

Board and training horses - still in process

Feed stores - still in process

Aquaculture - found too much investment, little return

Planning retirement - phasing out livestock, will sell hay

Bakery - done well

Gift shop - very successful

Reduced U-pick and now depend on over the counter sales - done very well

Organic vegetable production - local buyers do not want to pay a premium for this.

We switched from heifer replacement to beef

Investigated entertainment. Cost of insurance and labor were the deciding factors

Christmas trees, market flooded, deer problem, want to grow hardwood for future generations

Fruit and vegetables are doing very well, but big deer problem

Raising different crops for sale, land not productive enough

Crops and vegetables eaten by deer and turkeys

Teaching riding to high school and college kids, need a teacher in each school to be leader of club

Greenhouses for berry production

Jam and jelly production

Farm museum, education center

Part-time "woodmizer" sawmill, doing wood lawn products considered for near future

Investigating composting

Hunting leases

Organic farmer 25 years, marketed 100% of custom grown products directly to steady customers

Would grow more vegetables - specialty for ethnic local population and strawberries

Custom services. As business grew, not enough time or profit margin to put up capital

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

26) What do you think would be the impact of the following factors on your farm's profits over the next 10 years?

	Major impact	Limited impact	No change	Not sure
Available markets	41	17	6	4
Changing consumer tastes	27	21	8	8
Higher consumer incomes	20	20	17	10
USDA commodity programs	11	22	24	11
Labor availability	16	15	25	6
Wage rates	16	16	23	6
Environmental regulations	35	23	7	5
Financing availability	14	16	26	9
Agricult land availability	20	18	27	3
Property taxes	38	15	4	1
Capital gains tax	28	17	14	4
Alternative enterprises	13	20	17	8
NAFTA and/or GATT	17	12	21	15
Cost-profits margin of selling	42	9	9	7
CRP-Conserv Reserve Prog.	9	23	22	15
Labor regulations	13	23	23	5
Insurance	31	27	12	0
Support services and bus.	16	30	11	6
Pesticide availability	16	18	27	4
Energy cost	36	26	7	0
Feed cost relative to milk price	18	7	27	8
Media image	20	17	18	11
Others	3	0	0	0

27) How many years do you feel your present farm operation will continue?

Less than a year - in process of exiting farming	2
1-5 years	21
6-10 years	23
11-15 years	10
16 or more	22

28) What percentage of your gross sales was required to operate your farm operations last year?

86% average of GROSS SALES in 1999/2000

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29) If you have scaled down your farming operation or stopped providing certain products during the past 5 years, what changes were made and why do you feel they occurred?

- Labor, lack of quality (2 responses)
- Age, cutting back (2 responses)
- Not enough profit selling milk
- Less field corn due to deer damage
- Less alfalfa due to deer damage
- Weaving - Chinese competition
- Less cattle
- Lack of local farms
- Reduced beef from 23 to 5 - sell calves each year
- Not as much U-pick
- No longer raise grain or oats for feed, job getting easier
- No longer farm, subsistence farming, no profit
- Poor milk price
- Quit raising corn and grain as well as beef due to health and age
- The farming operation has been strictly curtailed
- Removed 75% of apple trees - goal is to raise enough apples to satisfy U-pick demand
- Had to stop growing fruit trees, Christmas trees, hardwood seedlings - deer damage
- Less haying due to weather and labor
- Had to sell tractor, haying equipment to pay taxes and mortgage
- Sweet corn eaten by deer and turkeys
- Used saddles and tack offered on Internet (very cheap)
- Horses are cheaper and harder to sell on Internet because of newness
- Stopped commercial vegetable products because lacked suitable land
- Reproduction problems
- Shut down broiler operation - lost market
- In process of transferring ownership; a gradual process
- Death of spouse; sold cows and young stock
- Could not find suitable employees and could not afford adequate compensation

30) Have you begun to develop an estate plan?	Considering plan	21
	Beginning plan	19
	Completing plan	20
	Not considering	18

31) Do you feel that estate taxes might create a barrier to holding on to the farm for future agricultural purposes?	Yes	36
	No	38

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32) How would you characterize your agricultural enterprise? Would you consider it to be a...	Sole proprietorship	60
	Partnership	16
	For profit corporation	3
	Non-profit corporation	3
	Limited liability company	2
	Other	0
33) Which category best represents your gross annual sales for a typical year?	Less than \$10,000	36
	\$10,000 to \$29,999	22
	\$30,000 to \$59,999	6
	\$60,000 to \$99,999	5
	\$100,000 to \$249,999	7
	\$250,000 to \$500,000	3
	Over \$500,000	5
34) Do you consider yourself to be a full or part-time farmer?	Full-time	38
	Part-time	40
How many hours per week do you devote to farming?		31.22 hours average
Do you have off-farm employment?	Yes	31
	No	14
What percent of your total work time (both off and on-farm) is allocated to your farming operation?		47% average
35) Is your spouse involved in your farm operation?	Yes	38
	No	26
What percentage of your spouse's work time is devoted to the farming operation?		40% average
Does your spouse have off-farm employment?	Yes	32
How many hours per week?		24.96 hours average
36) What percentage of your family income comes from sources OFF THE FARM?		71% average

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37) How many years have you operated and/or owned a farm (include all other farms you've owned and operated, as well as this one)? 29% average

38) How many more years do you plan to continue to farm? 15.03 years average

39) How many years have you worked in farming? 45.44 years average

40) What year were you born?

