



Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
 Division of Agricultural Resource Management
 P.O. Box 8911
 Madison, WI 53708-8911
 (608) 224-4500

Agricultural Enterprise Area Petition

The undersigned persons hereby petition the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), pursuant to s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., to create an Agricultural Enterprise Area (**AEA**) under s. 91.84, Wis. Stats. We have read the guidance provided and submit the following information in support of the petition (*use the space provided or check the appropriate box*):¹

PART I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Name of AEA. Elba/Portland
AEA
- B. County or counties in which the proposed AEA is located. Dodge
- C. All towns, villages or cities in which the proposed AEA is located. Town of Elba and
Town of Portland
- D. Number of owners of eligible farms, within the proposed AEA,
who are signing this petition. 86
- E. Total number of acres in the proposed AEA. 38,873 Acres
- F. All parcels in the proposed AEA are located within a farmland preservation
area designated in the certified county farmland preservation plan. Yes No
- G. All parcels in the proposed AEA are contiguous. Yes No
- H. The proposed AEA is primarily in agricultural use. Yes No
- I. Primary agricultural land use in proposed AEA. Cash Cropping
and Dairy
- J. Designated contacts for the AEA. *Please list at least two contacts for the AEA; preferably at least one staff contact (county, town, UWEX, etc.) and one landowner representative.² You may have more than two contacts. Attach a separate page if necessary.*

Name: Nate Olson
 Address: 127 E Oak St, Juneau, WI 53039
 Phone number: 920-386-3948
 Email: nolson@co.dodge.wi.us

Name: Joe Roche - Town of Elba
 Address: N 3799 Cty Hwy T, Columbus, WI
 53925
 Phone number: 920-623-2225
 Email: rochejoe36@yahoo.com

¹Personal information you provide may be used for purposes other than that for which it was collected, s. 15.04(1)(m), Wis. Stats.

²The listed contacts should be willing to:

- Communicate with other petitioners and partners in the AEA, with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and with contacts in other AEAs
- Engage in activities within the AEA

PART II. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE FOR AEA³

Introduction to proposed AEA (optional):

See Part 2 Attachment – Page 1

1. State the goals of the proposed AEA for

a. preservation of agricultural land use:

See Part 2 Attachment – Page 1

b. agricultural development:

See Part 2 Attachment – Page 1

2. Describe (a) all current land uses within the proposed AEA **and** (b) provide information about land use trends in and around the AEA. *(The proposed AEA must be primarily in agricultural use.)*

See Part 2 Attachment – Page 2

3. How did you determine the boundary (location and size) of the proposed AEA?

See Part 2 Attachment – Page 5

4. Confirm that the proposed AEA is consistent with any existing local comprehensive plan. Submit a future land use map, if available. *Please do not submit a complete copy of any comprehensive plan.*

The county(ies) of Dodge has(have) a comprehensive plan and the proposed AEA is consistent with this plan.

The Town(s) of Elba and Portland has(have) a comprehensive plan and the proposed AEA is consistent with this plan.

There are no comprehensive plans for the political subdivisions in which the proposed AEA is located.

³ DATCP will evaluate petitions under s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., and will consider information provided in response to the following questions.

5. Describe any recent investments made to support agriculture and agricultural-related business in or near the proposed AEA.

See Part 2 Attachment – Page 11

6. Indicate the approximate level of petitioner compliance with state soil and water standards.

- Nearly all petitioners are in compliance
 - More than half of the petitioners are in compliance
 - Half or less than half of the petitioners are in compliance
 - Few or no petitioners are in compliance
 - Compliance status of petitioners is unknown
-

7. Describe the level of non-petitioner cooperator support for the petition.

See Part 2 Attachment – Page 16

8. Fill in the tables to provide information about the activities (past, ongoing and future) that support the proposed AEA.

A. Farmland Preservation Agreement Strategy	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Summarize these outreach efforts, including who will provide assistance (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informational meeting(s)	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 17
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mailing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-on-one conversations	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newsletter/media	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Word of Mouth	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

B. Land Use Controls		
<i>Type of Control</i>	<i>Timeframe (past, ongoing, future)</i>	<i>Provide details about the selected control (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farmland preservation zoning ordinance	X	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 20
<input type="checkbox"/> Other zoning ordinances Specify:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farmland preservation agreements		See Part 2 Attachment – Page 22
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purchase of development rights and/or easements (donated or purchased)	X	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 21
<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of development rights		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subdivision ordinances	X	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 21
<input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative boundary agreements		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural area protections	X	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 22
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) Farmland Preservation Plan	X	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 22
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)		

C. Agricultural Development Activities		
<i>Type of Activity</i>	<i>Timeframe (past, ongoing, future)</i>	<i>Summarize contribution to AEA (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<i>Ex: Joint marketing or purchasing, development of agri-tourism opportunity, value-</i>		

<i>added agricultural activity</i>		
Various Activities	X	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 23

D. Other AEA Activities		
<i>Type of Activity</i>	<i>Timeframe (past, ongoing, future)</i>	<i>Summarize contribution to AEA (attach an additional page if necessary)</i>
<i>Ex: Form a stakeholder group, attend statewide AEA meetings</i>		
State, Cty, & Town Workshops	X	See Part 2 Attachment – Page 25

PART III. MAP AND SPATIAL LOCATION DATA

Please send the following to DATCP in electronic form. Follow the map and spatial location data guidelines found in Part III of the guidance document.

1. A map of the proposed AEA, **and**
2. The spatial location data for the AEA boundary.

PART IV. IMAGES FROM PROPOSED AEA (OPTIONAL)

If desired, petitioners may submit high resolution images taken from within the boundary of the AEA. Photos should help to depict agriculture and agricultural-related land use described in the petition.

Please follow the image submission guidelines in Part IV of the guidance document.

PART V. SIGNATURE PAGES AND LOCAL RESOLUTIONS

Submit appropriate documentation from all eligible farm owner and political subdivision petitioners. See attached "Landowner Signature Page," "Political Subdivision Signature Page" and "Cooperator Signature Page."

Please follow the signature page and resolution guidelines in Part V of the guidance document. Sample resolution text is included in Appendix B of the guidance document.

Landowner Signature Page

The petition must be signed by the owners of at least 5 eligible farms within the proposed AEA. A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a husband and wife as individuals, both must sign.

Farm owner (correct legal name or legal name of business entity):

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

Authorized signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Authorized signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Farm owner address (street, city, zip): _____

E-mail address(es) (if available): _____

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement). Yes No Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. Yes No Maybe
(Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)

Political Subdivision Signature Page

In addition to passing a resolution in support of this petition, this signature page must be signed by an authorized officer or representative of every political subdivision (county, town, city or village) in which any part of the proposed AEA is included.

Political subdivision name: _____

Type (check one): County Town City Village

Printed name of authorized officer or representative: _____

Title of authorized officer or representative: _____

Authorized signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal mailing address: _____

Phone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Cooperator Petitioner Signature Page (optional)

Persons other than the petitioners may sign in support of the petition. A separate signature page, or letter of support, may be submitted for each cooperator. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity.

Legal name of cooperator:

Relevant interest (farm owner, business, nonprofit or community organization, government entity, other):

Principal mailing address:

E-mail address:

Briefly describe your interest in signing this petition requesting designation of an agricultural enterprise area:

Print name _____

Authorized signature: _____ Date _____

Elba/Portland Agricultural Enterprise Area Petition

Part II – Purpose and Rationale

Dodge County, WI

Introduction

The significant agricultural land base and progressive agricultural operations in the Town of Elba and the Town of Portland make the Towns a primary place to designate an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA). As you will learn in the Elba/Portland AEA petition, the geographic location and existing agricultural infrastructure of the proposed AEA make it a great setting for future agricultural investments and innovation. Additionally, the Towns commitment to maintaining and supporting the local agricultural operations is outstanding; which is demonstrated by the actions of the Town officials. Overall, the proposed Elba/Portland AEA would be an excellent choice for an AEA, as it will further the objectives of the Farmland Preservation Program and complement the State's existing AEA's.

