



American Farmland Trust

### *Planning for Agriculture*

**San Diego County, California:** Worked with the County of San Diego, the San Diego Farm Bureau, and the University of California Cooperative Extension/ Farm & Home Advisors to develop a plan to help San Diego County:

- Provide recommendations for the 2007 Farm Bill;
- Streamline the regulatory environment for farmers;
- Provide economic incentives to restore, enhance, or create habitat for sensitive species;
- Provide recommendations for equity mechanisms, i.e., transfer and/or purchase of development rights;
- Support County pest exclusion and pest detection efforts designed to minimize the economic damage caused by quarantines and treatment protocols required for new and exotic pests.

The Farming Program Plan included a Plan and an Implementation Manual to create the framework for economically and environmentally sustainable farming, land use policy and programs recommendations to keep land available and affordable for farming, and economic development tools to help improve farm profitability.

Solano County, California: Developed a framework to sustain and enhance agriculture in the fertile Suisun Valley resulting in the study *Agricultural Vision and Economic Innovation for Suisun Valley*. AFT formulated a vision statement for agriculture in Suisun Valley using individual interviews and listening sessions to assess farmers' concerns for the future of local agriculture. Finally, AFT outlined a strategic plan for agricultural economic development and conservation in Suisun Valley and Solano County.

### **Connecticut**

AFT and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities are currently providing technical assistance to help communities plan for agriculture. Six municipalities—Coventry, Durham, Eastford, North Stonington, Preston and Woodbridge—were selected to receive technical assistance to implement one of the strategies discussed in *Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities*. The towns are focusing on strategies such as: initiating an Agricultural Commission; reviewing farm tax reduction options; encouraging buy local opportunities; including agriculture in town conservation and development plans; and developing right-to-farm ordinances.

**Department of Agriculture, Maryland:** Facilitated planning process and wrote *A Statewide Plan for Agricultural Policy and Resource Management* to provide the state with comprehensive policy recommendations. AFT helped organize the public input process, including stakeholder surveys, listening sessions, conference calls with experts and the Governor’s Agricultural Forum. AFT developed the strategic plan, the core of which centers around three overarching issues: enhance profitability, ensure an adequate base of well-managed agricultural land, and advance research, education and the advocacy of agriculture.

**Saratoga County, New York** (Cornell Cooperative Extension Service): Developed an agricultural and farmland protection plan for Saratoga County, N.Y. This project included surveys and analyses of agricultural resources, trends in the local economy and development patterns, assessment of the importance of agriculture to the local economy, an exploration of ways to support agricultural development, public education and policy recommendations.

**Ohio** (Department of Agriculture): Assisted the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force in analyzing the causes and consequences of farmland loss in Ohio. AFT also helped the task force develop recommendations for improving existing growth management and farmland protection programs and for creating new programs.

**Lancaster County, Pennsylvania:** Worked with Wallace, Roberts & Todd (WRT) Design on the update of the Lancaster County Growth Management Plan’s strategy to sustain rural areas in this Pennsylvania county, focusing on the viability of agricultural industry and the creation of a “Smart Growth Toolbox,” including methods to be implemented by municipalities and the county to improve regulatory and capital investment strategies.

**Union County, Pennsylvania** (in progress): AFT is working with WRT on a comprehensive plan for nine rural townships and four boroughs of Union County, Pa. Located along the Susquehanna River 60 miles northwest of Philadelphia and 200 miles east of Pittsburgh, Union County anticipates its residential housing to grow 40 percent by 2030, with highest growth in agricultural townships. The Agricultural Development and Natural Resources Element of the plan offers strategies to protect farmland and promote smart growth, and explores regional food system development and other economic development strategies to support the business of farming and encourage sustainable agricultural and forestry practices to improve and protect the region’s natural resources.

**Other Clients:**

- Stanislaus County, Calif., Stanislaus Farmland Trust
- Colorado Cattlemen’s Association
- Maine Department of Agriculture
- Cecil County, Md., Cecil Land Trust
- Acme, Mich., Township Board

- Michigan Department of Agriculture
- Genesee County, N.Y., Department of Planning
- Rensselaer County, N.Y., Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
- Town Boards of Brant, Evans and North Collins counties, N.Y.
- Bear River Association of Governments, Utah