

An aerial photograph of a large farm complex. The farm features several large barns, silos, and a central pond. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green fields, some of which appear to be recently plowed or planted, and dense forested areas. The overall scene depicts a well-maintained agricultural operation.

Planning a Future for Agriculture in New York

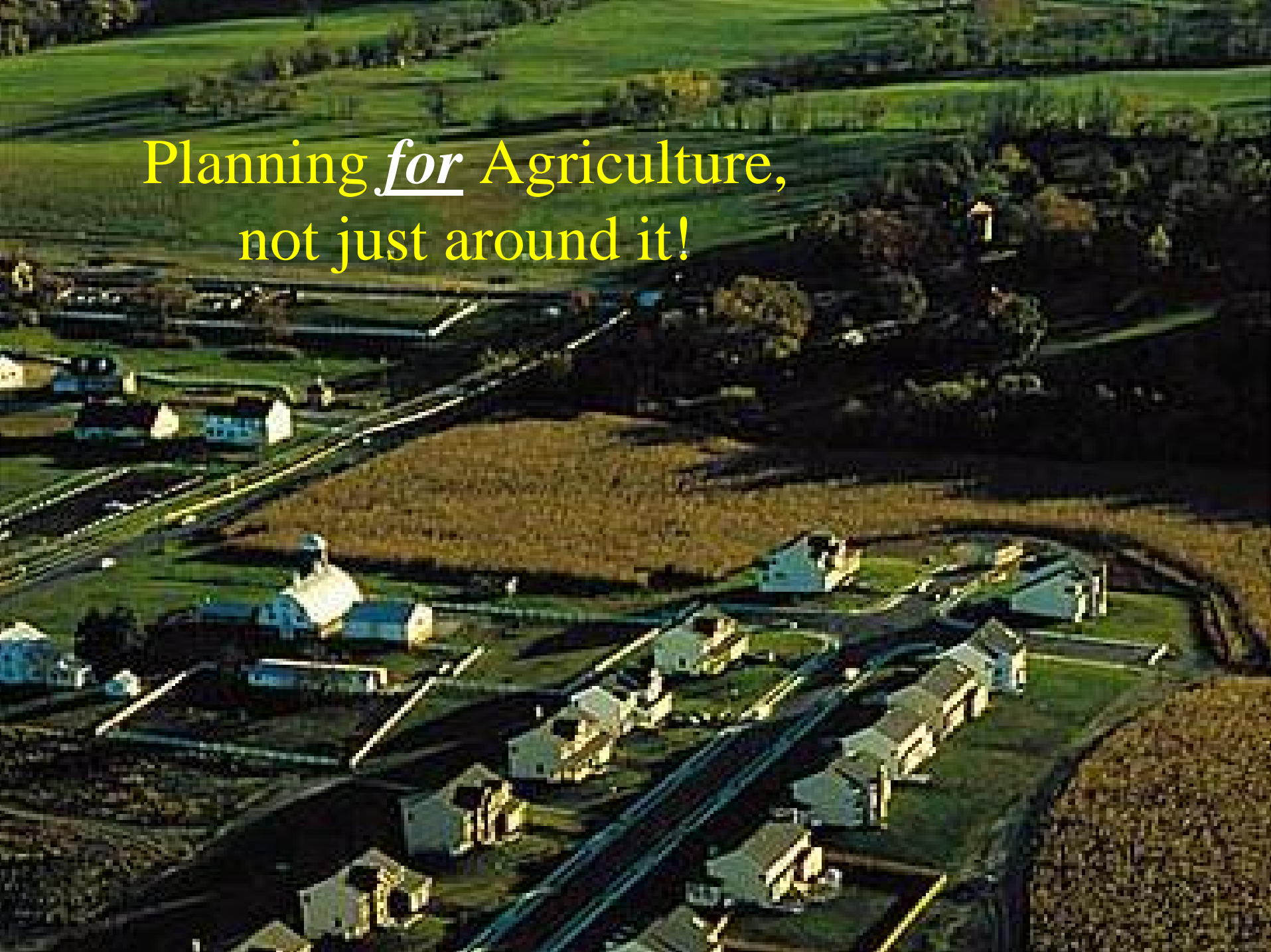
American Farmland Trust

American Farmland Trust



- **National nonprofit founded in 1980**
- **Funded by private donations, grants and consulting contracts**
- **Mission: To stop the loss of productive farmland and promote farming practices that lead to a healthy environment**

Planning *for* Agriculture,
not just around it!





What is Planning for Agriculture (P4A)?

- **Proactive Approach to Insuring a Land Base & Supportive Business Environment for Farms**
 - **Not Just Planning for Open Space!**



Why is P4A Important?

- **Land Use Trends Threaten Agriculture's Future in New York**
- **Towns Play a Critical Role in Land Use Issues**
- **More Towns Interested in Supporting Agriculture**
- **More Tools Available to Town Governments**

Potential Barriers to P4A

Issues For Non-Farmers to Consider

- Multiple Interests Held by Farmers
 - Business Owner
 - Taxpayer
 - Landowner
 - Community Member
- Farms are Businesses & Land Uses
- Agriculture is Constantly Changing

Potential Barriers to P4A

Issues For Farmers to Consider

- Planners & Local Officials Often Share Common Interests with Farmers
- Mixed Messages From Farmers Confuse Local Officials:
 - “Agriculture is dieing anyway. Why bother?”
 - “Keep development away from my farm but don’t restrict my right to develop my property.”
 - “The best thing to do for me is don’t do anything.”