1) State the goals of the proposed AEA for:

A) Preservation of Agricultural Land Use and B) Agricultural Development

The overall goal of the proposed Elba/Portland Agricultural Enterprise Area is to preserve the agricultural and natural resource land base, support the economic viability of agricultural enterprises, and support local and regional agriculture related businesses that serve the AEA.

- A) *Provide landowners an opportunity to enter in to a Farmland Preservation Agreement to further protect the agricultural land base and maintain the rural landscape.*
- B) *Give landowners and agribusinesses confidence that agriculture will remain strong in the area, thereby attract and/or retain agribusinesses and encourage farming operations to invest in their operations for the future.*

In addition to the goals of the AEA project. Both Towns have previously adopted goals to address land preservation. Within the Town's Comprehensive Plan's, they identified the following goals that are pertinent to the purpose of this AEA petition:

- a. Maintain, preserve and enhance the town's agricultural, natural and cultural resources.
- b. Manage growth to preserve farmland.
- c. Consider balance between residential development and farming and how it coexists.
- d. Achieve a continued quiet, country environment.
- e. Retain existing businesses and promote the Town to new businesses.

2) Describe (a) all current land uses within the proposed AEA and (b) provide information about land use trends in and around the AEA.

A) Current Land Uses

Agriculture is the dominant land use in the proposed Elba/Portland AEA. The Towns are agriculture intense towns with the majority of land use activities centered on agriculture. There are some non-agricultural land uses in the Town, such as Astico County Park, the Waterloo State Wildlife Area, and some residential areas. However, the vast majority of the land base is dedicated to agricultural practices. This is evident in the most recent existing land use survey. Dodge County staff completed an existing land use survey by field verification during both of the Town's Comprehensive Planning process. The Town of Elba adopted their Comprehensive Plan on November 21, 2005 and the Town of Portland adopted their Comprehensive Plan on January 19, 2006 (see the attached existing land use maps).

The table below shows the existing land uses by acreage for the combined area of Elba and Portland.

**Existing Land Use
Towns of Elba and Portland**

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Single Family Residential	816.8	1.8%
Two Family Residential	5.3	0.0%
Multi-Family Residential	0.2	0.0%
Mobile Home Parks	0.0	0.0%
Commercial	37.6	0.1%
Industrial & Quarries	194.3	0.4%
Public & Quasi-Public	23.7	0.1%
Transportation	1,519.0	3.3%
Parks & Recreation	240.8	0.5%
Communication & Utilities	2.0	0.0%
Water Features	666.5	1.5%
Agricultural & Other Resource Land	42,222.5	92.3%
Total	45,728.8	100.0%

According to the existing land use inventory, it was determined that approximately 42,222.5 acres or 92.3 percent of the proposed AEA area is classified as Agricultural and Other Resource Land. Agricultural land and other resource land were combined into one category since the categories are closely related and typically blend together. The other resource land category includes open space areas and wetlands.

The next largest land use category is transportation, which accounts for approximately 1,519 acres of land or 3.3 percent of the land base. The transportation category includes

the paved areas and right of ways for all state, county, and town roads, along with the railroad right of ways. This land use category is fairly stagnant, compared to the other land use categories and should not change very much over time.

The third largest land use category is single family residential. This land use category accounts for approximately 816.8 acres or 1.8 percent of the land base. Almost all of the residences in the proposed AEA area are single family residences. The residences in the Town of Elba are concentrated just outside the City of Columbus on the west side of the Town. The residences in the Town of Portland are grouped in several single family residential subdivisions.

The fourth largest land use category is Water features, which accounts for 666.5 acres or 1.5 percent of the land area. This area includes open water areas such as the Crawfish River, Maunsha River, Chub Lake, and areas in the Waterloo Wildlife Area. Though this is accounted for in the exiting land use inventory, it does not greatly impact the proposed AEA's existing land use base. Also, the other remaining land use categories have a relatively small footprint in the proposed AEA's landscape. Though all the land use categories are important and serve the area in some fashion, they have a small impact on the proposed AEA's total land base.

Also worth noting, Dodge County has updated its parcel information and some acreage amounts have changed since the adoption of the Towns Comprehensive Plan. Those changes are not due to land use changes, but to advancements in parcel data information and adoption of the latest wetland inventory information. Overall, the landscape of the proposed AEA has changed some since the land use inventory; however, much of the land remains the same as it did during the inventory survey, which is primarily agricultural.

B) Land Use Trends

During the AEA petition project, community officials and citizens identified various land use trends that are affecting the proposed AEA area. Many of the land use trends depend on changes in population, housing needs, transportation system improvements, changes in the agricultural industry, and economic development activities. Land use trends affecting the proposed AEA region and the area within the proposed AEA include:

Increasing Nonfarm Residential Development in Agricultural Areas

A land use trend affecting the proposed AEA and all of Dodge County is the creation of nonfarm residences, transitioning land from agricultural use to residential use. New nonfarm residential lots increase the fragmentation of the rural landscape. Fragmentation of the agricultural land is problematic for farming operations, as it breaks up larger agricultural tracts of land. For most farming operations, the economies of scale require relatively large tracts of land frequently involving many hundreds of acres. The breakup of large blocks of farmland by farmland fragmentation makes it more difficult for farmers to assemble such larger tracts either through ownership or rental arrangements. Tract assembly is thus complicated by scattered field locations resulting in costly and inconvenient related travel distances resulting in unproductive time and higher fuel consumption. There are other issues with farmland fragmentation, which can include:

increased traffic congestion, nonfarm residents complaining of noise from machinery at night time and the smell from manure spreading. Overall, people find the Towns of Elba and Portland are desirable place to live due to the rural settings, but are close enough to the Cities of Beaver Dam, Columbus, Madison, and Watertown area to enjoy the conveniences of urban life.

Population and Housing Units Are Projected to Increase

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA), the population in the Towns of Elba and Portland is projected to increase from 2010 to 2030. The population in the Town of Elba is projected to increase by 9.3 percent by 2030 and the Town of Portland population is projected to increase by 13.4 percent by 2030. Also, the number of households are projected to increase in the towns between 2010 and 2030 (WDOA). An additional 65 housing units are projected for the Town of Elba and an additional 88 housing units are anticipated for the Town of Portland by 2030. That is a total of 153 additional housing units in the towns by 2030. Where these housing units are located and at what density will have a substantial impact on the future success of agriculture in the towns.

Geographic Location Encourages Development

The proposed AEA is located near the Cities of Beaver Dam, Columbus, Madison, Watertown, and Fox Valley region (see regional map). Due to employment opportunities in these urban areas and a major four lane highway (USH 151) leading to the City of Madison and Fox Valley Region, the proposed AEA is in a part of the state that is subject to constant growth pressure. Many people come to the Dodge County area wanting to live in a rural setting, yet live close enough to big city services. This land use trend was further validated in the 2000 Census. According to the 2000 Census, almost 40 percent of Dodge County citizens commute outside of Dodge County for employment. This statistic shows that there is a large amount of people that are willing to commute to the major metropolitan areas, yet live in a more rural setting.

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Trends

During the comprehensive planning process, Town of Elba and Portland officials and citizens identified various land use trends they feel are affecting the Town. The following land use trends, which were identified in the comprehensive plans of the towns, are still valid today:

- ◆ Elba's and Portland's population and the number of housing units will continue to grow.
- ◆ The number of persons per household will continue to decrease requiring more housing units and more land to accommodate the growing population.
- ◆ The Town's river frontage, woodlands and highland areas will be desired for residential development.
- ◆ Agriculture will maintain a strong presence. There will likely be a decreasing number of total farms, but an increasing number of large farms. The number of horse farms and hobby farms will increase.

