PLANNING FOR AGRICULTURE:
A GUIDE FOR CONNECTICUT MUNICIPALITIES

A PUBLICATION OF
AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST
AND
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES

American Farmland Trust

- National non-profit organization, founded in 1980. 50,000 members nationwide
- Mission - to stop the loss of productive farmland and to promote farming practices that lead to a healthy environment.
- Policy, Education & Outreach

AFT in Connecticut:

- Working Lands Alliance – statewide coalition working to increase the state’s commitment to farmland preservation. WorkingLandsAlliance.com
- Conservation Options for Connecticut Landowners, Land Trusts & Municipalities
- Planning for Agriculture – A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities

WRITING THE GUIDE

- Advisory Team:
  - Capitol Region Council of Governments
  - CME Associates
  - Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
  - Connecticut Farmland Trust
  - Farm Service Agency
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - Connecticut Conference of Municipalities
  - Town of Lebanon
  - Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association
  - Town of Somers
  - University of Connecticut

WHAT’S IN THE GUIDE?

- Sec 1: Importance of Agriculture
- Sec 2: Is Your Town Planning a Future for Agriculture?
- Sec 3: Getting Started
- Sec 4: Tools to Support Farming and Protect Farmland
- Sec 5: Addressing Common Issues
- Sec 6: Promoting Local Farm Viability
- Appendix A: Connecticut General Statutes
- Appendix B: CRCOG Model Regulations
- Appendix C: Selected Court Cases Affecting Connecticut Agriculture
- Appendix D: Resources

WHAT’S IN THE GUIDE?

- Case Studies
  - Tolland
  - Lebanon
  - Shelton
  - Granby
  - Madison
TRENDS IN CT AGRICULTURE

Changing Farm Economy

- Easier to lease than own land
- Difficult to find housing on farmland
- Rise of small farm businesses
- Transition (sometimes departure) of large farm businesses
- Farms expanding/diversifying toward direct retail and agritourism
- Search for energy efficiency options
- Growing interest in raising livestock
- Limited agri-infrastructure (kitchens, meat processing, delivery).

Three Common Myths

1. Residential development will lower property taxes by increasing the tax base.
2. Differential property tax programs give farms an unfair tax break.
3. Open lands, including productive farms, are interim uses waiting around to be developed to their “highest and best use.”

Cost of Community Services

Median cost per dollar of revenue raised to provide public services (Sept 2007)

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONS

RIGHT-TO-FARM
TAX POLICIES

PROMOTE LOCAL FARM VIABILITY

HELP FOR MUNICIPALITIES
- Connecticut Agriculture Viability Grants Program
- Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

CONTACT INFO

Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities is available online at: www.ctplanningforagriculture.com

For more information about AFT, visit:
- www.farmland.org
- www.workinglandsalliance.org

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