Year	No.	%
1909-1919	4	5%
1920-1925	9	11%
1930-1939	16	20%
1940-1949	31	39%
1950-1959	17	21%
1966-1967	2	3%
1973	1	1%

41) Does your family have...

	Yes	No	Not sure
COMPREHENSIVE Health Insurance	64	8	2
CATASTROPHIC Health Insurance	19	21	3
OTHERS:	5	0	0
Disability policy	1		
Medicare & Supp	1		
HMO	1		
Medicare	1		
Term/life	1		

42) Is your insurance provided by an off-farm job?

	Yes	No	Not sure
COMPREHENSIVE Health Insurance	51	19	0
CATASTROPHIC Health Insurance	17	15	1
OTHERS:	2	0	0
Supplemental insurance	1		
Medicare	1		

Section 2: Your Employees

1) How many full-time, seasonal workers, or family members worked on your farm in 1999/2000?

	Number	Average
NON-FAMILY MEMBERS		
Year-round workers:		
Full-time	66	4.4
Reg. Part-time	32	2.9
SUB-TOTAL	98	3.8
Seasonal workers:		
Full-time	6	1.2
Part-time	32	2.7
SUB-TOTAL	38	2.2
TOTAL	136	6.0
FAMILY MEMBERS		
Partner	13	1.4
Spouse	22	1.0
Children	49	2.0
Relatives	18	1.8
TOTAL	102	6.2

2) What is your average hourly rate for the following workers?

Full-time	1	\$9.00
	1	\$8.00
	2	\$7.50
	3	\$7.00
	1	\$5.25

Part-time	1	\$8.50
	4	\$7.00
	2	\$6.50
	6	\$6.00
	1	\$5.15
	1	\$5.00
	1	\$5.25
	1	\$4.75

Seasonal	1	\$7.00
	3	\$6.00
	1	\$5.50
	1	\$5.00

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3) Do you provide your employees with other benefits such as insurance, housing, milk, meat, etc.? Please list those benefits:	Housing	5
	Meat	5
	Insurance	3
	Milk	2
	Meals	1
	Produce	1
	Retirement	1

4) Do you use migrant workers in your operation? None

5) What barriers have you experienced in using migrant workers? N/A

6) If using migrant workers were a viable option for you, would you consider hiring them?	Yes	8
	No	23

7) Overall, how would you rate your employees' work ethics?

Excellent	12
Good	17
Fair	7
Poor	1
Very Poor	0

8) Overall, how would you rate your employees with respect to the quality of their work?

Excellent	11
Good	17
Fair	4
Poor	1
Very Poor	0

9) In which of the following categories does your business have problems recruiting employees?

Category	Not a problem	A real problem	Not sure
Skilled	13	8	9
Semi-skilled	11	10	10
Unskilled	18	5	8

10) If your business has a problem recruiting in any of these categories, please describe the nature of your recruiting problem.

Available labor has low-level skills	12
Wage requirements high for skilled labor	8
Poor work attitudes	7
High competition for skilled employees	5
High cost of training employees	2
Skilled labor reluctant to migrate here	1
DOES NOT APPLY	18

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11) Over the next two years, do you think that your business will experience an increase or decrease in the number of its employees? Or do you think things will remain pretty much the same?

Increase	5
Same	30
Decrease	8
Not sure	7

12) A list of training resources follows. Indicate if any of the following have been a source of trained employees for your business.

Previous job experience	15
On the job training	10
Cornell Cooperative Extension	4
Community college/universities	2
BOCES	1
Customized job training	1
NYS Job Service/Department of Labor	1
Targeted Job Tax Credits	1
Other	1

Section 3: Factors Affecting Your Future

1) How useful is the farm management information you receive from the following?

	Useful	Not useful	Don't use or receive
Other farmers	104	4	7
Farm publications	57	5	4
USDA agencies (NRCS, FSA)	46	9	8
Soil & Water Conservation District	46	11	7
Agri-Service	37	7	19
NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets	31	20	13
Cornell-Cooperative Extension	27	6	6
Newspapers	21	31	10
Non-farming friends/relatives	20	20	25
Computer/satellite link	9	24	20
Television/radio	9	35	11

2) What type of changes do you anticipate making in your farming operation during the next 10 years?	No change	20
	Diversify enterprises/markets	17
	More livestock	14
	Major capital improvements	12
	Retire	11
	Sell land	5
	Fewer livestock	4
	More acreage	4
	Sell whole farm	4
	Less acreage	1
	Off-farm job	1

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3) What do you hope to/intend to do with your land upon requirement?

Transfer to family members who plan to farm	39
Transfer to family member for non-farm use	16
Sell to other farmers	14
Sell to non-farmers	11
Other:	7
Build houses	
Additional crops	
Live there	
Get as much as possible when I sell	
Not sure	
Hard to sell farm	
Live on farm as a subsistence farmer	

4) To what extent will the following factors have a negative impact?

	A lot	Somewhat	Not at all
Farm income	41	17	9
Taxes	38	23	9
Federal regulations	36	10	11
State regulations	35	11	11
Local land-use regulations	31	19	17
Watershed regulations	28	10	16
Need new equipment	22	27	18
Development pressures	16	26	21
Need new facilities	15	21	27
Non-farm neighbors	14	30	20
Capital available	11	24	23
Traffic	10	25	25
Labor shortage/turnover	10	16	34
Ability to expand/diversify	8	26	25
Credit available	6	21	34
Other	2	0	0
Age	1	0	0
Available Farmer's Market	1	0	0

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5) How effective are the following in supporting and promoting agriculture in Broome County?

