

November  
2014

# Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan Part 2



Town of Copake Agricultural and  
Farmland Protection Plan  
Committee

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## Appendix 1: Maps

The following maps describe agricultural characteristics and resources of Copake

- Aerial Photograph
- Agricultural Districts
- County Priority Agricultural Lands in Copake
- Farmed Parcels
- Farmer-Owned Parcels
- Farmland Assessments
- Farmland Soils
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Hydrologically Sensitive Areas
- Parcels with Agricultural Assessments
- Potential New Farmland
- Priority Farmland and Criteria
- Protected Lands
- Recent Development

# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

### Aerial Photos - 2010

-  Town Boundaries
-  Property Boundaries
- Roads**
-  State Route
-  County Road
-  Local Road
-  Private Road/Parking
-  Railroads (abandoned)

Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
 Other data layers are the latest available through the NYS Data Sharing Cooperative Website or developed specifically for the plan

Map Date:  
 August 2014



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles



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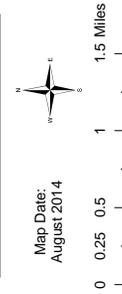


# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

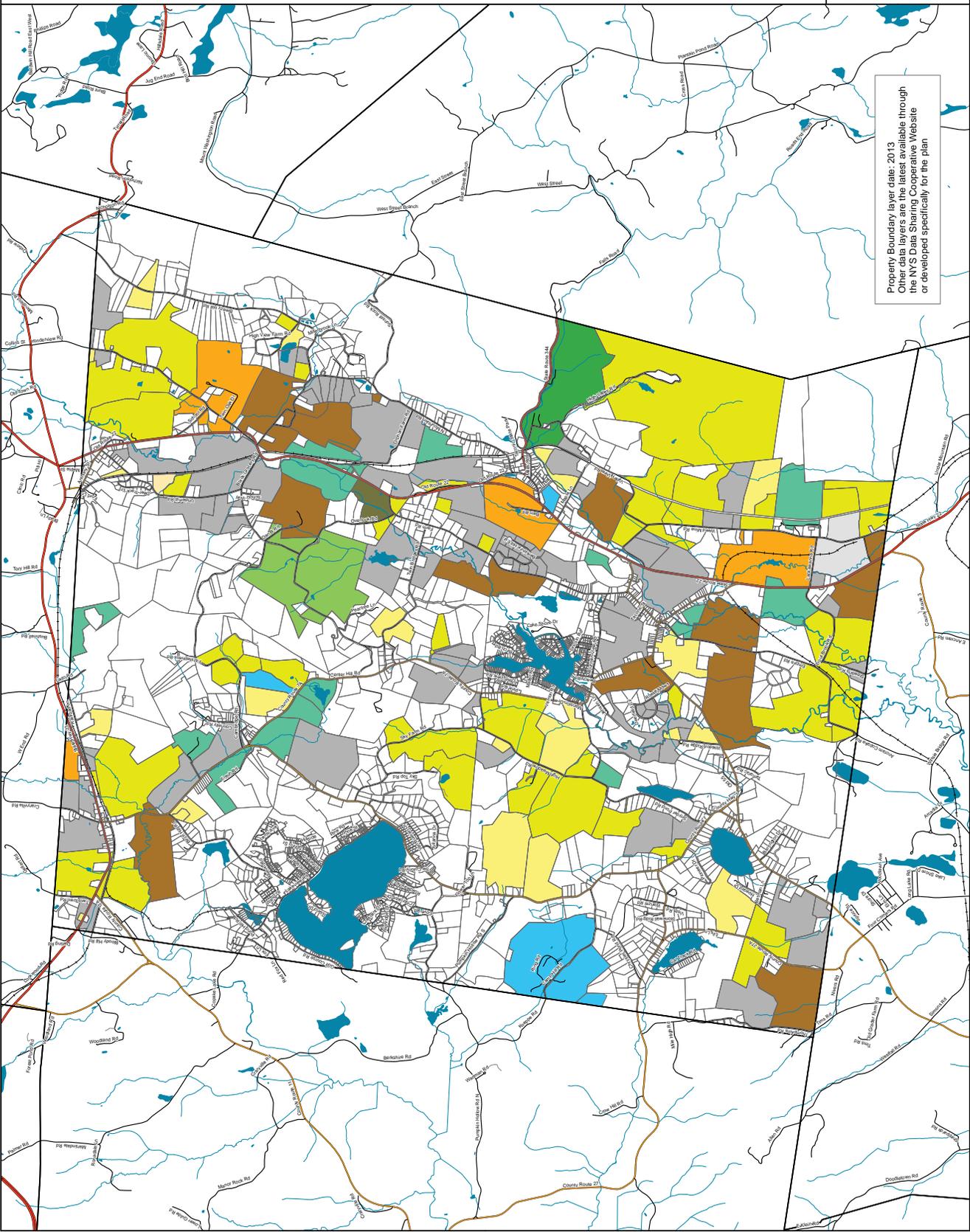
### Farmed Parcels

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  - State Route
  - County Road
  - Local Road
  - Private Road/Parking
  - Railroads (abandoned)
- Water**
  - Water
  - Streams
- Farmed Parcels**
  - Agricultural-Livestock
  - Agricultural-Crops
  - Agricultural-Horse Farm
  - Agricultural-Nursery Specialty
  - Agricultural-Other
  - Agricultural-Vacant Land
  - Residential-Agricultural
  - Residential-Other
  - Community Services
  - Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks, Government Owned
  - Vacant Land
  - Unknown Class



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Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
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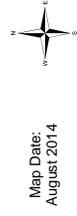
# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

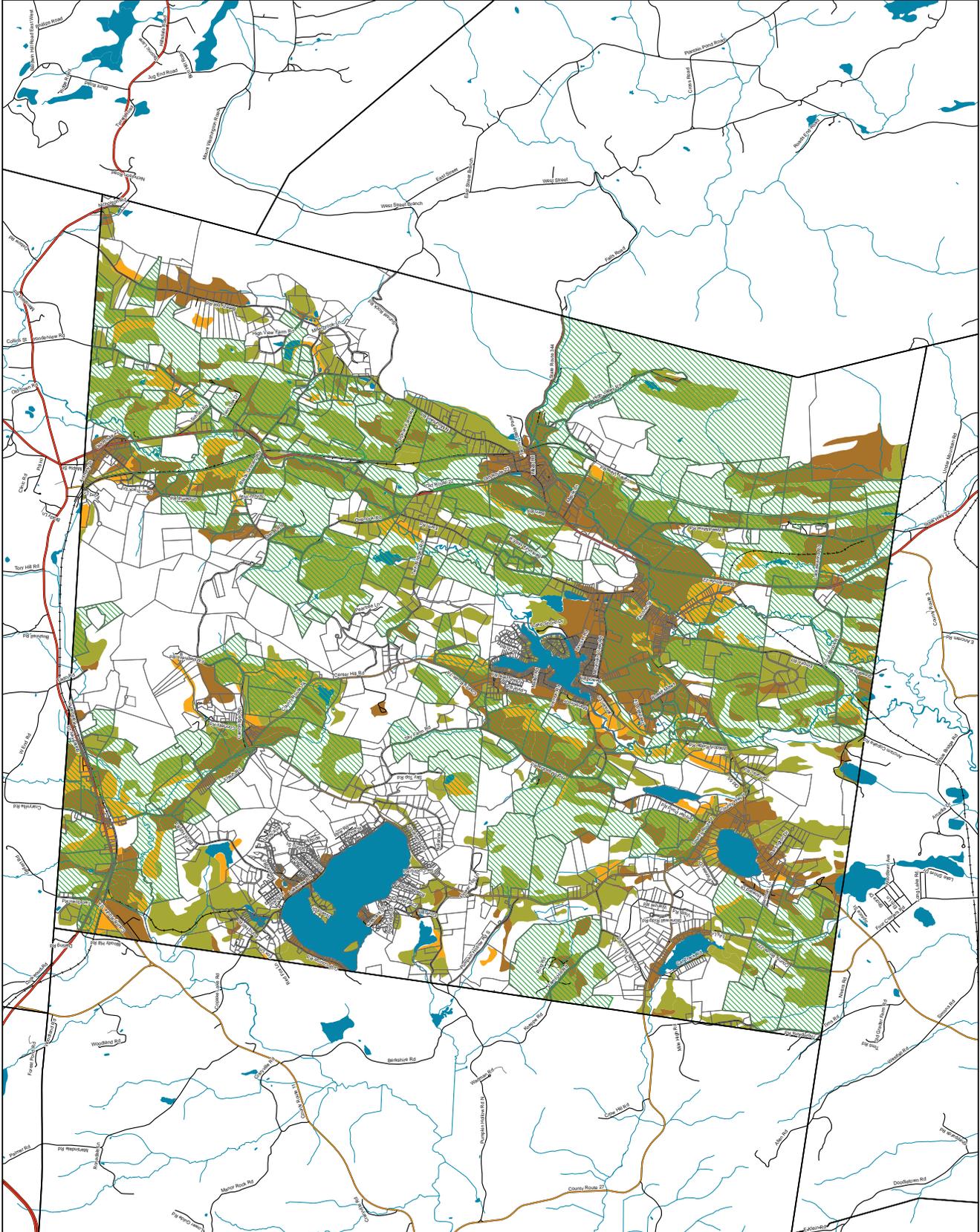
### Farmland Soils

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  - State Route
  - County Road
  - Local Road
  - Private Road/Parking
  - Railroads (abandoned)
- Water
- Streams
- Farmed Parcels
- Farmland Soils**
  - Prime Farmland
  - Prime Farmland if drained
  - Farmland of Statewide Importance

Property Boundary layer dates: 2013  
 Other layers are current as of the date of the  
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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

### Protected Land

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  - State Route
  - County Road
  - Local Road
  - Private Road/Parking
  - Railroads (abandoned)
- Water
- Streams
- Farmed Parcels
- Conservation Easements (private)
- Other Conservation Lands (public)
- Copake Park
- Hillside Community Wetland
- Reinstrom Hill
- Bloody Hill
- Taconic State Park
- New Forge State Forest
- Other State Owned Land

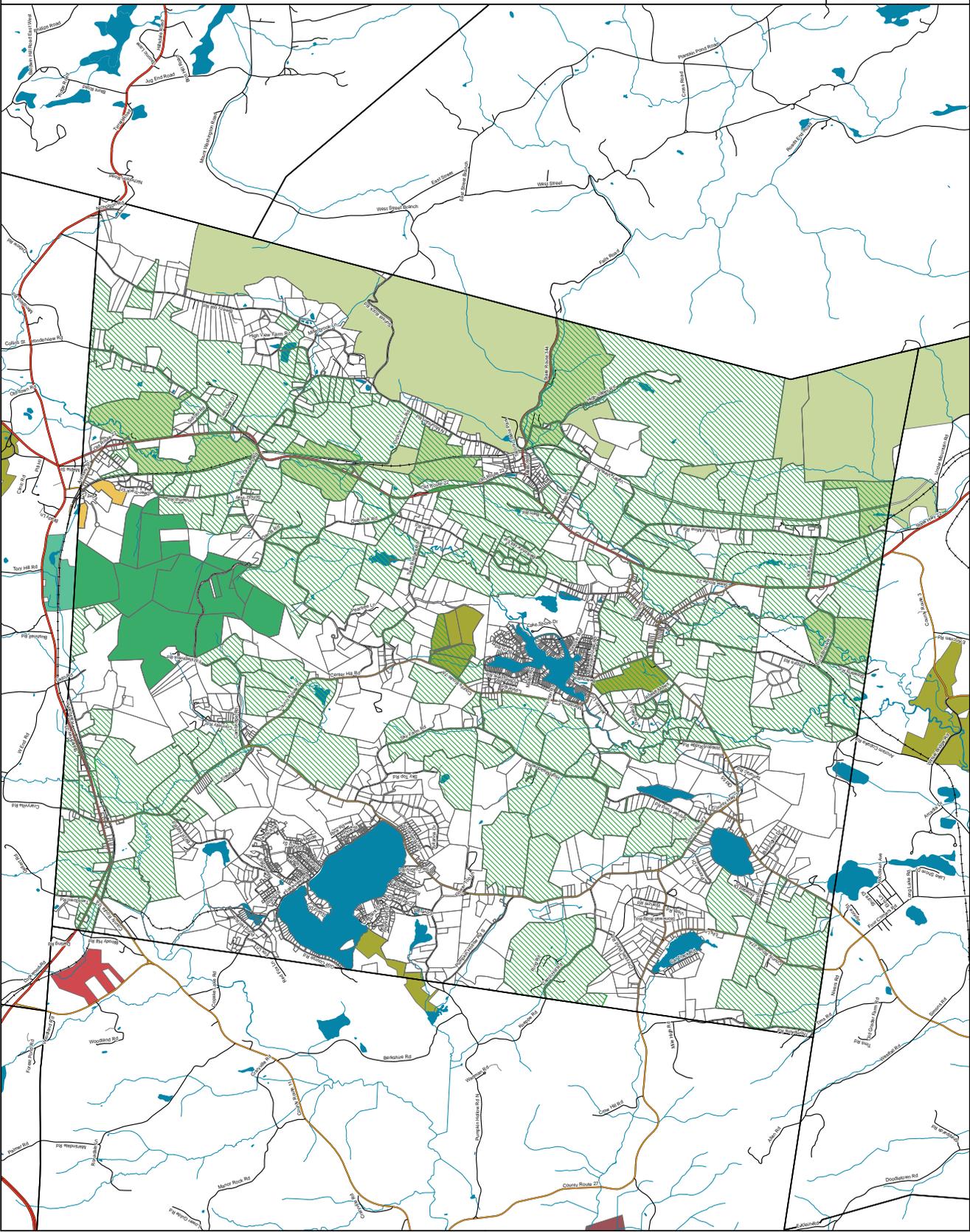
Property Boundary layer dates: 2013  
 Other layers are the most up to date available through  
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Map Date:  
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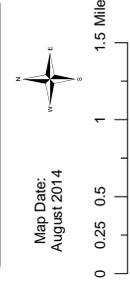
# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