3) How did you determine the boundary (location and size) of the proposed AEA?

The Towns of Elba and Portland are proposing an approximate 38,873 acre AEA; see the attached Elba/Portland Agricultural Enterprise Area map.

A. Proposed AEA Boundary Support Goals

Town officials and petitioners believe it is appropriate to identify much of the land in Elba and Portland as an AEA, mainly due to the area's intense agricultural uses. Establishing an AEA to cover much of the agricultural land in those Towns will further support both Town's planning goals and the goals of this petition. The proposed AEA will meet those goals by providing an additional economic incentive for almost all landowners whose property is used for agriculture. By creating an incentive for landowners to preserve and enhance their land, the Towns are maximizing their efforts to preserve the existing agricultural land base. In addition to protecting the agricultural land base, an AEA will demonstrate to landowners, current agribusinesses, and potential agribusinesses that the Towns are committed to agriculture and want to see agriculture succeed in the Towns and in Dodge County. Landowners will be more willing to make future investments in their operations knowing that the land around them will remain in agriculture or agriculture-related uses.

B. Boundary Determination Factors

Existing Agricultural Land Use

Agricultural use is the dominant existing land use in the proposed AEA. Agricultural use occupies 92.3% of the land area in the AEA (See Section 2a). In order to determine the AEA boundaries, the existing zoning maps, future land use maps, and existing land use maps were used. All of the existing agricultural land that was not zoned for something other than agricultural use or designated as something other than agricultural on the Future Land Use Maps was included in the AEA. Since both towns are certified for farmland preservation zoning, the farmland preservation zoning districts were also used to help determine the AEA boundary. In addition, the recently adopted Dodge County Farmland Preservation Plan identifies Farmland Preservation Areas within the two towns. The proposed AEA boundary must be consistent with the Farmland Preservation Plan Map.

The proposed AEA has some unique land features. The Waterloo State Wildlife Area is located in the south-central portion of the Town of Portland. The Waterloo Wildlife area covers over 1,500 acres. Much of the Wildlife area is covered by wetlands. Chub Lake State Wildlife area contains a 120 acre lake and 40 acres of land surrounding the lake. Dodge County operates Astico Park, which is located about three miles east of the City of Columbus in the Town of Elba. This scenic 61.4 acre park is bordered on



three sides by the Crawfish River and the historic Danville Mill Pond. The park lies on a drumlin, which is a long narrow hill formed by glaciations, and is primarily wooded. The proposed AEA contains large areas of drumlin fields. The Wisconsin Land Legacy Report from 2002 identified 229 special environmental features in the state. The Crawfish River-Waterloo Drumlins were included in the Land Legacy Report.

Soil Productivity

The soil structure of the Town’s played a role in the proposed AEA as well. The Towns contains a large amount of quality agricultural soils, hence the Towns soils annually produce high yields of quality crops. Therefore, the Town wanted to include as much quality soils in the proposed AEA as possible. The soil structure can be attributed to the Towns physical location as the Towns are located in the Rock River basin. Much of the Rock River basin has excellent agricultural producing soils. According to the annual Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics reports, Dodge County typically ranks within the top five or ten counties for agricultural crops produced. This is evident in the Dodge County Soil Survey, which is produced by The United States Department of Agriculture. The survey places the soils into certain classifications. This classification system is based on criteria of production potential, soil conditions and other basic production related criteria. Class I, II and best of Class III soils are all considered good soils for agricultural production.

The table below documents the amount of soil in acres per classification. Also, see the attached Soil Survey map, the map shows the location of Class I, II and III soils in the towns.

Soil Classification	Acres	Percent of Total Land Base
1	7,080	15.5
2	23,624	51.7
3	10,775	23.6
4 +	3,654	8.0

Agricultural Economy

The local agricultural economy is not independent; it is a piece of the regional, state, and national agricultural industry. The whole agricultural industry is made up of many local agricultural communities. While Dodge County and the Towns of Elba and Portland are small in the big picture, they do support and help maintain the agricultural industry. In fact, Dodge County on the whole is a major player in the State’s agricultural production. Dodge County typically ranks in the top 5 or 10 counties for agricultural commodities produced, as reported in the annually produced Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics report. The major commodities produced in Dodge County are grain, milk, soybeans, and winter wheat.

Recently, the UW Extension agency produced the “Dodge County Agriculture: Value & Economic Impact”. This document is a good indicator of the status of the agricultural industry in Dodge County and the economic impact it has on the local communities and taxpayers. According to the value & economic impact analysis agriculture provides

9,608 jobs in Dodge County. Jobs can include farm operators, veterinarians, crop/livestock consultants, farm machinery dealers, food processing, and agricultural lenders. Also, every job in agriculture generates an additional 0.84 jobs in Dodge County. Dodge County accounts for \$2.3 billion in business sales; every dollar of agricultural sales generates an additional \$0.37 of business sales in other parts of the county's economy. The additional generation of business sales can be attributed to: sale of farm products, processing of products, purchase of food processing inputs, service/equipment sales, and people who work on farms that locally spend their earnings. The County's agricultural industry is responsible for \$559 million in county income; this can include wages, salaries, and benefits. What is more, the agriculture industry pays \$47 million in taxes. Dodge County farms and agriculture related businesses pay approximately \$47.4 million in local and state taxes. Lastly, Dodge County is still a family owned farming community since 85.1 percent of the farms are owned by individuals or families. While there are some corporations and family partnerships, Dodge County is still a family farming community.

The figures from the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics report and the Dodge County Agriculture: Value & Economic Impact report shows that Dodge County and the proposed AEA are major players in the Wisconsin agricultural industry.

C. Future Land Use Maps

Dodge County, Town of Elba, and the Town of Portland have invested in the development of Comprehensive Plans. The Comprehensive Plans were used to help shape the scope of the AEA project, as well as the proposed AEA area. The Comprehensive Plan is a tool that allows the Town to plan its future and guide its land use decisions. A very important feature of the plan is the Future Land Use Map (see attached Future Land Use maps). These maps illustrate what Town officials and residents would like the Town to look like in the future. The Future Land Use map identifies areas where the communities would like to see agricultural land and open space land preserved, as well as areas for growth. Areas designated for agriculture or open space uses were included in the proposed AEA, open space designations include wetlands, floodplains, and parks/open space. Areas designated for a land use other than agricultural or open space were excluded from the proposed AEA. By far, most of the proposed AEA is being planned for agriculture. Also, there are various areas owned by the state government (for recreation), those lands were not included in the proposed AEA. The Towns would like to maintain its intense agricultural land use well into the future. Therefore, in addition to areas zoned agricultural, those areas designated for agriculture or open space uses on the Future Land Use maps were included in the proposed AEA.

D. Identifying Farm Owner Petitioners

There were a variety of methods used to notify/identify farm owner petitioners for the AEA petition. They consisted of one-on-one conversations, public meetings, phone calls, and a formal informational meeting. The formal informational meeting was held on September 12, 2011 and was mainly used to gauge the citizen's interest in applying for an AEA. The meeting was very well attended. County staff and Town officials reviewed the Farmland



Preservation Program and the opportunity to apply for an AEA. Meeting attendees were supportive and felt that all existing program participants and landowners in agricultural areas should have the opportunity to apply for a Farmland Preservation Agreement. Hence, the proposed AEA should cover the majority of both of the towns. The informational meeting was a success and led to the creation of the AEA Committee, the committee consists of Elba and Portland town board officials.

Most meeting attendees said they would like to support the petition and sign the AEA petition (landowner signature page); however they couldn't because the AEA petition materials were not available at that time. Once the 2012 AEA petitions became available, AEA Committee members made contact with those meeting attendees and had them then sign the landowner signature page.