	Effective	Ineffective	Not sure
Cooperative Extension	63	6	6
Farm Bureau	53	12	10
Soil & Water Cons. District	49	10	14
Veterinarians	42	14	18
4-H	33	16	22
County Ag. & Farmland Bd.	31	10	27
NYS Ag & Markets	29	17	23
Farm supply/equip dealers	27	16	19
FFA	24	15	32
Banks and other lenders	23	23	23
NYS DEC	21	29	21
County Government	10	33	26
County Planning & Ec. Dev.	5	30	34
Chamber of Commerce	5	38	28
NYS DOS	3	31	35
NOFA	2	0	0
Forest owner groups	2	0	0
NYS DOL	1	35	34
IDA	1	37	31
Grange	1	0	0

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6) How interested are you in the following topics?

	Very	Some	Little	None
Energy costs/energy conservation	42	26	5	2
Environmental regulations	37	25	6	5
Marketing strategies	34	21	9	8
State finance incentives for farming	31	22	9	8
Pesticide and fertilizer regulations	30	26	8	10
improving your woodlot	28	24	9	11
Influencing potential customers	27	23	10	10
Alternative farming opportunities	26	22	11	15
Opportunities for local processing	24	21	13	14
Estate planning	23	31	13	7
Business plan	23	25	11	11
Resource conservation	21	32	8	5
Regulations on employing workers	13	20	11	27
Labor availability	12	12	18	29
Tax information on employees	10	15	14	30
Labor issues	9	18	15	26
Health care for employees	6	13	19	21
Other	1	0	0	0
Loans for farms	1	0	0	0

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Section 4: State and Federal Agencies, Policies & Programs

- 1) If you've had the opportunity to deal with any of the following city, state, or federal programs, policies and agencies in the last five years, please indicate your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with each.

State Agencies	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dissatisfied	No Contact
NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation	11	25	7	3	28
NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets	9	20	4	1	34
Community college/universities	7	17	3	2	38
NYS Dept. of Transportation	3	8	4	2	52
NYS Dept. of Health	2	9	4	3	53
Empire State Economic Development	2	4	4	0	58
NYS Dept. of Labor	1	5	5	2	54
NYS Public Utility Commission	1	3	3	3	56

Federal Agencies	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dissatisfied	No Contact
Farm Service Agency	28	10	4	1	21
USDA - US Dept. of Agriculture	22	21	2	1	23
Federal Emergency Management	3	7	2	2	55
Rural Development	3	7	5	5	47
Environmental Protection Agency	2	6	2	1	53
Small Business Administration	1	5	2	3	51
Occupational Safety & Health	1	3	2	0	63
US Dept. of Commerce	1	2	2	4	56
Cooperative Extension	1	0	0	0	0

State or Federal Policies & Programs	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dissatisfied	No Contact
Highway programs	1	12	1	3	52
Energy credit program	1	9	4	3	50
Public training provider (BOCES)	1	8	3	1	54
Worker's Compensation	1	5	10	4	50
Unemployment Compensation	0	2	4	2	61
Small business policy	0	2	5	3	58
State welfare programs	0	0	6	7	55

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

2) **Should the state government put more, less, or the same amount of effort in the following if it is to help Broome Co. farmers?**

How important is this to you as a Broome County Farmer?

	More	Same	Less	Very	Some	Not
Establish/improve markets	69	9	0	51	17	2
Lower taxes of goods, inheritance	62	30	0	41	17	1
Tax incentives	59	10	2	39	15	1
Preserve/protect farmland	57	10	2	43	13	4
Provide incentives	49	15	0	35	18	4
Keep insurance prices down	43	7	3	43	10	4
Help find alternative cash crops	43	21	0	32	26	8
Incentives - new approaches	41	20	2	27	24	3
Reduce imports	37	19	6	29	17	9
Enhance financing opportunities	32	23	7	19	23	9
Funding for ag-research	31	26	4	22	25	5
Export opportunities	31	20	6	18	21	10
Grant to develop new products	28	31	2	21	22	8
Fertilizer, pesticide regulation	22	30	16	28	21	6

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

Section 5: City and County Departments

1) City and County Departments	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dis-satisfied	No Contact
Broome Co. Cooperative Extension	39	23	3	8	10
Broome Co. Chamber of Commerce	5	4	4	2	56
Broome Co. Health Department	2	7	3	3	57
Broome Co. Planning & Econ. Development	1	1	2	1	59
Office of Employment & Training	0	2	3	0	62
Broome Co. IDA	0	1	2	0	66

2) Should the local government put more, less, or the same amount of effort in the following if it is to help Broome Co. farmers?

How important is this to you as a Broome County Farmer?

	More	Same	Less	Very	Some	Not
Establish/improve markets	49	11	0	34	20	4
Property taxes	65	2	0	58	6	1
Foster reliable labor	19	28	3	15	24	11
Provide info. on financing/training	20	28	5	12	32	9
Enhance financing opportunities	24	26	4	19	24	14
Education/training	29	21	5	13	27	13
Health care	35	19	3	30	20	7

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

3) What are the three greatest problems you have had or are experiencing in agriculture that you feel government agencies - either at the local, state or federal levels may be able to help with?