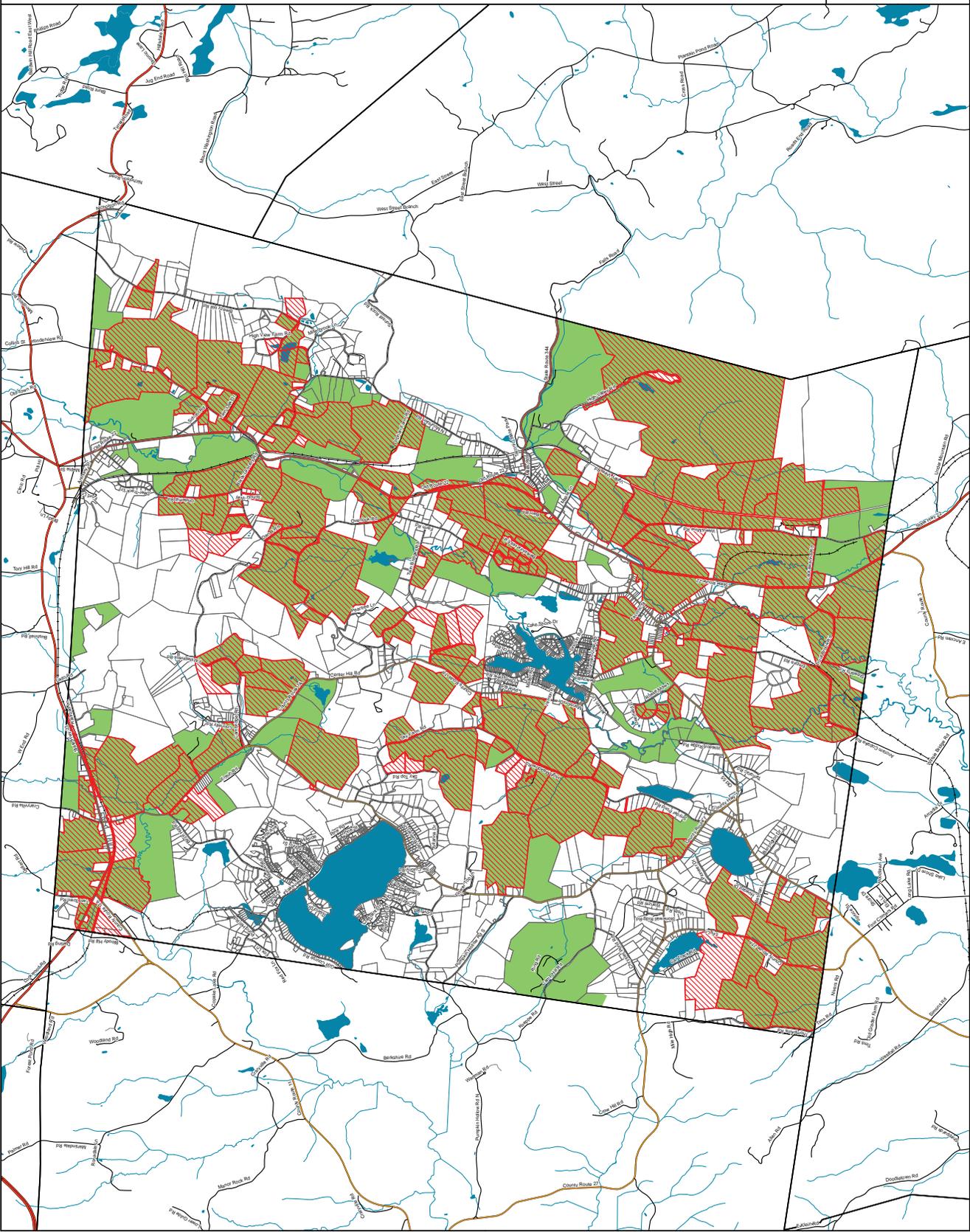
### Agricultural Assessment

-  Town Boundaries
-  Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  -  State Route
  -  County Road
  -  Local Road
  -  Private Road/Parking
  -  Railroads (abandoned)
-  Water
-  Streams
-  Farmed Parcels
-  Agricultural Assessment

Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

**Agricultural Districts**

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries

**Roads**

- State Route
- County Road
- Local Road
- Private Road/Parking
- Railroads (abandoned)

**Water**

- Water
- Streams

**Farmed Parcels**

- Farmed Parcels

**Agricultural Districts**

- 1
- 4
- 6

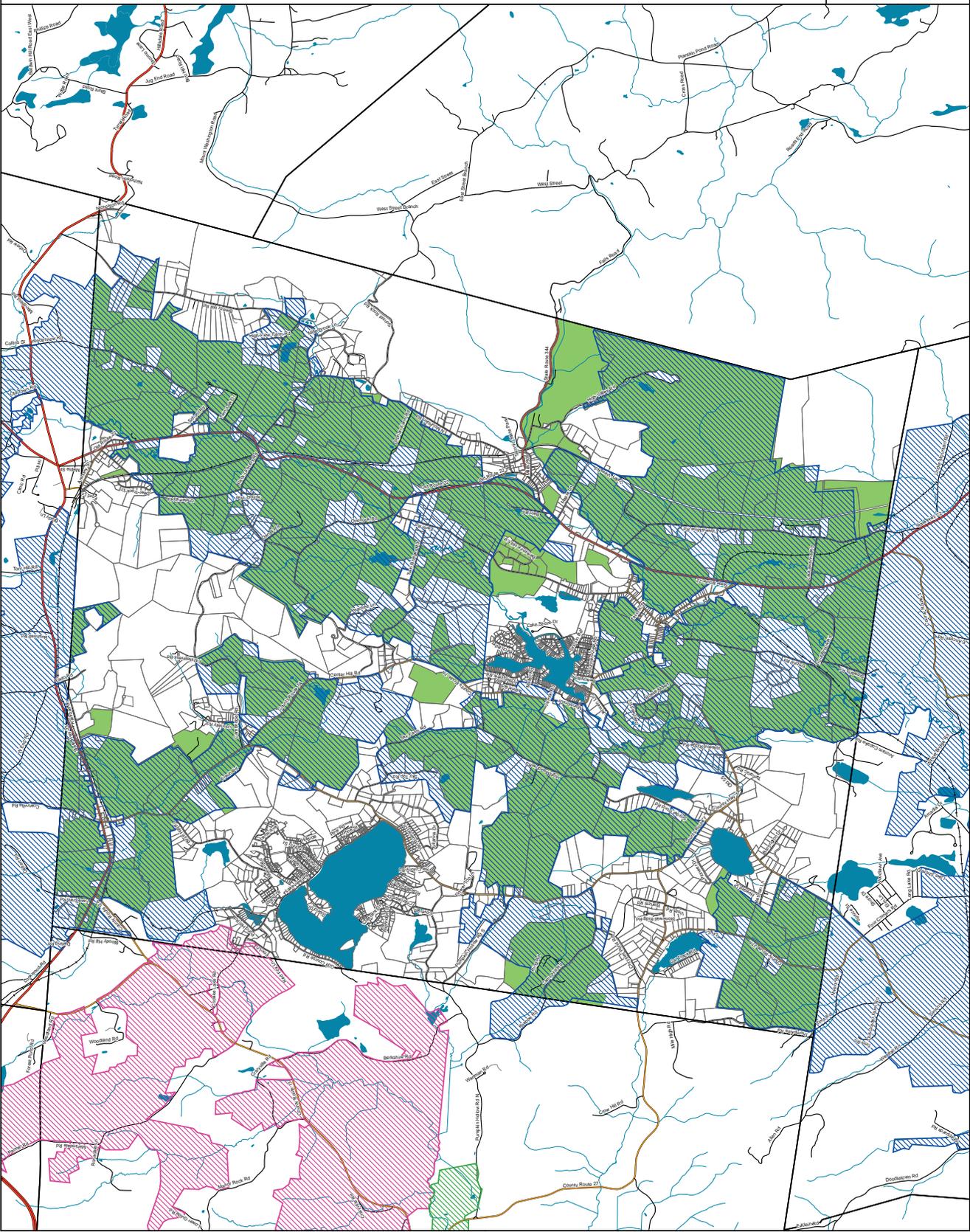
Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
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Map Date:  
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0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

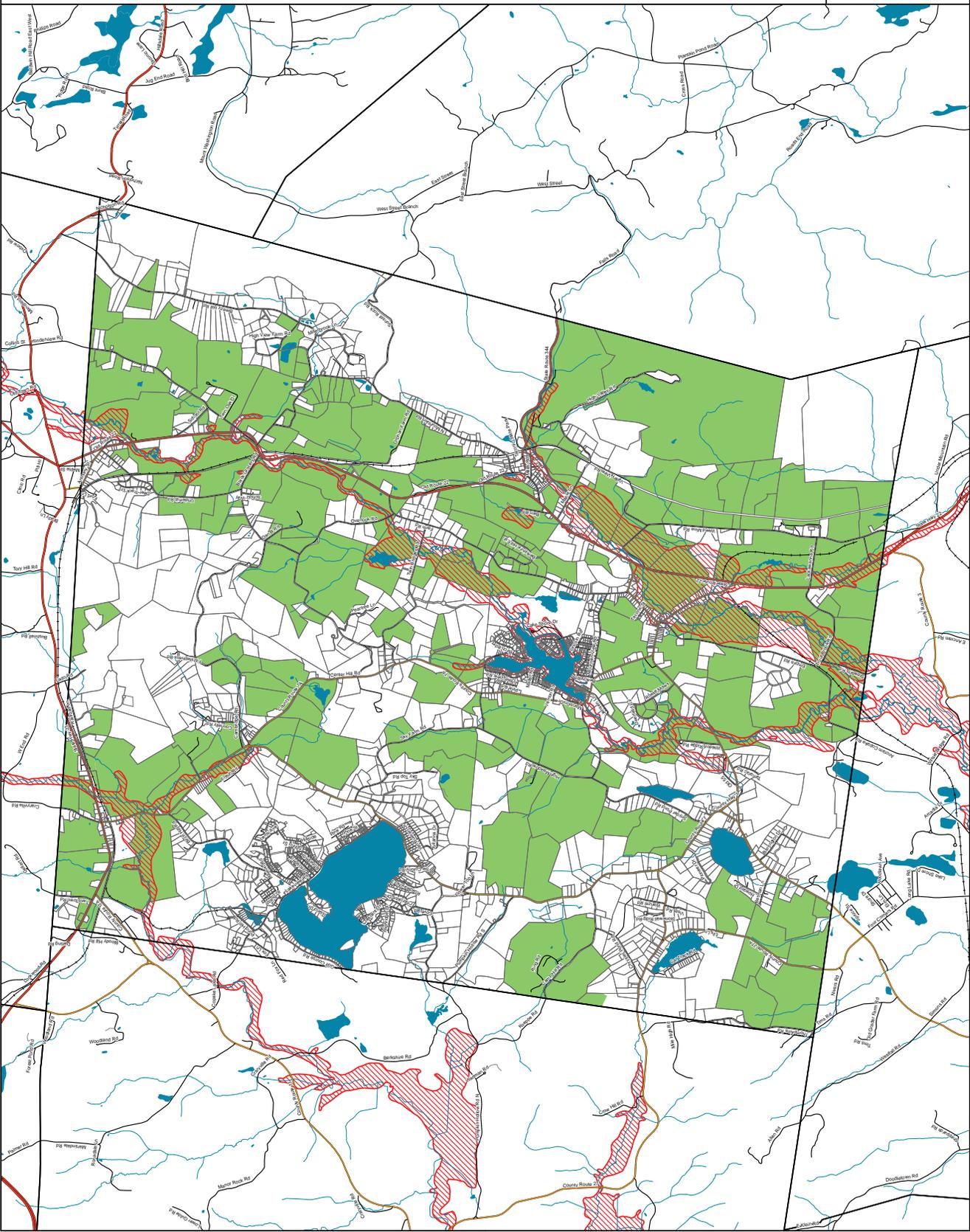
### Flood Hazards

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  - State Route
  - County Road
  - Local Road
  - Private Road/Parking
  - Railroads (abandoned)
- Water
- Streams
- Farmed Parcels
- 100 Year Flood Hazard

Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
 Other layers are available through the NYS Data Share Cooperative Website or developed specifically for the plan

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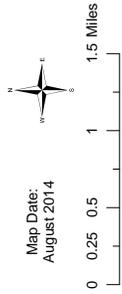
# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

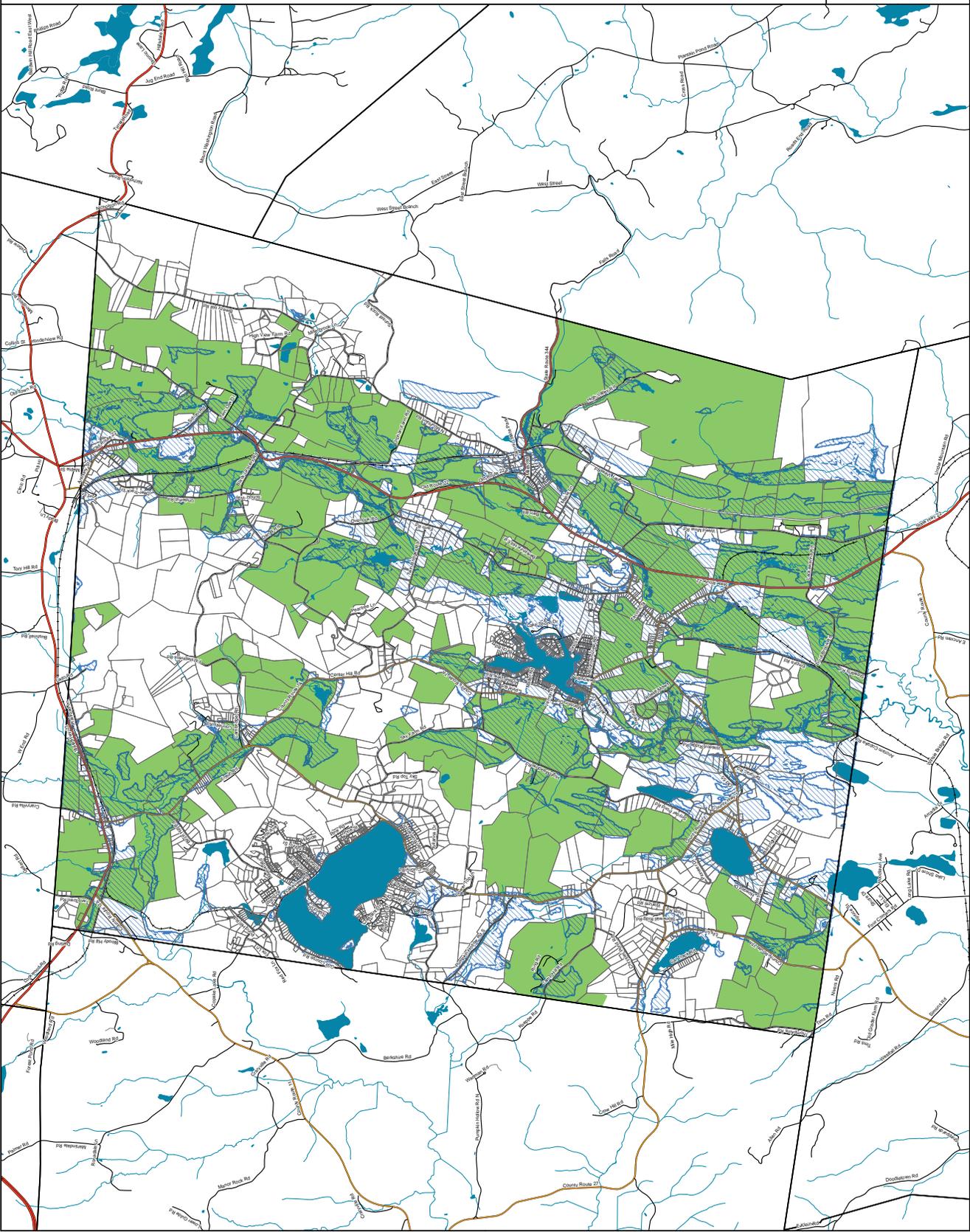
### Hydrologically Sensitive Areas

-  Town Boundaries
-  Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  -  State Route
  -  County Road
  -  Local Road
  -  Private Road/Parking
  -  Railroads (abandoned)
- Water**
  -  Water
  -  Streams
  -  Farmed Parcels
  -  Hydrologically Sensitive (high or very high)

Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
 Hydrologically sensitive areas are from the Town's Groundwater Resources Study performed by NY Rural Water Association and the Copake Water Association through the NYS Data Share Cooperative Website or developed specifically for the plan




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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

### Farmer Owned Lands

-  Town Boundaries
-  Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  -  State Route
  -  County Road
  -  Local Road
  -  Private Road/Parking
  -  Railroads (abandoned)
-  Water
-  Streams
-  Farmer Owned Parcels
-  Other Farmed Parcels

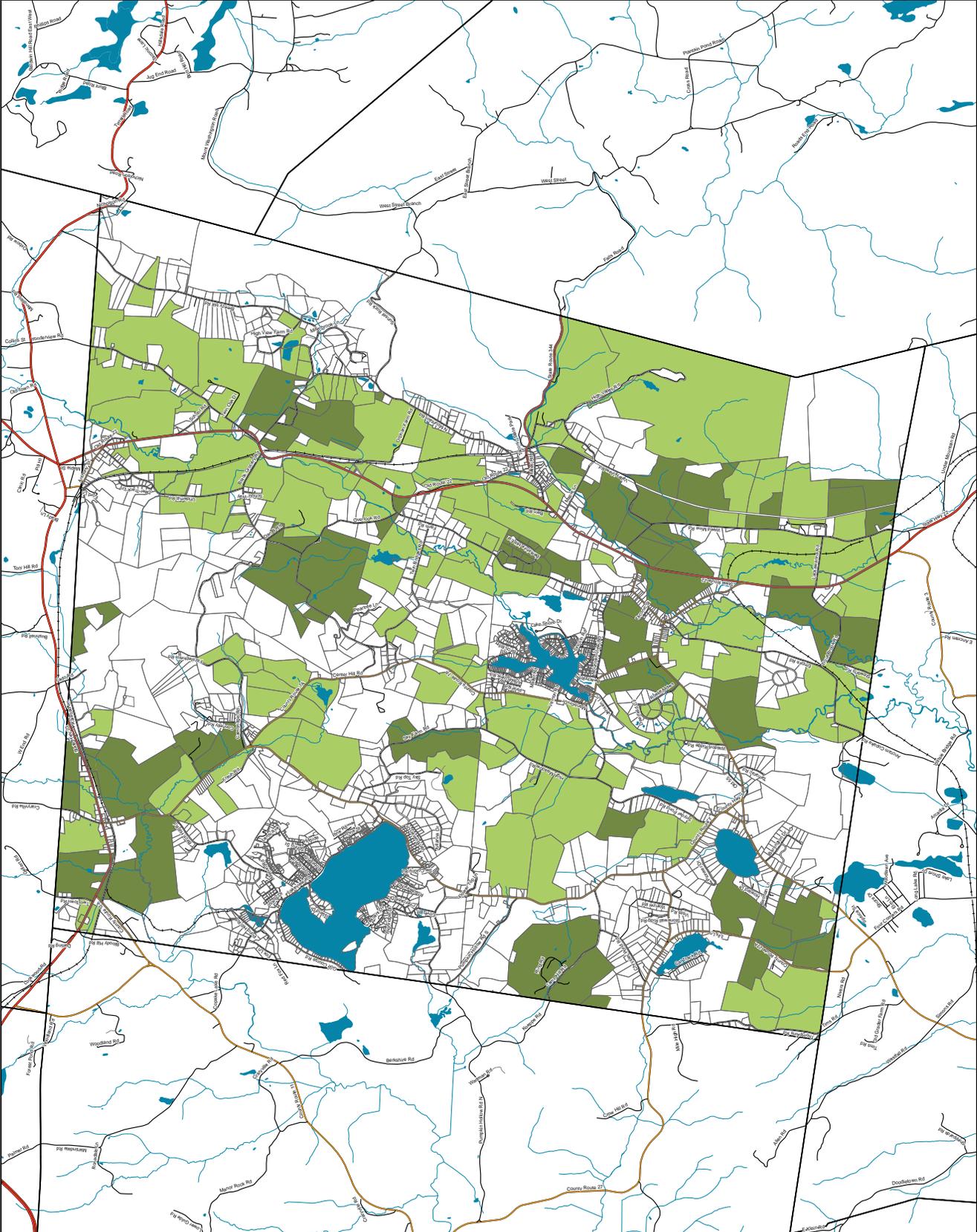
Property Boundary layer dates: 2013  
 Other layers are up to date as available through  
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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

