



Time to Get Into a Certified Ag District

In accordance with the NYS Ag & Markets Law Section 303-b, Ulster County will accept requests from March 1st to March 30th from landowners desiring to have their agricultural lands to be included within a certified agricultural district. Landowners seeking inclusion into a certified ag district must submit a completed *Ag District Review Worksheet* with tax map identification number(s), a copy of the relevant portion of the tax map, and a description of the land within this thirty-day period to: Lydia Reidy, Chair, Ulster County Agricultural Farmland Protection Board, 10 Westbrook Lane, Kingston, NY 12401. The *Ag District Review Worksheet* and a free brochure explaining ag districts are available through Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County. To receive a worksheet, a brochure or more information about the review process, please contact Mike Fargione, Agricultural Resource Educator, 845-691-7117 or via email: mj22@cornell.edu. Information is also available on Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County's website: <http://counties.cce.cornell.edu> then go to Agriculture page and click on Farmland Preservation Tools.

Ag districts were created by an act of the New York State Legislature in 1971 to protect and promote the availability of land for farming purposes. They are intended to counteract the impact that non-farm development has upon the continuation of farm businesses by providing a framework limiting unreasonable local regulation on farm practices. The Ag Districts Law also limits a public agency's ability to acquire farmland through eminent domain, as well as the ability to advance public funds to construct facilities that encourage non-farm development. Additionally, land used in agricultural production and within an agricultural district is not subject to special assessments, *ad valorem* levies, or other rates and fees for the financing of improvements such as water, sewer or non-farm drainage. Ulster County has four certified agricultural districts containing over 66,000 acres of farmland.