

# AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT FACT SHEET

The purpose of the Agricultural Districts Program is to preserve, protect and encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production. The Program is based on a combination of landowner incentives and protections, all of which are designed to forestall the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. Some of the benefits of including your farmland in an Agricultural District are as follows:

- **Property Assessments.** The Agricultural Districts Program provides farmland owners real property assessments that are based on the value of their land for agricultural production, rather than on its development value. The program also limits the power to impose benefit assessments, special ad valorem levies and other fees on farmland.
  
- **Minimizing Adverse Impacts to Farmlands.** The Agricultural Districts Law mandates state agencies, local governments, and public benefit corporations to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to farm operations when pursuing projects that involve the acquisition of farmland, or the use of public funds for certain construction activities. Some proposed land use activities are also required to complete an agricultural data statement that assesses the possible impacts on nearby farm operations.
  
- **Right to Farm Protection.** The Agricultural Districts Law requires local governments to enact and administer local laws in a manner that doesn't unreasonably restrict farm operations from occurring in an agricultural district. The law also discourages private nuisance lawsuits against agricultural practices that are determined to be sound.

For more information about the Agricultural Districts Program, visit:  
<http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AP/agservices/agdistricts.html>