16	Lowering taxes.
13	Restoring/improving markets for products and in new areas such as horse breeding.
12	Improving prices.
11	Protecting the right to farm.
6	Addressing NAFTA and import problems.
6	Miscellaneous
5	Helping to ensure intergenerational transfers of family farms
5	Increasing labor availability
5	Limiting increases in energy, production, equipment and other costs of inputs.
4	Copying with environmental and other regulations.
4	Developing and supporting the timber industry
4	Funding ditching and repairs and other soil and water conservation measures.
4	Keeping government out of farming and reducing its scope
3	Controlling animal damage.
3	Helping to access resources available.
2	Improving understanding and fairness toward agriculture in land use regulation.
2	Increasing public awareness of the value of agriculture.
2	Protecting farmland from development and purchasing conservation easements.

Section 6: Plans for Renovation and Expansion

1) Does your agricultural business have a written business plan?	Yes	7
	No	56
	Not sure	3

2) Please indicate which business activities you have done in the past five years and/or plan to do in the next five years.

	Done in past 5 years	Plan to do in 5 years
Starting other business ventures	16	12
Improve facilities	41	24
Change work/business hours	14	9
Participate in joint marketing efforts	8	7
Attend business training	17	11
Computerize record/inventory	19	20
Develop a partnership/corporation farm	10	3
Expanding existing business	17	15
Automation/reduce dependence hired labor	13	10
Downsizing	15	8
Other	2	0
Sold cows	1	0
Construct new facilities	0	1

3) If needed, is land available for your business expansion?

To purchase:	Yes	28	To rent or lease:	Yes	38
	No	23		No	15

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

4) What are the obstacles to your business expansion, if any?

12	Poor prices for products produced and lack of profit potential.
7	Lack of local markets.
5	Age.
5	Lack of capital and other resources.
4	Labor availability.
3	Lack of time.
3	Miscellaneous.
3	Poor location, proximity to developed areas.
2	Government and taxes.

5) How much do you plan to spend for land; machinery, and buildings on your farm operation in the next four years?

Land	
Less than \$25,000	55
\$25,000-\$50,000	1
\$50,000-\$75,000	1
\$75,000-\$100,000	1
\$100,000-\$200,000	0
More than \$200,000	1

Machinery	
Less than \$25,000	44
\$25,000-\$50,000	13
\$50,000-\$75,000	7
\$75,000-\$100,000	0
\$100,000-\$200,000	2
More than \$200,000	1

Building	
Less than \$25,000	47
\$25,000-\$50,000	11
\$50,000-\$75,000	1
\$75,000-\$100,000	1
\$100,000-\$200,000	1
More than \$200,000	1

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

6) In planning for business expansion or improvement, from which of the following organizations have you requested assistance?	Broome Co. Cooperative Extension	22
	Financial Institution	17
	Accountant and/or Financial Planner	15
	Agri-business	11
	FSA	11
	Real Estate Firm	4
	Small Business Admin.	3
	Broome Co. Indust. Dev. Agency	1
	Chamber of Commerce	1
	Farm Credit	1
	NYS Empire State Dev.	1
	Public Official	1
	Small Bus. Dev. Center	1
7) Do you use any of the following as a source of business credit?	Local bank	36
	Farm Credit Service	21
	Credit card	18
	Implement dealer	18
	Credit union	17
	Family	13
	Out-of-county bank	3
	Small business loan	3
	Do not buy on credit	2
	USDA Rural Development	2
	Insurance company	1
	State programs	1

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

Section 7: Assessing Your Community

1) How satisfied are you with this community in terms of the following factors and features?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dis-satisfied	Not Sure	N/A
Scenic area	29	27	6	0	1	4
Services (fire, health, etc.)	22	48	7	1	2	0
Location	17	40	5	0	1	0
Access to higher education	17	35	3	0	1	4
Reliability of utilities	14	40	8	0	1	0
Housing	14	39	5	0	1	6
Recreational opportunities	14	38	5	0	1	3
People	13	44	6	3	0	2
Business environment	13	36	20	4	2	2
Schools	13	35	15	4	0	0
Level of crime/vandalism	13	30	12	6	1	1
Land availability	12	37	8	3	1	1
Size of community	8	42	11	2	0	3
Proximity of markets	8	33	15	1	1	2
Arts and cultural activities	8	31	4	1	2	11
Cost of living	6	39	17	5	0	0
Commercial bank services	6	34	6	1	2	9
Proximity of supplies	5	40	21	2	1	1
Land costs	4	32	11	8	1	6
Quality of labor force	4	27	13	5	3	9
Wage rates	4	25	17	4	2	7
Work ethic	4	23	14	8	1	9
Building costs	3	29	21	4	1	2
Abundant labor	3	20	9	10	4	16
Vocational training	2	22	9	1	6	12
Local taxes	2	15	28	17	2	1
State income taxes	2	14	28	15	2	0
Overall cost of doing business	1	30	25	8	0	1
Labor costs	1	25	13	3	3	11
Sales taxes	1	14	29	13	3	1
Unemployment Compensation	1	13	10	3	5	22
Employee training	0	22	6	1	7	16
Transportation costs	0	17	26	9	3	7
Energy costs	0	11	37	9	2	0
State corporate taxes	0	7	12	6	3	26

