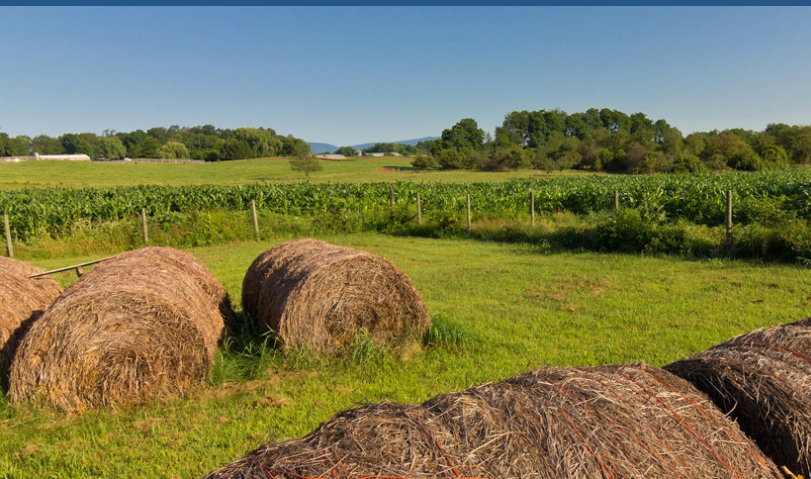




## Valley Farms Provide Important Benefits

Hudson Valley farms supply us with fresh, wholesome food that doesn't have to be trucked or flown in from hundreds or even thousands of miles away. Farms maintain working landscapes, rural heritage and residents' quality of life, all of which drive a multibillion-dollar tourism industry and help fuel smart economic growth. The region's farms also safeguard critical wildlife habitat and environmentally sensitive areas such as meadows, woodlands, wetlands and streams. Further, they protect local aquifers—source of many communities' drinking water—and keep a lid on local property taxes by requiring just 37 cents in municipal services for each \$1 of taxes they pay.



Scenic Hudson preserves land and farms and creates parks that connect people with the inspirational power of the Hudson River, while fighting threats to the river and natural resources that are the foundation of the valley's prosperity. A crusader for the valley since 1963, we are credited with saving fabled Storm King Mountain from a destructive industrial project and launching the modern grass-roots environmental movement. Today with more than 25,000 ardent supporters, we are the largest environmental group focused on the Hudson River Valley. Our team of experts combines land acquisition, support for agriculture, citizen-based advocacy and sophisticated planning tools to create environmentally healthy communities, champion smart economic growth, open up riverfronts to the public and preserve the valley's inspiring beauty and natural resources. To date Scenic Hudson has created or enhanced more than 65 parks, preserves and historic sites up and down the Hudson River and conserved more than 40,000 acres, including over 15,000 acres of farmland.

For more information about Scenic Hudson's farmland protection work, contact Assistant Land Conservation Director Cari Watkins-Bates at 845 473 4440, ext. 268, or [cwatkins@scenichudson.org](mailto:cwatkins@scenichudson.org).



land ■ parks ■ advocacy

Scenic Hudson • One Civic Center Plaza Suite 200  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 • 845 473 4440

[www.scenichudson.org](http://www.scenichudson.org)



# Farmland Conservation

*Keeping agricultural land available for future generations*

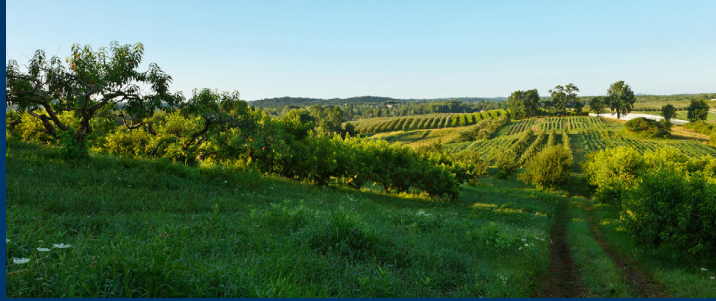




## Protecting Farms and Farming

Scenic Hudson's unique "critical mass" approach to farmland conservation does more than conserve land. By focusing our efforts on carefully defined regional farm "clusters," we work to make sure small-scale farming remains economically viable for farmers. By engaging with partners to conserve a cluster of farms in a community or region, we also support the larger agricultural community by sustaining the economic viability of vital farm support services—feed stores, tractor dealers, large-animal veterinarians, etc.

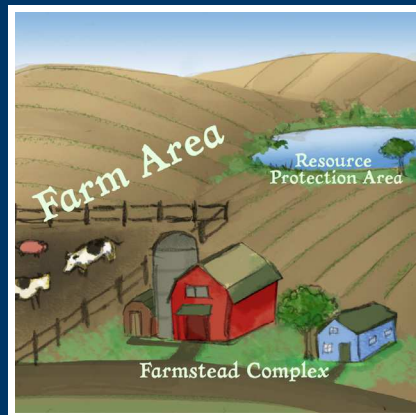
In 1998 Scenic Hudson became one of the first organizations in New York State to permanently protect farmland through the acquisition of **conservation easements**—a voluntary, legally binding agreement between a landowner and a qualified non-profit organization or public agency that restricts the use of land in perpetuity to protect its conservation values. Since then, we've partnered with farm families to preserve more than 15,000 acres of farmland on more than 100 farms in five counties. These easements, also known as Purchase of Development Rights (or PDRs), have placed more than \$50 million directly into the hands of farmers, providing them with capital to grow their operations and ensuring that important farmland will be kept open and available for agricultural use for generations to come.



## About Conservation Easements

A conservation easement runs with the land and is filed in the county clerk's records. An agricultural conservation easement sets forth the landowner's commitment to preserving their farm for future generations and defines the specific restrictions to be placed on the property.

Every conservation easement is unique. We work directly with landowners to tailor lasting agreements designed to allow for farming and continued agricultural uses while protecting important soils and other natural resources such as water quality. Landowners retain ownership of their property and continue to use it subject to the terms of the conservation easement.



Each conservation easement features a land plan that includes a **Farmstead Complex**, **Farm Area** and (if applicable) a **Resource Protection Area** providing additional safeguards to significant natural resources such as wetlands and streams. The Farmstead Complex

is the farm's "nerve center," site of most of its infrastructure; the Farm Area generally includes all fields and woodlands.

To address long-term affordability and access for farmers to agricultural land in our region, Scenic Hudson continues developing new, innovative tools. These include a Preemptive Purchase Right (PPR), which can be added to a conservation easement. The PPR would require any future sale of the farm to be at an agricultural value. The farm owner would be compensated for this additional restriction.

## A Foodshed Approach

In 2013 Scenic Hudson released a report entitled "Securing Fresh, Local Food for New York City and the Hudson Valley: A Foodshed Conservation Plan for the Region." In addition to providing reliable data on how much farmland must be conserved to ensure that growing populations in the region and New York City can continue to count on supplies of fresh, local food, it offers a blueprint for ramping up collaborative farmland protection efforts. To date it has received excellent buy-in from farmers, fellow environmental groups, New York State and local governments, and others.

To download a copy of the Foodshed Conservation Plan, visit [www.scenichudson.org/foodshedplan](http://www.scenichudson.org/foodshedplan)