One on-one-conversations (personal visits) was a great way to garner support for the AEA petition. It gave landowners a chance to review the program with AEA Committee members and ask questions about the program. AEA Committee members obtained most of the signed signature petitions through this method. Overall, the proposed AEA has a tremendous amount of petitioner support; a total of 86 eligible landowners have signed the landowner signature page. These landowners account for 19,566 acres. Also, 59 of the 86 landowners indicated they are interested in entering into a farmland preservation agreement. Another 20 landowners in the proposed AEA indicated that "maybe" they would be interested in a farmland preservation agreement. The location of the petitioning landowners can be seen on the attached Petitioning Landowners map.

E. Notifying Non-Petitioners

Support for the proposed AEA is not limited to farm owner petitioners; many non-eligible landowners within the proposed AEA are in support of the proposed AEA. To inform these landowners, AEA Committee members had one-on-one conversations (personal visits) with landowners and all landowners were welcome to attend the public meetings. Overall, non-eligible landowners see the value of protecting the agricultural land base; hence support the opportunity to apply for an AEA. Some landowners did sign a cooperator petition and some voiced their support and encouraged the Towns to keep implementing activities to maintain the agricultural land.



4) **Confirm that the proposed AEA is consistent with any existing local comprehensive plan.**

Dodge County adopted its Comprehensive Plan on March 21, 2006. The Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives, policies and recommendations are consistent with the goals and purpose of the proposed AEA.

Dodge County and 19 local communities were awarded a \$321,000 Comprehensive Planning Grant in 2003. This planning project allowed county and local community officials to work together to cooperatively develop comprehensive plans for the county and the participating communities to meet the state's Comprehensive Planning Law. The Towns of Elba and Portland participated in this planning project. This planning project was a unique opportunity since each community benefited by learning what the others were planning to do and how they planned to do it.

The Dodge County Comprehensive Plan is a product of the community's plans that participated in the planning project, especially the Future Land Use Map. The County's Future Land Use Map was developed with the influence of the Town's Future Land Use Map. The Town's Future Land Use Map was inserted in to the County's Future Land Use Map, with some minor alterations. Since this is the case, the County and Town of Elba's and Portland's Future Land Use Maps are consistent with each other.

The Towns of Elba and Portland have comprehensive plans and the proposed AEA is consistent with these plans. The Town of Elba adopted its Comprehensive Plan on November 21, 2005. The Town of Portland adopted its Comprehensive Plan on January 19, 2006. The Future Land Use Maps from the Plans are consistent with the proposed AEA (See enclosed Town of Elba and Portland Future Land Use Maps).

Dodge County is required to make its Farmland Preservation Plan Map consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map. In order for a landowner to obtain a Farmland Preservation Agreement, they must be consistent with the County Farmland Preservation Plan Map. Dodge County used the 2011 Farmland Preservation Plan Map to help create the proposed AEA Map. By ensuring consistency between the proposed AEA and the Farmland Preservation Plan Map, the proposed AEA is made consistent with the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Maps for Elba and Portland.



5) Describe any recent investments made to support agriculture and agricultural-related business in or near the proposed AEA.

There are various agribusinesses located in and near the proposed Elba/Portland AEA that depend on agricultural products produced by the farmers located in the proposed AEA. Many of these operations have made recent investments to support their agricultural businesses into the future. The information below is a brief summary of the recent investments made in and near the proposed Elba/Portland AEA.

Three major agribusinesses that Dodge County and Elba/Portland farmers support are the Valero Renewables ethanol plant, United Wisconsin Grain Producers (UWGP) ethanol plant, and the Didion Milling ethanol plant. These companies are very important to the local, regional, and statewide agricultural industry. These companies support and believe in the future of agriculture in the area, as all three companies have recently invested millions of dollars in their operations.

In 2010 Valero Renewables invested millions of dollars in the purchase of an existing ethanol plant from Renew Energy, located in Jefferson, WI. The plant annually processes nearly 40 million bushels of corn into 110 million gallons of un-denatured ethanol a year. The plant also produces nearly 400,000 tons of high-value co-products including bran, germ, and CO₂. The facility employs approximately 85 full-time employees. The UWGP facility was constructed in 2005 and is located in Cambria, WI. The plant typically purchases 18 million bushels of corn a year and produces approximately 53 million gallons of ethanol from that corn. In addition to ethanol, the plant produces approximately a million gallons of corn oil annually and produces 150,000 tons of distillers grain per year. The UWGP facility employs 39 full-time employees. In addition to selling corn to the ethanol plant, there are various Town landowners who are shareholders in the plant. This action shows that producing landowners not only support agricultural facilities by selling their crops to an agribusiness, but also support such facilities by investing in them. Also, Kevin Roche (Roche Farms – Town of Elba) is on the UWGP Board of Directors.

The Didion Milling facility is located in Friesland, WI; the plant is a corn milling operation and an ethanol plant. The company invested \$11 million in 2011 to increase ethanol production from 40 million gallons per year to approximately 50 million gallons of ethanol a year. Didion Milling plant produces a variety of products, such as: corn grits, corn meal, corn flour, pregelatinized corn, corn bran, corn binders, and ethanol. Between the plant's corn milling operation and ethanol production operation they employ over 150 people.

These three ethanol plants are approximately 15-20 miles from the proposed AEA. Though they are not directly adjacent to the proposed AEA, they are major players in the town's agricultural industry. The facilities are extremely dependent on the corn produced in Dodge County and the Towns of Elba and Portland. In order to support these facilities, there must be a steady supply of corn. These agribusinesses support and indirectly invest in the local agricultural economy, as well as provide and support local agricultural jobs.

Within the proposed AEA is the Duffy Grain company, Duffy Grain provides area landowners commodity merchandising and trucking services. Duffy Grain has two

locations, Columbus, WI and Marshall, WI. The Columbus facility is located in the west central portion of the Town of Elba, adjacent to the City of Columbus. The Columbus facility is the main office, repair shop, and houses many storage bins. In 2010, Duffy Grain invested \$260,000 in a 100,000 grain bin, new scale, and offices at the Columbus site. In total, the company has over 3.3 million bushels of grain storage capacity between the two



Also, the Marshall facility recently built a new train loading facility, which is located on the Wisconsin & Southern Rail line. This new facility allows for more economical transportation of grain on rail to end users. This facility has the ability to load 25 car unit trains for shipment to Chicago and beyond. A 25 car train can be loaded in about 4 hours. In addition to storage the company has a fleet of 16 trucks. These trucks serve local farmers, and feed/fertilizer operations throughout the near Midwest. The trucks transport grain to major terminals in Milwaukee, Chicago and various points along the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

United Cooperative provides area landowners a full service cooperative offering various farm services. There are four facilities located near the proposed AEA; two are located in and near the City of Beaver Dam, one is located in the City of Horicon, and one is located in the Village of Randolph. Farm operators can take their corn, oats, soybean, and wheat products to these cooperative locations. None of the cooperative facilities are located in the Towns of Elba and Portland; however the large amount of products produced in the proposed AEA support these agribusinesses. This agribusiness has made many investments in their operations in the past 10 years, especially the South Beaver Dam facility. Within the past 10 years, the facility has invested approximately \$8,160,000 in railroad spur improvements, liquid fertilizer storage, corn drying improvements, and increased storage capacity. In addition to the South Beaver Dam site, the Horicon site is a large facility. The site has recently invested in many modernization activities to keep up with technology and business demands. The Horicon facility has rail access, and grain storage/drying capabilities (3.9 million bushels); commodities handled are corn, soybeans and wheat. Also, the Randolph site is located on the Wisconsin Southern Railroad and also offers various marketing contracts along with drying services and storage (store 640,000 bushels). Due to the large amount of agricultural products produced in Dodge County and the proposed AEA, United Cooperative has been able to make multiple expansions and considerable investments in their facilities.

