

WAUSHARA COUNTY
FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN
2014



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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Waushara County is a rural county characterized by rolling farmlands interspersed with woodlands. The county, located in south central Wisconsin has a total land area of 638 square miles or 408,122 acres. The county lies within the Upper Fox, Wolf, and Wisconsin River Basins. In 2010 agriculture constituted a \$59 billion industry in Wisconsin. Most of this farmland can be found in the southern and eastern portion of the state. In Waushara County the highest percentage of land is Unique Farmland and is found in the western one-third of the county where irrigated vegetable production occurs. Prime agricultural soils are found primarily in the eastern one-third of the county where most of the dairy herds are located.

Despite its importance, agriculture faces many challenges. Farmland around the state is being lost at an alarming rate, and once it's gone it's gone for good. Because of the economic importance of agriculture in Wisconsin and the potential for loss of our agricultural land base, farmland preservation planning is crucial to preserving the agricultural land remaining in the state.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Part of the purpose of drafting, adopting and implementing this Farmland Preservation Plan (FPP) was the process of gathering input from various sources; county and town land use plans, other agencies, and peers. In doing so, Waushara County was able to develop a process to create the FPP mapping areas that would best describe our farmland preservation process.

Waushara County's current FPP was adopted in June, 1981. With the Working Land Initiative (WLI) being adopted in 2009 as part of the 2009-11 biennial budget known as Wisconsin Act 28, it became a priority for counties to update their FPP plan. This plan will fulfill that requirement and help to preserve the farmland that contributes to the economic growth and cultural importance of Waushara County while still allowing for the necessary growth that allows for a vibrant and diverse community.

OVERVIEW OF 1981 PLAN

The 1981 plan is fairly comprehensive in seven major areas identified as: 1) Population and housing that describe county & town population trends, projected populations as well as housing and residential land use trends, 2) Agricultural characteristics describe the county's land use trends relative to farm consolidation, the abandonment of marginal

farmland and the impacts of development, agricultural employment, earnings, farm product sales and production, net farm income and farm investment, 3) Environmental characteristics outline soils found throughout the county, the prime agricultural soils, soil conservation, woodlands and wetlands, 4) Future urban growth and public facilities, 5) Mapping policies that outline the acreages required for enrollment, the impacts on cultural resources such as wetlands and the need to identify areas for growth, 6) Plan recommendations and implementation describe the areas on the map included in the FPP, a description of exclusive ag zoning, residential development restrictions and the pro's and con's of large lot zoning.

The plan lists how conservation standards would be met and followed in accordance with state statutes. Each participant certifies annually in writing that they are following the soil and water conservation standards in their plan. The Land Conservation & Zoning Department monitors this self-certification annually and performs status reviews at a minimum of once every six years through a combination of field inspections, crop rotation reviews as well as aerial photo examinations.

OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS

A modest amount of information meetings were held throughout the county and in different locations in order to get input regarding text and mapping areas. Meetings were held with agency personnel (peer to peer or local work groups), Township Chairs, and the public. Each meeting was advertised in the paper of record, via public service announcements, as well as emails and phone calls to Town Chairs.

PLAN MAINTENANCE AND AMENDMENT

Wis. Stats. 66.1001 requires that an adopted plan be reviewed once every ten years. However, it is a working document that is intended to be reviewed and updated as necessary. The review serves as a checkpoint to ensure that the plan is providing clear direction to meet identified goals and that it remains consistent with both local and state trends, values, and needs.

Chapter Two

EXISTING CONDITIONS

OVERVIEW

This chapter gives a brief summary of existing conditions in Waushara County and will help to explain how determinations were made in this plan (Appendix 2.1). Waushara County's Comprehensive plan was adopted on December 8, 2009 and much of this information was taken from that plan.

POPULATION, HOUSING AND MUNICIPAL GROWTH

Over the past fifty years, the population within Waushara County has seen a substantial increase in its growth. Recent Waushara County growth trends from WDOA (Wisconsin Department of Administration) indicate that between 2000 and 2005 population increase has slowed but continues to outpace Wisconsin.

Migration has played a greater role in population change in Waushara County than natural increase between 1950 and 2005. Furthermore, the rate of net migration in Waushara County has exceeded the overall Wisconsin net migration rates each decade since 1980, which indicates that Waushara County is attracting residents from other parts of Wisconsin. Since natural increase rates were negative, the entire increase in population in Waushara County since 1990 can be attributed to in-migration. As the county's population ages, an increase in demands or desires may exist for a wider variety of housing, healthcare, support services and transportation options than are typically available in rural communities.

Household size for Waushara County has been decreasing since 1970. Waushara County had an average household size of 2.5 in 1990 and 2.4 in 2000. In 1990 and 2000, the majority of households in Waushara County were family households, and the majority of family households were married couple families. The population in Waushara County is less diverse than that of the state. In 2000, whites comprised 96.8 percent of Waushara County's population compared to 88.9 percent of the state's population.

Population growth in Waushara County will result in an increase in demand for services and land consumption. Waushara County is expected to grow by 21.6 percent between 2000 and 2030. Waushara County population projections by age indicate that the number of county residents age 65 and older may double between 2000 and 2030 (from 1,306 to 2,811), while the number of children may decline by 21 percent.

Based on projected growth patterns and smallest average household size assumptions, the number of households in Waushara County is expected to increase by 28.8 percent between 2000 and 2030 (from 9,336 to 12,023).

Waushara County is comprised of 18 towns (Plainfield, Oasis, Rose, Springwater, Saxeville, Bloomfield, Poy Sippi, Leon, Mount Morris, Wautoma, Deerfield, Hancock, Coloma, Richford, Dakota, Marion, Warren and Aurora), two cities (Berlin – partial and Wautoma), and six villages (Coloma, Hancock, Plainfield, Wild Rose, Redgranite and Lohrville).

With the exception of the Town of Warren, all unincorporated communities within Waushara County utilize county zoning. Waushara County enforces shoreland zoning and subdivision regulations in all unincorporated areas and private on-site wastewater treatment system regulations in all jurisdictions not served by municipal sewer.

Two incorporated municipalities utilize extraterritorial controls within the county. The City of Wautoma regulates subdivisions within the extraterritorial area, while the City of Berlin has adopted extraterritorial zoning in the Town of Aurora.

Areas of municipal expansion are most likely to occur around townships within the county. Appendix 2.2 is the proposed future land use map with municipal expansion in many townships, including industrial areas around Plainfield, Redgranite and Coloma. There is proposed mixed commercial/industrial expansion around the city of Wautoma and the Town of Aurora. There is an area in the township of Bloomfield that has proposed expansion of mixed commercial/residential. Areas in the townships of Coloma, Wautoma, Dakota, Marion, Springwater, Warren, Aurora, Poy Sippi and Bloomfield have areas proposed for future residential expansion.

UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Electrical and Natural Gas

There are four companies that provide power to Waushara County; they include Adams Columbia Co-op, Alliant-Wisconsin Power and Light, Pioneer Power & Light Company, and Wisconsin Electric Power Company. Natural gas is provided to Waushara County residents by either Wisconsin Gas Company or Alliant/Wisconsin Power & Light.

Water

The county is served by municipal water systems and private wells. Municipal water systems are located in the cities of Wautoma and Berlin, and the villages of Coloma, Hancock, Plainfield and Redgranite. Groundwater is the source of drinking water throughout the county. The majority of homes within Waushara County are served by private wells. Some private wells located in this area contain nitrate levels that are higher than the EPA Safe Drinking Water Act standards of 10 mg/L. Water sample tests from 1990 – 2001 revealed that 96 wells within Waushara County exceeded the 10 ppm threshold level for nitrate. For conversion purposes, 1 part per million (ppm) is the same concentration as 1 mg/L. Existing and new high capacity wells for irrigation, predominately in the western half of the county is causing tension between farmers and

non-farmers, because of the fluctuation of surface water levels and the perceived connection between ground and surface water levels.

Groundwater

Low lake levels and poor groundwater quality in some areas have been concerns for Waushara County communities. Portions of Waushara County, especially the northwest portion, are particularly susceptible to groundwater quantity issues due to a regional groundwater divide. High capacity wells used by agricultural operations and incorporated communities may also cause greater strain on local supplies. In addition, the fish hatchery that was recently refurbished in the Wild Rose area by the DNR has caused additional concerns about the quantity of the local water supply.

Water Quality

The water quality in some parts of the county has degraded. Though the source of the problem remains unclear, a number of pesticides, herbicides, and other fertilizers used in traditional agricultural practices have been found in the local water supply. The increase in nitrates, phosphorus, and other chemicals in the water might be related to upstream agriculture production practices.

Transportation

Waushara County's roadway network is comprised of local roads and highways. Interstate 39, found in the western part of Waushara County, provides north-south vehicular movement through the center of the state, while STH 21, another popular transportation corridor, traverses east-west through the county, providing access from Oshkosh to I-39, I-90/I-94 and the western part of the state. Although private vehicles are the primary mode of transportation in Waushara County, there are several biking and pedestrian opportunities available to the residents and visitors. Two basic utility airport facilities are located in Waushara County: the Wautoma Municipal Airport and the Wild Rose Idlewild Airport. (Appendix 2.3)

Communications

According to information obtained from Waushara County files, there are a number of cell phone towers scattered throughout the county. Century Kendall, Century Midwest WI, CenturyTel Central, SBC Communications, Verizon, AT&T, Bug Tussel and Union Telephone all provide service to Waushara County. Due to the proliferation of internet service providers (ISP), area residents can choose from several national and local ISPs. These services can and often assist farmers in the day to day operations of farming.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS) serve a majority of Waushara County residents. Public wastewater treatment is available in the cities of Wautoma and Berlin; the villages of Coloma, Hancock, Plainfield, Wild Rose and Redgranite; and through the Silver Lake Sanitary District (city of Wautoma and parts of the townships of

Dakota, Marion, Wautoma and Mount Morris). Service is also available around Lake Poygan through North Lake Poygan Sanitary District and South Lake Poygan Sanitary District.

The county operates nine (9) waste collection sites and contracts with Waste Management of Wisconsin, Inc. and Onyx Waste Services to haul waste and recyclables. Residents are able to utilize any drop-off site within the county. All waste management sites in Waushara County accept recyclable materials. The University of Wisconsin Extension holds a Hazardous Materials Clean Sweep each year for Waushara County residents. This service assists landowners and farmers dispose of waste that is potentially dangerous to keep on hand. This program is very popular with area residents and farmers.

Processing, Storage and Supply

The growing of crops and livestock is just part of the process. Farmers need to have convenient access to supplies – from what they put in the ground to feed and care for their animals, how they care for them to maintaining their equipment. Waushara County has the following services available to help farmers operate efficiently:

- Farm Cooperatives
- Veterinary Services
- Fuel Supplies
- Feed Dealers
- Fertilizer Dealers
- Livestock Services
- Farmers Market
- Grain Storage
- Grain Drying
- Meat Processing
- Dairy Consulting & Supplies
- Agricultural Consulting
- Soil Testing
- Manure Management
- Pest Management
- Farm Equipment & Repair

Anticipated changes in the nature and focus of agricultural production, supply and distribution in the future is difficult to predict. Agricultural production, supply and distribution have expanded in the recent past and we expect to see this trend continue in the future. Opportunities exist within the agricultural community for businesses to consolidate, merge, etc., as the need to accommodate this new growth continues. There are two large grain storage facilities located in the eastern side of the county at the intersection of State Highway 21 and State Highway 49. Both have plans for expansion and have room for further expansion if there is a need in the future.

Fresh vegetable production and processing continue to grow throughout the central sands of Waushara County. Land is being cleared to expand fields and add acres under irrigation. New high capacity irrigation wells are being drilled to increase vegetable and

grain production. Fresh vegetables are shipped to processing plants through-out the state and neighboring states. There is also an increasing need for large amounts of forage for large dairy operations in central Wisconsin; therefore there is more irrigated land in forage production. Another trend Waushara County is seeing is Christmas tree farms are no longer replanting Christmas trees after harvest, but having wells drilled and converting the land to irrigated grain and vegetable production. With continued availability of irrigation water, we can expect the amount of land cleared and converted for farming to increase along with continued increased grain and vegetable yields.

Although there is not a farmers market in Waushara County, residents enjoy plenty of fresh produce available at roadside stands. Many smaller vegetable producers have roadside stands to get fresh produce to the residents. Some have multiple produce stands around the county and surrounding counties to reach a larger market. In Waushara County there are many Amish farmers that produce fresh market vegetables and many sell their vegetables at the vegetable auction in Dalton, WI.

There are two main agriculture co-op's in the county: Archer Daniels Midland Co. (ADM) located in the Town of Aurora and Frontier FS located in Wautoma. TH Agri-Chemicals located in the Village of Plainfield, also provides products and services for area farmers.

Other agriculture co-op's serving Waushara County in neighboring counties are ADM in Westfield & Stevens Point, CPS in Almond, and FS in Amherst currently providing fertilizer and seed needs for area farmers.

