

Working Lands Information for Public Meeting
Aug 23, 2010

WORKING LANDS INITIATIVE
MAIN POINTS

1. Replaces existing program of farmland preservation agreements, which will not be renewed. Individual farmers not participating in Agricultural Enterprise Areas (see below) or not located in an exclusive agricultural zoning district may not participate in the Working Lands Initiative.
2. As few as five contiguous farms may apply to the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for certification as Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA). Designations will be effective beginning in 2012. Applications for participation in a two year pilot program are now closed.
3. The per acre tax credit for land within an AEA is \$5.00 per acre.
4. AEA must be consistent with land use in county farmland preservation plans approved by DATCP.
5. Land in an AEA remains subject to the AEA after sale.
6. Exclusive agricultural use zoning may be adopted by counties; tax credit available for farmland preservation agreement in exclusive agricultural zoning district is \$7.50 per acre.
7. The tax credit for land in an AEA and in an exclusive agricultural zone is \$10.00 per acre. .
8. New agreements must be for terms of at least 15 years.
9. If statewide tax credits claimed in any year exceed \$27,000,000, credits will be prorated.
10. To claim tax credit, you must be the owner of the land for which the credit is claimed and you must have at least \$6,000 in gross farm revenue in the past year or \$18,000 in the past three years. If someone else crops your land, and that person obtains the \$6,000/\$18,000 from your land, you may claim the tax credit. Land rental payments do not count as gross farm revenue.
11. Land expected to develop within the next 15 years (formerly transition areas under county plans) is not eligible for tax credit)
12. Compliance with state soil and water conservation standards (Wis. Stat. §§92.05(3)(c) & (k), 92.14(8) and 281.16(3)(b) & (c)); checks required every four years.
13. If the agreement is relinquished during its term, or if land is rezoned out of an exclusive agricultural district, a per acre conversion fee equal to three times the per acre value of the highest class of tillable agricultural land in the municipality.
14. Removal of land from an AEA requires DATCP approval on condition that relinquishment will not impair or limit agricultural use of other land under farmland preservation zoning or agreement.