In addition to the investments made by the very large agribusinesses in the surrounding area, there have been recent investments made by the smaller local agribusinesses, Town government, and agricultural operations located in the proposed AEA. The following is a summary of recent investments made by farm operations in the proposed AEA:

Agricultural Operation Investments
Towns of Elba and Portland
2002 – 2012

Project	Year	Total Project Costs
Sheds, Manure Pit	2002	\$211,000
Sheds, Grain Bins	2003	\$333,000
Sheds, Silo	2004	\$395,000
Sheds, Barns, Add. To Cheese Factory	2005	\$723,800
Sheds, Barns, Silo	2006	\$1,277,000
Sheds, Barns, Grain Bin	2007	\$1,008,700
Sheds, Barns, Silo	2008	\$2,031,000
Sheds, Barns	2009	\$168,700
Sheds, Barn, Grain Bin	2010	\$218,700
Sheds, Barns	2011	\$120,000
Shed	2012	\$25,000
Total		\$6,511,900

Since the year 2002, there has been over 6,511,900 dollars invested in agriculture related improvements in the proposed AEA, many of these being machine and livestock sheds (according to building permit info). However, these building permit numbers are deceiving. Not all of the agricultural investments were included, as a permit may not have been required. Manure digesters, manure storage pits, bunker silos, and a cheese factory were not included. In a letter from Crave Brothers Farm (see enclosed), it states that over the last 10 years over 10.5 million dollars has been invested in their agricultural operation.

In addition to the Crave Brothers dairy and cheese production facility, Ed Bacon (Town of Elba) is investing over a million dollars in to his dairy operation. A new 70' X 300" freestall barn will be constructed, which will house 120 cows. The site will include a new milking parlor and milk house, in which two robotic milkers will be used. The use of the robotic milk machines shows that landowners are willing to make the investment in new technology. Additionally, this is the first phase of the project, if all goes well the operator plans to construct a new manure storage facility and double the herd size.

Aside from the known structure investments, there have been many other recent agricultural operation investments, including: various machinery upgrades, new machinery (combines, tractors, and implements), no-till machinery, and incorporating new technology into farming practices.

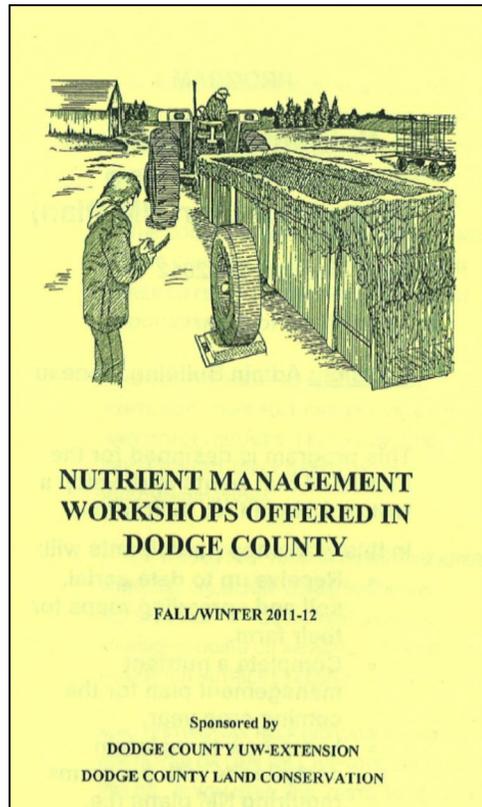
Additionally, the Towns of Elba and Portland annually invest a considerable amount of money in to their transportation networks. The Town of Elba spends approximately \$154,000 and the Town of Portland spends approximately \$255,000. Expenditures will cover roadwork and maintenance activities. Town transportation expenditures are included in the discussion of local investments, because the towns put forth a considerable amount of money to make the local transportation network safe and useable for daily agribusinesses. For example, veterinarians can safely access all local farms, milk trucks can safely transport milk, farm operators have good access to fields, and equipment service providers can get to all areas of the Town. Also, the condition of the roads enables semi-tractor trailers to haul grain commodities to the mills and ethanol plants. Additionally, paved roads are wider than gravel roads, therefore allowing for bigger agricultural machinery to utilize them. This also allows for safer interaction with nonagricultural vehicles, by allowing more vehicle room and passing options. Furthermore, almost all of the town's roads are paved, which is worth identifying since not all agricultural communities in Wisconsin have paved roads.



6) **Indicate the approximate level of petitioner compliance with soil and water standards**

According to the Dodge County Land Conservation Department, as of January 9, 2012, department records indicate more than half of the landowners petitioning for an Agricultural Enterprise Area in the Towns of Elba and Portland are likely in compliance with the conservation standard of maintaining cropland soil erosion at or below tolerable rates. At the same time, and based on the best available information, it is believed that less than half of the landowners in the Towns of Elba and Portland are in compliance with the conservation standard of preparing and following a cropland nutrient management plan. The remaining soil and water conservation standards appear to be applicable to only a small number of landowners.

The staff of the Dodge County Land Conservation Department believes that the majority of these landowners are likely to be in compliance with most, if not all, of these remaining soil & water conservation standards. Therefore, a conservative estimate of half or less than half of the petitioning landowners in the Towns of Elba and Portland are in full compliance with state soil & water conservation standards. (See enclosed letter from Marc Bethke, County Conservationist). It is believed that by establishing an AEA and allowing landowners to enter in to an agreement, it will further communication between the landowner and the County Land Conservation Department staff. Increased communication will foster a better working relationship between staff and the landowners and parties can work together to implement farming practices that exceed the minimum conservation standards.



Since many Town landowners have been participating in the program through farmland preservation zoning and have been implementing soil and water conservation standards for years, it is believed that there will be high level of cooperation between landowners and County Land Conservation staff. Cooperation will be necessary to get all parties signing farmland preservation agreements to meet standards set by ATCP 50, Wisconsin Adm. Code.

7) **Describe the level of non-petitioner cooperator support for the petition.**

The proposed AEA has received a tremendous amount of support from persons other than the petitioners, especially from area businesses and government agencies. A total of 45 Cooperator Signature pages and/or separate Letters of Support were received. Many of those petitions/letters were from businesses that are directly related to the agriculture industry, such as CD farm Supply, LLC, Foremost Farms Cooperative, Duffy Grain, Inc., Mid-State Equipment, UWGP, AgVantage, Farmers & Merchants Union Bank, Columbus Chemical Industries. Also, Foremost Farms submitted a good descriptive letter of support for the proposed AEA. Foremost Farms is a cooperative owned by 2,100 dairy farmers in the upper Midwest, including many from the proposed AEA area and greater Dodge County area. They annually market about 5.6 billion pounds of milk with annual revenues of \$1.4 billion and employ over 1,100 people.

To further show the importance of creating the Elba/Portland AEA, the mayors of the adjacent Cities of Columbus and Waterloo made the following statements in their letters:

“The City of Columbus has historically valued agriculture as an important economic asset, not only to the City, but also to the greater Columbus community. We have many private and corporate agricultural businesses that would gain a direct benefit from this destination”;

“As Mayor of the City of Waterloo I am writing to convey the City’s wholehearted support for the creation of an Agricultural Enterprise Zone in the Town of Portland and the Town of Elba. This is an excellent step towards sustaining and building the area’s agricultural activity. WE all benefit from a healthy and vibrant agricultural sector. Agricultural Enterprise Areas can provide real opportunities for our area farmers to innovate and find the best ways for them to preserve their most precious asset, their land”.

These two quotes and their letters of support show how important agriculture is to the communities within and surrounding the proposed Elba/Portland AEA.

Overall, the landowners, government agencies, and agribusinesses that support the proposed AEA see the value of the agricultural industry. Creating an AEA will help support the local agribusinesses, preserve the region’s way of life, and encourage growth in the agricultural industry.

Please see the attached cooperator petitions and letters of support for detailed statements and comments.