Chapter Three

ECONOMICS

OVERVIEW

Agriculture and the natural resources of Waushara County are still important segments of the county's rural economy. There may be specific economic development strategies that could help improve the well-being of local farmers; as long as financial conditions remain difficult, farmers will continue to find alternative uses for their land. Natural resources can provide a positive economic benefit to the area through recreational uses and overall aesthetics. However, protection and impact to the area's natural resources should be considered whenever a new business or development is proposed.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Economic Base Information

The manufacturing (22.1%); education, health, social services (17.9%) and retail trade (10.4%) industries employed over half (50.4%) of workers in Waushara County in 2000. The top three occupations for Waushara County workers in 2000 were production, transportation, and material moving (25.0%); management, professional, and related (23.5%); and sales and office (21.4%).

Employment Forecast

It is anticipated that the largest increases will be seen in the education and health services sector.

Economic strengths generally include the proximity to Stevens Point (Portage County), Oshkosh (Winnebago County), and the rest of the Fox Valley; natural areas, open space, and recreational opportunities; access to a good highway system; unique agricultural soils; strong agricultural economy; and tourism attractions. Weaknesses include low population density; lack of economic diversity and lack of affordable housing.

Housing

Agriculture and natural resources need to be considered when planning for the housing element. Most new residential construction is occurring on agricultural land or adjacent to significant natural resources such as a lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, steep slopes, or forested areas. Although these natural features provide aesthetically pleasing views for new homeowners, residential encroachment has detrimental impacts to the natural resource base. In many areas housing development patterns have been rather haphazard. Scattered housing patterns have resulted in high costs to local communities in the form of lost farmland, increased demand for public services; and conflicts between homeowners,

farmers, environmentalists, and recreationalists. Demand for home sites also drives land costs upward, reducing the ability of farmers to buy land to either begin farming or expand existing operations.

AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Generally, Waushara County has had a farming history and tradition that have attracted residents to the area. Waushara County farmers produce a variety of feed and cash crops. Farming and other agricultural activities contribute significantly to the local economy. As with elsewhere in rural Wisconsin, these trends are changing as new developments encroach on productive farmland. The suburbanization trend is of great concern to both farmers and residents of the County.

The following information was taken from Waushara County’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan - December 2009: Agricultural land cover, which includes row crops, forages, and grassland, comprised over 56 percent of the total area of Waushara County (see chart below).

Table of Percent of Land Cover, 1991—1993

	Row Crop	Forages	Grassland	Total Farmland
Waushara County	26.6%	9.0%	20.4%	56.0%

UWEX Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, 1999

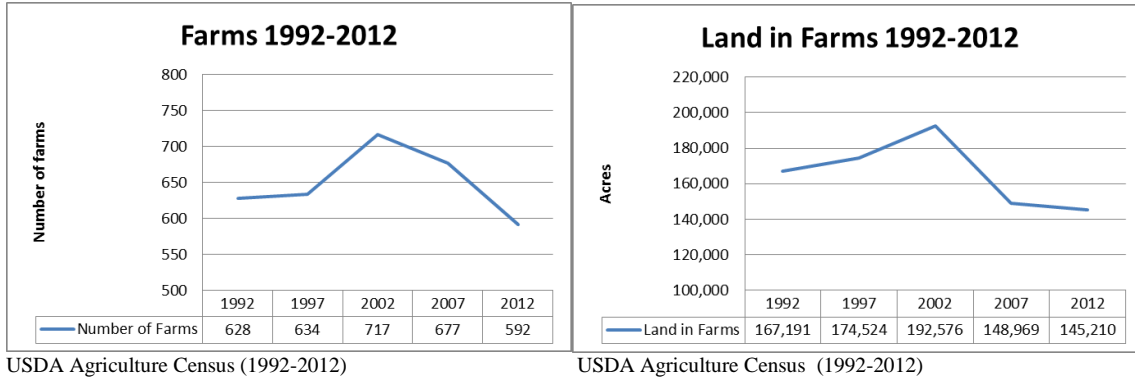
While 56 percent of the land in Waushara County is farmland, within the individual towns the percentage varies - higher percentages of land in forage are generally found in the eastern part of the county in the Townships of Aurora, Poy Sippi and Bloomfield. Exceptions are the towns of Oasis and Hancock. Towns with lower land area in forages generally have a larger percentage of land in grassland. Towns with a smaller share of total farmland are usually areas with a higher number of lakes.

CORN FOR GRAIN: Acreage, Yield, and Production for Waushara County, 2010-2011

All corn planted	Grain Harvested	Yield per acre	Production
36,000 Acres	34,100 Acres	174 Bushels	5,940,000 Bushels

2012 WI Agriculture Statistics

Farmland Losses



Farm and farmland losses are the result of economic pressures within agriculture as well as competition for agricultural lands from residential and recreational development. Waushara County has kept pace with a steady decline in the number of farms and farmland acreage. The graphs above show that both the number of farms and the amount of land in farms in Waushara County has decreased from 1992-2012. National trends have indicated that, while the number of farms has declined, the acreage per farm has increased. While this may be a state trend as well, it was not true for Waushara County. Between 1992 and 2012, the average farm size decreased from 291 acres to 245 acres. Since 2012 land in the county has been cleared to increase acreage in fields and create new fields, so we expect the land in farms to increase in the 2017 agricultural census. Waushara County has seen agriculture related enterprises grow in the past and with continued land clearing and increased yields of vegetables and grain crops, we expect to see this growth continue in the future. Additionally, we anticipate the need for additional veterinary services, fertilizers, fuel and farm service suppliers as well as increased grain storage from local coop's. As dairy farmers retire, many sell their cattle, expand corn and soybean production, and reduce or eliminate pasture and hay ground.

Waushara County Farm Statistics Table

	1992	1997	2002	2007
Number of Farms	628	634	717	677
Median Size (Acres)	N/A	132	141	94
Land in Farms	167,191	174,524	192,576	148,969

USDA Agriculture Census (1992-2007)

Distribution of farms by size and percent change from 1992 to 2007

Acres	1992	1997	2002	2007	Percent Change
1 to 9	34	35	36	46	1.3
11 to 49	84	168	170	142	7.5
50 to 179	241	248	243	290	4.4
180 to 499	188	166	190	133	-10.3
500 to 999	56	46	42	39	-3.1
1000+	25	30	36	27	0

USDA Agriculture Census (1992-2007)

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

There is one hospital located within Waushara County; the Wild Rose Community Memorial Hospital in the village of Wild Rose. Emergency medical services for most of the county are provided by the Waushara County EMS. EMS administrative offices are located at 230 W. Park Street in Wautoma and provide municipal and county ambulance service. The department also operates a permanent service center in Poy Sippi and alternating service centers in Coloma and Plainfield. Additional services are provided by neighboring communities in some instances (e.g. City of Berlin provides services in the town of Aurora).