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

2) How satisfied are you with the following locally available services?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not Sure	N/A
Transportation						
Delivery services (UPS, etc.)	19	51	0	1	1	1
Access to roads/highway	16	53	3	0	0	2
Road maintenance	11	51	10	1	1	1
Airport facilities	8	45	8	2	1	8
Public parking	7	38	7	1	2	16
Public transportation	7	32	5	1	6	20
Access to shipping	6	36	4	0	5	18
Access to railroad	1	18	9	2	10	30
Utilities	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not Sure	N/A
Water supply	12	37	6	0	0	18
Telecommunication	8	51	5	2	0	3
Energy resources (LP, oil)	8	39	11	8	0	5
Electricity	7	46	13	9	1	0
Waste water treatment	3	26	9	4	5	25
Natural gas	3	17	8	4	2	34
Personal Care/Protection	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not Sure	N/A
Fire protection	16	50	5	1	2	1
Health care/hospital	14	48	9	2	0	0
Police protection	12	51	6	3	2	0
Ambulatory services	10	48	5	1	3	6
Day care	4	25	5	1	5	26
Other	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not Sure	N/A
Solid waste disposal	8	41	4	0	6	11
Code inspections/permits	5	34	21	4	6	7
Hazardous waste disposal	5	27	9	1	10	17
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

3) Do you feel that your community (local and county-wide) has a positive or negative attitude towards agriculture and farmers?	Positive	38
	Negative	38

Broome County, New York - 2001 Agricultural Producer Survey - 83 Responses

4) Please explain why you think so.

26	Lack of awareness of agriculture and the challenges and opportunities it presents.
13	Lack of political power with relative decline in farm base population.
8	Farmers are hurt by taxes and regulation and receive little protection themselves.
7	Farming is perceived as contributing to the economy, culture and environment.
4	People willing to support agriculture until it costs them.

5) Do you feel that agriculture in Broome County is perceived by your community as a vital segment of its economy?

Yes	13
No	62

6) Explain why you think this is so.

11	Lack of understanding as to how the food supply works or agriculture in general.
4	Lack of farm base.
3	Over-regulation and over-taxation of land
1	Economy has made it impossible to be a fulltime farmer.
1	Farms smell.
1	Fresh products availability.
1	People do care about farmers' lives.

7) If Broome County had a "buy local" campaign, would your business be interested in participating?

Yes	34	Are you interested as a...	Buyer	8
No	17		Seller	17
			Buyer & Seller	27

8) How would you feel about town government ordinances that would protect agriculture uses in locations where farming is now the principle activity and allow other uses by permit?

Oppose	8
Undecided	11
Might support	22
Definitely support	31

Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan

Sample Right to Farm Law

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of _____ as follows:

Section 1. Legislative Intent and Purpose

The Town Board recognizes farming is an essential enterprise and an important industry which enhances the economic base, natural environment and quality of life in the Town of _____. The Town Board further declares that it shall be the policy of this Town to encourage agriculture and foster understanding by all residents of the necessary day to day operations involved in farming so as to encourage cooperation with those practices.

It is the general purpose and intent of this law to maintain and preserve the rural traditions and character of the Town, to permit the continuation of agricultural practices, to protect the existence and operation of farms, to encourage the initiation and expansion of farms and agribusinesses, and to promote new ways to resolve disputes concerning agricultural practices and farm operations. In order to maintain a viable farming economy in the Town of _____, it is necessary to limit the circumstances under which farming may be deemed to be nuisance and to allow agricultural practices inherent to and necessary for the business of farming to proceed and be undertaken free of unreasonable and unwarranted interference or restriction.

Section 2. Definitions

1. "Farmland" shall mean land used in agricultural production, as defined in subdivision four of section 301 of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law.
2. "Farmer" shall mean any person, organization, entity, association, partnership, limited liability company, or corporation engaged in the business of agriculture, whether for profit or otherwise, including the cultivation of land, the raising of crops, or the raising of livestock.
3. "Agricultural products" shall mean those products as defined in section 301(2) of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law, including but not limited to:
 - a. Field crops, including corn, wheat, rye, barley, hay, potatoes and dry beans.
 - b. Fruits, including apples, peaches, grapes, cherries and berries.
 - c. Vegetables, including tomatoes, snap beans, cabbage, carrots, beets and onions.
 - d. Horticultural specialties, including nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees and flowers.

Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan Sample Right to Farm Law

- e. Livestock and livestock products, including cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, llamas, ratites, such as ostriches, emus, rheas and kiwis, farmed deer, farmed buffalo, fur bearing animals, milk and milk products, eggs, furs, and poultry products.
 - f. Maple sap and sugar products.
 - g. Christmas trees derived from a managed Christmas tree operation whether dug for transplanting or cut from the stump.
 - h. Aquaculture products, including fish, fish products, water plants and shellfish.
 - i. Short rotation woody crops raised for bioenergy.
 - j. Production and sale of woodland products, including but not limited to logs, lumber, posts and firewood.
4. "Agricultural practices" shall mean those practices necessary for the on-farm production, preparation and marketing of agricultural commodities. Examples of such practices include, but are not limited to, operation of farm equipment, proper use of agricultural chemicals and other crop production methods, and construction and use of farm structures.
5. "Farm operation" shall be defined in section 301 (11) in the State Agriculture and Markets Law.

Section 3. Right-to-Farm Declaration

Farmers, as well as those employed, retained, or otherwise authorized to act on behalf of farmers, may lawfully engage in agricultural practices within this Town at all times and all such locations as are reasonably necessary to conduct the business of agriculture. For any agricultural practice, in determining the reasonableness of the time, place, and methodology of such practice, due weight and consideration shall be given to both traditional customs and procedures in the farming industry as well as to advances resulting from increased knowledge, research and improved technologies.