8) **Fill in the tables to provide information about the activities (past, ongoing and future) that support the proposed AEA.**

A) Farmland Preservation Agreement Strategy

Informational Meeting(s)

As mentioned before, the Town of Elba (Portland officials/landowners were present) hosted a formal informational meeting on September 12, 2011 that reviewed the Farmland Preservation Program, specifically the option to apply for an AEA. Hosting a formal public informational meeting was a large asset to the development of the proposed AEA petition. The meeting was a great way to educate the public on the Farmland Preservation Program and clear up misconceptions of the program.



The public informational meeting also led to the creation of the AEA Committee, which have put in a tremendous amount of work in to the AEA petition. In addition to the formal informational meeting, the Towns have held separate public meetings to discuss the opportunity to apply for an AEA and its benefits. Also, there were several public meetings held by the AEA Committee to work on the AEA petition and discuss the Farmland Preservation Program. Largely, the AEA Committee has spent numerous hours in the development of the Elba/Portland AEA petition (meetings, phone calls to inform landowners, discussions with agri-businesses, and personnel visits with landowners).

If the proposed Elba/Portland AEA is approved, the Towns would officially announce the approval of the AEA at a public informational meeting / social event. The event would be held jointly by the two towns and notices of the event would be published in the newspapers (Beaver Dam and Watertown), as well as posted throughout the Towns. Also, town officials will contact all of the individual landowners who signed the petition to create the AEA and inform them of the meeting. The informational meeting /social event would be used to celebrate the achievement and provide program information (applications) about farmland preservation agreements to interested landowners. County staff would attend the event to review the program and application procedures. Officially recognizing the accomplishment with an informational meeting / social event has been used in other awarded AEA's in Dodge County with success. The event could be held in a relaxed setting, possibly at a petitioning landowner's property or a local recreation area (park). In addition to landowners, local supporting agribusinesses will be invited by town officials.

Mailing

In conjunction with the public meetings, mailings were sent out to landowners to provide meeting notice and program information. Mailing general information out to landowners was a beneficial activity, as landowners were more informed when they came to the formal informational meeting. Also, it provided information to landowners that didn't attend the meetings.

If the proposed AEA is formally designated, town officials plan to mail Farmland Preservation Agreement information materials to all landowners in the AEA. To make the effort more efficient, the information will be included with the 2012 tax bills. This mailing method has been used in other AEA's and has been a very effective method, since every eligible landowner will receive a tax bill.

Additionally, the towns and Dodge County would like to coordinate a mailing effort with DATCP. DATCP typically sends out a mailing notice to all petitioning landowners in approved AEA's. Town and county officials feel that this would be a good opportunity to do a joint informational mailing, followed up with a joint informational meeting. This effort would show that there is communication between the three levels of government and give landowners an opportunity to talk with a DATCP representative. To further the impact of this opportunity, a joint mailing/meeting could include other nearby AEA's.

One-on-one conversations

In addition to the public meetings, AEA Committee members have spent many hours talking to landowners about the Farmland Preservation Program and the opportunity to apply for an AEA. Committee members have made numerous personal visits and phone calls to landowners to provide program information and follow up on program info. This has been an excellent method to educate landowners and develop relationships.



If the proposed AEA is approved, the personal one-on-one activities will continue. Aside from town hosted informational meetings, town officials will continue to educate landowners about the opportunity to enroll their land in a farmland preservation agreement. In addition to town activities, Dodge County staff will continue to provide one-on-one support to landowners. Future County activities will include: individual meetings with landowners, town hall meetings, personal phone conversations, and a designated day (or days) to meet landowners at the town hall.

Newsletter/media

The AEA petition process has generated interest in the City of Beaver Dam and the City of Watertown, as the Beaver Dam (Daily Citizen) and Watertown newspapers (Daily Times) has published newspaper articles on the AEA petition process. The articles (one article was on the front page) have increased awareness of the local agricultural industry and the efforts to preserve agricultural land (see attached newspaper articles).

If the proposed AEA is awarded, both the newspapers will do a large write of the accomplishment and the benefits of the AEA. Especially since the newspaper and local citizens (city and town) are watching the AEA petition project. The newspaper articles will be used to highlight the achievement and advertise future informational meetings.

Also, the Town of Elba maintains a website, which will be used to provide information to the public on the farmland preservation program.

Other Methods

Farmers are a tight knit group of individuals that regularly communicate with each other. If the proposed AEA is approved, the news of an opportunity to sign a farmland preservation agreement will spread quickly by word of mouth. Unknowingly, landowners will have a role in spreading the word about the program. Overall, all eligible landowners in the AEA will learn of the program by one of the above mentioned methods.



B) Land Use Controls

There are multiple land use controls implemented in the Towns of Elba and Portland. Both Towns have adopted their own zoning ordinance and are under the jurisdiction of the County land division ordinance. The following is a review of each land use regulatory tool:

Farmland Preservation Zoning Ordinance

Both Towns have adopted their own zoning ordinance. Zoning has been in place since 1979 in the Town of Elba and since 1971 in the Town of Portland. Both towns have updated their Zoning Ordinance and Map to comply with Chapter 91, Wis. Stats. In 2011, DATCP certified both of the town zoning ordinances as farmland preservation zoning ordinances. The current Town of Elba and Portland zoning maps are enclosed. The updated zoning maps are consistent with the Dodge County Farmland Preservation Plan, which was adopted in June of 2011.

In addition to the restrictions placed within the farmland preservation zoning district under Chapter 91, Wis. Stats., the Towns have chosen to require additional restrictions on the amount of residential development allowed in their updated zoning ordinances.

In the Town of Elba, the town requires a minimum lot size of 1.9 acres. Therefore, landowners must have a minimum of 39.9 acres to create a non-farm residential lot in the Farmland Preservation Zoning District, due to the town's minimum lot size requirement.

In the Town of Portland, the town has a minimum lot size of 1.5 acres. A maximum of only four new lots are allowed with 135 acres or more. The density standards listed in the Table below will apply not only to the Farmland Preservation Zoning District (A-1), but also to the Town's other agricultural zoning district (A-2). Below is Table 6.6-1 from the Portland Zoning Ordinance:

Density Standards in A-1 and A-2 Zoning Districts

Parent Lot Total Area (Acres)	Number of New Lots Allowed
Less than 45 acres	1
45 acres up to 90 acres	2
90 acres up to 135 acres	3
135 acres and above	4 (Maximum)

A town's participation in farmland preservation zoning greatly helps the Town work towards obtaining its Comprehensive Plan goals and proposed AEA goals. This is especially true since the new farmland preservation zoning standards limit the amount of growth in a town and restricts uses that are allowed in the Farmland Preservation Zoning District. Those uses that are allowed or conditionally allowed in the farmland preservation zoning district are limited to uses that are compatible with agricultural uses. Limiting allowed or conditionally allowed uses in the Farmland Preservation Zoning

District to agricultural uses, will help support agricultural development and the goals of the proposed AEA. By obtaining an AEA and participating in farmland preservation zoning, the Towns of Elba and Portland will help make its landowners eligible for the highest tax credit and implement stringent land preservation tools.

Easements or Purchase of Development Rights

There are no known donation of conservation easements or development rights purchased in the proposed AEA, although there are two land trusts that are active in Dodge County. The Drumlin Area Land Trust (DALT) and the Land Trust Network work with Dodge County landowners, both have submitted letters of support for the proposed AEA. These land trust organizations can accept the donation of conservation easements and possibly the purchase the development rights on farmland. Dodge County has assisted these land trusts in the past, however the land trusts are the holders of the easement and ensure that the land is used only for agricultural or open space uses in perpetuity.

If an AEA is awarded to the Towns of Elba and Portland, farmland preservation agreements will complement the opportunity to sell or donate conservation easements. Landowners who willingly enter into farmland preservation agreements may likely be willing to make further commitment by having a conservation easement on their land.

