



NYS Agricultural Environmental Management Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District

Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) leads in the implementation of the of the NYS Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program. AEM is a voluntary, confidential, locally-led, and comprehensive approach that further advances environmental management on New York's farms, across all sizes and commodities. This program delivers technical support and financial incentives needed to help farmers to implement conservation practices critical to the protection of water quality and other natural resources. AEM helps to ensure that New York's farms remain viable and continue to meet their business objectives in an everchanging market place. Over the last two decades, over 12,000 farms across New York State have participated in AEM by working with local SWCDs and partnering with resource professionals, to develop and implement comprehensive, farm-specific plans using AEM's 5-Tier approach.

Tier 1: Inventory current activities, and future plans of the farm business.

Tier 2: Assess current environmental stewardship and opportunities for improvement.

Tier 3: Develop conservation plans addressing concerns and opportunities tailored to farm goals.

Tier 4: Implement plans utilizing available financial, educational, and technical assistance.

Tier 5: Evaluate practices and plans to ensure the protection of farm viability and the environment.

Completing this step provides farms the opportunity to become more engaged with the AEM program, often leading to further work through the Tiers to address farm and natural resource needs. Advancing through the AEM Tiers, opens doors for farms to apply for cost-share funding to implement priority practices, by advancing to the Tier 3 planning process. AEM

takes a whole farm view to address not only nutrient management, but also addresses farmstead water supplies; pasture management; pesticide mixing, loading and storage; erosion control; stream and floodplain management; irrigation water management; and soil health to name a few. AEM can also address farm-to-neighbor relations and agriculture in the community. In today's climate of environmental awareness, AEM's technical and financial resources are valuable to assist farmers in maintaining their commitment to conservation. Proactively advancing conservation practices is central to economic viability on today's farms. Any farm can participate in AEM.

Madison County SWCD is currently reviewing potential projects for funding through the AEM process. If your farm is interested in getting involved in the AEM program please contact us at the office.

Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District continues their long record of leading and implementing AEM with farmers at the county level, supported by statewide leadership from the Department of Agriculture and Markets and the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee. To learn more about AEM, contact your local Madison County SWCD at 315-824-9849 ext 5.