Addressing Agriculture's Land Use and Business Needs: *Town-Based Tools*

- Right to Farm Protections
- Comprehensive Plans
- Zoning
- Subdivision Laws
- Development Rights Programs
- Infrastructure Planning
- Tax Reduction Programs



Right to Farm Protections

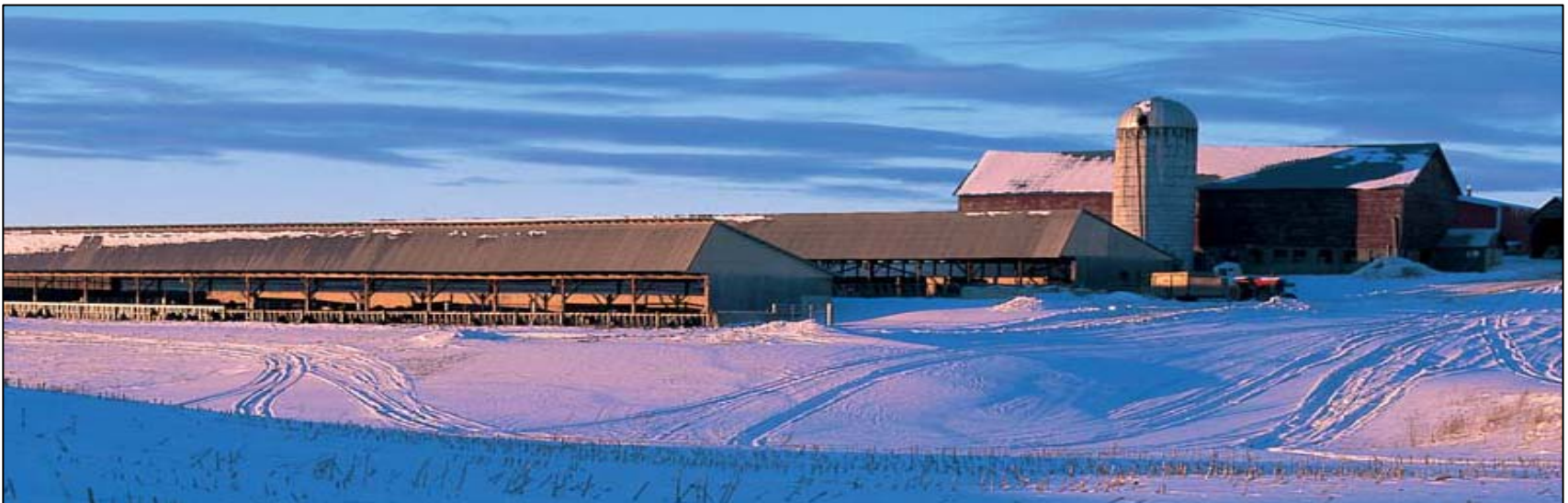
Local Right to Farm Laws

- Local Ordinance Provision – Sec. 305a
- Limit Farmer/Non-Farm Neighbor Conflicts
- Additional Protections
 - ✓ Dispute Resolution
 - ✓ Real Estate Disclosure Notices



Comprehensive Plans and Local Agriculture Plans

- Content
 - Vision
 - Identify Priority Farming Areas
 - Document Benefits and Challenges of Local Farms





Zoning Laws

Supportive Business Environment

- Adopt a Broad Definition of Farming
 - NYS Ag & Mkts Law Section 301
- Support Direct Market Farm Businesses
- Support Business Opportunities Compatible with Ag
- Make Accommodations for Farm Worker Housing and Other Ag Needs
- Stabilize the Ag Land Base

Subdivision Laws

- Evaluate Impacts of New Development
- Design Standards





Development Rights Programs

- Voluntary, Incentive Based Tools
- Provide Incentive for Landowner Accepting Deed Restriction Limiting Rights to Develop the Enrolled Property
- Deed Restriction = Conservation Easements
- Purchase (Permanent) vs. Lease (Term)



Purchase vs. Lease

Purchase

- Permanent Easement
- Incentive = Full Market Value – Restricted Value
- For Landowners Looking to “Cash In” on Equity

Lease

- Term Easement
- Incentive = Reduction in Property Taxes
- For Landowners Not Interested in Permanent Agreement

Infrastructure Planning

Address Agriculture's Infrastructure Needs



- Drainage Systems
- Electric
- Roads & Bridges
 - Handle Large Vehicles
 - Traffic Calming
 - Snowplowing

Infrastructure Planning

Limit Impacts on Agriculture

- Identify Priority Farming Areas
- Steer Water, Sewer & Major Road Improvements Away From These Areas
- Use Mitigation Techniques
 - Lateral Restrictions





Tax Reduction Programs: Local Options

- Promote Property Tax Benefits of Farms
 - COCS Study Results
- Be a Resource for Landowners About State Tax Reduction Programs
- Use Ag Assessment Values for Service Districts
 - Fire, Library, etc.



Town Based Tools for Planning for Agriculture

- No Single Tool Will Solve All of Agriculture's Business and Land Use Needs
- Mix of Tools Will Differ by Community

Sources for Further Information and Assistance

- AFT's *Guide to Local Planning for Agriculture in New York*
 - Purchase at www.farmland.org
 - Download at www.farmlandinfo.org
- NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets
 - www.agmkt.state.ny.us





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