Also, County staff and town officials have promoted the use of the previously funded Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) program that was offered through the state farmland preservation program. In the past, County staff has conducted informational meetings (one in cooperation with DATCP and American Farmland Trust) on the PACE program and conservation easements. If funding is restored in the PACE program, Dodge County will promote the use of the program and work with area landowners to utilize the program. Staff would also host another farmland preservation workshop with DATCP, focusing on the PACE program.

Subdivision/Land Division Ordinance

All major subdivisions and minor divisions of land in Dodge County, except in incorporated municipalities, must receive approval from Dodge County. The purpose of Dodge County regulating all land divisions is to promote the public health, safety, morals, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare of the County. Any proposed division of land in Elba or Portland that result in a new lot being created, must obtain the approval of Dodge County. The land division provisions of the County Land Use Code specifies that all new lots not served by public sewer must abut a public road, be at least 40,000 sq. ft. in area, and have at least 125 feet of lot width at the building setback line. Without the requirement that all lots abut a public road, small tracts of wooded areas or hills far off the road could become residential building lots. These lots could be surrounded by agricultural operations and the driveway to such a lot may dissect existing agricultural fields. Having a nonfarm residence surrounded by agricultural fields can also lead to land use conflicts and disrupt normal farm operations. The subdivision/land division regulations also detail the requirements for proposed roads within a new subdivision along with grading, drainage, sidewalks, and erosion control design. The Town of Elba

also enforces its own Land Division Ordinance. Standards in the Land Division Ordinance match the Towns Zoning Ordinance.

Between the County land division standards and the Town's zoning requirements, all land divisions and land uses on agricultural land in the Towns are strictly regulated. The establishment of an AEA will further support the County and Town efforts. With existing regulations in place and the addition of an AEA, agriculture will continue to be the foundation of the Towns for years to come. Farmers can feel confident that the Towns will support agricultural operations, minimize land use conflicts, and will protect agricultural investments in their farm operations.

Farmland Preservation Agreements

There are currently no active farmland preservation agreements in the Towns of Elba or Portland. Each of the Towns participated very early in farmland preservation zoning program, thus there was no need for landowners to sign farmland preservation agreements.

If the proposed Elba/Portland AEA is awarded, it is believed that there will be an interest by landowners to enter into farmland preservation agreements. The AEA petition project has given government officials the opportunity to educate landowners on the Farmland Preservation Program and its benefits. This process has removed some landowner's misconceptions about the program and has sparked an interest in farmland preservation agreements, as well as other land preservation programs. With the increased tax credits and continuing educational efforts, it is anticipated that there will be a revitalized interest in the Farmland Preservation Program and landowners signing agreements.

Natural Area Protection

A large portion of the Town of Portland (1,662 acres) is occupied by the Waterloo State Wildlife Area. This area is managed by the Department of Natural Resources and is protected from future development. Dodge County owns a public park (Astico) in the Town of Elba. The 113 acre county park is located in the central portion of the Town and is protected from future development.



Other Land Use Controls

In addition to the above mentioned land use tools, Dodge County has recently adopted a revised Farmland Preservation Plan (June 21, 2011). The Dodge County Farmland Preservation Plan outlines agricultural statistics, land preservation techniques, as well as areas planned for agricultural preservation. Similar to the proposed AEA, the Farmland Preservation Plan map shows the same areas to be preserved for agriculture. The proposed AEA and the Farmland Preservation Plan map are consistent. Since the Farmland Preservation Plan is part of the Comprehensive Plan, proposed rezonings must be consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the Farmland Preservation Plan Map.

C) Agricultural Development Activities

One purpose of this AEA is to enhance existing agricultural operations and encourage new agricultural investments. The establishment of an AEA will further demonstrate to town landowners, agribusinesses, and potential agribusinesses that the Towns and County are committed to agriculture. Creating an environment where agricultural operations and agricultural businesses are encouraged to be progressive is critical. Below is a brief summary of recent agricultural investments in the proposed AEA.

The Crave Brothers Farm is located in central Portland and is a great example of an existing agricultural operation that will contribute and encourage future agricultural activities within the proposed AEA. The Crave Brothers have created a value-added operation, by producing their own specialty cheeses. In 2001 the brothers constructed their own cheese factory; milk is piped directly from the dairy farm to the cheese factory within hours of milking. The cheese factory



produces five different award winning specialty cheeses. Crave Brothers cheese is sold locally and shipped throughout the United States.

In addition to the cheese factory, Crave Brothers farm has two manure digesters. The digesters provide the electricity needed to run the dairy operation, cheese factory, and 300 area homes. The digesters are operated by Clear Horizons and are computer controlled over the internet from the company's office in Milwaukee. The liquid byproducts are used as fertilizer on their fields and the solid byproducts (dry organic matter) are used as animal bedding and in a line of organic potting soil. The digesters help manage the farm's manure (produced from 1,200 dairy cows), it provides clean, renewable energy for the farm, and produces excess electricity.

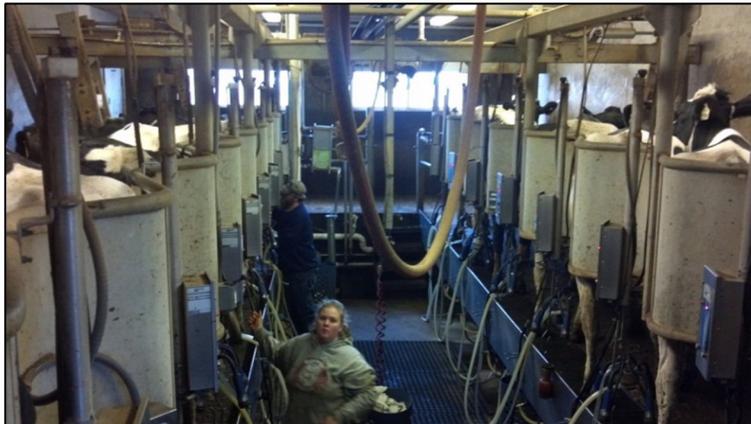
The Crave Brothers Farm is a forward thinking operation, which is shown by their numerous awards including the Dairy Farm Family of the Year award in 1993, placed second nationally in the Farm Progress Magazine's Best Managed Farms Contest in 1999, World Dairy Expo recognized the Crave Brothers as 2008 Dairymen of the Year, and Dairy Business Association awarded them the Advocate of the Year Award. They also hosted the 2009 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days.

The Crave Brother Farm supports Agri-tourism as they provide opportunities for tours of their operation, which is a unique activity. They have provided other dairy operations with a roadmap for future success and environmental stewardship. The economic impact of the operation in terms of jobs and revenue generated is extensive. Additionally, the farm operation supports many agribusinesses in Dodge County and Wisconsin. The Crave Brothers Farm is dependent upon the continued success of agriculture in the proposed AEA and Dodge County, in order to provide the support necessary for their operation.



There are many other great examples of existing agricultural operations that will contribute to the future of agriculture development in the proposed AEA. Just to name a few; McKay Nursery (Town of Portland) is a long standing company that produces landscaping plants and landscaping services, Roche Farms (Town of Elba) is a large cash cropping and beef cattle operation that operates over 6,000 acres, Northcrest Dairy (Town of Portland) is a dairy operation that milks 300 cows, Milwaukee Stockyard (Town of Elba) is a large livestock buying/selling facility, and Duffy Grain (Town of Elba) buys and sells grain/soybeans/wheat.