Agricultural practices conducted on farmland shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance if such agricultural practices are:

- 1. Reasonable and necessary to the particular farm or farm operation,
- 2. Conducted in a manner which is not negligent or reckless,

Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan Sample Right to Farm Law

3. Conducted in conformity with generally accepted and sound agricultural practices,
4. Conducted in conformity with all local state, and federal laws and regulations,
5. Conducted in a manner which does not constitute a threat to public health and safety or cause injury to health or safety of any person, and
- 6 .Conducted in a manner which does not reasonably obstruct the free passage or use of navigable waters or public roadways.

Nothing in this local law shall be construed to prohibit an aggrieved party from recovering from damages for bodily injury or wrongful death due to a failure to follow sound agricultural practice, as outlined in this section.

Section 4. Notification of Real Estate Buyers

In order to promote harmony between farmers and their neighbors, the Town requires land holders and/or their agents and assigns to comply with Section 310 of Article 25-AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law and provide notice to prospective purchasers and occupants as follows: "It is the policy of this state and this community to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food, and other products and also for its natural and ecological value. This notice is to inform prospective residents that the property they are about to acquire lies partially or wholly within an agricultural district and that farming activities occur within the district. Such farming activities may include, but not be limited to, activities that cause noise, dust and odors." This notice shall be provided to prospective purchase of property within an agricultural district or on property with boundaries within 500 feet of a farm operation located in an agricultural district.

A copy of this notice shall included by the seller or seller's agent as an addendum to the purchase and sale contract at the time an offer to purchase is made.

Section 5. Resolution of Disputes

1. Should any controversy arise regarding any inconveniences or discomfort occasioned by agricultural operations which cannot be settled by direct negotiation between the parties involved, either party may submit the controversy to a dispute resolution committee as set forth below in an attempt to resolve the matter prior to the filing of any court action and prior to a request for a determination by the Commission or Agriculture and Markets about whether the practice in question is sound pursuant to Section 308 of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law.

Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan
Sample Right to Farm Law

2. Any controversy between the parties shall be submitted to the committee within thirty (30) days of the last date of occurrence of the particular activity giving rise to the controversy or the date the party became aware of the occurrence.
3. The committee shall be composed of three (3) members from the Town selected by the Town Board, as the need arises, including one representative from the farm community, one person from Town government and one person mutually agreed upon by both parties involved in the dispute.
4. The effectiveness of the committee as a forum for the resolution of disputes is dependent upon full discussion and complete presentation of all pertinent facts concerning the dispute in order to eliminate any misunderstandings. The parties are encouraged to cooperate in the exchange of pertinent information concerning the controversy.
5. The controversy shall be presented to the committee by written request of one of the parties within the time limits specified. Therefore after, the committee may investigate the facts of the controversy but must, within twenty-five (25) days, hold a meeting at a mutually agreed place and time to consider the merits of the matter and within five (5) days of the meeting render a written decision to the parties. At the time of the meeting, both parties shall have an opportunity to present what each consider to be pertinent facts. No party bringing a complaint to the committee for settlement or resolution may be represented by counsel unless the opposing party is also represented by counsel. The time limits provided in this subsection for action by the committee may be extended upon the written stipulation of all parties in the dispute.
6. Any reasonable costs associated with the function of the committee process shall be borne by the participants.

Section 6. Severability Clause

If any part of this local law is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not effect the remainder of this Local Law. The Town hereby declares that it would have passed this local law and each section and subsection thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more of these sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases may be declared unconstitutional or invalid.

