

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section prioritizes the recommendations for short-term, medium-term, long-term, and ongoing activities and identifies the responsible parties to assist with implementation. Town agencies (including the Planning Department, existing Boards and Committees, and a re-established Town Agricultural Committee) will play a vital role in the implementation and success of the Plan. A critical and primary implementation step for the Town Board is to authorize and encourage the Agricultural Committee to take an active role in implementing the Plan on behalf of the Town Board. So that the ideas presented in this Plan can become a reality, it is recommended that the Town Board commit to the following strategies immediately after adoption:

### *1. Strengthen the relationship between Town farmers and Town staff*


- Encourage farmer representation on the Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Conservation Board
- Designate a Town staff person to be a farmer contact
- Educate Town of Ithaca staff and decision makers regarding the needs, benefits, and operational aspects of agriculture and how these are affected by the Town's permitting processes
- Ensure that Town staff is respectful and courteous in dealing with the agricultural community

### *2. Support the implementation of the Town of Ithaca Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan*

- Adopt the Town of Ithaca AFPP as part of the Town of Ithaca's current Comprehensive Plan update
- Encourage the Town's Agriculture Committee to take an active role in the implementation of the AFPP
- Actively seek State, Federal, private, or other sources of funding to assist in implementing the recommendations in this AFPP
- Use the Implementation Chart below as a list of implementation activities and to establish time frames and expectations for implementation

This AFPP calls for a variety of policy decisions, program initiation, regulatory changes, coordination with other organizations and agencies, and the provision of educational resources. Short-term recommendations (highlighted in orange) are those that could be implemented immediately, within the first year. Medium-term recommendations (highlighted in blue) are those that could be implemented following the completion of short term items (1 to 5 years). Long-term recommendations (highlighted in green) are those that would take considerably more time to research and implement, perhaps 5 to 7 years following plan adoption. Ongoing recommendations (highlighted in red) are actions that are to

be incorporated into the ongoing activities of the Town Departments, Boards, and Committees. The prioritization of these recommendations may change based on the availability of Town staff and grant opportunities.



Within the Implementation Chart, several of the recommendations are especially critical to supporting agriculture in the Town. These are recommendations that can be addressed solely by the Town and would have the most impact on agriculture in the Town of Ithaca. Although it would be ideal for all of these recommendations to be classified as “short-term” and be done immediately, many of these involve significant time to prepare and could be related to other updates to Town ordinances. These recommendations are identified with a “




The recommendations provided in the Implementation Chart have been organized by each goal and then by implementation timeframe. The table lists the individual recommendations, the proposed timeframe for implementation, and the responsible organization or agency. The initials of the primary responsible organizations or agencies involved in the recommendations are listed below and at the end of the Chart.

**Responsible Organization / Agency:**

- AC = Town of Ithaca Agricultural Committee
- CCETC = Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County
- DEC = New York State Department of Conservation
- NYS = New York State
- SWCD = Soil and Water Conservation District
- TC = Tompkins County / Tompkins County Farmland Protection Board
- TCCOG = Tompkins County Council of Governments
- TOI = Town of Ithaca

