



2025 Petition Cycle Agricultural Enterprise Areas Update

Wednesday Coe – DARM – Bureau of Land and Water Resources

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP)

November 2025

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AGRICULTURE ENTERPRISE AREAS



Greenville Greenbelt AEA – Outagamie County

Agricultural enterprise areas (AEAs):

- Are community led
- Are important to local agricultural identity and economy
- Support community's farmland and environmental protection goals



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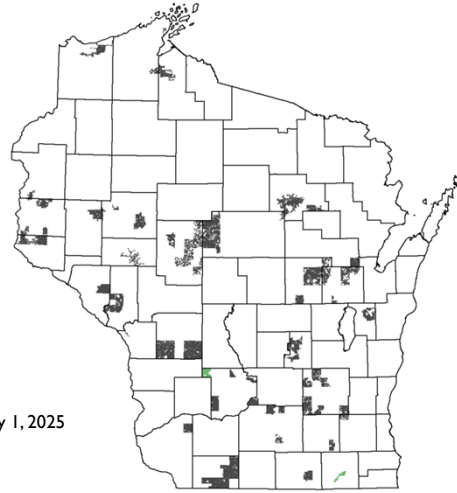
2025 AEA PROGRAM UPDATE

Currently Designated AEAs:

- There are 51 AEAs in 140 towns and the Bad River Reservation in 31 counties covering 1,648,572 acres across the state.

Map Legend

- New AEAs Designated January 1, 2025
- All Other AEAs



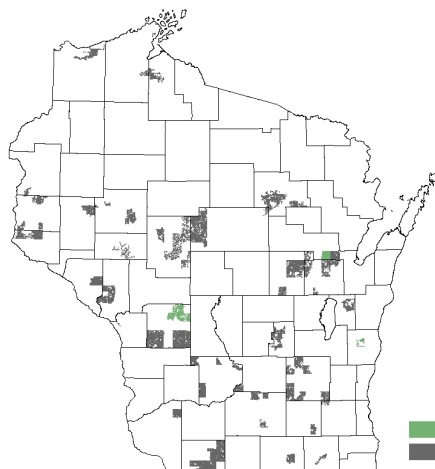
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2025 AEA PETITION PERIOD

Recommended AEAs:

- NEW:** Lemonweir River Cranberry Region AEA – *Monroe County*
- NEW:** Town of Lessor AEA – *Shawano County*
- NEW:** Town of Plymouth AEA – *Sheboygan County*



- 2025 Recommended Agricultural Enterprise Area
- Existing Agricultural Enterprise Areas



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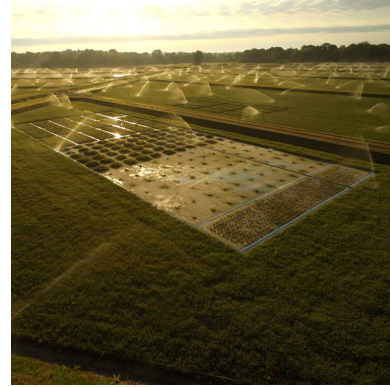
2025 NEW AEA PETITION CYCLE:

LEMONWEIR RIVER CRANBERRY REGION AEA

MONROE COUNTY – TOWNS OF LINCOLN, SCOTT, GREENFIELD, LA GRANGE, AND BYRON

64,109 acres | 60 petitioners and 78 non-petitioning cooperators

- Ag Production: High number and concentration of cranberry operations; dairy; row crops; managed forest land; and Federal Conservation Programs, including Conservation Stewardship
- Program Goals:
 - Preserve the cranberry and dairy production to ensure long term viability
 - Protect shared natural resources and watersheds that support agricultural viability and wildlife habitat
 - Promote conservation practices that enhance soil health, water quality, and climate resilience
 - Support the local farm economy through access to tax credits, value-added production, and market diversification
 - Foster a strong local ag community and rural workforce



Sprinklers at Night at the Valley Corporation Farm, Monroe County – Courtesy of Valley Corporation



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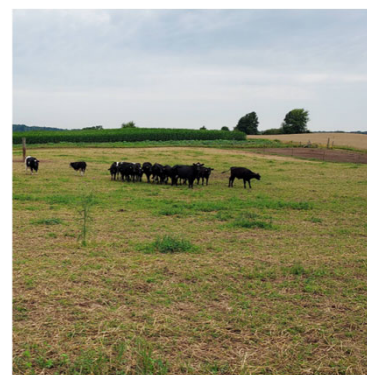
2025 NEW AEA PETITION CYCLE:

TOWN OF LESSOR AG FIRST AEA

SHAWANO COUNTY – TOWN OF LESSOR

22,551 acres | 10 petitioners and three non-petitioning cooperators

- Ag Production: Wheat; corn; soybeans; oats; greenhouse annuals; poultry; Community Supported Agriculture farms; and Federal Conservation Programs, including Conservation Stewardship Program
- Program Goals:
 - Preserve farmland in an environmentally friendly way, including enrolling lands into FP agreements and nutrient management
 - Promote soil conservation and nutrient management planning through farmer-led education
 - Promote a farm business environment that encourages new crops, livestock, and marketing ventures
 - Protect agricultural land from runoff and sedimentation into streams by added conservation practices to protect water quality
 - Promote land use practices that maintain or improve natural resources while promoting a viable and diverse economic base



Cows out to pasture, Town of Lessor



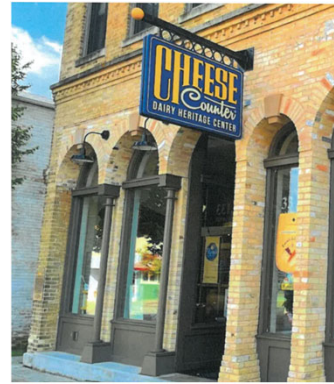
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2025 NEW AEA PETITION CYCLE:

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH AEA*SHEBOYGAN COUNTY – TOWN OF PLYMOUTH***9,945 acres | Seven petitioners and six non-petitioning cooperators**

- Ag Production: corn; soybeans; alfalfa; wheat; farmers market growers; beef; dairy; grazing; Community Supported Agriculture farms; and Federal Conservation Programs, including Conservation Stewardship Program
- Program Goals:
 - Promote agribusiness near production areas
 - Consider important agricultural areas when considering development
 - Preserve rural character by encouraging towns to adhere to their “Smart Growth” plans
 - Preserve natural resources and public lands through good management for multiple uses
 - Protect groundwater through continued well testing
 - Preserve, restore, and improve surface water quality through education, erosion control, buffer strips, land use controls, and other practices
 - Continue to promote sustainable forestry



Cheese Counter Dairy Heritage Center,
City of Plymouth



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FUTURE SUPPORT FOR AEA PROGRAM

Evaluate the need to raise AEA acreage cap past 2 million acres

- As of October 2025:
 - Over 86% of eligible acres have been designated or proposed for designation as an AEA, leaving less than 270,000 acres to be designated in future cycles.
 - Average AEA size is 34,000 acres, and the program reviews an average of three petitions annually. If these trends continue, we will max out our acres within the next two years.
 - Currently, there is one active petition for a new AEA and two active petitions to expand existing AEAs to be submitted in the 2026 cycle. We anticipate additional interest in other petitions after the 2026 petition materials are posted later this winter.



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Thank you!



Wednesday Coye

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