OFF-FARM JOBS

Of the total number of farmers in the county, 1,694 list farming as the principal occupation and 388 list other sources of income (retirement pensions or off-farm jobs) as primary income sources. According to 2008 Agricultural Statistics, the average farm income in Waushara County in 2007 was \$19,040 compared to \$39,185 in 2004, down 49 percent.

Chapter Four

AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

OVERVIEW

Agricultural, natural, and cultural resources give definition to a community and strongly affect its quality of life. For communities in Waushara County, a tapestry of working farms interwoven with large stands of woodlands and wetlands continue to dominate the rural landscape and help shape the area's identity and culture. Increased development within the county has caused large parcels of land to become fragmented. The new development is often scattered on large parcels of land taking unnecessarily large amounts of acreage out of productive agricultural and forestry use with a resultant impact on natural resources such as lakes, streams, and woodlands.

RESOURCES AND LAND USES

Approximately 151,042 acres of land in Waushara County is considered agricultural land. The table below outlines the distribution of agricultural land within the county by category.

Agricultural Land Use Table

USE	ACRES	DISTRIBUTION
Total Cropland	108,934	72.1%
Cropland used only for Pasture and Grazing	2,073	1.4%
Total Woodland	22,021	14.5%
Permanent Pasture and Rangeland	5,066	3.4%
Land in Buildings, Livestock facilities, etc.	12,948	8.6%
Total	151,042	100.0%

2007 USDA Agriculture Census

Cropland makes up the largest percentage of agricultural land within the county at just over 72%. Of the 108,934 acres of cropland, about 97,711 acres are harvested. Corn for grain, corn silage and soybeans comprise approximately 44,360 acres or 45.4% of harvested cropland. Western Waushara County consists mainly of irrigated vegetable production which is comprised of approximately 27,364 acres or 28% of harvested cropland (2007 USDA Agriculture Census).

The number of livestock operations is changing according to the Waushara County UW-Extension agriculture agent, Ken Williams. Farms engaged in dairy reported a decline of cow numbers from 6,000 in 2002 to 5,100 dairy cows in 2008. Conversely, hog producers have increased their numbers recently. In 2002 there were only 35 hog producers in the county. In 2007, 36 hog farms were in operation. The number of hogs and pigs sold in 2002 was 1,793. By 2007, that number increased to 4,677.

Additionally, the beef industry in Waushara County has seen a slight increase in cattle numbers. The number of beef cattle farms has increased slightly from 81 in 2002 to 103 in 2007. As a result of these beef operations, beef cattle numbers have also increased from 781 in 2002 to 1196 in 2007. According to a February 2013 “Wisconsin Cattle & Milk Review” publication, Wisconsin’s inventory of cattle is up 50,000 head from 2012. Wisconsin maintained its ninth place ranking in the nation for inventory of cattle and calves.

RATE OF FARM CONVERSION

As new households are formed, more land will be converted from farms, forests and open space to residential uses. Farmland is also under pressure in many areas of the county from seasonal home development. The amount of land converted will vary depending on the choices made in terms of the density, design and placement of that development.

Choices must be made; residential land uses have higher property values than farmland, so their expansion is seen as an opportunity to increase tax revenues. Little attention is paid to net tax gains, even though various farmland trust studies have shown that the cost of services for other forms of development, particularly single family residential, typically exceeds tax revenues generated by that development, while taxes generated by farmland exceed the cost of services for farmland.

As farmers reach retirement age, many of these individuals see farmland conversion as a quick, easy retirement option, especially in the face of increased conflicts between the realities of farming and the expectation of exurban residents. Modern day industrial farming requires substantial monetary investments, which makes it difficult for young farmers to enter the field. Farming is also under considerable economic pressure, as production costs rise and profits from food sales shift away from farmers to food processing and sales. Allowing a farmer to develop his land provides housing opportunities and cash benefits for that farmer. However, it also increases the need for additional public services which require additional tax revenues. Nonfarm development may also cause economic, land use, and transportation conflicts for the farmer who wishes to maintain or expand his operation.

Since 1990, dairy farms within Waushara County have been declining. In 1990 Waushara County had 232 dairy farms and in 2007 the number had dropped to 69, a 70.3% decline.

From 1990 to 2012 the price of corn has fluctuated considerably. In 1990 the average price of corn was \$2.36 a bushel and the price stayed constant until 2000 when the average price dropped to a 22 year low at \$1.82 a bushel. In 2007 the average corn price began to increase, to \$4.20 a bushel in 2008 and an all-time high of \$6.89 a bushel in 2013 (USDA Economic Research Service).

Soybeans followed a similar trend; in 1990 the price of soybeans was \$5.58 a bushel and dropped to \$4.54 in 2000. In 2006 the price began to increase to \$6.43 and rose to an all-time high in 2013 at a price of \$14.07 a bushel (USDA Economic Research Service).

Hay prices have increased yearly since 1990 where the price was \$80.60 a ton. In 2007 the price rose to \$110.00 at ton, the first time it was over \$100 a ton. In 2012 and 2103 the price skyrocketed to \$187.00 a ton due to the shortage caused by the lack of rainfall. As the supply begins to rebound the price should re-stabilize (USDA Economic Research Service).

Non-Irrigated cropland rental rates vary dramatically due to the variation of soil types within Waushara County. The County averages ranged from \$71.00 an acre in 2006 to \$45.00 dollars an acre in 2009 and increased to \$53.50 an acre in 2011. The land rental rates also vary dependent on the commodity prices (USDA Farm Census 2007).

NATURAL RESOURCES

The local communities in Waushara County are defined by diverse topographical features. Evidence of several phases of the Wisconsin Glacier can be found in the County. The western edge of the county is a flat outwash plain. A narrow moraine is located on the eastern boundary of this outwash plain extending through the Villages and Towns of Coloma, Hancock and Plainfield. This moraine ridge creates a groundwater divide separating the county's groundwater flow east and west. Central Waushara County (City of Wautoma, Village Wild Rose and surrounding Towns) gradually flattens to a rolling plain as you move eastward across the county. The eastern third of the county is a gently rolling lake plain. The southeastern areas of Waushara County were once occupied by Lake Oshkosh and are characterized by relatively flat to gently rolling plains. The glacial plain areas of Waushara County have expansive deposits of red clay and organic-rich soils. This combination has resulted in expansive wetlands and valuable agricultural areas. As a result of glacial activity, land relief within Waushara County is quite varied. Within Waushara County, land relief is approximately 390 feet, from a low of 750 feet above sea level near Poygan Marsh to a high of 1,137 feet at the Nordic Mountain Ski Hill (a granite monadnock located in the Town of Mount Morris).

