

Jefferson County Farmland Protection Plan

Jefferson County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

Jefferson County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan provides a coordinated framework to guide policies, programs, and investments that support the long-term viability of agriculture. Developed under the direction of the Jefferson County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, the Plan serves as the County's primary strategy for maintaining agriculture as a critical land use, economic driver, and defining component of the rural landscape.

The most recent update, completed in 2016 with assistance from Community Planning and Environmental Associates, built upon the County's original 2002 plan. The 2016 Plan established a clear vision and a set of strategies to support farm viability, strengthen agricultural economic development, and guide land use decisions affecting farmland.

The Plan was informed by a comprehensive public engagement process, including farmer workshops, surveys, and coordination with agricultural partners, ensuring that its recommendations reflect local conditions and priorities.

Looking ahead, Jefferson County will undertake a comprehensive update to its Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan in 2026. This effort will reassess existing conditions, incorporate updated data and stakeholder input, and establish a forward-looking strategy to address emerging trends in agriculture, land use, and rural development. Additional information, including opportunities for public and stakeholder engagement, will be shared as the update process moves forward.

Jefferson County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board

- Steve Watson, Chairman - Active Farmer
- John Peck, Vice Chairman - Active Farmer
- Michael Kiechle - Active Farmer
- Jan Martusewicz - Ag Business
- Al Gehrke - Active Farmer
- Doug Shelmedine - Active Farmer
- Amanda Rae Root - Cooperative Extension
- Daniel McBride - County Legislator
- Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer- Director of Planning & Community Development
- Alex Marchenkoff - Director of Real Property
- Justin Bach - Jefferson County Soil & Water