Additionally, there are various operations in the proposed AEA that use custom farming services (manure spreading, crop harvesting/planting), many of these operations will continue to utilize that farming infrastructure as it helps reduce equipment needs. A good example of this is the Crave Brothers and Roche farms utilize



Lemmenes Custom Farms, which provide manure spreading services to these farm operations. Though Lemmenes Custom Farms is not in the proposed AEA, they are located in the Town of Trenton's AEA (awarded in 2011 round). Furthermore, a summary of agricultural relationships was prepared for the proposed AEA (by a local landowner/town official), see the attached page titled "Existing or Potential Cooperative Relationships between Local Producers and/or Agricultural-Related businesses". The listing of cooperative relationships provides a summary on how cooperation works among area farmers.

Agriculture is no different than any other industry, in order to keep competitive and maximize profits, agricultural operators and agribusinesses need to be progressive. Obtaining an AEA is just that, it is progressive and forward thinking. It is the local petitioners and Towns way of preparing for the future and obtaining a tool necessary for

its landowners to prosper in the future. By securing an additional economic tool, such as an AEA, the Towns are positioning its farm operators and agribusinesses to be progressive. By obtaining an AEA and having landowners think about the future, it is believed the proposed AEA will encourage the: implementation of nontraditional operation practices, investment in new technology, investment new farming equipment, consideration of potential business opportunities, shared farm services, and utilization of new resources.

D) Other AEA Activities

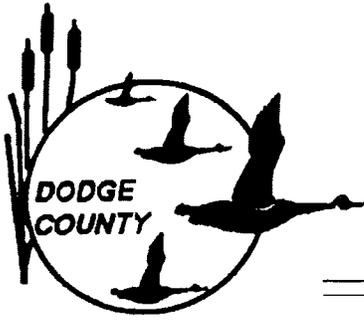
Town officials and landowners from the Towns of Elba and Portland have attended various Farmland Preservation Program workshops. Hosting and attending town, county, and state workshops/meetings shows the dedication the officials/landowners have for the preservation of agriculture in their communities. If the Elba/Portland AEA is awarded, the Towns may create a special committee dedicated to educating landowners on the Farmland Preservation Program and promote the use of Farmland Preservation Agreements. Also, Dodge County staff is interested in working with DATCP and other AEA representatives to develop new ways to educate and promote the use of agreements. In addition to providing education on the various benefits of the AEA, the group plans to develop a formal method to acknowledge landowners that have signed a Farmland Preservation Agreement. One possible method to acknowledge landowners would include the placement of a specially designed sign, which states “Elba/Portland AEA – Farmland Preservation Agreement” on the landowner’s property. This would be a great way to recognize the landowner’s commitment to the preservation of agriculture, as well as spur conversations and interest in the program.



EXISTING OR POTENTIAL COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LOCAL PRODUCERS AND/OR AGRICULTURAL-RELATED BUSINESSES

1. Duffy Grains = Hauling, Drying, Storing & Selling, Buying Local Farmers Grains (corn, soybean, wheat)
2. Action Tire = Selling Farm Tractor & Machinery tires and repair
3. Duffy Fleet Service = Repair Farm Trucks
4. Nehmer Produce & Green House = Raising & Selling Farm Vegetables at Farm Stand & Farmers Markets
5. KranzDale Farm = Buying & Selling High quality & register Cattle
6. Lundeen Farm = Raising & Selling organic pork to Restaurants & Farm Markets
7. BlackBurn Hoof Trimming = Trimming hoofs of all cattle
8. Heseman Enterprises Inc. = Selling small farm machinery
9. Temkin Iron & Metal = Buying old machinery & metal for recycling
10. CD Farm Supply = Selling Farm Feed & Supplies to local farmers
11. Kraft Imp. = Selling Machinery to local farmers
12. Columbus Country Side Veterinary Clinic = Care, Treatment of small animals
13. Gaska Dairy Health Service = Care, Treatment of large animals
14. Col. Bob Wedel Auction Service = Selling of farm machinery thru auctions
15. Bacon Custom Farming = Custom farm machinery work for farmers
16. Columbus Sportsman Club = Sportsmen & Farmers to shoot & relax
17. Astico Park = A place for farmers and family to camp & relax

18. Livestock Farmers & Producers = Milk, Meat, Grains to Business
19. Grain Farmers = Producing corn, wheat, soybeans for food, feed, ethanol
20. Columbus Rural Fire Group = Rural Townships for fire protection
21. E.M.S. Group = With Columbus & Townships provide Emergency service to rural farmers
22. Schultz Trucking = Hauls locally produced milk
23. Anthon Enterprise = Selling used iron & culverts for farm use
24. Culvert Man = Selling culverts for farm & field driveways
25. OKey, Bethel & St. Columbkille Cemeteries = A place to let farmers body rest after they preserve the land for the next generation
26. Prideworks = Excavating & cleaning farm fence lines-brush cutting.
27. A major railroad runs through the center for the Town of Elba with two tracks. From Milwaukee to Minneapolis and beyond with many stops in between (stopping traffic in places). Carrying farmers supplies and produce goods to a busy America.
28. St Columbkille Church – a place for a farmer and his family to worship and give thanks for abundant harvest on his beautiful land.



Dodge County Land Conservation Department (LCD)
127 E Oak Street Juneau WI 53039-1329
(920) 386-3660
Email: landcons@co.dodge.wi.us

DATE: January 9, 2012

TO: Wisconsin DATCP
Coreen Fallat – AEA Petition Review

FROM: Marc Bethke, County Conservationist
Dodge County Land Conservation Department

RE: Soil & Water Conservation Compliance in the Towns of Portland and Elba,
Dodge County

As of January 1, 2012, Farmland Preservation Program participation records in the Dodge County Land Conservation Department appear to indicate that more than half of the landowners petitioning for an Agricultural Enterprise Area in the Towns of Portland and Elba, Dodge County, are likely in compliance with the conservation standard of maintaining cropland soil erosion at or below tolerable levels. As of the same time, and based on the best available information, it is believed that less than half of the landowners in the Towns of Portland and Elba, Dodge County, are in compliance with the conservation standard of preparing and following a cropland nutrient management plan.

Because fewer than half of the remaining landowners in the Towns of Portland and Elba have livestock or manure storage structures on their farms, we believe that the remaining soil and water conservation standards would likely apply to only a small number of Town of Portland and Town of Elba landowners. Staff of the Dodge County Land Conservation Department believes that the majority of these landowners would be found to be in compliance with most, if not all, of these remaining soil & water conservation standards.

Therefore, all things considered, we would estimate that half, or less than half, of the petitioning landowners in the Town of Portland and the Town of Elba, Dodge County, are in full compliance with all state soil and water conservation standards. However, trends in nutrient management planning and the application of other conservation practices throughout Dodge County, including the Town of Portland and the Town of Elba, would suggest that positive progress is being made every year, and that more than half of the Town of Portland and the Town of Elba landowners could be in full compliance with state soil and water conservation standards in the next few years.

Please contact me with any questions at 920-386-3663.

Crave Brothers Farm and Cheese Factory Summary



Crave Brothers Farm moved to Dodge County, in Portland Township after renting a farm for a short time in Dane County. The primary reasons for moving to Dodge County were good farm land and a positive attitude toward agriculture. In other words, agriculture is looked upon as a positive enterprise in the county. We have farmed here for 30 years.



In 2001, the decision was made to build a farmstead cheese factory. It was then added onto in 2004. In 2006, Crave Brothers Farm decided to expand our farming operation to supply enough milk to the cheese factory. We built three cow barns, four heifer barns, 10 concrete bunker silos, a 10 million gallon manure lagoon, 2 digesters in cooperation with Clear Horizon, a machine shop, and an office building. All of these buildings were added to the farm between 2006 and 2009. In 2008, the cheese factory was added onto again. With everything that was built on the farm and cheese factory in the last 10 years, we have invested over 10.5 million dollars. It is quite evident that with the amount of investment that we have made that we feel confident that this is a very good place to invest in agriculture. We now have the next generation of owners coming into the family business. We feel that Portland Township will be a good place to operate our agricultural enterprises in the years to come.

