

Agricultural Environmental Management



NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Department of Agriculture & Markets



Agricultural **E**nvironmental **M**anagement

Environmentally
Sound

Economically
Viable

Energy
Efficient
Agriculture



Agricultural Environmental Management



**Over 12,000 farms
of all
types & sizes
Statewide**



Agricultural Environmental Management

Meets challenges to:

- Protect the environment
- Comply with regulations
- Address neighbor relations
- Help farm businesses thrive



Agricultural Environmental Management



Statewide Organization

Voting Members (5)

- Farm Bureau
- Grange
- At-Large Farmer
- At-Large Non-Farmer
- NY Association of Conservation Districts

Advisory Members (9)

Conservation Partners (3)

- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Districts Employees Association
- Cornell Cooperative Extension

State Agencies (4)

- Dept. of Agriculture & Markets
- Dept. of Environmental Conservation
- Dept. of Health
- Dept. of State

Academic Institutions (2)

- Cornell University
- SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Led by the

NYS
Soil & Water
Conservation
Committee

&

County
Soil & Water
Conservation
Districts



Agricultural Environmental Management

Locally Led by Conservation Partners

- Farmers
- Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Farm Service Agency
- Agri-Business
- Watershed Groups
- Environmental Organizations



Agricultural Environmental Management

County AEM Strategic Plans:

- Identify & prioritize local issues & opportunities
- Plan & coordinate activities
- Obtain funding
- Conduct outreach
- Evaluate efforts



Agricultural Environmental Management

Helps address New York's commitment to the:

- Clean Water Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act



Agricultural Environmental Management



Core Concepts

- Voluntary, incentive-based
- Locally-led & delivered
- Based on watershed needs
- Customized farm by farm
- Confidential
- Coordinates assistance
- Promotes teamwork



Agricultural Environmental Management

AEM Framework:

- Document stewardship
- Identify concerns & opportunities
- Develop conservation plans
- Implement conservation practices
- Evaluate plan, practices & program



Agricultural Environmental Management

AEM in Action



- Identify & prioritize issues & opportunities
- Install conservation practices
- Initiate management changes
- Utilize local, state & federal resources



Agricultural Environmental Management



**Farmers
doing their part
to
Protect Water
Quality**



Agricultural Environmental Management

5 Tiers

- *Tier 1* - Inventory Questionnaire
- *Tier 2* - Assessment Worksheets
- *Tier 3* - Planning
- *Tier 4* - Implementation
- *Tier 5* - Evaluation



Agricultural Environmental Management

■ *Tier 1* - Questionnaire

Farm inventory completed by the farmer & AEM team.

- Establishes basic information
- Identifies potential concerns & benefits
- Identifies farmer interests & opportunities
- Determines worksheet needs



Agricultural Environmental Management

■ *Tier 2 - Worksheets*

Farm manager completes assessment with AEM team.

- Documents stewardship & benchmark conditions
- Inventories concerns, benefits & opportunities
- Provides an educational opportunity



Agricultural Environmental Management

Tier 2 Worksheets

- Core
- Dairy - Livestock
- Horse
- Greenhouse
- Vineyard
- Long Island
- Fruit - Vegetables



Agricultural Environmental Management...