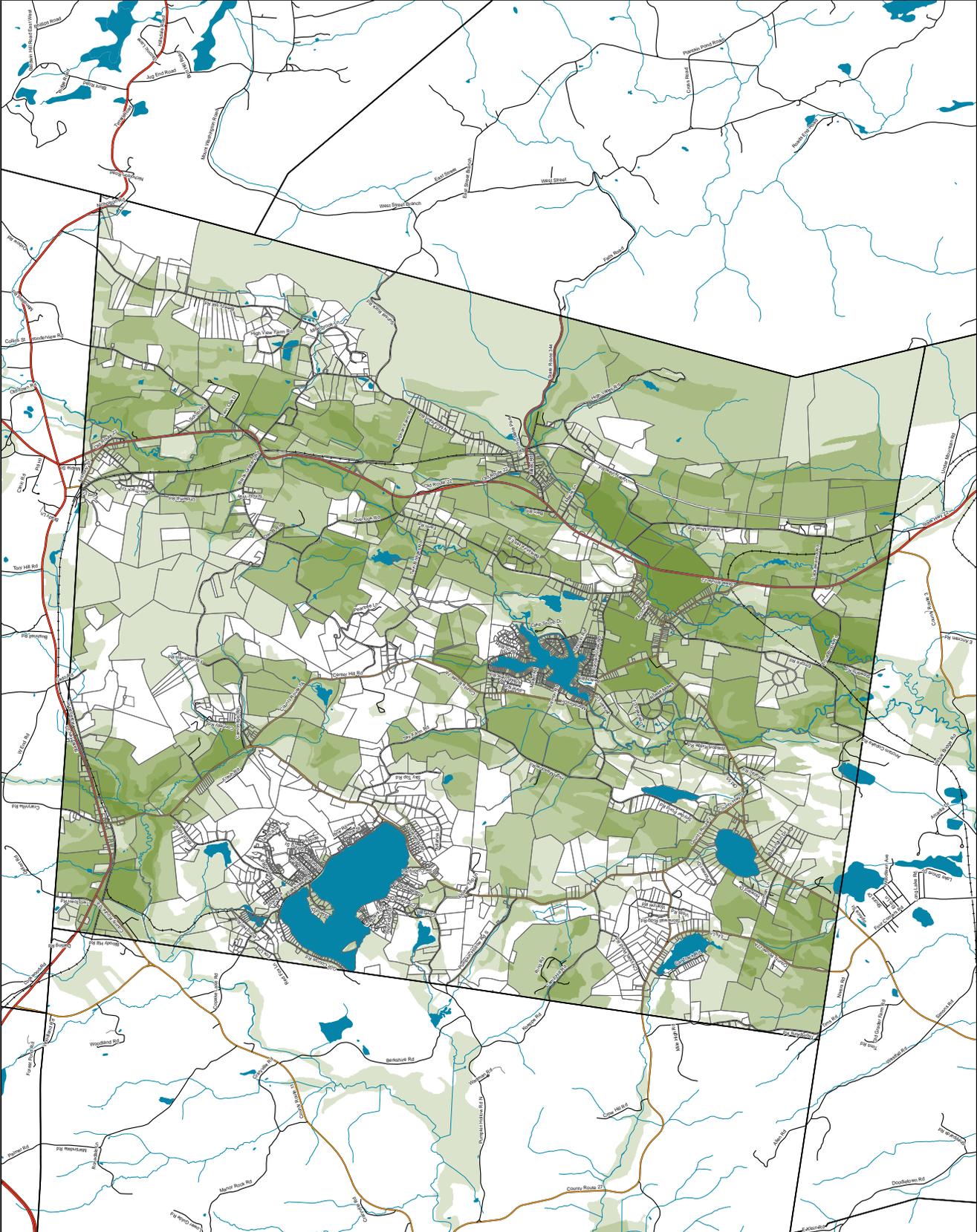
### Farmland Evaluation Criteria

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  - State Route
  - County Road
  - Local Road
  - Private Road/Parking
  - Railroads (abandoned)
- Water
- Streams
- Farms
- Soils - Prime Farmland
- Soils - State Important
- Protected Land
- Ag Assessment
- Flood Hazard
- Hydrologically Sensitive (high or very high)
- Farmer Owned Properties

Property Boundary layer dates: 2013  
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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

### Farmland Assessment

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads**
- State Route
- County Road
- Local Road
- Private Road/Parking
- Railroads (abandoned)
- Water
- Streams

**Farmland Assessment**  
 (Higher Number = more criteria on or around a parcel, or a higher percentage of a criteria on a parcel)

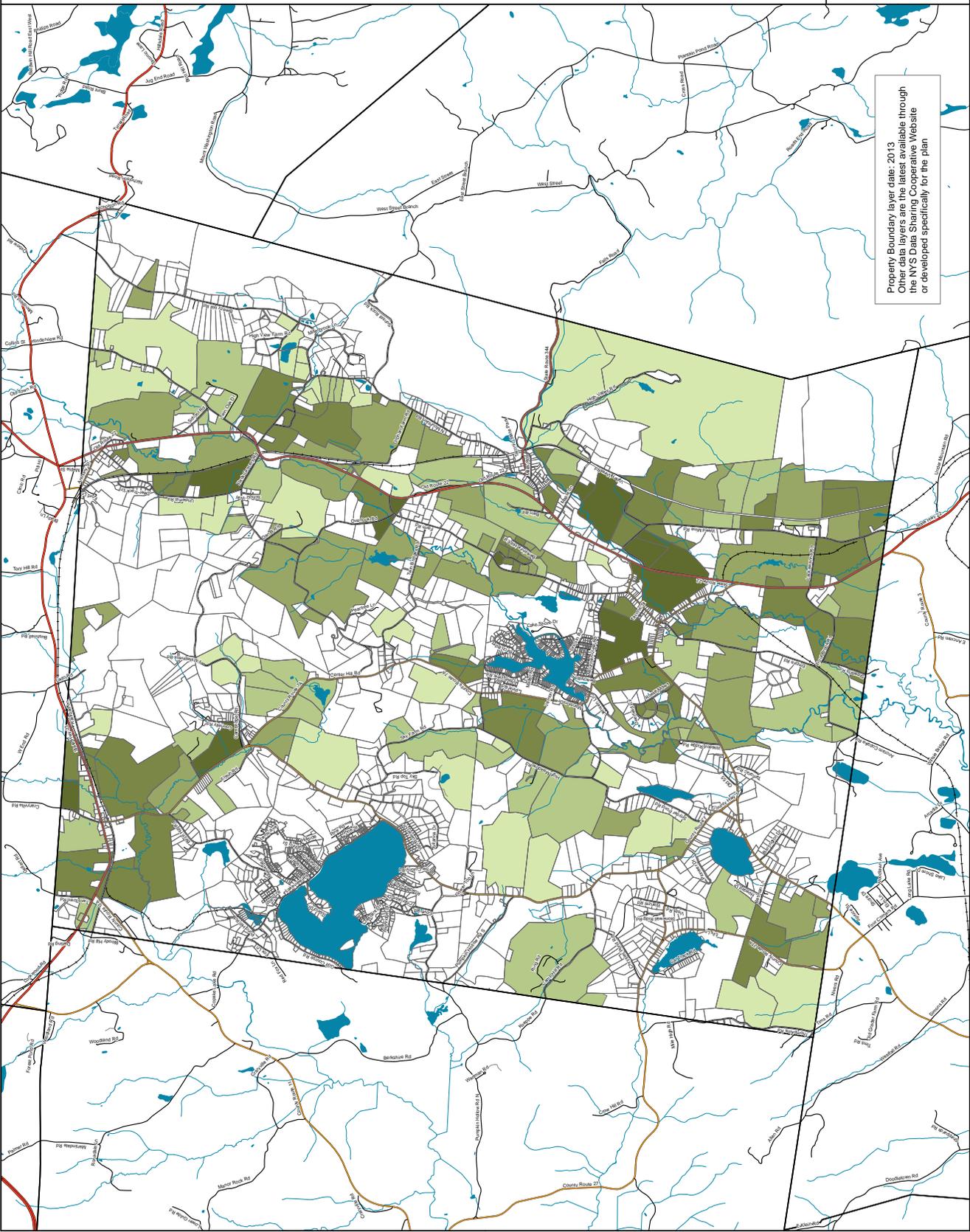
	47 - 66
	36 - 46
	27 - 35
	18 - 26
	2 - 17

The items used in this Farmland Assessment include:  
 Parcels Owned by a farmer  
 Prime farmland soils  
 Soils of statewide importance  
 Parcels with an Agricultural Assessment (developed by a government agency, or with a preservation easement)  
 100 year flood hazard areas  
 Areas identified as being highly or very highly hydrologically sensitive  
 Parcels with none of these elements present appear in a darker green color

Map Date:  
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0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

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Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

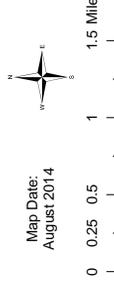
### Columbia County Ag Plan Farmland Prioritization

-  Town Boundaries
-  Property Boundaries
- Roads**
-  State Route
-  County Road
-  Local Road
-  Private Road/Parking
-  Railroads (abandoned)
-  Water
-  Streams

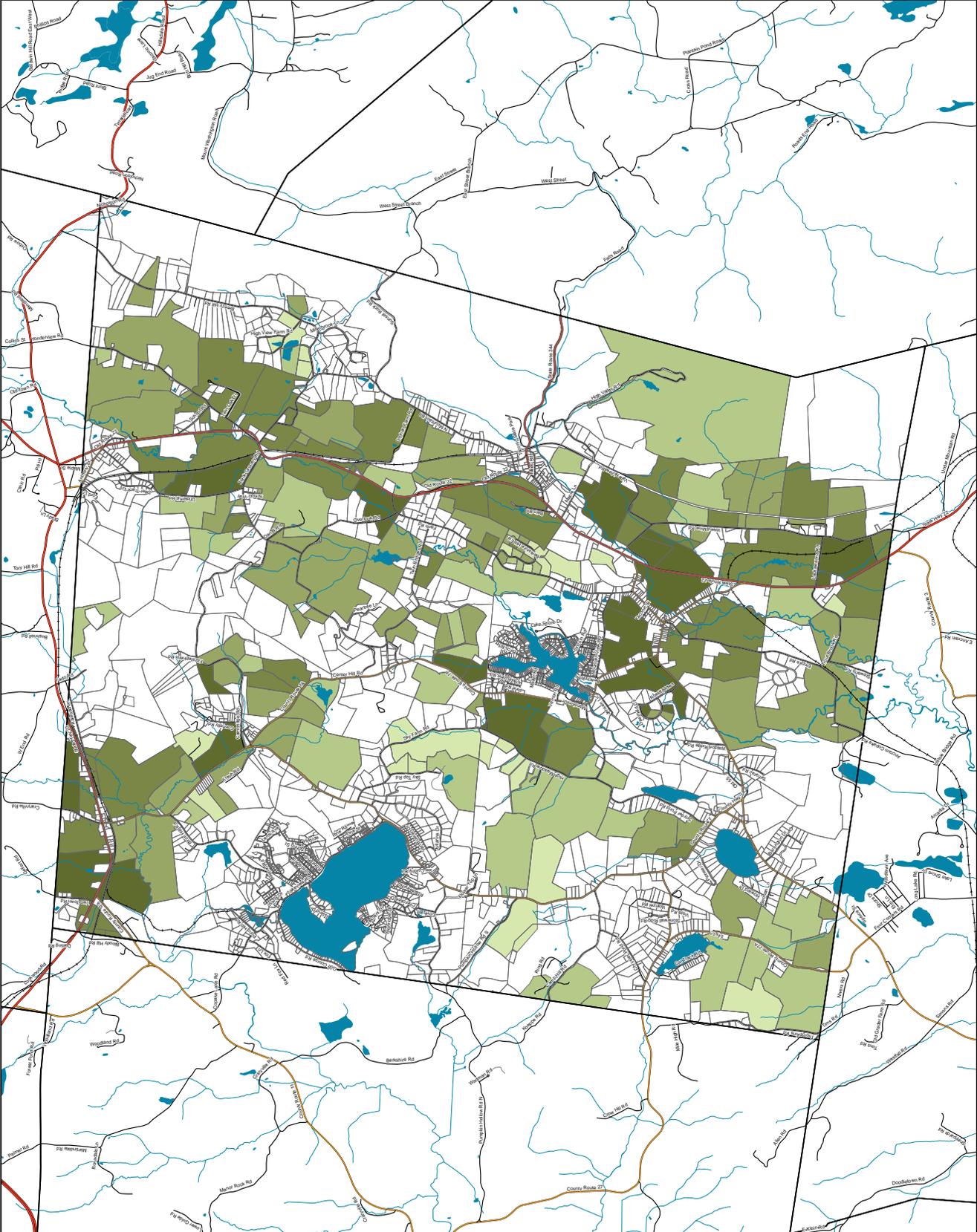
### County Ag Plan Priorities

- Score**
-  1 - Highest Priority
  -  2
  -  3
  -  4
  -  5

Property Boundary layer dates: 2013  
 Other layers are current and available through  
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# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

### Recent Development

- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads
  - State Route
  - County Road
  - Local Road
  - Private Road/Parking
  - Railroads (abandoned)
- Water
- Streams
- Farmed Parcels
- Recently Built Residential (last 10 years)

Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
 Other layers are available through the NYS Data Share Cooperative Website or developed specifically for the plan

