

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION SURVEY



*Washington County, in cooperation with the local UW-Extension Office, has developed this survey to obtain your opinions about farmland preservation in your municipality. The results will help guide your town or village as it decides whether to participate in Wisconsin's new Working Lands Initiative. Thank you for your input!*

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## 1. Where do you own most or all of your land?

Town/Village of Town of Kewaskum (22 responses) (approx. 20% response rate)

## 2. Approximately how many total acres do you own within Washington County?

112.14 acres (average)

## 3. In the last few years, how many of these acres have you:

A. Typically farmed yourself 59.48 ac B. Rented out for farming 37.75 ac (averages)

## 4. Do you currently receive farmland preservation tax credits?

6 Yes

15 No

No response: 1

## 5. Would you like to receive tax credits in the future for preserving your farmland?

8 Yes

6 No

6 Not sure

No response: 2

## 6. Would you consider participating in one or both of the following?

A. Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) 3 Yes 6 No 13 Not sure No response: 0

B. Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) program? 3 Yes 6 No 12 Not sure

No response: 1

## 7. Is the agricultural infrastructure (co-op, veterinarian, etc.) you need close enough to your operation? (check one)

14 Everything my operation needs is close enough

7 Most of what's needed is close enough

0 Most of what's needed is NOT close enough

0 Nothing my operation needs is close enough

No response: 1

**8. What type of infrastructure, if not already present, would help increase your operation's efficiency? (check all that apply)**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <u>  1  </u> Food processing facilities                  | <u>  1  </u> Transportation facilities |
| <u>  2  </u> Storage facilities                          | <u>  3  </u> Agricultural suppliers    |
| <u>  3  </u> Co-ops                                      | <u>  0  </u> Veterinarian services     |
| <u>  4  </u> Other (please specify) <u>  see below  </u> | No response: 12                        |

- > Would be nice to have a local slaughterhouse for poultry
- > [illegible] for horses
- > No forced farmland preservation
- > Better and wider roads

**9. How should non-ag development occur in rural areas? (check one)**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <u>  4  </u> Scattered where appropriate                               |                |
| <u>  6  </u> Concentrated in a few specified areas                     |                |
| <u>  4  </u> There should be little or no non-ag growth in rural areas |                |
| <u>  5  </u> Not sure  |                |
| <u>  2  </u> Other (please specify) <u>  see below  </u>               | No response: 1 |

- > Locate growth in poor soil areas of county
- > Up to land owner — This is America!

**10. How would you like to see the future (next 10-20 years) of agriculture in Washington County? (check all that apply)**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <u>  4  </u> Same as it is today   | <u>  0  </u> Gradually phase out farms               |
| <u>  0  </u> Hobby farms predominate                                     | <u>  0  </u> Larger farms                            |
| <u>  3  </u> Organic or niche farming play a significant role            | <u> 13  </u> In general, a farm-friendly environment |
| <u>  6  </u> Several Agricultural Enterprise Areas in existence          |  |
| <u>  6  </u> Multiple easements or similar farmland protections in place |  |
| <u>  1  </u> Not sure  |  |
| <u>  3  </u> Other (please specify) <u>  see below  </u>                 | No response: 0                                       |

- > No forced farmland preservation
- > Up to land owner
- > No AEA or easements - when will farmers realize that with less controls on their operations the more opportunity for advancement and profit they will have! Enough has been done with use-value assesment unfortunately taxpayers are tired of providing tax credit to farmers. free enterprise is the answer not easements and controls

**11. What is your preferred vision of "rural character"? (check one)**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <u>  1  </u> Plenty of small and medium-sized farms                                      |                |
| <u> 10  </u> Farms of all sizes and types, including larger operations                   |                |
| <u>  0  </u> Scattered, large-lot, well-landscaped subdivisions                          |                |
| <u>  4  </u> Green space consisting of a mix of woodlands, wetlands, etc.                |                |
| <u>  4  </u> A mix of uses including farms, subdivisions, home businesses, and nurseries |                |
| <u>  2  </u> Not sure  |                |
| <u>  0  </u> Other (please specify) _____  | No response: 1 |

**12. If you own a farm, please identify current issues you have, if any, with non-ag landowners? (check all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <u>  7  </u> Traffic  | <u>  6  </u> Loss of prime farmlands               |
| <u>  1  </u> Stormwater flow problems                                   | <u>  2  </u> Vandalism or other crimes             |
| <u>  1  </u> Encroaching non-ag development pressures                   | <u>  2  </u> Change in “fabric” of rural community |
| <u>  4  </u> Lack of tolerance for ag-related noises, odors, activities | <u>  9  </u> No significant issues                 |
| <u>  3  </u> Other (please specify <u>  see below  </u> )               | No response: 3                                     |
- > Loss of available rental land
  - > Trespassing
  - > My nicest and best friends are non-ag land owners!

**13. If you own a farm, what, generally speaking, are your future plans? (check all that apply)**

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <u> 10 </u> Keep farming in Washington County until my retirement               |                |
| <u>  1 </u> Move elsewhere in order to keep farming until my retirement         |                |
| <u>  8 </u> Pass the farm on to my children or others in the next generation    |                |
| <u>  1 </u> Get out of farming as soon as practical                             |                |
| <u>  3 </u> Increase the size of the farm                                       |                |
| <u>  0 </u> Decrease the size of the farm                                       |                |
| <u>  5 </u> Seek to put/keep farm in a Farmland Preservation zoning district    |                |
| <u>  1 </u> Seek to put the farm in an Agricultural Enterprise Area             |                |
| <u>  2 </u> Preserve the farm with a conservation easement on all or part of it |                |
| <u>  1 </u> Split off part of the land for development                          |                |
| <u>  6 </u> Other (please specify) <u>  see below  </u>                         | No response: 2 |
- > Hang onto land as long as possible, then sell for retirement money
  - > Sell as a whole for farming — next generation
  - > Remaining acreage is swamp. Would like zoning maintained so that we can continue to have animals.
  - > Washington County north or south of Hwy 33 is no longer rural — what did the 35-acre preservation do in the past other than have someone build a home on it (usually in the middle) which took it out of farming. If you want to tell the farmer what to do with his land — buy it and then you can do what you want with it.
  - > Why pay people to keep farming? My ice cream stand doesn't get a tax break.
  - > Will never retire - enjoy farming. Washington County is an URBAN county! Not a farming county. It is too late for Washington County to return to an agricultural county.

This survey was mailed by the Washington County Planning & Parks Department to all landowners in the Town of [Sample] who own at least one property that is 20 acres or greater in size.

Survey questions were developed by UW-Extension. Survey results were tabulated by UW-Extension.