

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition Strategies • Departmental Management Strategies • Partnership and Fund-Raising Strategies • Marketing Strategies
<p>American Farmland Trust</p>	<p>The American Farmland Trust released a “Farms Under Threat” report which displayed converted farmland and quality of agricultural land across the country. The converted farmland maps, which show agricultural land which was converted to highly developed (UHD) and low-density residential (LDR) uses, revealed almost 250,000 acres in the state were converted between 2001-2016. The quality of agricultural land was mapped using productivity, versatility, and resiliency (PVR) ratings, and found Jefferson County has a significant amount of high-quality agricultural land susceptible to conversion.</p> <p>The data supplied by the American Farmland Trust can guide Jefferson County preservation strategies to protect agricultural land at high risk of conversion and measure the effectiveness of the county’s preservation model.</p>

Preservation Policies

Creation of and adherence to specific preservation policies are one of the key strategies in implementation of Jefferson County’s farmland preservation model. As this plan focuses primarily on land use preservation efforts, most policies detailed below are related to the zoning ordinance. Policies are categorized according to their land use type (i.e. Farmland Preservation Area or 15 Year Growth Area) or overlay area (i.e. Urban Service Area or Environmental Corridor).

Farmland Preservation Areas

A-1 Zoning District Policies

1. Utilize the A-1 Farmland Preservation (Exclusive Agriculture) zoning district as the primary zoning district to implement Farmland Preservation Area policies. Other zoning districts (e.g. A-2, A-3, N) may be utilized on an occasional basis, particularly based on preexisting uses and zoning patterns.
2. Allow no new residences in the A-1 zoning district, except for replacement of existing residences as may be permitted under the Working Lands law and the County zoning ordinance. Instead, require the rezoning of A-1 zoned lands to the A-3 Agricultural/Rural Residential zoning district when new homes are proposed in accordance with the following A-3 Agricultural/Rural Residential Zoning District Policies.
3. Require a minimum lot size of 35 acres in the A-1 zoning district to limit the fragmentation of agricultural lands.
4. Allow legally established residences built before January 15, 1975 to remain within the A-1 zoning district when historically zoned in that manner, except where new land divisions are required (see A-3 Agricultural/Rural Residential Zoning District Policies in such cases).
5. Encourage agricultural-related businesses that support farmers, in part by considering expansion in the number and scope of agricultural-related uses that are allowed in the A-1 zoning district, as enabled under Ch. 91 Wis. Stats.
6. Whenever land is proposed for rezoning from a certified farmland preservation zoning district (such as A-1) to a noncertified zoning district, require that the following criteria in Section 91.28, Wis. Stats. is met:
 - a. The land is better suited for a use not allowed in the A-1 zoning district.
 - b. The rezoning is consistent with the applicable town and County comprehensive plan.
 - c. The rezoning is substantially consistent with this County certified farmland preservation plan.
 - d. The rezoning will not substantially impair or limit current or future agricultural use of surrounding parcels of land that are zoned for or legally restricted to agricultural use.