

Agricultural District Review

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: I'm not a farmer and my property isn't farmed. Why am I getting this letter?

A: You received the letter because the property or properties listed on the letter (Tax ID #) are currently located within one of the 6 Agricultural Districts in Cayuga County. There are different types of properties in addition to farms; many are residential, which are in these districts. New York State Agriculture and Market's Law requires that **all** property owners receive a notice of the district's review...that's why you received the letter.

Q: What do I do with this form?

A: You don't need to fill it out or send it back unless you are farming, renting land to a farmer, or you wish to be taken out of the Agricultural District.

Q: I am a non-farm property owner, what effect does being in the Agricultural District have on my property?

A: There is no effect on your property by being in the Agricultural District. Being in the district **does not** affect your taxes, your property values, or your property assessment.

Q: Do I want to take my property out of the Agricultural District?

A: That is completely up to you. As a non-farm property you will not notice a change to your property taxes, values, etc. as a result of either being in or out of the district. If you have farmers as neighbors, keeping your property in the district, if residential, may help to protect those farms from future development pressure.

Q: I am not a farmer but I have land which could be farmed by myself or others in the future, either by renting it or selling it. Should I stay in the Agricultural District?

A: Being in an Agricultural District has the greatest benefits for farmers, whether they own or rent the land, but the choice is completely up to you. Staying in the district may help future farmers in the following ways:

Agricultural Districts are formed under the provisions of the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law and are designed to protect farming from a variety of non-farm activities that can make farming more difficult and contribute to the conversion of farmland to non-farm uses.

Specifically in an Agricultural District:

- Any owner of land used in agricultural production within an Agricultural District shall be eligible for an agricultural assessment provided they comply with certain requirements under New York State Agriculture and Markets Law Section 305;
- Triggers environmental reviews of non-farm projects in the District at a lower than normal threshold;
- Requires public agencies to assess, and modify policies, if needed, so as to prevent their actions from being injurious to agriculture;
- May limit the eminent domain authority of government in the District;
- Is the area in which the State's "Right to Farm" law applies;
- Triggers a review and assessment by the Commissioner of the New York State Agriculture and Markets and the County Farmland Protection Board before acquisition of land or placement of infrastructure within the Agricultural District by municipalities can be authorized;
- Requires consideration by local Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Boards of the impacts on agriculture when variances, site plans or other reviews carried out by those boards.