SOILS

Soils provide the physical base for development and agriculture within a community. Knowledge of their limitations and potential difficulties is important in evaluating crop production capabilities and other land use alternatives such as residential development, and utility installation. The criteria considered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in establishing the severe rating of soils include wetness, shrink–swell potential, bearing strength, susceptibility to flooding, land spreading, slope steepness, and frost action. Soils are classified according to their associations, which are a grouping of similar soil types based on geographic proximity, physical characteristics, and permeability. There are eight major soil associations within Waushara County: (Appendix 4.1)

- Plainfield-Okee-Richford Association Soil
- Plainfield-Richford-Boyer Association Soil

- Kingsville-Meehan Association Soils
- Houghton-Adrain-Willette Association Soils
- Hortonville-Symco-Manawa Association Soils
- Plainfield-Pearl-Leola Association Soils
- Poy-Zittau-Poygan Association Soils
- Morocco-Kingsville-Keowns Association Soils

Farmland Soils

Waushara County's farmland contributes to the quality of life, provides an open agricultural landscape, and adds to the economy of the area. A classification system rating the suitability of a specific area based on soil type and condition was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These classifications in order of importance are: 1) prime farmland, 2) unique farmland, 3) farmlands of statewide importance, 4) farmlands of local importance, and 5) other lands. (Appendix 4.2)

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture is “the land that is best suited for food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops” when managed according to acceptable farming methods. These lands may be cultivated, pasture, woodland, or other land, however the land cannot be built-up, urbanized, or a water area. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources with the least damage to the environment. Criteria used to determine prime farmland include an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, few or no rocks, high permeability, gently sloping terrain (0 to 6%) and a low erodibility. Prime farmland is not frequently flooded during the growing season or saturated with water for long periods of time. Soils that have a seasonal high water table may qualify as prime farmland if this limitation is overcome by drainage measures. Prime farmland makes up 36,290 acres or 8.9% of Waushara County's soils. There is a possibility that more prime farmland is present in the county. There are 11 soil types that encompass 40,890 Acres or 9.9% of the county soils, that are considered prime farmland if they are drained. Many of these soil types are tilled but an estimated acreage is hard to determine. Prime farm land is mainly located in the eastern portion of the county, within townships of Saxeville, Bloomfield, Leon, Poy Sippi, Warren and Aurora.

Unique farmland is defined as land other than prime farmland that is used to produce specific high-value food or fiber crops. It has a moisture supply, either from stored precipitation or irrigation systems, and combines favorable factors of soil quality, growing season, temperature, humidity, drainage, elevation, aspect or other conditions. Examples of specialty crops that typically require a high management and investment level include apple orchards, lettuce, carrots, celery, and cauliflower. The highest percentage of land in Waushara County is considered unique farmland. According to the Census of Agriculture, in 2012 there were 30,140 acres where vegetables for sale were grown, and 39,904 acres under irrigation.

Farmlands of statewide importance are lands in addition to prime and unique

farmland that are important to the State of Wisconsin for crop production. These lands fall mostly within the central portion of the county in the transition area between the irrigated sands to the West (unique farmland) and the finer clay soils to the East.

Farmlands of local importance are lands in addition to the previous three categories which are important to Waushara County for crop production. Christmas tree farms in Waushara County are farmlands of local importance. According to the 2012 census of agriculture, there are 42 farms in Christmas tree production comprised of 2,394 acres.

Other lands are areas which have little value for producing crops.

GROUNDWATER

In Waushara County, groundwater occurs mostly in the alluvium and glacial drift of the Quaternary Age and in the sandstone of the Cambrian Age. Precipitation in the form of either rain or snow is the largest contributor to recharge of the groundwater aquifers. Recharge is generally greatest in spring when water from melting snow and heavy rains saturates the ground and percolates to the water table. If discharge (the drawing out and use of groundwater) is greater than recharge, the elevation where the groundwater is extracted will fall and a local depression in the water table will result. Lower water levels cause the pumping lifts to increase and may reduce the yields of some of the wells. Groundwater within the county occurs under both water table and artesian conditions. Water in the unconsolidated beds of sand and gravel is generally unconfined and occurs under water table conditions. Confined or artesian conditions exist locally where the water in the sand and gravel deposits is confined by layers of silt or clay.

A groundwater divide, located west and parallel to the topographic divide, cuts diagonally through Waushara County. It extends from Marquette County, through the towns of Hancock and Coloma, the Village of Hancock, and east of the Village of Plainfield to the Portage County line. East of this divide, groundwater moves southeasterly toward the Wolf and Fox Rivers. West of this divide groundwater moves westerly toward the Wisconsin River.

According to the well water information obtained from the Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center in Stevens Point, some private wells located in Waushara County contain nitrate levels that are higher than the EPA Safe Drinking Water Act standards of 10 mg/L. These standards apply to municipal water sources only, but are strongly suggested thresholds for private systems. Nitrates originate in both agricultural and residential fertilizers, human sewage, and farm animal waste. Excessive levels of nitrates in drinking water have caused serious illness or death in infants less than six months of age. Pregnant women are also advised not to drink water in which nitrate levels exceed the EPA standards. Due to sandy soils within the county, there is potential for groundwater contamination in the shallower aquifers. However, this potential is greatly reduced in the deeper aquifers. The table below lists the results of water sample tests conducted between 1990 and 2001. For conversion purposes, 1 part per million (ppm) is the same concentration as 1 mg/L.

Nitrate levels (ppm) in Waushara County Wells

	None Detected	0.1-2.0 ppm	2-10 ppm	10-20 ppm	> 20 ppm
Waushara County	273	277	193	53	43

Although groundwater is found at varying depths throughout the area, the majority of groundwater in Waushara County is found in depths greater than six feet.

Groundwater depths of less than two feet are found in just over a quarter (25.8%, 105,049 acres) of the land area, an additional 13.2 percent (53,787 acres) of the area has groundwater depths of 2 to 6 feet. Groundwater depths exceed 6 feet in 58.9 percent (240,374 acres) of the county. The remaining 2.1 percent (8,723 acres) in the county has either no rating or is surface water. In general, there is a strong correlation between areas of high groundwater and wetlands. A greater concentration of higher groundwater is generally found in the eastern part of the county.