■ *Tier 3* - Conservation Planning

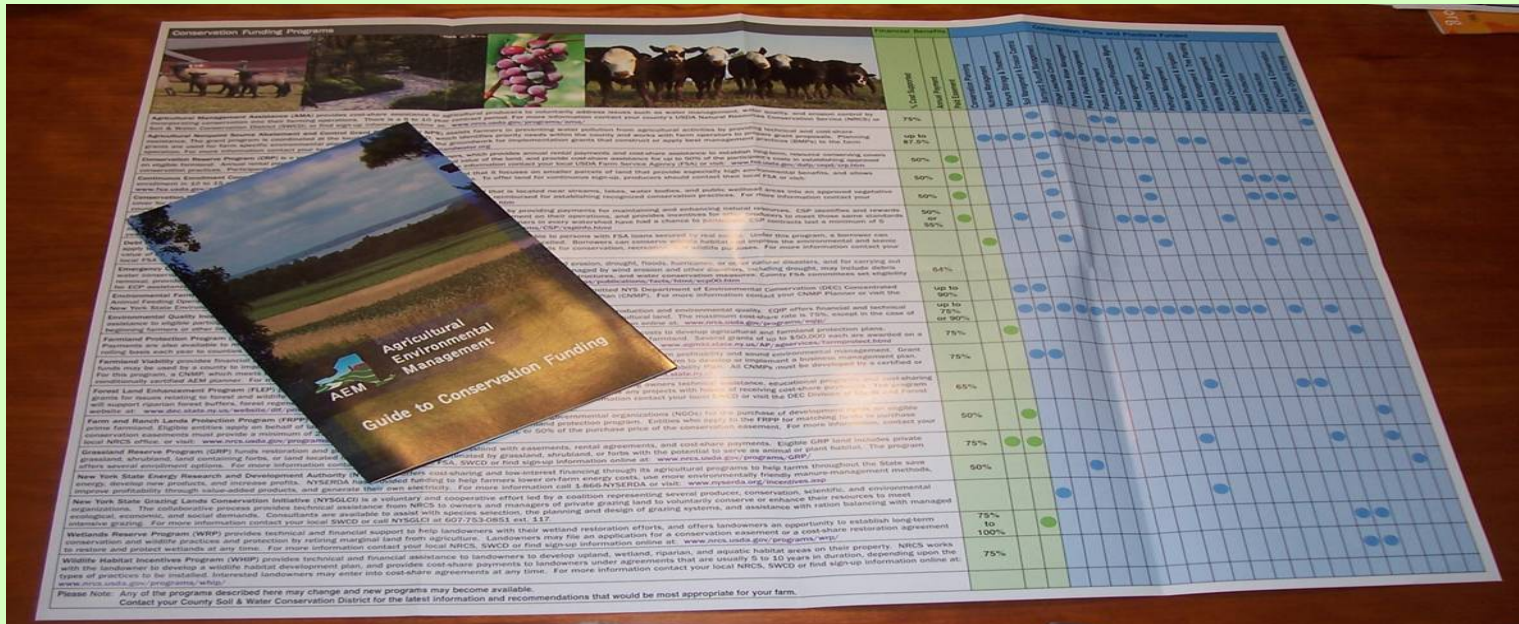
Customized utilizing the NRCS 9-Step Planning Process

- **3A** - Initiation of progressive planning process addressing at least 1 priority issue
- **3B** - Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan
- **3C** - Whole Farm Plan



Agricultural Environmental Management

Guide to Conservation Funding



Helps identify resources to
get conservation on the ground!



Agricultural Environmental Management

Tier 4: Plan Implementation



- Install conservation practices
- Initiate management changes
- Follow NRCS Standards & Specs
- Utilize appropriate funding programs



Agricultural Environmental Management

Tier 5 - Plan & Program Evaluation



- **Farm Evaluation**
 - Assessment Update
 - BMP Assessment
 - Plan Assessment/Revision/Update
 - Continuing Education/Coaching
- **Planning Unit Evaluation**
- **County Program Evaluation**



Agricultural Environmental Management

Education

- Enhances farmer environmental awareness
- Promotes agriculture's environmental benefits



Agricultural Environmental Management



AEM Roadside Sign Award
E-Z Acres Farms, Cortland County

2008 Statewide AEM
Award Fessenden Dairy, Cayuga



Agricultural Environmental Management

Spreading the Word



- Over 550 agricultural professionals have attended AEM communications training.



Agricultural Environmental Management

Watershed Success:

- Oneida Lake Watershed
- Steele Creek Watershed
- Skaneateles Lake Watershed
- Kueka Lake Watershed
- Wappinger's Creek Watershed
- Lake Champlain Watershed...



Agricultural Environmental Management

AEM Receives 2008 Environmental Excellence Award

- Awarded by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.



Agricultural Environmental Management

- ✓ Enhances the environment
- ✓ Documents farmer stewardship
- ✓ Maintains viability of farm enterprise
- ✓ Reduces farmer exposure to liability
- ✓ Assists farmers in complying with regulations
- ✓ Coordinates federal, state & local assistance
- ✓ Promotes agriculture's benefits to the community



Agricultural Environmental Management

*MOO-ving
Forward...*



- As of 2008, over \$73.6 million in State funds were awarded through District AEM programs to plan & implement conservation practices.
- The *AEM Planner Certification Program* accredits AEM Planners statewide.
- The *AEM Base Program* provides non-competitive funds to get conservation on the land!



Agricultural Environmental Management...

New Legislation Expands AEM



- Air
- Energy
- Credit Trading
- Marketing Opportunities



Agricultural Environmental Management



Protecting
natural resources,
open space,
&
wildlife habitat
for **ALL**
New
Yorkers!



Agricultural Environmental Management

Productive Farms & Healthy Watersheds



NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Department of Agriculture & Markets
www.nys-soilandwater.org

