

# Petitioning for an Agricultural Enterprise Area

## Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program

Preserve farmland. Protect the environment. Grow the economy.



### What is an agricultural enterprise area (AEA)?

These are community-led efforts establishing designated areas important to Wisconsin's agricultural future. An AEA is a contiguous area of productive agriculture that has received designation from the state at the request of landowners and local governments. AEAs are a way for landowners to participate in the Farmland Preservation Program that does not require general zoning or provide additional land use restrictions to landowners. As part of the state's Farmland Preservation Program, AEAs strive to support local farmland protection goals, the agricultural economy, and conservation goals.

### How can we start a new AEA?

To create a new AEA, a petition must be crafted with landowner inputs and supported by the local governments and community stakeholders. Petitions must include the following:

- A narrative of the area in and around the proposed AEA
- Signature pages from each political subdivision (such as counties, cities, towns, and villages) within the AEA and a minimum of five petitioning landowners
- Non-petitioning cooperator signature pages to show the support of community stakeholders
- A map of the proposed AEA boundary
  - All lands in the proposed AEA must be planned for farmland preservation and contiguous

### What are the benefits of being in an AEA?

- Provides opportunity to claim the farmland preservation tax credit:
  - \$10/acre for landowners with a farmland preservation agreement located in designated AEA.
  - \$12.50/acre for landowners in farmland preservation zoning and with a signed farmland preservation agreement in an AEA.
  - The average Wisconsin farmland preservation tax credit claim in 2023 was \$2,057. This value represents participants from farmland preservation zoning and farmland preservation agreements in AEAs across Wisconsin.
- Creates economic incentive for best management practices
- Clusters protected farms to promote community investment in agriculture
- Provides opportunities for community-based grants
- Establishes the option to protect and preserve agricultural lands through farmland preservation agreements

### How do I start my AEA petition?

To start the petition process for an AEA in your community, visit

[https://datcp.wi.gov/pages/programs\\_services/aeapetitioninfo.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/pages/programs_services/aeapetitioninfo.aspx) or contact your county land and water conservation department.

### Where can I find more information?

For additional resources or information about Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program visit

<http://farmlandpreservation.wi.gov>. If you have questions, please call (608) 224-4611 or email [datcpworkinglands@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcpworkinglands@wisconsin.gov).



**Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection**

Division of Agricultural Resource Management | Bureau of Land and Water Resources

P-DARM345 (03/2025)