Depth to Groundwater

	<2 Feet		2-6 Feet		>6 Feet		No Rating		Water		Total Acres
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	
Waushara County	105,049	25.80	53,787	13.20	240,374	58.9	533	0.10	8,190	2.00	407,933

USDA-NRCS, 1982; Waushara County, 2005

ATRAZINE PROHIBITION AREAS

According to the Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter ATCP 30 Atrazine, Pesticides; Use Restrictions, atrazine prohibition areas have been established throughout Waushara County (Appendix 4.3). In the prohibition areas no person can apply, mix or load any atrazine product, except under special conditions. The Department of Agriculture has determined these areas based on well samples. These areas are monitored, and if atrazine is not applied, the levels may diminish and may be removed from the list. There are five Atrazine Prohibition Areas within Waushara County.

Waushara County Atrazine Prohibition Areas

Name	Township/Range	Section
Town of Hancock (PA 93-70-01)	T19N / R08E	4, 5, 8, and 9
Town of Saxeville (PA 93-70-02)	T20N / R12E	31 and portions of 30 and 32
Town of Plainfield (PA 94-70-01)	T20N / R08E	14 & 15 portions of 10, 11, 22 & 23
Town of Warren (PA 96-70-01)	T18N / R12E	20, & portions of 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 28, 29, & 30
Towns of Rose, Springwater, Mount Morris & Wautoma (PA 04-70-01)	T19-20N / R10-11E	T20N R10 E S 36, parts of 35,25 & 26 T20N R11E S 31 T19N R10E S 1, 12, 13 and part of 2 T19N R11E S 6,7 and 18

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Register, March 2005

RIVERS AND STREAMS

There are forty-six named river/streams in Waushara County totaling approximately 584 miles. A number, of them are classified as Outstanding and Exceptional Water Resource rivers and streams. The most prominent rivers/streams within Waushara County are the Mekan River, White River, Pine River and Willow Creek. (Appendix 4.4)

LAKES, PONDS AND QUARRIES

The majority of lakes within Waushara County are natural and of glacial origin. Sandy soils readily allow for the percolation of precipitation into the ground rather than overland flow directly to surface waters. This results in a continual recharge of the shallow aquifer underlying the county and surrounding region. There are 136 lakes and/or impoundments found within Waushara County. According to the WDNR's website, Lake Poygan is the fourth largest lake in the state, while the Redgranite and Lohrville quarries are the third and fifth respectively deepest lakes in the state.

Lakes can be described as drainage, seepage, spring, or drained lakes. The vast majority of lakes within Waushara County are classified as seepage lakes. Seepage lakes do not have an inlet or an outlet and are recharged by precipitation and runoff supplemented by groundwater. Seepage lakes commonly reflect groundwater levels and can fluctuate seasonally. The second most common type of lake in Waushara County is drainage lakes. These lakes have both an inlet and an outlet; the main water source is stream drainage. Drainage lakes, in which one-half of the maximum depths are dependent on a dam, are considered to be artificial lakes or impoundments. Waushara County has a small number of spring lakes, primarily scattered throughout north central and south central Waushara County (Towns of Springwater, Saxeville, Mount Morris, Leon, Dakota, and Richford). Spring lakes have an outlet, but have no inlet. The primary source of water is groundwater flowing into the bottom of the lake from inside and outside the immediate surface drainage area. Spring lakes are the headwaters of many streams. Waushara County has one listed drained lake (located in Mount Morris). Drained lakes have no inlet, but have a continuously flowing outlet. Drained lakes are not groundwater fed. The primary source of water is from precipitation and direct drainage from the surrounding land. Water levels fluctuate depending on the supply of water.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are scattered throughout the county and are generally associated with the county's stream corridors and lake shorelines. Eastern Waushara County has the largest concentration of wetlands. Table 5-12 indicates the number of acres and the percentage of wetlands within Waushara County. Not including small tracts of wetlands (less than five acres); approximately 15 percent (59,964 acres) of Waushara County is classified as wetlands. The amount and variety of wetlands have moderate limitations on the future growth and development of the area. (Appendix 4.4)

FORESTED LAND

Originally, the majority of Waushara County contained vegetation consisting of a mixture of oak forest species interspersed with pine forests and oak openings with an understory of prairie grasses. Waushara County once encompassed substantial areas of wetland conifers, lowland hardwoods, wet meadows with lowland shrubs, and marshes. Currently, upland forest areas are characterized by an oak-hickory association. Pine species are found throughout much of the county, while the wetland conifers have been replaced largely by shrub wetlands, general agriculture, and urban areas. Woodlands are found in large stands as well as scattered throughout the County. Woodlands comprise about 46 percent of the total land area in Waushara County. The majority of wetlands, especially along stream corridors, are predominantly forested. Generally areas in the western part of the county; west of the outer moraine and between the inner and outer moraine and in the eastern part of the county are less forested. Forests and woodlands can be classified into one of two categories: general (unplanted) woodlands and planted woodlands. General woodlands are naturally occurring forests and hedgerows. Planted woodlands are tree plantations in which trees are found in rows; these areas include orchards, timber tracts, Christmas tree production and other general uses. There are 140,879 acres of general woodlands and 44,851 acres of planted woodlands in Waushara County.

The Forest Crop Law of 1927 (FCL) and the Woodland Tax Law of 1954 (WTL) were established to encourage sound forestry practices on private lands. In 1985, the Managed Forest Law (MFL) replaced both the FCL and WTL. Enrollment in the FCL closed in 1986, and renewal in the program is not permitted. The last WTL contract expired in 2000. The MFL ensures the growth of future commercial crops while balancing individual property owner objectives and society's need for compatible recreational activities, forestry aesthetics, wildlife habitat, erosion control and protection of endangered resources. In 2008, a total of 41,102 acres were actively managed within Waushara County under the MFL, while a total of 1,233 acres were managed under FCL.

STATE WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AREAS

Since 1876, the State of Wisconsin has been acquiring land to meet conservation and recreation needs. Public lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provide many opportunities and public spaces to hunt, fish, hike, canoe, watch or photograph wildlife. All Wildlife Areas are open to a full range of traditional outdoor recreational uses. Below is a list and description of Waushara County's State Wildlife Areas and State Natural Areas. (Appendix 4.5)

- Greenwood Wildlife Area lies on the edge of a pitted outwash plain creating a flat sandy topography and a wooded hilly moraine comprised mostly of oak trees. This area is an important wintering area for a local population of Giant Canada geese. A larger portion of the area, that was once farmed heavily, has been restored to prairie that provides important habitat for grassland dependent species.
- Poygan Marsh Wildlife Area is over 3,600 acres in size located in east central Waushara County on the western shore of Lake Poygan. Most of the area is open marsh

or bottomland timber, with the Pine River, Pumpkinseed Creek and Willow Creek flowing through the wildlife area and terminating in Lake Poygan.