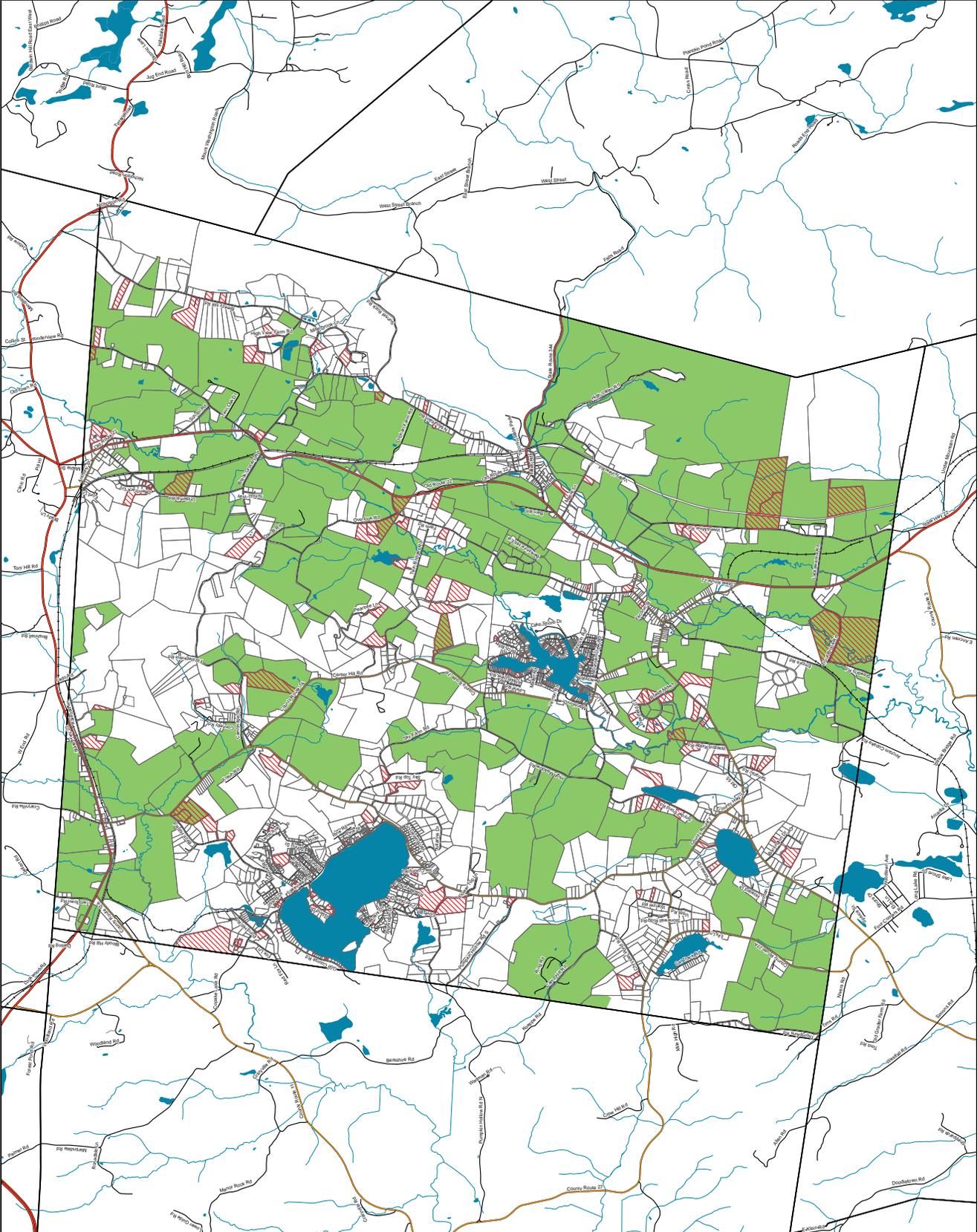
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0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles



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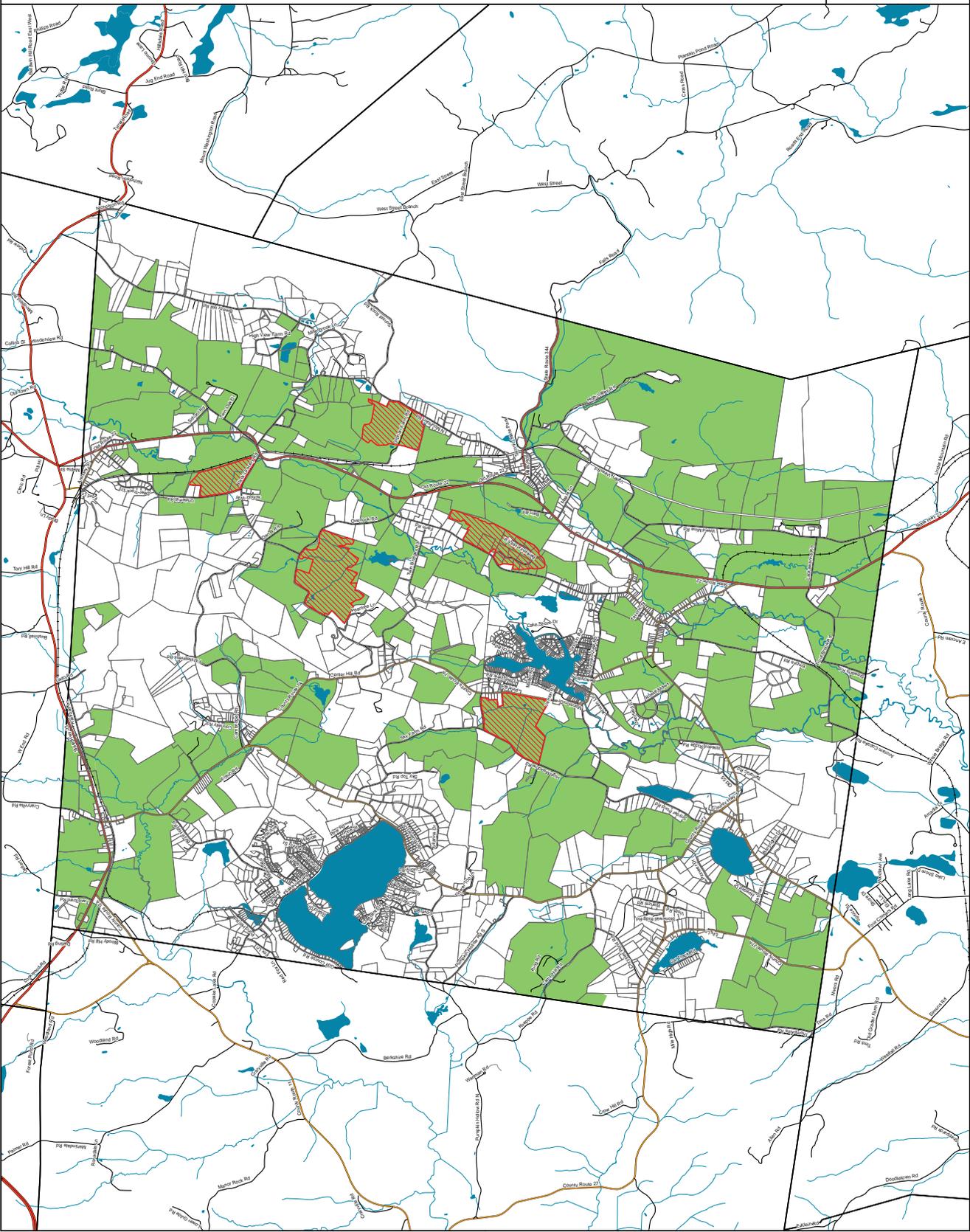
### Fenced Agricultural Lands

-  Town Boundaries
-  Property Boundaries
- Roads**
-  State Route
-  County Road
-  Local Road
-  Private Road/Parking
-  Railroads (abandoned)
-  Water
-  Streams
-  Farmed Parcels
-  Fenced Areas

Property Boundaries layer date: 2013  
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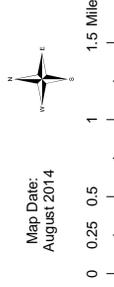
# Town of Copake

## Agriculture and Farmland Preservation Plan

### Potential New Farmland

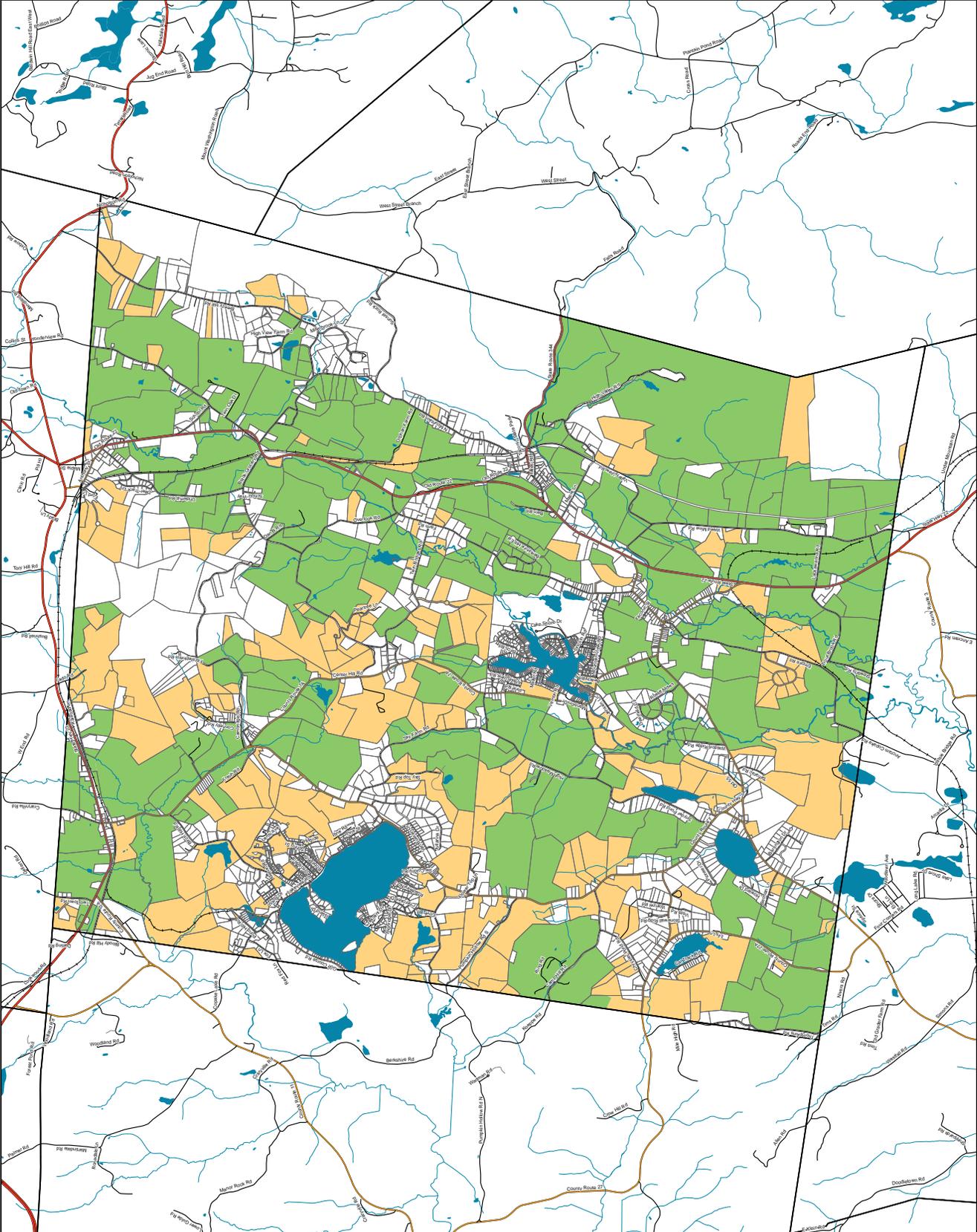
- Town Boundaries
- Property Boundaries
- Roads**
  - State Route
  - County Road
  - Local Road
  - Private Road/Parking
  - Railroads (abandoned)
- Water**
  - Water
  - Streams
- Farmed Parcels (currently farmed)**
- Potential New Farmland (195 parcels, 5,345 acres, mostly wooded)**

Property Boundary layer date: 2013  
 Other data layers are available through  
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## Appendix 2: A Profile of Agriculture in Copake

### Historical Trends

Since the Town's founding, agriculture has been central to the life and economy of Copake. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the majority of Copake residents were farmers. Through the Civil War era, major crops consisted of hay and grain. When grain prices fell as a result of competition from western states, Copake farmers turned to sheep and then dairy farming, taking advantage of growing access to urban markets to the south. Commodities such as milk, butter and cheese were consumed locally or shipped by railroad to New York City and other urban centers.

In recent decades farms in Copake have grown larger and fewer in numbers. New types of farms such as plant nurseries and beef operations have reduced the traditional dominance of dairy farms. Farms owned by corporations such as the Shagbark Nursery are a new feature in the agricultural landscape. Nearby farm services such as feed, equipment and service facilities have become scarce. In the last ten years, the trend toward larger farms has been offset by an increasing number of small producers of specialty farm products such as hops, goat cheese, vegetables, honey and specialty wools.

