Agricultural Environmental Management

Environmentally Sound
Economically Viable
Energy Efficient Agriculture
Agricultural Environmental Management

Over 12,000 farms of all types & sizes Statewide
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Meets challenges to:

• Protect the environment
• Comply with regulations
• Address neighbor relations
• Help farm businesses thrive
AgEironmental Management

Led by the NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee & County Soil & Water Conservation Districts
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Locally Led by Conservation Partners

- Farmers
- Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Farm Service Agency
- Agri-Business
- Watershed Groups
- Environmental Organizations
County AEM Strategic Plans:

• Identify & prioritize local issues & opportunities
• Plan & coordinate activities
• Obtain funding
• Conduct outreach
• Evaluate efforts
Helps address New York’s commitment to the:

- Clean Water Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act
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Core Concepts

- Voluntary, incentive-based
- Locally-led & delivered
- Based on watershed needs
- Customized farm by farm
- Confidential
- Coordinates assistance
- Promotes teamwork
AEM Framework:

- Document stewardship
- Identify concerns & opportunities
- Develop conservation plans
- Implement conservation practices
- Evaluate plan, practices & program
AEM in Action

- Identify & prioritize issues & opportunities
- Install conservation practices
- Initiate management changes
- Utilize local, state & federal resources
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Farmers doing their part to Protect Water Quality
5 Tiers

- **Tier 1** - Inventory Questionnaire
- **Tier 2** - Assessment Worksheets
- **Tier 3** - Planning
- **Tier 4** - Implementation
- **Tier 5** - Evaluation
**Tier 1 - Questionnaire**

Farm inventory completed by the farmer & AEM team.

- Establishes basic information
- Identifies potential concerns & benefits
- Identifies farmer interests & opportunities
- Determines worksheet needs
**Tier 2 - Worksheets**

Farm manager completes assessment with AEM team.

- Documents stewardship & benchmark conditions
- Inventories concerns, benefits & opportunities
- Provides an educational opportunity
Tier 2 Worksheets

- Core
- Dairy - Livestock
- Horse
- Greenhouse
- Vineyard
- Long Island
- Fruit - Vegetables
Tier 3 - Conservation Planning

Customized utilizing the NRCS 9-Step Planning Process

- 3A - Initiation of progressive planning process addressing at least 1 priority issue
- 3B - Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan
- 3C - Whole Farm Plan
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Guide to Conservation Funding

Helps identify resources to get conservation on the ground!
Tier 4: Plan Implementation

- Install conservation practices
- Initiate management changes
- Follow NRCS Standards & Specs
- Utilize appropriate funding programs
Tier 5 - Plan & Program Evaluation

- Farm Evaluation
  - Assessment Update
  - BMP Assessment
  - Plan Assessment/Revision/Update
  - Continuing Education/Coaching
- Planning Unit Evaluation
- County Program Evaluation
The AEM Program is:

- Enhances farmer environmental awareness
- Promotes agriculture’s environmental benefits

Education
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2008 Statewide AEM Award
Fessenden Dairy, Cayuga County

AEM Roadside Sign Award
E-Z Acres Farms, Cortland County
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Spreading the Word

- Over 550 agricultural professionals have attended AEM communications training.
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Watershed Success:

- Oneida Lake Watershed
- Steele Creek Watershed
- Skaneateles Lake Watershed
- Kueka Lake Watershed
- Wappinger’s Creek Watershed
- Lake Champlain Watershed…
AEM Receives 2008 Environmental Excellence Award

• Awarded by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.
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- Enhances the environment
- Documents farmer stewardship
- Maintains viability of farm enterprise
- Reduces farmer exposure to liability
- Assists farmers in complying with regulations
- Coordinates federal, state & local assistance
- Promotes agriculture’s benefits to the community
As of 2008, over $73.6 million in State funds were awarded through District AEM programs to plan & implement conservation practices.

- The AEM Planner Certification Program accredits AEM Planners statewide.

- The AEM Base Program provides non-competitive funds to get conservation on the land!
New Legislation Expands AEM

- Air
- Energy
- Credit Trading
- Marketing Opportunities
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Protecting natural resources, open space, & wildlife habitat for ALL New Yorkers!