- Lunch Creek Wetlands (State Natural Area No. 333) contains one of the most diverse and species rich sedge meadows in Wisconsin. This area is situated within a mainly undisturbed watershed, an uncommon occurrence in Wisconsin. This large wetland complex is free of exotic species and dominated by fern and sedge meadow communities containing a total of 115 plant species.
- Mecan Springs (State Natural Area 370) protects a large Clearwater springs which are the headwaters to the Mecan River. The Mecan River system contains some of the finest trout streams in central Wisconsin and supports excellent natural trout reproductions. Fen vegetation is present in the saturated soils of the Mecan Springs area.
- Karner Blue Meadow (State Natural Area No. 327) features a dry sand prairie that is home to a strong population of the federally endangered Karner blue butterfly. The Karner blue is restricted to habitats that contain wild lupine, the larval butterfly's only food plant. The natural area borders Bonneville Lake, a 15-acre seepage lake surrounded by marshy vegetation that supports a diverse aquatic invertebrate fauna, including several species of dragonflies.
- Upper Fox Headwaters (State Natural Area No. 265) is made up of three distinct units: Zinke Lake, Upper Chaffee Creek Meadow, and Caves Creek. This area contains a large wetland complex of fen, wet-mesic, and wet prairie with over 100 native plant species present.
- Plainfield Tunnel Channel Lakes (State Natural Area No. 226) includes Sherman Lake, Second Lake, and Plainfield Lake. This State Natural Area provides specialized habitat for Fassett's Locoweed, one of the rarest plants found in Wisconsin. This plant is found only on the fluctuating shorelines of lakes in Wisconsin's Central Sands Ecological landscape areas and nowhere else on earth. This area protects three lakes in a string of 13 lakes and ponds lying in a "tunnel channel" created by a melt water river flowing beneath the glacial ice. The lake basins were created from buried blocks of ice left behind when the tunnel collapsed.
- Bohn Lake (State Natural Area No. 530) is a 13 acre, 24 foot deep hard water seepage lake that is part of a geologically significant tunnel channel. The Bohn Lake shoreline fluctuates anywhere from four to six feet depending on the hydrologic cycle and in some dry years contains little water. In wet years, abundant vegetation grows in distinctive concentric rings around the lake due to its fluctuating nature. Each ring has a different combination of species.
- Bass Lake Fen (State Natural Area No. 178) features a 20 acre calcareous fen located on the underdeveloped shore of Bass Lake. The fen is exceptionally diverse with many small springs, openings, and ponds providing a calcium-rich habitat that supports 125 species of plants. To the east the fen grades into sedge meadow and two communities are bordered on the north by tamarack swamp and on the south by shrub-carr.

Chapter Five

POLICIES, GOALS AND ACTIONS

MAPPING CRITERIA

OVERVIEW

This chapter will provide a description of what is included in the Farmland Preservation Plan map and why it was or was not included in the mapping process. Waushara County has no exclusive ag zoning in any township and the trend with the farmland preservation program has indicated declining participation. Because of these two factors, the future of the program in the County is somewhat uncertain.

POLICIES

Based on the factors described above, there are just a few simple policies that determine the goals and actions of this plan and that helped to determine the mapping criteria. They are as follows:

- Protect farmland and maintain the agriculture that is a mainstay of the landscape and lifestyle of Waushara County.
- Discourage the conversion of contiguous parcels to non-agricultural uses.
- Encourage development in areas identified in the county and town comprehensive plans and not in prime farmland areas. This would be land labeled on the Farmland Preservation Township Maps as “Potential Growth Area.”

GOALS AND ACTIONS

The Farmland Preservation Area is mapped generously in order to include as many participants as possible while taking into consideration the 15-year future growth of the County. The goals for the plan itself are simple. They are as follows:

- Work to increase participation in the program by meeting with Town Boards explaining the benefits of the program while working with the Zoning Director if any townships decide to become zoned.

- Use Information & Education strategies to inform landowners of the benefits of cooperating with their neighbors in order to enroll in the Agriculture Enterprise Areas through informational brochures distributed at the County Fair, June Dairy Breakfast and other events that staff might attend as well as promoting it as opportunities arise when talking with landowners.
- Inform and educate the general population on the benefits of preserving farmland and limiting development to certain areas. This too will be done at events such as the County Fair and June Dairy Breakfast and any other events in which staff may be invited to participate.

MAPPING CRITERIA

The Farmland Preservation Area was identified based on the Agriculture/Natural Area and the Environmentally Sensitive Areas mapped on the future land use map of the Waushara County Comprehensive Plan.

The Agriculture/Natural Area shows land in which agricultural and compatible low intensity uses are encouraged as the principal uses of land. This area also includes natural areas that have not been disturbed. The plan area excludes any agriculture/natural areas and environmentally sensitive areas within a municipality.

The Environmentally sensitive areas are identified as areas that have environmental limitations that limit their use as developable property. This does not mean these areas are not developable, only those additional restrictions, such as shoreland zoning, may apply in these locations.

Environmental areas may include DNR lands, Resource Protection Areas, and Atrazine Prohibition areas, although DNR lands are excluded from the plan area. Any unplanned areas, such as the township of Warren are included in the Farmland Preservation Area. The township of Warren is absent from county zoning and has no future land use plan. For this reason the township of Warren is unplanned in the County Comprehensive Plan and the entire township is included in the farmland preservation area, excluding DNR owned lands and the municipalities of Red Granite and Lohrville. .

Any land that does not meet the criteria is considered to be Non-Farmland Preservation Areas and would not be eligible for tax credits under this plan until the Farmland Preservation Plan is adjusted to allow the ineligible land to become eligible.

Chapter Six

PLANNING

OVERVIEW

This chapter will discuss the planning process as well as how others were drawn into this process.

REQUIREMENTS

The Farmland Preservation Plan must address certain elements as specified in Chapter 91, Wis. State Statutes. There are required plan elements that are mandatory for counties who want to make farmland preservation benefits available to eligible landowners; however flexibility is possible in how the plan is prepared.

The planning process needed to take into account existing and future agricultural conditions, the local economy, existing and future growth trends, current and future prospective participation in the program and coordinate all of this with other agencies who work with these same landowners as well as offer the public the opportunity to have input into the planning process.