The Town of Copake contains 41 square miles of land area, which is equivalent to 26,240 acres. The Town maintains assessment data on approximately 3,000 parcels that contain about 25,429 acres, indicating approximately 811 acres is dedicated to roads and right of ways, making up roughly 3% of the Town. Agricultural lands comprise 7,255 acres or 28.5% of the Town's land area but makes up only 3.3% of the taxable assessed value. An additional 25% of land is vacant.

Copake has a wide variety of land cover including forests, wetlands, pasture, cropland, water bodies, hamlets and scattered agricultural and residential housing. Forests are concentrated in the hilly eastern portions of Town while farmland and open space is located in the low-lying valleys in the central and western sections. Several historic hamlets are located in the vicinity of Route 22 with major lakes and ponds in western sections of Town.

### Soil Data

Copake is fortunate to have high quality soils for farming. These productive soils take thousands of years to make and can be destroyed by inappropriate development activity or improper management. Blasdell, Occum and Stockbridge soils make up the local landscape. Blasdell and Occum predominate in the flatter valley bottom areas of Town created by outwash from the melting glaciers ten to fifteen thousand years ago. Melting ice water from the glaciers created temporary stream channels and lakes that collected fine, deep silty material ideal for creating high quality farm soils. Stockbridge soils were formed in limestone upland areas through the tilling action of the glaciers.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conducts an inventory rural lands that may support the production of food, feed, fiber forage, and oilseed crops. This exercise is conducted both at the national level and, with cooperation from interested groups at the local and state levels, at the state level, yielding two classifications important to farmland protection planning: prime farmland and soils of statewide importance.

Table 1. Farmland Type and Acreage in Copake.

Prime Farmland in the Town	3,740.1 acres
Soils of Statewide Importance in the Town	5,713.3 acres
Prime Farmland if drained, in the town	963.3 acres
Prime Farmland Soils on farms	2,048.7 acres
Soils of statewide importance on farms	3,184.8 acres
Prime Farmland if drained, on farms	588 acres
% of farm property area having prime, prime if drained, or soils of statewide importance	51%

Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for agriculture. Prime soils generally have the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce economically sustained high yields of crops. These soils are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time and do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding. Soils of statewide importance do not meet prime farmland criteria but are nearly prime farmland and can produce high yields of crops in an economic manner when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Criteria and classification is determined at the state level in concert with NRCS.

Soils of Statewide Significance in Copake are concentrated in the Route 22 valley area and in the northwest corner of Town. They include Stockbridge, Manlius and Pittstown in some of the hillier farmland locations. They are of lower quality than prime farmland soils but are still significant from a statewide perspective. They were formed in rolling upland areas through the tilling or churning action of the glaciers. Many of these soils have a limestone make-up which increases their fertility and sweetness.

#### Parcel Data

Tax assessment information collected by the Town and reported to the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services provides one of source of information concerning the level, type, and local function of agriculture in Copake. In 2012, there were 25 agricultural parcels (i.e. 100-class land use codes) in Copake, a decline of 44, or 64%, since 2008. Most of this decline took place between 2010 and 2011 and could reflect consolidation of smaller farm parcels into larger operations. Note that the tax assessment data does not always reflect the total amount of agricultural activity taking place. This is because some parcels identified as vacant or residential may have agriculture taking place on it.

Table 2. Acres and Number of Parcels by Farm Type in Copake.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Number of Parcels</b>
Productive Vacant Land (105)	790.3	17
Dairy (112)	1,222.1	9
Cattle (113)	254.1	2
Horse (117)	16.8	1
Field Crops (120)	617.0	4
Nursery and Greenhouse(170)	391.7	1
Residential also used in Ag (241)	3,695.2	31
Other Vacant Land (300's)	2,823.5	84
Other Non-Farm class properties, but identified as farmland through planning process (Primarily Residential)	1,664.2	26
<b>Total Farmland</b>	<b>11,474.9</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>Average Size of Farm Parcels</b>	<b>65.6 acres</b>	

About 2.5% of the total assessed value in Copake in 2012 were ag-assessed parcels. This percentage is a decline from the 2008 value of 5.3%.

Table 3. Agricultural Assessments and Value of Farmland in Copake.

<b>Property Class Code</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>No. of Parcels</b>	<b>No. of Parcels with Ag. Exemption</b>	<b>Average Assessed Value of land*</b>	<b>Total Assessed Value of Land</b>
105	Productive Vacant Land	17	5	155,240	776,200
112	Dairy	9	7	332,243	2,325,700
113	Cattle	2	1	320,500	320,500
117	Horse	1	0	-	-
120	Field Crops	4	3	484,567	1,453,700
170	Nursery and Greenhouse	1	1	876,600	876,600
241	Residential also used in Ag	31	31	278,713	8,640,100
300's	Other Vacant Land	84	78	112,500	8,775,000
200's other than the 241, and others	Other Non-Farm class properties, but identified as farmland through planning process (Primarily Residential)	27	14	212,243	2,971,400
<b>Total</b>		<b>176</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>186,709</b>	<b>26,139,200</b>

Table 4. Tax parcel assessment data for agricultural parcels (100-class use codes), Town of Copake, 2008-2012.

Year	Total Assessed Value (AV)	Percent of AV	Number of Parcels	Percent of All Parcels
2008	\$27,995,524	5.3%	69	2.3%
2009	\$27,371,924	5.2%	69	2.3%
2010	\$26,147,324	4.9%	68	2.2%
2011	\$14,655,224	2.7%	34	1.1%
2012	\$13,391,524	2.5%	25	0.8%

Source: New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services

### Agricultural Districts

Table 5. New York agricultural district information

Total Land in a NY Certified Agricultural District	14,054.8 acres
Farmland in a NY Certified Agricultural District	10,914 acres
Number of farmland parcels in a NY Certified Agricultural District	149
Total Acres in Town	27,048 acres
Acres receiving an Agricultural Assessment	9,199 acres

### Farm Operations and Farm Characteristics

This section uses the most current data from the Census of Agriculture to describe characteristics of farms and farm operators in the Copake area. Historical information dating to 1987 also helps describe long-term changes in these characteristics. Information from the Agriculture Survey and Inventory conducted in the Town in the fall of 2013 is also included. Finally, a summary of relevant Columbia County data is also included for comparison.

#### Farm Characteristics from Survey

The survey included about 3,800 acres of owned farmland in the Town and about 5,100 acres rented. Copake farmers also own and rent land in Ancram, Taghkanic, and Hillsdale. The average size of a farm was 188 acres. However, the average size of land rented is 577 acres. About 59% of farms are used for cropland, followed by 20% for woodland, 15% for pasture and about 2% idle. Rented land is used primarily for cropland.

Farm activities in the Town are dominated by dairy, beef and hay operations. But a wide variety of agricultural operations exist including horses, livestock, fruit, vegetables, cash crops, forestry, fowl, bee keeping, maple syrup, and seeds. While most are not considered or certified organic, some are. In the survey, about 13% of participating farms identified as organic.

Many farms have secondary activities on them. Most included farm stands, rental of farmland, home milk delivery, and working with people having disabilities. Farms rely on rental land in Copake: 39% of farmers in the survey indicated they rent land from someone else. That is greater than the 30% that own and work their own land.

### Census of Agriculture Background

Every five years, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) collects agricultural information using a mail-out-mail-back survey every five years. The survey asks farm operators questions covering a variety of topics, such as farm size, land use, ownership, value of agricultural products sold, receipt of government payments, and demographic characteristics, among others.

The Census of Agriculture provides a detailed picture of farms and is the only source of uniform national, state, county, and local (i.e. ZIP code) ag-related data, collected at regular intervals, for the entire United States. As such, it is particularly suited to uncovering and analyzing trends over time.<sup>1</sup> The most recent data available and provided below is from the 2007 census. Unfortunately, the 2012 Census of Agriculture data at the local level is not available yet. This plan outlines 2012 data for Columbia County, but the data below compares trends between 1987 and 2007 at the zip code level.<sup>2</sup>

### Columbia County 2012 Census of Agriculture

Between 2007 and 2012, Columbia County lost 11% of their farms (554 to 494 farms). That loss included 11,196 acres of land. That loss was much greater than New York as a whole. Statewide, 2% of farms were lost between 2007 and 2012 and there was no farmland loss.

Although farms and farmland were lost in the County during that period, the market value of products sold increased slightly. The average per farm market value was \$134,663 – about 13% higher. However, market value of products sold throughout New York rose about 25% during the same time frame.

Almost 54% of all the farms in Columbia County had less than \$10,000 per year in sales. 21% had value of sales greater than \$100,000. The average per farm production expenses was \$128,286 and the average net cash farm income per farm was \$17,540. The net cash per farm income in Columbia County was half as much as that statewide (\$34,240). Expenses of

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<sup>1</sup> There are certain limitations. Prior to 1997, the U.S. Census Bureau administered the Census of Agriculture; but beginning in 1997, NASS has conducted it. Since 1997, there have been some changes to survey content and statistical methodology that affect comparability.<sup>1</sup> Also, confidentiality standards mean that certain data are withheld in order to prevent identification of respondents—a situation that, in particular, resulted in the withholding of 2002 data for ZIP codes with small numbers of farms. Thus, in 2002, due to the small number of farms in the Copake area ZIP codes analyzed in this Plan, the information presented likely understates certain types of ag practices and farm numbers.

<sup>2</sup> The ZIP code is the smallest geography for which Census of Agriculture data are released. When referring to these data, “farms in Copake” means farm operations, as defined by the Census of Agriculture, in the ZIP codes 12516 (Copake), 12517 (Copake Falls), and 12521 (Craryville). Of the three ZIP codes, only Craryville extends beyond Town of Copake boundaries.

Columbia County farms were about the same as those statewide. About half of all New York State farms had less than \$10,000 in sales, comparable to Columbia County.

The average size of a farm in the County in 2012 was 193 acres. The average age of a Columbia County farmer in 2012 was 59.7 years. This compares to 57.1 years statewide.

In Columbia County, dairy sales were the number one commodity followed by fruit/tree nuts and beers, then grains, nursery/greenhouse/floriculture/sod, vegetables, and horses. Sheep/goats, hogs/pigs, other crops and hay and cut Christmas trees were other commodities raised in the County.

The top crop items were hay/silage, corn, soybeans and apples. Top livestock inventory items were chickens (layers, followed by cattle/calves, broilers, sheep/lambs, and horses/ponies).

### **Trends in Copake Agriculture from 1987 to 2007 Census of Agriculture**

#### **Number of Farms**

The 2012 Census at the local level is not available at the time of completion of this plan (Fall 2014).

For Census of Agriculture purposes, a “farm operation” is defined as “any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.”<sup>3</sup> Beginning in 2007, this definition was broadened slightly to include farms with government payments of \$1,000 or more, too. By this definition, there were over 2.2 million farms nationally in 2007, an increase of 4% over 2002 numbers.

In the Copake area, 33 farms were recorded in 2007, which represents about 6% of all farms in Columbia County recorded that year. Table 6 shows the distribution and change of farms among the three Copake area ZIP codes. The number of farms declined to 27 in 1997 but has increased since, showing a net decline of 2 farms, or 6% over this 20 year period. Recent gains between 2002 and 2007 are likely a bit lower than suggested by Table 6 due to data withholding in 2002.

Table 6. Number of farm operations by ZIP code, Copake area.

<b>ZIP code</b>	<b>1987</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002*</b>	<b>2007</b>
12516	19	18	15	15	17
12517	0	0	0	0	1
12521	16	12	12	12	15
<b>Copake Area Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>

\*Due to withholding, the precise number of farms in 2002 was not reported but is likely higher than indicated here. *Source: Census of Agriculture.*

Between 2002 and 2007, the number of farms in Columbia County fluctuated from a high of 567 in 1987 to a low of 484 in 1992. Growth in the number of farms at the County level between

<sup>3</sup> This definition is from the Farmland Information Center’s *Census of Agriculture: Technical Memo*, February 2009.

2002 and 2007 was 11%. For comparison, there were 36,352 farms in New York State in 2007, which is a decline of 2.4% since 2002. Nationally, the number of farms has generally declined since World War II, although the slight increase posted between 2002 and 2007 represents a stabilization of this broader trend. According to the most recent NASS estimate for Columbia County, the number of farms has declined slightly since 2007 to 550 farms in 2010.

