

# Draft Farmland Preservation Goals and Objectives Review

## Workshop April 27, 2011 – Baldwin (19 responses)

On December 31, 2011, the St. Croix Farmland Preservation Plan is set to expire. St. Croix County is in the process of developing a new plan. Chapter 91, Subchapter II, of WI State Statutes specifically identifies several planning requirements the new farmland preservation plan must address to obtain state certification, including:

1. All plans must clearly state the county's goals and policies related to:
  - a. farmland preservation; and
  - b. agricultural development, including development of enterprises related to agriculture;
2. Identification of farmland preservation areas; and
3. The county's strategy to increase housing density outside of farmland preservation areas.

These workshops will provide an opportunity for farm operators, agri-businessmen, local officials and the public to review and respond to draft goals, objectives and policies proposed for the new plan. Below is the first draft of these materials.

**Comments provided after the "why", Written comments are hyphenated, verbal are italicized/bulleted.**

**Goal 1: *Preserve farmland to maintain and grow St. Croix County's agricultural industry and to enhance the rural landscape.***

(15)Like (0)Dislike (4)Depends

Why:

- There is only so much productive land.
- Population growth
- Must do unless we want another Woodbury
- Maintain good use and soil
- We need the land for food.
- Growth outside expansion acres of existing municipalities
- Ag is an important industry.
- location

**1A. Preserve productive soils identified by county land evaluation system.**

(15)Like (1)Dislike (3)Depends

Why:

- Poor or eroded lands should not be farmed – use for urban development.
- LESA is poor system/does not represent actual production
- Who is going to do it?
- Can build anywhere
- Farmers in these areas should have opportunities also.

1B. Support public and/or private initiatives that preserve farmland.

(14)Like (1)Dislike (2)Depends

Why:

- has to be county and state support
- depends if farmers lose value on their property
- \$\$?
- Don't use tax dollars
- What is the cost?

1C. Minimize the loss and fragmentation of farmland in rural areas.

(16)Like (1) Dislike (4)Depends

Why;

- Keep good farmland in larger blocks
- Can not have an area of small tracts and be able to farm them.
- Outside expansion areas of municipalities
- Housing sometimes causes problems
- Easier to farm larger parcels
- Future Farm will be larger and adapt to larger parcels

1D. Encourage preservation of open space and scenic areas and structures.

(13)Like (3)Dislike (2)Depends (1 no response

Why:

- We have plenty.
- Will help to preserve larger tract of farm land
- Not part of ag preservation
- Who is going to do it?
- Less density

**Goal 2: *Promote agricultural development to support St. Croix County producers, businesses, and communities.***

(15)Like (1)Dislike (2)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- must educate non farmers, people that want a piece of the pie, but do not like to see, smell, etc. what the farmers are doing to keep
- AE
- Already have infrastructure

2A. Maintain and strengthen a farm operator's right to farm using accepted practices that do not threaten public health or safety.

(16)Like (0)Dislike (3)Depends

Why:

- must be able to farm and not just make open space for non-farmers to enjoy
- must be harmonious with development plan
- new laws
- most residential subdivisions are hostile to farm operators
- could turn into problem with non-ag residents

2B. Support economic incentives for landowners to keep productive agricultural land in agricultural use.

(14)Like (1)Dislike (3)Depends

Why:

- got to make incentives large
- Who will pay?
- !!
- Where is money coming from?
- Highest bidders sometimes determines use
- Don't use the tax dollars

2C. Support efforts which increase the viability and diversity of agriculture throughout the county.

(13)Like (1)Dislike (4)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- not financial efforts
- Let the market decide, farm to market farms are insignificant.
- There is room for all types of ag in county.
  - o *Sound like hobby farms, what else*
  - o *Diversity might create conflicts among AG activities*

2D. Encourage bio-energy production to diversify energy resources and the agricultural economy.