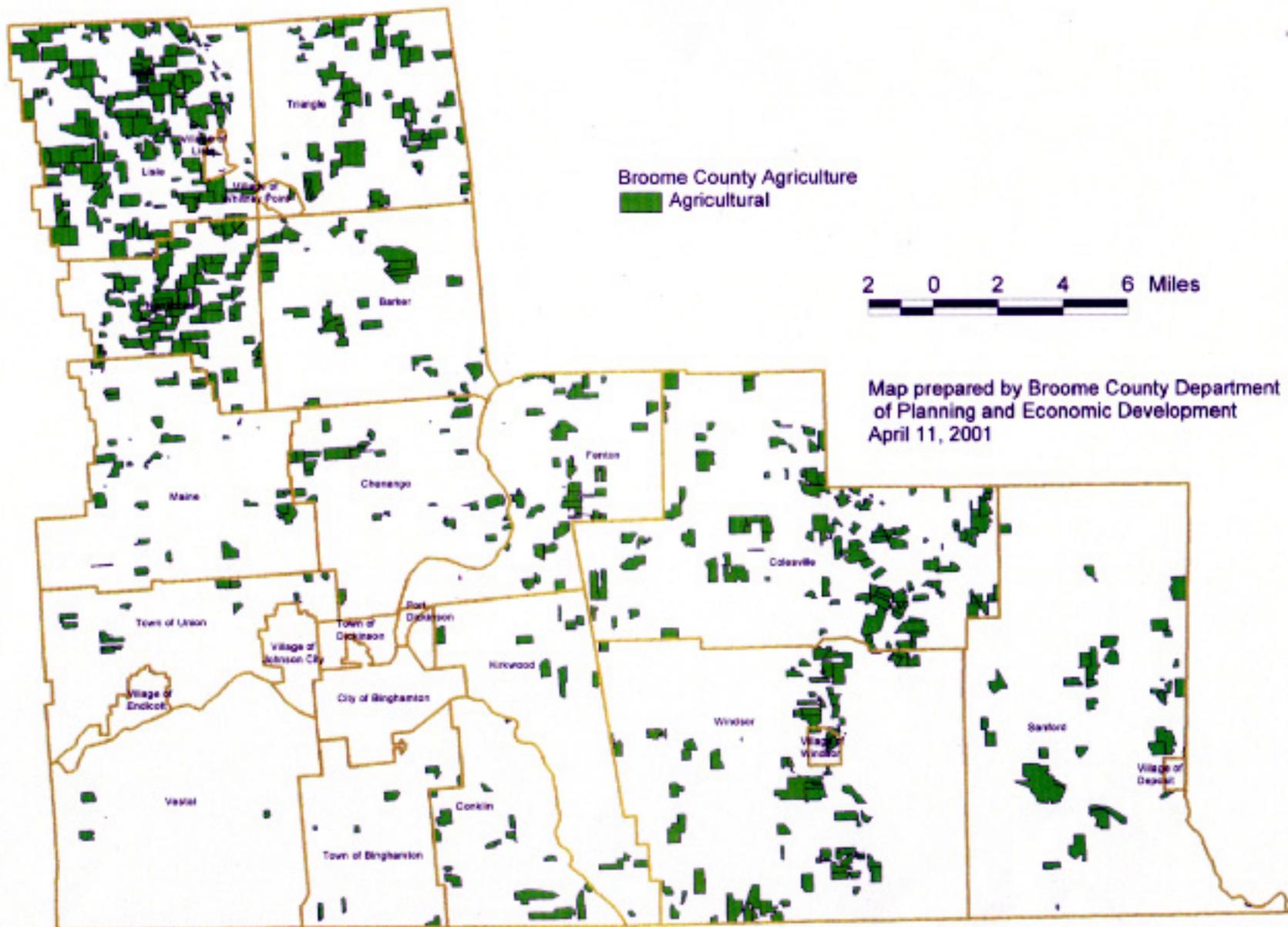
Section 7. Precedence

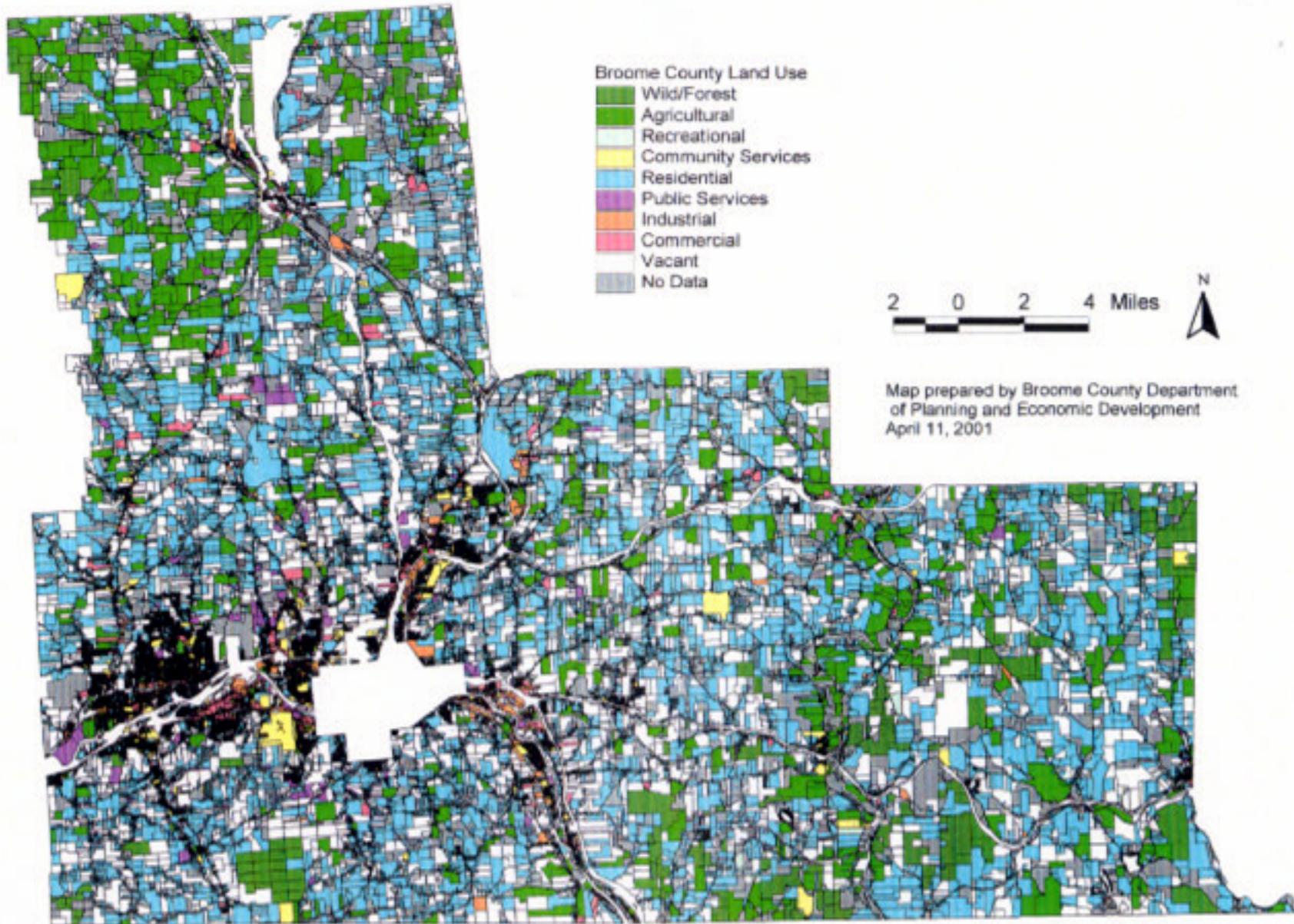
This Local Law and its provisions are in addition to all other applicable laws, rules and regulations.