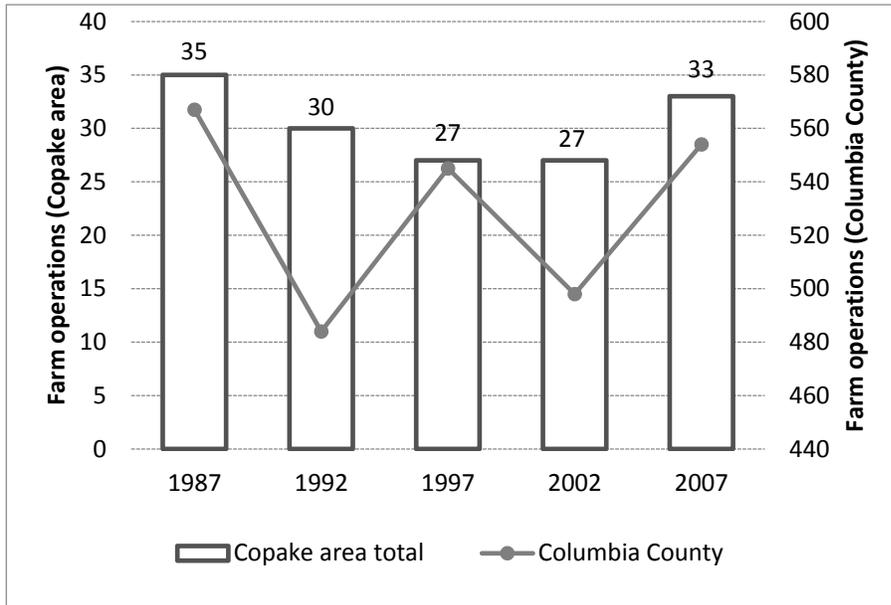


Figure 1. Number of farm operations, Town of Copake (ZIP codes 12516 & 12517) and Columbia County, 1987 to 2007.

Source: Census of Ag

### Size of Farm Operations

There are two ways to measure farm size using Census of Agriculture data. The first is according to the size of the area a farm operates. As Figure 2 shows, most farms in the Copake area are mid-sized, operating between 50 to 999 acres—a steady trend since at least 1987. However, beginning in 2002, numbers of small and large farms have increased. A few large farms operating 1,000 acres or more were added. In 2007, the average size of farms in New York State and Columbia County was 197 acres and 192 acres, respectively.

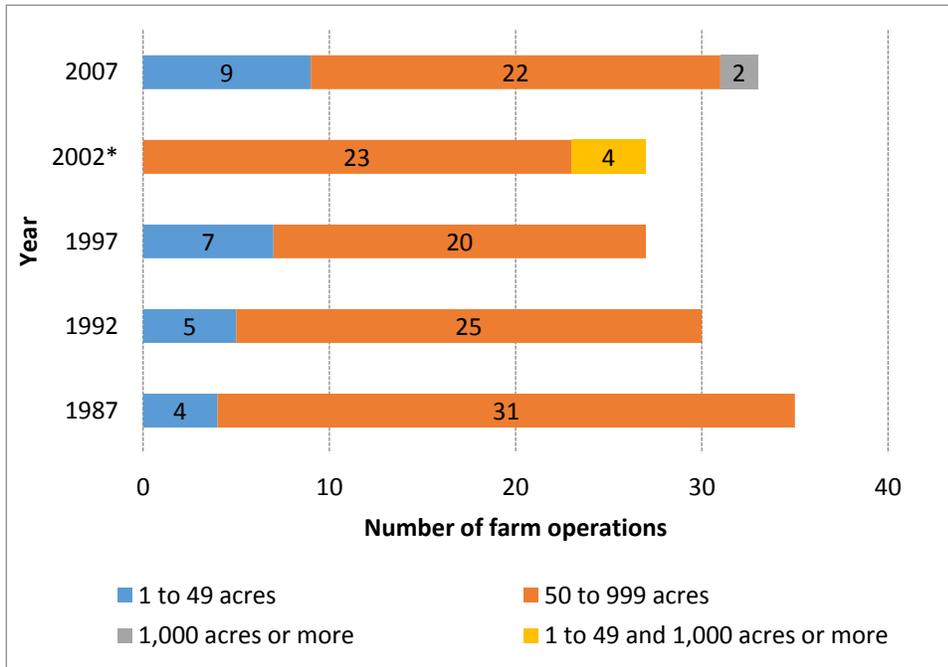


Figure 2. Number of farm operations by area operated, Copake area, 1987-2007.  
\*Certain data were withheld in 2002. Source: *Census of Agriculture*

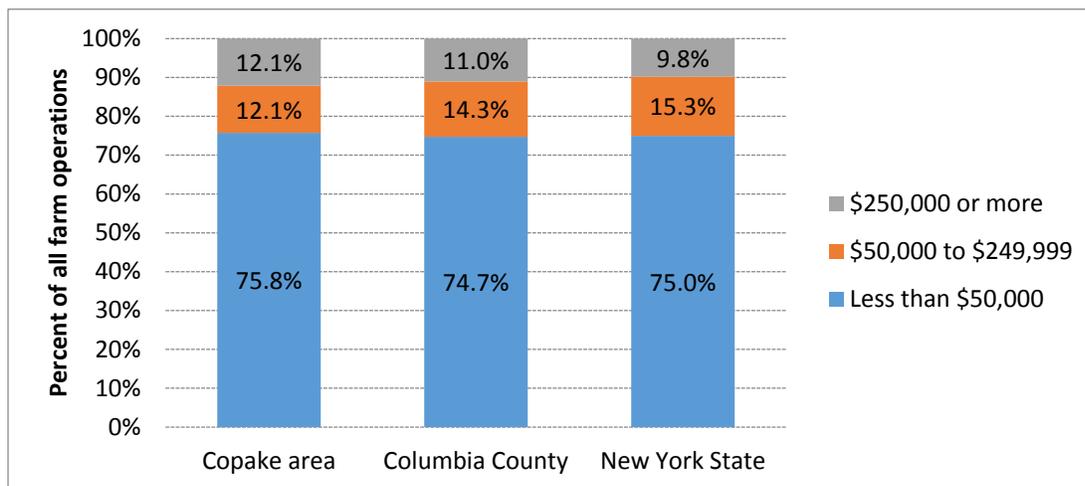


Figure 3. Comparison of proportion of farms by sales category, 2007.  
Source: *Census of Ag.*

Another way to measure the size of farms is by the value of agricultural products sold. In 2007 in the Copake area, most (75.8%) farms are small by this measure, receiving less than \$50,000 for products sold (Figure 3). There were four farms each in the upper two revenue categories, representing about a quarter of all farms in the Copake area. These proportions are similar to Columbia County and New York State, though the percentage of farms with sales of \$250,000 or more appears to be slightly higher in the Copake area.

When comparing revenues over time, a notable trend has been a decrease in farms with both moderate and high revenues, and a simultaneous increase in farms with smaller revenues. The

Census of Agriculture does not release inflation-adjusted revenue figures, but it is possible to compare the distribution of farms across the revenue categories used by the Census of Agriculture. Figure 4 shows the breakdown of farms in the bottom, middle, and top third of revenue categories.

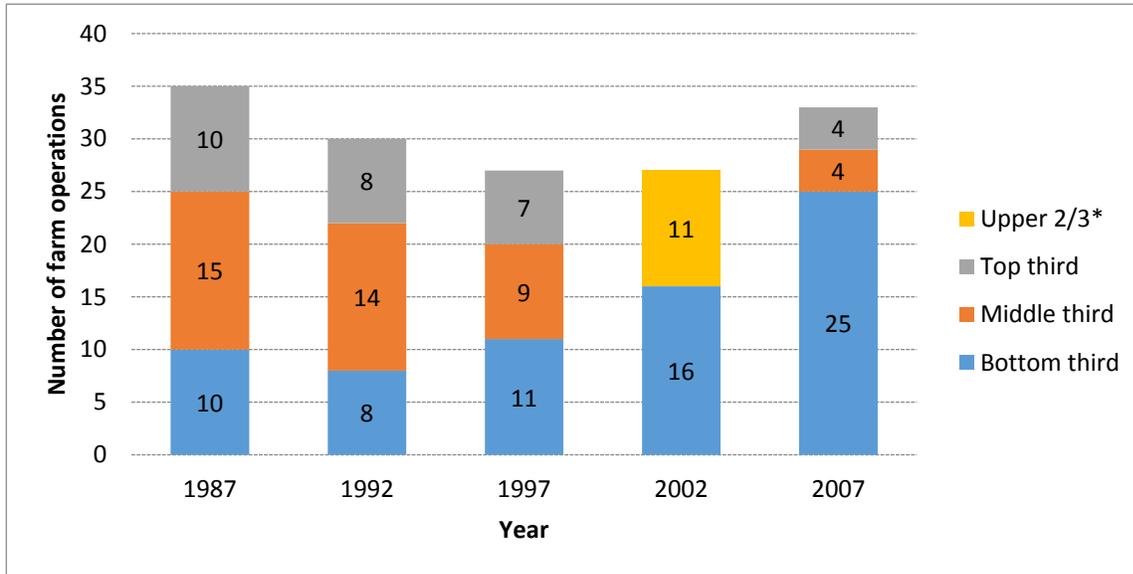


Figure 4. Change in farm numbers by Census of Agriculture value of sales category,<sup>4</sup> 1987-2007. Explanation of categories: For the years 1987 to 1997, the categories were: less than \$10,000; \$10,000 to \$99,999; and \$100,000 or more. Beginning in 2002, the categories were: less than \$50,000; \$50,000 to \$249,999; and \$250,000 or more. \*The number of categories in 2002 is reduced for 2002 due to data being withheld. Source: *Census of Agriculture*

The increasing number of farms in the bottom third of sales could reflect the entrance of new farmers in the Copake Area. At the national level, the 2007 data show that new farms tend to be smaller in terms of total sales.<sup>5</sup> It could also be a result of the methodological changes, described above, that tended to increase small farm counts.

### Farm Types

Census of Agriculture data provide two ways to describe the structure of agriculture in the Copake area. The first is by sales of agricultural products. Table 7 shows that, in 2007, 73% of all farms in the Copake area had sales of animals and their products. The majority of these operations had sales totaling less than \$50,000 at the end of 2007. However, seven farms were larger, with animal-related sales of more than \$50,000, and of these, the vast majority (six farms, or 86%) were dairy farms.

Still, Copake is home to a rather diverse set of animal-related farming operations. For example, eight or more farms had sales each of cattle and calves, hogs, dairy, sheep and goats, and poultry

<sup>4</sup> For the years 1987 to 1997, the categories were: less than \$10,000; \$10,000 to \$99,999; and \$100,000 or more. Beginning in 2002, the categories were: less than \$50,000; \$50,000 to \$249,999; and \$250,000 or more.

<sup>5</sup> National Agricultural Statistics Service, *2007 Census of Agriculture: Farm Numbers*, (n.d.), [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online\\_Highlights/Fact\\_Sheets/Farm\\_Numbers/farm\\_numbers.pdf](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online_Highlights/Fact_Sheets/Farm_Numbers/farm_numbers.pdf)

products. Some of these sectors were significant when placed against County level data. For instance, about a quarter of all farms with hog and pig sales in Columbia County in 2007 were located in the Copake area. Smaller numbers of farms had sales of horses and ponies as well as specialty animals (e.g., bees or fish).

Table 7 also shows that in 2007, 18 Copake area farms, or 55% of the total, had crop sales. Most farms reported crop sales of \$50,000 or less, though there were two larger operations. Diversity in crops sales was less: of farms with crop sales, it appears that most (83%) were engaged in the production of field crops, such as hay, though small numbers of operations sold grains, vegetables, and horticultural products. In addition, one farm reported sales of organic products (i.e. products grown using National Organic Program standards), and over a third of all farms (i.e. 12 operations, or 36%) used direct sales.

Table 7. Type of agricultural operations by sales of agricultural products, 2007.