**Town of Ithaca Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan  
Implementation Chart**

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Goal 1: <i>Promote the availability of locally grown foods and other agricultural products for all residents including limited income families</i></b>			
1-a	List active growers on the Town’s website and through the development of a guide to local farms	Short / Ongoing	TOI, AC, CCETC
1-b	Facilitate GPS registration of the locations of agritourism and retail sales of local farm products	Medium / Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC
1-c	Identify any additional land-based agriculture products that are available for local consumption, including biomass products, firewood, local lumber and other agriforestry products	Medium	CCETC, TOI, TC
1-d	 Revise Zoning and other Town Ordinances (e.g., Sign Law) to accommodate farm stands, year-round farm markets, greenhouses, value-added product operations, home food production, U-picks, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), and agritourism sites	Medium	TOI, AC
1-e	Revise Subdivision and Site Plan requirements to require community gardens in larger new housing developments and provide community gardens (including raised beds, irrigation water, and other facilities to encourage participation of all residents) on Town lands and elsewhere	Medium	TOI
1-g	Identify locations for and facilitate additional small-scale farmers’ markets, including “mobile markets” and CSA distribution sites	Medium / Ongoing	TOI, CCETC, AC
1-f	Plant appropriate low-growing perennial herbs and fruits in public spaces for public consumption-possibly associated with community gardens	Ongoing	TOI
<b>Goal 2: <i>Retain and encourage a diversity of viable farm types</i></b>			
2-b	On the Town’s website, include links to educational resources, services, business loans, and programs that support farmers	Short / Ongoing	TOI
2-c	 Review and revise regulations pertaining to structures to accommodate farm operations (e.g. Sprinkler Law, use of rough-cut timber, property-maintenance law)	Medium	TOI, AC
2-e	Provide mechanism for listing agricultural lands available for lease or purchase for agricultural uses	Medium	TOI, TC, CCETC
2-j	Revise Zoning and other Town Ordinances to encourage on-farm sustainable energy production	Medium	TOI, AC
2-k	Encourage shared farm infrastructure development (storage and processing facilities, slaughter and processing facilities, mobile market, locations for CSA drop-off and pick-up, etc.)	Medium / Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, AC
2-o	Review and revise the Town’s Commercial, Light Industrial, and Agricultural Zones to ensure that the necessary agriculture-related businesses would be permitted, and to encourage those types of businesses to locate in the Town of Ithaca	Medium / Ongoing	TOI, AC

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
2-a	Promote short-term property-tax abatements for new startup farming operations and for the initial plantings of crops that take multiple years until first harvest	Long	TOI, TC, NYS
2-f	Connect farmers with existing funding programs, or pursue the development of programs, for subsidizing fencing (including deer fencing), lime, drainage tile, and the restoration of barns and other old agricultural buildings	Long	TOI, TC, NYS, CCETC, SWCD
2-n	Implement or advocate at the State or County level, a grant or revolving loan program to assist farmers who are putting land back into active agriculture	Long / Ongoing	TOI, TC, NYS
2-d	Work with towns that have adjoining agriculture lands to write consistent zoning and other regulations	Ongoing	TOI, CCETC, TCCOG
2-g	Assist farmers in exploring new farming and marketing ideas and opportunities	Ongoing	TOI, CCETC, AC, TC, NYS, SWCD
2-h	Identify under-utilized farming and forestry resources in the Town	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, DEC
2-i	Participate in regional efforts promoting sustainable biomass for energy production	Ongoing	TOI, TC, NYS, CCETC, AC
2-l	Work with State, Tompkins County, and Town highway officials regarding speeding, safe movement of domestic animals across roads, and other traffic issues	Ongoing	TOI, TC, NYS
2-m	Encourage and support intergenerational transfer through inheritance, sale, or lease of agricultural properties to future generations of farmers. Educate farmers (e.g., through the sponsoring of seminars) about farm transition issues, estate planning, and related issues	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, AC
<b>Goal 3: <i>Ensure long-term protection of agricultural-land resources for agriculture, open space, and scenic resources</i></b>			
3-g	 Reactivate and support the Town of Ithaca's Agricultural Committee	Short / Ongoing	TOI, AC
3-l	Review the Town Agricultural Zoning, the Town's Agricultural Easements Target Areas, and the boundaries of the Tompkins County Agricultural Districts for inconsistencies; address inconsistencies as is deemed appropriate	Short	TOI, CCETC, TC
3-a	 Enhance zoning as a tool to control non-agricultural development on or adjacent to agricultural land	Medium	TOI, AC
3-f	Explore alternative methods to deed restrictions for monitoring the subdivision of farm properties in the Town's Agricultural Zone	Medium	TOI, AC
3-j	Identify lands owned by local colleges or New York State that are of high priority to retain in agricultural/open space designation and work with those institutions to locate development in a way that minimizes the loss of agricultural land	Medium / Ongoing	TOI
3-b	Investigate an agricultural Lease of Development Rights program and/or a program to allow the Town the right of first refusal for outright purchase of agricultural properties	Long	TOI, TC, AC
3-c	 Continue implementation of the Town's current agricultural conservation easement acquisition (PDR) program for appropriate agricultural parcels that have been targeted in the Policies and Procedures Manual for the Agricultural Land Preservation Program	Ongoing	TOI, TC, AC

