



CARING FOR THE  
**FACES & SPACES**  
OF WISCONSIN

# Farmland Preservation Workshop Summary

May 12, 2010

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(Response Count = 15)

# Process Used to Generate and Score Responses

- Farmland Preservation Plan
  - statutory requirements were turned into 9 specific questions
- Small Group Discussion
  - Participants were broken into three groups, each facilitated by County staff. Each group was asked to provide responses to 3 of the 9 questions
- Large Group Discussion
  - Small groups reported back to large group for discussion/revising so that there were no more than 10 responses per question.
- Voting
  - Participants used electronic clickers to prioritize responses for each question. They were given three votes (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> choices) for each question.
- Scoring
  - The numbers in parentheses for each response were calculated using the following weighting system: Each 1<sup>st</sup> place vote received 3pts, each 2<sup>nd</sup> place vote received 2pts, and each 3<sup>rd</sup> place vote received 1pt.

# #1 What are the important agricultural uses of land in St. Croix County?

1. Dairy (46)
2. Crops: (Corn, Soybeans, Hay) Traditional Row Crops (28)
3. Beef (5)
4. Nurseries (2)
5. Canning Crops (2)
6. Community Supported Agriculture (2)
7. Forestry (1)
8. Pasture/Grazing (0)
9. Energy Crops (0)

## #2 What are the key natural resources that support agriculture?

1. Land is available (31)
2. Land is productive/high capability (25)
3. Good groundwater quality & quantity (10)
4. Favorable terrain (6)
5. Favorable precipitation/growing conditions (5)
6. Sustainable energy resources available (2)
7. Quality surface waters: lakes, rivers & ponds (1)
8. Significant amount of timber/forest land (0)
9. Is open space (0)

### #3 What are the anticipated changes in the nature, scope, location, and focus of agriculture related to production, processing, supply, and distribution?

1. Consumers demanding more (24)
2. Mergers of enterprises – lack of competition & options (19)
3. Smaller profit margins (14)
4. Fragmented land/Parcel size increases difficulty (11)
5. Disconnect of people from ag production (8)
6. World or global marketing -- good & bad (7)
7. Health insurance – off-farm jobs necessary (5)
8. Labor availability may be inadequate (3)
9. Climate change (3)

## #4 What are key pieces of agricultural infrastructure that currently exist?

1. Storage elevators/private storage (25)
2. Good roads & highway system (22)
3. Machinery dealers/repair (18)
4. Financial Institutions (9)
5. I-94 (5)
6. Fertilizer dealers (2)
7. Colleges/Technical Institutions (2)
8. Vet services (1)
9. Railroad (0)

## #5 What are key pieces of agricultural infrastructure that are needed?

1. Land availability for agriculture (45)
2. Experience labor supply (18)
3. Finishing facilities for raw materials/crops (17)
4. Parts depot for ag equipment (15)

## #6 What are the significant trends affecting agricultural land use and the conversion of agricultural land to other uses?

1. Population growth (62)
2. Selling farmland for development (land values) (30)
3. Transitioning farms to next generation (9)
4. Farm size increasing/small farms disappearing (8)
5. Commodity price/cost of production (6)
6. Land use conflicts with nonfarm, recreation, etc. (6)
7. Labor availability (2)
8. Manure spreading/product./Nutrient management challenges (2)
9. Technology – size of equipment larger (0)

# #7 What are the significant trends affecting agricultural production and enterprises related to agriculture?

1. Increased demand for nonfarm development (32)
2. Farmers retiring not being replaced (19)
3. Competition between large & small farms (15)
4. Too much government intervention (13)
5. Full & part-time farmers with outside incomes (5)
6. Cost/lack of supplier availability (4)
7. Foreclosures of farm & ag enterprises (2)
8. More no till & reduced till occurring (0)
9. New roads splitting property/fragmenting (0)

## #8 What should our goals be for agriculture in the county?

1. Keep as much viable ag land as possible (32)
2. Protect working farms from encroachment from non-ag/Keep development in designated areas (21)
3. Protect farms with better financial incentives (19)
4. Plan for farming with less restrictions/Get out of NR151 (11)
5. Flexible planning/plans adjust over time (9)
6. Easier transition to farm easements (3)
7. Better disaster assistance (0)

## #9 What should our goals be for enterprises related to agriculture?

1. Encourage/support ag businesses (23)
2. Profitable ag for all sizes to help support local businesses (19)
3. Cooperative agreements for supplies (17)
4. Help support small suppliers for small farms (15)
5. Enough farming capacity to support businesses (critical mass) (12)