The rural landscape has changed over the years and this planning process has offered the community an opportunity to have a voice in how that change can be managed. A number of meetings were held (Appendix 6.1) in order to gather information from federal, state and county agencies, townships, boards and the public on the direction they would like to see this plan take. All meetings were held in a public place easily accessible and in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They were advertised well ahead of time with phone numbers and names of contact persons in case of questions or comments. A public hearing was held as part of the formal plan adoption process and this too was published (Appendix 6.2) as required by law. Several objectives were met by holding these meetings:

- Participants of all races, ethnic backgrounds and economic levels had an equal opportunity to voice their opinion and be heard
- All residents of Waushara County had an opportunity to be aware of the planning process through the advertisement of the meeting and the stated objective of the Farmland Preservation Plan and mapping criteria
- Residents were also offered the opportunity to call or write to voice their comments if they were not able to make them in person
- Public involvement strengthens the sense of vested interest in the success of the process and in the community as a whole

Chapter Seven

IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW

This chapter will look at the tools available to those who work with the landowners of the county. They also have the charge of implementing the standards and statutes filtered down from national and state agencies. All of this will affect how this plan is implemented.

TOOLS

While some tools are specific, tangible and measurable; others are more vague, such as education. Educating the public and local government agencies about the economic benefits of farming and the cost of converting/developing farmland to other uses is an important part of the implementation strategy. Equally important is showing the benefit of protecting the environment while gaining a financial benefit. Not all of these tools have funding available at any given time. The more specific tools that may be available are as follows:

- Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA). This is a tool set forth in Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. Designation of an AEA identifies the area as valuable for current and future agricultural use. Eligible farmers in an AEA can receive income tax credits per an agreement with DATCP.

General eligibility requirements are:

- Five eligible land owner participants
- All land in the proposed AEA area must be in the farmland preservation area
- Land must be contiguous
- Land must be primarily in agricultural use

Benefits of the AEA designation are that the land is identified as important for agricultural preservation. This designation provides reassurance about future farmland use and may encourage investment in agriculture.

Eligible landowners can enter into a voluntary farmland preservation agreement that allows them to claim a tax credit in exchange for keeping land in agricultural use for 15 years and meeting State Conservation Standards (Appendix 7.1).

- Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE Program). Agricultural Conservation Easements are deed restrictions that landowners voluntarily place on their properties to protect productive agricultural land. They sell a

conservation easement to a government agency or private conservation organization. Landowners retain full ownership and continue to pay property taxes, and manage and operate the farm. Conservation easements are tailored to each property: purchasers and landowners decide which activities should be restricted or limited. When the landowner eventually sells the farmland, the development restrictions are passed on to the new owner.

- Purchase of Development Rights (PDR). A similar program is the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) where government agencies buy the development rights to a property. The program does not give the government agency the right to develop the agricultural land; it simply permits it to extinguish those rights in return for appropriate compensation.
- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). These programs allow landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land. The programs are usually established by local zoning ordinances, and they are used to shift development from agricultural areas to designated growth zones closer to municipal services. The parcel of land where the rights originate is called the “sending” parcel. Once the development rights are transferred from a sending parcel, the land is restricted with a permanent conservation easement. The rights are transferred to a “receiving” parcel, which allows an owner purchasing the rights to build at a higher density than ordinarily permitted by the base zoning. Most TDR transactions are between private landowners and developers. Local governments approve transactions and monitor easements. Some jurisdictions have created “TDR banks” that buy development rights with public funds and sell them to developers and other private landowners. TDR programs can prevent non-agricultural development of farmland, reduce the market value (and tax burdens) of protected farms and provide farmland owners with liquid capital that can be used to enhance farm viability.
- Mitigation Ordinances. Mitigation ordinances require developers to permanently protect a certain amount of farmland for every acre of agricultural land they convert to other uses. Developers can place an agricultural conservation easement on farmland in another location or pay a fee to satisfy mitigation requirements.
- Comprehensive Land-Use Planning. The County and Townships can use their comprehensive plans as the basis for farmland preservation zoning ordinances. This not only protects these areas for agricultural uses but also offers a greater tax incentive for landowners.
- Farmland Preservation Zoning. Agricultural protection zoning ordinances (Farmland Preservation Zoning) allow some residential development but can restrict density. Such constraints on development potential can limit land speculation and keep land affordable to farmers. Keeping large areas relatively free of non-farm development can reduce the likelihood of conflicts between

farmers and their non-farming neighbors. However, many municipalities and individual property owners find this layer of protection to be overly restrictive.

Tax credits for land under Farmland Preservation Zoning are as follows:

- \$10.00/acre if land is zoned as exclusive agriculture under farmland preservation zoning and located in an Agricultural Enterprise Area
- \$7.50/acre if land is zoned as Exclusive agriculture and under farmland preservation zoning
- \$5.00/acre if the land is in AEA (Agriculture Enterprise Area)

MONITORING

Monitoring is an important step to the whole planning process in order to assess what is working and needs to be adjusted. The county will continually evaluate the plan and that the decisions made remain consistent with the goals and objectives of the Farmland Preservation Plan and the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Any participants in the programs will be monitored according to rules and regulations set forth by the federal, state or local agencies participating in the program.

AMENDMENTS

The plan has a long-term outlook, one that may need to be readjusted as policy or trends become irrelevant, contradictory or errors/omissions have been identified. The plan has been written with some flexibility incorporated so future amendments should be limited in scope. The process to amend the plan is similar to that of writing this initial document. The steps to amend the document or the plan map will be as follows:

1. As a result of the request of a local government, a property owner or a developer, the county staff and committee will evaluate the proposed amendment to see if it meets the goals and objectives of the plan, the state requirements and any other laws or standards that may be in effect at the time of the request. If all is in order, the proposal will be brought before the County Board.
2. The County Board adopts a resolution outlining the proposal/amendment.
3. The county staff prepares the text and/or map that amend the specific part of the Farmland Preservation Plan or plan map.
4. County Staff forward the amended materials required under Section 91.20, Wis. Stats. to DATCP for certification of the plan amendment.
5. A public meeting is held for input on the amendment.
6. A Class 1 notice is published at least 30 days before the County Board public hearing is held.
7. The County Board holds the formal public hearing on an ordinance that would incorporate the proposed plan amendment into the County's Farmland Preservation Plan.

8. Following the public hearing and DATCP certification, the County Board approves or denies the ordinance adopting the proposed plan amendment.
9. County staff forwards a copy of the adopted ordinance and plan amendment to DATCP and any landowners who have requested a copy in writing as well as to the Township Chairperson(s).