



DATCP Designates New Agricultural Enterprise Areas in Sauk and Walworth Counties

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 7, 2025

Contact: Dan Richter, Public Information Officer, (608) 419-5352,
dan.richter@wisconsin.gov

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) designated more than 30,000 acres in Sauk and Walworth counties as new agricultural enterprise areas (AEAs) effective January 1, 2025. With these additions, there are now 51 AEAs statewide, totaling 1,648,572 acres and covering portions of 31 counties, 140 towns, and the Bad River Reservation.

AEA designations are important to Wisconsin’s agricultural future and support local farmland protection goals, the agricultural economy, environmental efforts, and rural prosperity. Landowners within designated AEAs are eligible to enter into voluntary farmland preservation agreements, committing all or a portion of their farm to agricultural use and maintaining state soil and water conservation standards. In return, they may be eligible to claim the annual farmland preservation tax credit.

The new AEAs include:

- [Woodland AEA](#), located in Sauk County, includes more than 20,000 acres in the town of Woodland. Local governments and partners joined eight landowners to petition for designation of this AEA. Petitioners want to preserve and maintain the agricultural use of the lands by promoting farming practices that help build soil health such as no-till and cover crops.
Local contact: Brian Sadler, Conservation Technician, (608) 355-4841
- [Delavan Lake Watershed AEA](#), located in Walworth County, includes more than 9,000 acres in the towns of Delavan, Geneva, and Walworth, and village of Fontana. Local government and partners joined 11 landowners to petition for designation in this AEA. Petitioners want to increase participation in agricultural conservation practices that promote water quality to protect local surface water and build relationships between agricultural producers and watershed stakeholders.
Local contact: Katie Porubcan, Conservation Technician, (262) 741-7913

DATCP is accepting petitions to designate new or modify existing AEAs through August 1, 2025. An AEA designation provides tools to support farmland protection, conservation, and the local farm economy. A minimum of five landowners and their local governments must file a petition jointly. Petitioners who notify DATCP of their intent to apply will receive information about workshops, webinars, and other resources to help prepare the petition.

DATCP has the authority to designate up to two million acres of AEAs. Interested landowners should contact their local government or county conservation department to begin the petition process, or contact Wednesday Coye at (608) 224-4611 or datcpworkinglands@wisconsin.gov. Petition materials are available at https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/AEAPetitionInfo.aspx.

About Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs)

AEAs are community-led efforts to establish designated areas important to Wisconsin’s agricultural future. As part of the state’s Farmland Preservation Program, AEAs strive to

support local farmland protection goals. Through this designation, communities can encourage continued agricultural production and investment in the local agricultural economy. The designation of an AEA establishes an option for landowners to sign a farmland preservation agreement. These are voluntary 10-year agreements provide protections for certain uses of local lands while allowing the landowners the opportunity to claim the farmland preservation tax credit. Landowners with a farmland preservation agreement are now eligible to claim a tax credit of \$10 per acre, or \$12.50 per acre if their lands are also located in a certified farmland preservation zoning district.

###

Find more DATCP news in our [newsroom](#), on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).