



Are you thinking of conducting a Municipal Farmland Inventory?

Things to Consider

- How will your community define a farm?
- What are the goals of the inventory?
- Who keeps the information and how will it be used?
- What data fields should be included?
- What data gets mapped?
- Should the inventory include a survey of farmers?

Possible Data Fields

Town Characteristics

- Total acres of farmland as defined
- Total acres of prime farm soils
- Total acres of soils of State-wide significance
- Total acres of active farmland (by type)
- Total acres of protected farmland by type and type of protection
- Number of farms in 2010, 2000, 1990, 1890 – how far back?
- Total local taxes paid by farmers

Farm Characteristics

- Farm Name
- Leased or Owned, if known
- Age of principal farm operator
- Primary occupation of principal farm operator
- Farm is or has been a SWCD client
- Conservation easement(s) associated with the farm
- Leased fields utilized for hay, grazing, or crop production
- Amount of Certified Organic Acres
- Farm includes tree growth acres or working forest lands
- Parcel Number
- Owner Name and Mailing Address
- Total Acres of Parcels in one ownership
- Parcel Size
- Assessed Value
- Building Value
- Land Value
- Annual Tax
- Tax Status
- Tax Exemptions or Reductions
- Land Use Classification - if town has zoning
- Year buildings built and condition

Risks and Opportunities

- Farmland Has Historic Barn or Archeological and Cultural Resources on Site
- Farmer is nearing retirement age
- Farmland is located near other farms

Natural Resources and Conservation Values

- Natural resources features
- Watershed the parcel is located in

- Soil types
- Farmland contains or is adjacent to significant aquifer, river, lake or stream
- Farmland is within a Beginning with Habitat Focus Area
- Recorded presence of rare, threatened or endangered species
- Proximity to conserved parcels
- Property identified as scenic in local comprehensive plan

Farm Productivity

- Types of crops or livestock (acreage / numbers)
- Quantities grown or sold
- Changes in last 10 or 20 years
- Value of sales

Municipal Policies and Ordinances

- Comprehensive plan consideration of farming
- Land use ordinance provisions affecting farmers and farmland
- Tax policies regarding farming
- Farmland protection policies and practices
- Number and type of nuisance complaints

Other Items to Consider Including or Addressing

- Does the farm allow public access or provide recreation opportunities?
- Are there ancillary commercial activities occurring on the farm?
- Are there other non-farm commercial enterprises occurring on the farm?
- Are there farm support businesses in town?
- If new farmers want to start farming here, what parcels of land might be suitable?
- Is there a field to school program and do local farmers participate?
- How have any nuisance complaints been handled and resolved?
- Are farmers represented on local boards and committees?
- Is there an active Grange or Agricultural Commission?
- Include or frame the inventory around stories of local farms and farmers to capture the historical perspective for future generations

Contact Maine Farmland Trust for more information: www.maineFarmlandtrust.org

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