

## Notification to All Participating Landowners in Any Agricultural Conservation Easement Project Receiving a Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (FPIG)

Please be advised that **every participating landowner** must provide to the Grantee (that entity with whom you submitted an application/proposal for FPIG funding) an acceptable **Conservation Plan**<sup>1</sup> for the lands to be protected by this proposed farmland protection project. Each agricultural conservation easement comprising this proposed project requires a separate Conservation Plan. A single Conservation Plan prepared on behalf of multiple landowners is acceptable provided that each landowner involved with the proposed farmland protection project is identified therein.

**The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) expects each landowner to provide the required Conservation Plan to the Grantee of each perpetual agricultural conservation easement no later than the date by which the Grantee is expected to submit a complete project file to AGM as required by the FPIG contract into which said Grantee and AGM will enter. That date is 18 months following approval of the FPIG contract by the New York State Office of State Comptroller (OSC).** Please stay in touch with the Grantee to be informed as to the date when OSC approves this FPIG contract. You should then have each required Conservation Plan completed within 18 months thereafter. **If you do not, the Grantee will most likely postpone the closing of each conservation easement transaction associated with your proposed farmland protection project until such time that you provide a complete and acceptable Conservation Plan to the Grantee.**

It is **your** responsibility to contact your local County Soil and Water Conservation District or an AEM Certified Planner as soon as possible to learn more about the Agricultural Environmental Management program and to **EITHER** –

- initiate the process to have a Conservation Plan prepared for each agricultural conservation easement comprising this proposed farmland protection project,

**OR**

- determine if your existing Conservation Plan meets the conservation planning requirement for FPIG.

For contact information for your local Soil and Water Conservation District, [view this link](#).

**Please understand that it is your sole responsibility to provide an acceptable Conservation Plan to the Grantee in a timely fashion.**

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<sup>1</sup> **“Conservation Plan”** shall be defined as an Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Conservation Plan (Tier 3 or higher), or such equivalent document that has been prepared by the local Soil and Water Conservation District, or other qualified conservation professional, in cooperation with the Grantor. Any participating landowner whose property is to be encumbered by an agricultural conservation easement that is the subject of an AEM Tier 2 environmental assessment (or its equivalent) that indicates a high level of existing stewardship and no resource concerns needing attention shall be considered to have satisfied the minimum requirement for a Tier 3 conservation plan. *(Please note: This does not preclude any landowner or any farmer leasing such lands to pursue enhanced levels of conservation through further conservation planning.)* However, please note that for any project receiving an FPIG award under the (a) Climate Resiliency or (b) Source Water Protection category, its acceptable Conservation Plan (whether a Tier 2 assessment indicating a high level of existing stewardship or a Tier 3 or higher plan) must also document the (a) agricultural practices and management that will sustain or improve the resiliency of the Farm Operation to changing climate impacts (e.g., intense storms, drought, increased pests, heat stress, etc.) or (b) soil and water conservation practices and agricultural management that will sustain or improve protection of known or potential source(s) of public drinking water that underlie, abut, or transect the Property, respectively.