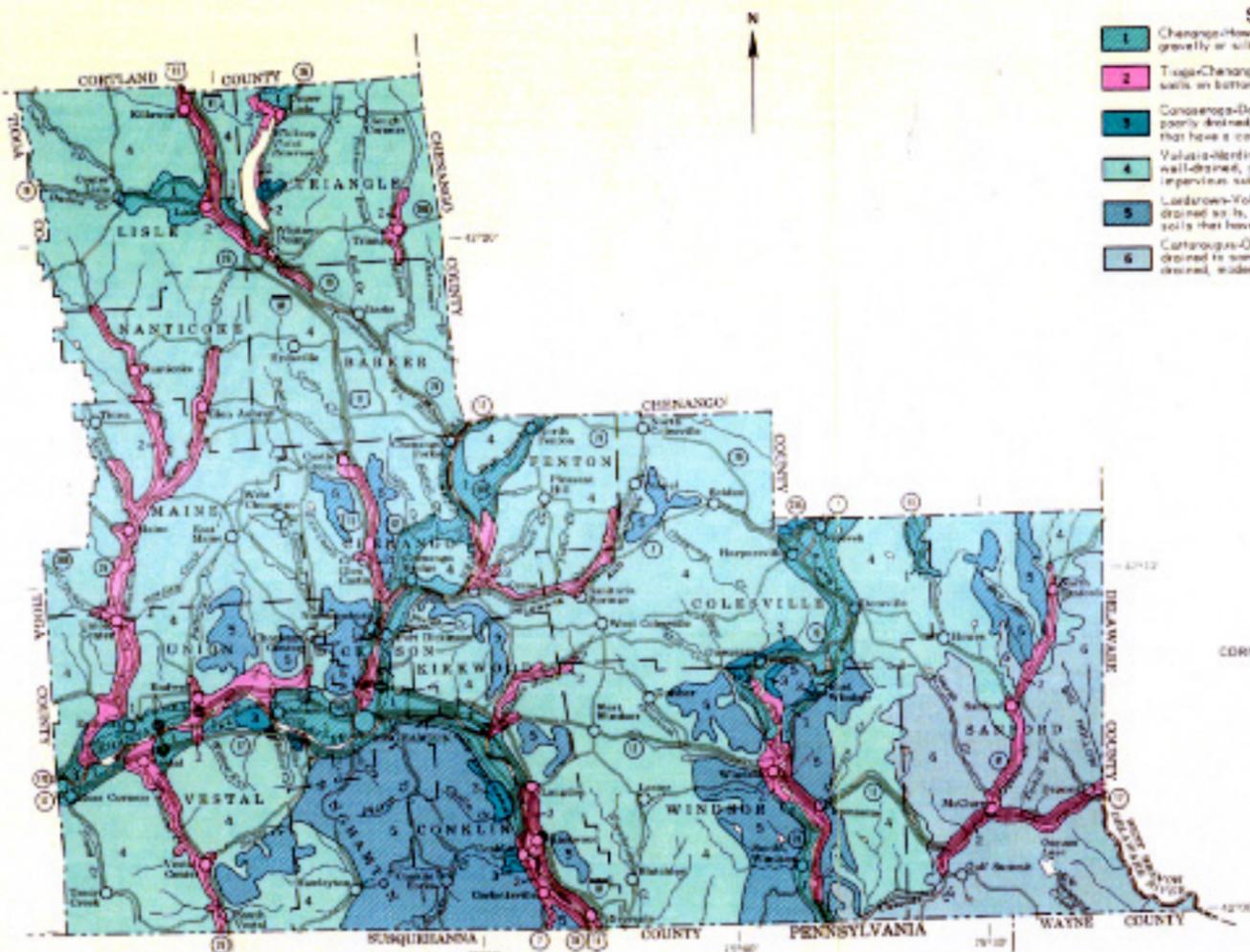
**Broome County Agricultural Economic Development Plan
Sample Right to Farm Law**

Section 8. Effective Date

This Local Law shall be effective immediately upon filing with the New York Secretary of State.







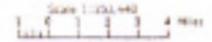
SOIL ASSOCIATIONS

- 1 Chango-Howard-Hudis association: Deep, well-drained, gravelly or silty soils on terraces
- 2 Tuscarora-Chango-Howard association: Deep, well-drained, silty soils on bottom lands and gravelly soils on terraces
- 3 Conango-Dalton association: Deep, well-drained to somewhat poorly drained, gently sloping to moderately sloping, silty soils that have a compact, impervious subsoil, on valley sides
- 4 Volusia-Martin association: Deep, somewhat poorly drained to well-drained, gently sloping to very steep soils that have an impervious subsoil, on uplands
- 5 Ludlow-Volusia-Martin association: Moderately deep, well-drained soils, and deep, well-drained to somewhat poorly drained soils that have an impervious subsoil, on uplands
- 6 Cortland-Dodge-Memo-Culvers association: Deep, well-drained to somewhat poorly drained and moderately deep, well-drained, moderately sloping to steep soils on uplands

October 1969

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
CORNELL UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

GENERAL SOIL MAP
BROOME COUNTY, NEW YORK



NOTE—
This map is intended for general planning.
Such activities may require soils having net
age obtained from those shown on the map.
Use detailed soil maps for operational planning.