



AEA Snapshot: Scuppernong AEA Layers Preservation Protections to Protect Farming Communities

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MADISON – The Scuppernong agriculture enterprise area (AEA) was designated as an AEA in 2011 after the state’s first petition cycle. It includes 13,859 acres located in the municipalities of Cold Spring, Hebron, Palmyra, and Sullivan in southeastern Jefferson County. The community uses comprehensive zoning, conservation easements, nutrient management planning, and the Scuppernong AEA to meet the following goals:

- Preserve local farmland for future use
- Promote clustering of farms to strengthen the local farm economy and agribusinesses
- Educate the community about the importance of local agriculture
- Protect the area’s groundwater resources

The Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department works with landowners in the Scuppernong AEA in a variety of ways to maximize the benefits of participating in the farmland preservation program and explore soil health practices. For example, the county offers classes each year on nutrient management planning for both new and experienced farmers. The county also provides individualized planning, technical support, and cost sharing to help offset the costs of implementing a nutrient management plan.

Additionally, Scuppernong AEA landowners who already participate in the program through zoning may be eligible to offset their costs further using the farmland preservation tax credit. By signing a farmland preservation agreement on lands within the AEA, the landowner devotes the covered land to agriculture and agricultural accessory uses for 15 years while ensuring the land meets state conservation standards. In return, the income tax credit increases from \$7.50/acre to \$10/acre and protects the land for future use.

To learn more about the Scuppernong AEA, visit https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/DesignatedAEAs.aspx. To find out if your farmland is located in this AEA, to sign a farmland preservation agreement, or to learn more about conservation initiatives or resources in Jefferson County, contact Nancy Lannert of the Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department at (920) 674-7110 or nancyl@jeffersoncountywi.gov.

About AEA’s and Farmland Preservation

Agriculture enterprise areas provide a path for landowners to create their own nutrient management plan, explore new conservation practices, and sign a farmland preservation agreement. DATCP has authority to designate up to 2 million acres for AEA’s. There are currently 40 AEA designations in the state with almost 1.4 million acres in 112 towns, 27 counties, and the Bad River Reservation. Since 2010, over 1,500 Wisconsin farmland owners supported petitions for designation of an AEA.

To learn more about AEA’s, visit https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/AgriculturalEnterpriseAreas.aspx. To start or join a current AEA, contact your county land conservation department. To learn more about the Farmland Preservation Program and to read the latest Farmland Preservation Report, visit <https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Publications/FarmlandPreservation.aspx>.

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