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	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
3-d	Limit extension of municipal sewer and water in agricultural areas	Ongoing	TOI
3-e	Cooperate with Tompkins County on Agricultural District designations	Ongoing	TOI, TC
3-h	Advocate at the State level for increased funds to be allocated for farmland protection initiatives	Ongoing	TOI, NYS
3-i	Educate individual landowners who rent (or could rent) land to farmers about the importance of that land to the overall farming landscape in the Town of Ithaca and the importance of keeping that land in active agricultural use	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, AC
3-k	Work with Tompkins County and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County (CCETC) to recruit farmers actively to the Town	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, AC, SWCD
3-m	Promote practices that slow runoff and enhance absorption of pollutants when constructing and maintaining roadside ditches	Ongoing	TOI, CCETC, TC, NYS, SWCD
<b>Goal 4: Encourage public understanding and involvement</b>			
4-d	Feature a variety of farm profiles and other agricultural topics in the Town newsletter and on the Town's website	Short / Ongoing	TOI, AC
4-e	Have the Town (or Tompkins County or the Town Agricultural Committee) sponsor an award to farmers or others who actively support local agriculture awarding e.g. a "Farmer of the Year" or "Farmer Appreciation Award" to highlight agriculture	Short / Ongoing	TOI, TC, AC, SWCD
4-f	Provide maps that show the coincidence of the prized scenic views and natural areas with agricultural lands	Short	TOI
4-g	Encourage Cornell University to host more tours of farm-research facilities in the Town	Short / Ongoing	TOI, CCETC
4-j	Require real-estate agents and mortgage writers to notify prospective buyers of their adjacency to or location within the Town's Agricultural Zone and the County's Agricultural Districts and provide them with a copy of the right-to-farm law	Short / Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC
4-k	Develop and place signs to recognize farms (e.g., this farm is protected) or to provide interesting facts or details about the farm	Medium	TOI, AC
4-a	Continue support for agricultural and gardening programs for youth (e.g., community gardens, 4-H Clubs, Dairy Princess)	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, AC
4-b	Encourage the Tompkins County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board to send information on agricultural districts and protected agriculture activities to real-estate agents and mortgage writers annually	Ongoing	TOI, TC
4-c	Encourage farmers to communicate with their neighbors on changes in their operations	Ongoing	TOI, CCETC, AC
4-h	Heighten public awareness regarding speeding and other traffic issues affecting farmers (e.g., domestic-animal and equipment movements) through the use of the Town's website, newsletter, and signage	Ongoing	TOI, TC, NYS, CCETC, AC
4-i	Provide a copy of the Town's right-to-farm law to applicants for building permits on land in and adjacent to the Town's Agricultural Zone	Ongoing	TOI

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Goal 5: <i>Promote wise land use and waste management on agricultural land</i></b>			
5-a	Connect farmers with Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Farm Service Agency (FSA) for funding for buffers, etc.	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC
5-b	Encourage ongoing relationships between farmers and resources such as Cooperative Extension and Soil and Water Conservation District for farm management and sound farming practices	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, SWCD
5-c	Connect farmers to resources for forest and woodlot management	Ongoing	TOI, TC, CCETC, DEC
5-d	Advocate at the State and Federal level for increased funds to be allocated for farm conservation practices, farm management and sound farming practices and for forest and woodlot management	Ongoing	TOI, NYS


**Implementation Legend:**

Short-Term (0 - 1 years): Recommendations that could be implemented immediately, within the first year.

Medium-Term (1 - 5 years): Recommendations that could be implemented following the completion of short term items.

Long-Term (5 - 7 years): Important recommendations that would take considerably more time to research and implement.

Ongoing: Recommendations to be incorporated into the ongoing activities of the Town Departments, Boards and Committees.

: Identifies recommendations that are critical to supporting agriculture in the Town.

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