(12)Like (2)Dislike (3)Depends (2)no response

Why:

- Too expensive
- Ok
- Funding source
- Food to fuel “no”
- Better returns for our investment
- Unsure
- Don't use tax dollars
  - o *Selling corn, wonderful. Buying corn, not so good.*
  - o *Why take land out of food production.*
  - o *Depends on which side of the question you are on.*
  - o *Level ground –*
  - o *But maybe it is cyclical and will shift back to daily from corn.*

2E. Support agricultural processing and marketing initiatives for local, regional, and global markets

(16)Like (1)Dislike (1)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- better prices
- drive less for service
- let the market decide

2F. Maintain and strengthen the county farm economy

(17)Like (1)Dislike (1)Depends

Why:

- I am a farmer
- Let the market decide

2G. Identify, develop, and maintain agricultural infrastructure to support agricultural operations.

(15)Like (1)Dislike (2)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- Do away with weight limits in the spring
- Farmers can do this better than government.

2H. Provide assistance to farmers seeking to innovate or modernize their operations.

(10)Like (1)Dislike (7)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- Less government intervention
- Funding source
- Need to know the type of assistance – private or government
- Help
- By private venture – not government
- Mostly goes to a select few.
- City folk do not like manure
- Hard to decide where assistance should go – who benefits
  - o *Where is the money coming from?*
  - o *Private financial support, not government.*

**Goal 3: *Guide or manage development patterns that will preserve farmland and promote agricultural development***

(14)Like (1)Dislike (3)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- Keep government out.
- Better development practices – allow municipalities to grow but stop sprawl
- This is a role the government can do.

3A. Guide urban growth into developed areas consistent with the community's willingness and ability to accommodate growth.

(16)Like (1)Dislike (1)Depends (1) no response

Why:

- Planning becomes more important.
- This is a role the government can do.
- Less ag land used

3B. Discourage rural nonfarm development on productive agricultural land

(17)Like (1)Dislike (1)Depends

Why:

- Productive land is needed for crops.
- A house is a house with horses
- !
- conflicts – road traffic
- The conflict with farm operators

3C. Guide rural development to locations that will not convert productive agricultural land.

(14)Like (1)Dislike (5)Depends

Why:

- outside source should not tell me how to act
- where ag should be
- makes long-term sense. Not much new land being created
- that would be a good use of land
- selling price
  - o *As long as it's not on my farm.*
  - o *As long as in places near existing towns / cities or near existing development.*
  - o *How do you determine what is productive? Might be better for wildlife.*

3D. Encourage conservation design development and private conservancy as methods for preserving productive agricultural land

(12)Like (0)Dislike (7)Depends

Why:

- depends on government control
- uses non-tax dollars
  - o *Government vs private involvement.*
  - o *Start with good intentions but lead to more government.*
  - o *Depends on where.*

3E. Guide low density rural development to non-productive agricultural land

(15)Like (0)Dislike (3)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- town plan
- !
- Won't conflict with farm operators

3F. Discourage isolated non-agriculture commercial and industrial uses in agricultural areas.

(16)Like (0)Dislike (3)Depends

Why:

- Not allowed in Rush River
- Town plan
- Because they conflict with farm operators
  - o *Should be left up to the town.*
  - o *Never have industrial out in farm areas.*

**Goal 4: Conserve availability and quality of natural resources for agriculture.**

(16)Like (0)Dislike (3)Depends

Why:

- Keep DNR from buying good farm land.
- Other industries should be able to utilize resources also
- This will keep farm land farmed
- Could turn into too much regulation

4A. Encourage the conservation of groundwater and surface water quality and quantity.

(15)Like (0)Dislike (3)Depends

Why:

- All citizens are concerned about groundwater

4B. Encourage and promote farming and forestry operations to follow best management practices and maintain strong stewardship principles.

(16)Like (0)Dislike (2)Depends (1)no response

Why:

- if they take the money they must meet the standards. Put a cap on how much dollars they can review.
- Will be telling for me – love to farm

4C. Maintain soil productivity through appropriate agricultural practices.

(19)Like (0)Dislike (0)Depends

Why:

- what else
- they have had decades to comply and be educated

4D. Discourage the conversion of agricultural land adjacent to established habitat areas.

(8)Like (4)Dislike (7)Depends

Why:

- not part of ag preservation
- We need to deal with animals.
- Trees makes farming more enjoyable
- Your land not mine!
  - o *Wildlife can damage crops from adjacent habitat land.*