

## Why Keep Saratoga County Farming?

### Farms help sustain the county's rural economy.

Saratoga County farms generate more than \$30 million a year in sales, producing a variety of agricultural goods. They spend \$29 million a year on goods and services, much of which goes to support local businesses.

### Farms support tourism.

Saratoga County's scenic farm landscapes help attract people to this area, contributing to Saratoga Springs' reputation as the "City in the country."

### Farms maintain the character of our communities.

Most Saratoga County farms are concentrated in the eastern and western outskirts of the county in towns like Northumberland and Charlton. Some farms, however, are scattered in more urbanized areas like Clifton Park, Malta, and Halfmoon. Farms create a sense of place, connect us to our rural heritage and help balance sprawl.

### Farms keep property taxes lower.

Taxes paid on farmland exceed the cost of providing services. Farmland contributes \$3 to \$4 in taxes for every dollar's worth of services it uses. Residences typically use \$1.25 in services for each tax dollar they pay<sup>1</sup>.

**Our farms are at risk.** Saratoga County is the second fastest growing county in the state. As areas in southern Saratoga County reach full-buildout, we will see our remaining farmland subjected to far greater development pressure on a scale that will threaten the very viability of farming.

### We can keep Saratoga County Farming!

If our rural, suburban and urban communities work together, we can save our most important farmland—keeping farming viable here in Saratoga County.

<sup>1</sup>Based on numerous Cost of Community Services Studies conducted by American Farmland Trust that look at the cost of providing community services like roads, sewers, and schools; comparing it to the services used, and taxes paid by different land use.

Saratoga County farmers welcome you and your family to the country. Together we can grow and prosper in our communities.

For more information about agriculture in Saratoga County contact:

Cornell Cooperative Extension  
of Saratoga County  
50 West High Street  
Ballston Spa, NY 12020  
518-885-8995  
[www.ccesaratoga.org](http://www.ccesaratoga.org)

Visit:

[www.saratogafarms.com](http://www.saratogafarms.com)

This brochure was produced by the:

Saratoga County Agricultural Promotion Committee.

Farm photos by Jim Newton

# ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT MOVING TO THE COUNTRY?



## PLEASE CONSIDER THIS...

Have the noise, traffic, and hassles of your neighborhood led you to consider moving to the country?



Does the thought of clean fresh air and country solitude and peacefulness make you want to build a new home?

Do you dream about moving to the country so your property will be surrounded by natural scenery and panoramic views?



If you answered, "Yes" to any of these questions, you may want to reflect on what it means to live in the country.

Since the early days of our nation, farmers have produced the food, fiber, and nursery products needed to make the country grow and flourish. In fact, their productivity has allowed our nation to become the "breadbasket" of the world.

### ***New York Is An Agricultural State***

Agricultural production returned over \$3 billion to the state's farm economy in 2002. About 25 percent of the state's land area, or 7.6 million acres are used by 37,000 farms to produce a very diverse array of food products.

New York ranks high nationally:

- Dairy Products – 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Apples - 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Grapes & Tart Cherries - 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Sweet Corn - 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Cabbage - 1<sup>st</sup>
- Maple Syrup - 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Snap Beans - 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Pumpkins - 1<sup>st</sup>
- Corn Silage - 3<sup>rd</sup>

NY farmers accomplished this by:

- practicing important soil and nutrient management;
- conserving natural resources; and
- working long hours in all types of weather.

Farm practices, such as late hours, manure application, and crop management give us the breadbasket designation and are essential to farming. New homeowners living in the country must take them into account.

### ***What Are Agricultural Districts?***

Agricultural districts encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production by:

- providing a farmer with certain protections to continue agricultural practices.
- allowing the farmland owner to receive agricultural assessment for their lands instead of having real property assessments based on higher market value.

- protecting farmers from local laws that unreasonably restrict farming operations located in an agricultural district.

Saratoga County has two consolidated agricultural districts that encompass 111,130 acres of the county's 540,423 acres of land or 21% of the county's total acreage.

### ***What Is a Right to Farm Law?***

The general purpose and intent of the law is to:

- maintain and preserve the rural traditions and character of the county.
- permit the continuation of agricultural practices.
- protect the existence and operation of farms.
- encourage the initiation and expansion of farms and agribusinesses.
- promote new ways to resolve disputes concerning agricultural practices and farm operations.

The Right to Farm Law exists in many Saratoga County towns.

### ***How Can You Help?***

Support farmers by shopping at local Farmers' Markets, at farm stands, or directly from farmers.

Learn about agriculture by attending events such as the Sundae on the Farm Tour held in June and Saratoga County Fair held in July.

Always seek permission from farmers before entering their property for any purpose to avoid damaging crops and/or disrupting farming operations.

Befriend your farm neighbors. Talk with them about your concerns. Refrain from unwarranted complaints about generally accepted farm management practices.