

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: AEA Snapshot: Sauk County offers farmland preservation incentive to landowners in Bear Creek AEA

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MADISON, Wis. – The Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department is working with landowners in the [Bear Creek agricultural enterprise area](#) (AEA) to further protect and support farmland preservation. The Bear Creek AEA includes over 30,000 acres of wooded ridges, high slopes, and pastureland in southwestern Sauk County.

Sauk County connects with landowners about farmland preservation and the benefits of nutrient management planning. Sauk County's goals are to:

- Use nutrient management planning as a tool to improve conservation and to move toward long term solutions to improve soil health.
- Increase communication with landowners they have not worked with in a while.
- Build stronger relationships through farm visits.
- Empower landowners to strive for conservation goals through education and networking with others in the community.

Landowners interested in claiming the farmland preservation tax credit, meeting conservation goals, and protecting land from non-agricultural related uses should contact the Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department.

Landowners in the AEA who sign a new farmland preservation agreement will receive a \$2,000 signing bonus for enrolling up to 200 acres, or a \$3,000 signing

bonus for enrolling more than 200 acres. A limited amount of funding is available.

To find out if your land is located in the Bear Creek AEA, to sign a farmland preservation agreement, or to learn more about conservation initiatives and resources in Sauk County, contact Brian Sadler, county conservation technician, by phone at (608) 355-4841, or email at brian.sadler@saukcountywi.gov.

About Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs)

AEAs are community-led efforts to establish designated areas important to Wisconsin's agricultural future. As a part of the state's Farmland Preservation Program, AEAs strive to support local farmland protection goals. Through this designation, communities can encourage continued agricultural production and investment in the local agricultural economy.

Eligible landowners within an AEA can sign a 15-year farmland preservation agreement committing all or a portion of their farm to agricultural use and maintaining state soil and water conservation standards. In return, they may be eligible to claim the farmland preservation tax credit.

Learn more about [AEAs and the Farmland Preservation Program](#). To start or join a current AEA, contact the county land conservation department in the county where your land is located.