	#	% of Total (n = 33)
<i>Animals</i>		
Total operations	24	73%
< \$50,000	17	52%
\$50,000 to \$249,999	3	9%
\$250,000 or more	4	12%
Cattle and Calves	10	30%
Horses and ponies	3	9%
Hogs	8	24%
Milk and dairy products	6	18%
Poultry, including eggs	11	33%
Sheep and goats	9	27%
Specialty animals	1	3%
<i>Crops</i>		
Total operations	18	55%
< \$50,000	16	48%
\$50,000 to \$249,999	2	6%
\$250,000 or more	0	0%
Field crops, including hay	15	45%
Grain	2	6%
Horticulture	3	9%
Vegetable totals	3	9%
Organic sales	1	3%
Retail sales for human consumption	12	36%

Source: Census of Ag

Farms in Copake can also be characterized by types of inventory and area harvested. Shown in Table 8, this information indicates that in 2007, a substantial number of farms harvested cropland

(much of it likely for hay), operated pastures and maintained woodlots. A large majority (76%) of farms operated some land exclusively as pasture. Thirty-nine percent had inventory of cattle, which was split evenly between beef and milk cows. Although not many farms sold horses or ponies, 15 farms did have inventory of these animals as well as chickens, hogs, and sheep and lambs.

Table 8. Types of agricultural operations by inventory or area harvested, 2007.

	#	% of Total (n = 33)
<i>Agricultural land</i>		
<i>Cropland</i>		
Harvested	21	64%
Pastured only	10	30%
Idle	3	9%
Pastureland	25	76%
Woodland	21	64%
Cattle, including calves	13	39%
Milk cows	6	18%
Beef cows	7	21%
Chickens	11	33%
Horses and ponies	15	45%
Hogs	6	18%
Sheep and lambs	11	33%
<i>Corn</i>		
For grain	5	15%
For silage	7	21%
Hay and haylage	20	61%
Maple syrup taps	3	9%
Oats	1	3%
Soybeans	4	12%
Vegetables	3	9%

Source: Census of Ag

Of the eight farms reporting sales of \$50,000 or more (Figure 3), seven had sales of animals—predominantly sales of milk and dairy products. In terms of agricultural inventory, farming in the Copake area appears composed of a broader array of agricultural practices, though many are still linked to the dairy sector. Hay production and pastureland appear to be important, and a quarter of farms produced corn for silage. In addition, many farms have horse operations, though these are not as important in terms of sales.

### Comparison of Farm Types in Copake: 1997 to 2007<sup>6</sup>

Sales data as well as inventory and area harvested information presented by Table 7 and Table 8, respectively, can be compared to earlier censuses of agriculture to identify changes and other trends. Because data for 2002 contain many categories for which information was withheld due to confidentiality concerns, the 1997 Census of Agriculture is used. In terms of sales, Figure 5 indicates a fair amount of stability, especially in the percentage of operations with crop and animal sales.

The types of crop sales, including field crops (still particularly important), horticulture, vegetables, and grain, appear to have remained stable in the Copake area. However, the types of animal sales have fluctuated. A smaller percentage had sales of cattle and calves, and there were relatively fewer dairy farms in 2007. Notably, the percentage of farms with sales of eggs and other poultry products has increased by 26 percentage points. Sales of hogs, pigs, sheep and goats experienced similar increases.

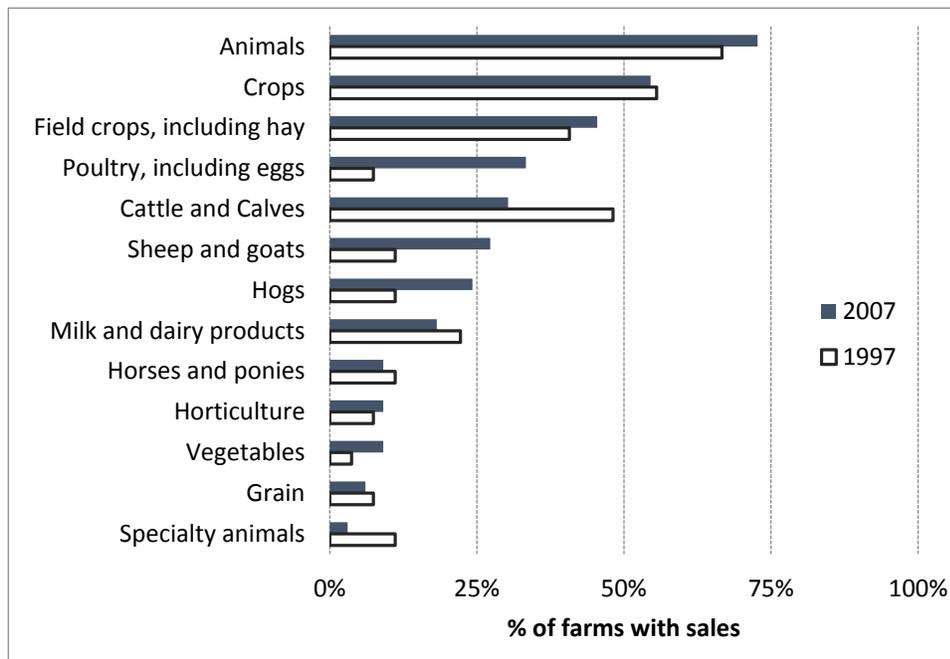


Figure 5. Change in types of agricultural operations by operations with sales, 1997 (n = 27) to 2007 (n = 33). Source: Census of Agriculture.

<sup>6</sup> Although there were changes in the way the data were adjusted for coverage, potentially affecting farm numbers within each category, the definitions of farm practices are more consistent. Thus, percentages of all operations are used.

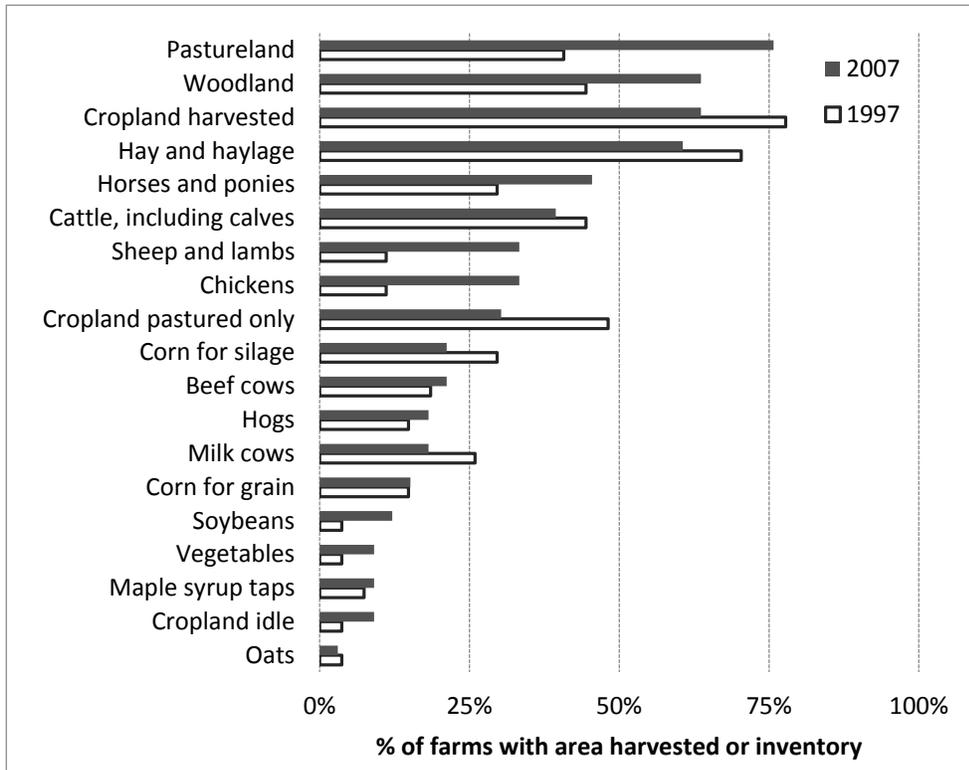


Figure 6. Change in types of agricultural operations by operations with inventory or area harvested, 1997 (n = 27) to 2007 (n = 33). Source: Census of Agriculture

Figure 6 presents the same 1997 to 2007 comparison, but uses percent of operations with inventory or area harvested. Major changes over the ten-year period are: more farms with pastureland and woodland; increases in the proportion of farms with chickens, sheep and lambs, and horses and ponies; and more farms with pasture. Over this period, the proportion of farms with milk cows declined from 26% to 18%; the relative number of farms with cropland harvested, hay and haylage production, and pastured cropland also declined.

When considered with the sales data comparison presented by Figure 5, the information offered by Figure 6 suggests that there may be changes in the ways that agricultural land is put to use in the Copake area, even as the types of agricultural practices directly generating sales on the majority of farms have remained relatively constant.

In addition to the number and value of agricultural parcels, assessment data provided by the Town also describe the types of agricultural practices taking place on all the 100-class parcels. Table 2 depicts the type of agriculture occurring on the 25 ag-identified parcels recorded in 2012. It shows that dairy farming (9 parcels in 2012) is the most prevalent farm type. There were four parcels used for production of field crops; two used for raising cattle, calves and hogs; and one nursery operation. Productive vacant land is another classification of land and is typically an agricultural parcel associated with a farm but with a use that cannot be placed into one of the other sub-types; there were 8 such parcels in Copake in 2012.

Since 2008, the earliest year for which Copake assessment data are available, both the number of dairy farm parcels and livestock operations have each declined by half. Copake lost other types of parcels, including field crops, horse farms, and sheep and goats, and in general, there were fewer different types of agricultural activities in 2012 compared to 2008.

### Operator Characteristics

The Census of Agriculture defines an operator as “a person who operates a farm, either doing the work or making day-to-day decisions about such things as planting, harvesting, feeding, and marketing.”<sup>7</sup>

As demonstrated by Figure 7, tenure characteristics of farms in Copake have changed since 1992, when about a third of operators farmed only land that they owned. Since then, the number of full-owner operations has increased, and in 2007, 21 operators, or 64%, were full owners, which is 27% more than in 1992 but still less than the 69% who were full owners in Columbia County. Tenant farmers, historically in the minority in Copake, remained so in 2007.

The tenure data also demonstrate that many farms in Copake rely upon rented land. In 2007, 27% all farm operators in Copake were classified as “part owners,” which means that operators farmed a combination of owned and rented land. Historically, there have been more part-owners in Copake, but their numbers have declined since 1992. Still, the proportion of part-owners in Copake is comparatively higher than in Columbia County (25%) and New York State. Farming leased land is a trend common across New York State: In 2007, about a quarter of all farms operated rented land.

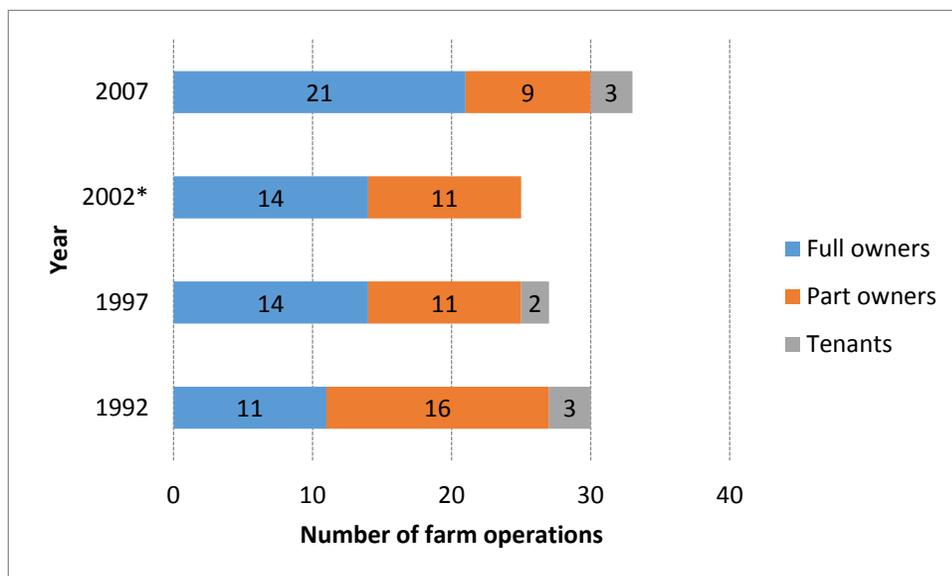


Figure 7. Change in tenure types among farm operations, 1992 to 2007.  
Source: Census of Ag

<sup>7</sup> This definition is from United States Department of Agriculture, *2007 Census of Agriculture, Vol. 1: Summary and State Data*, December 2009, Available at [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full\\_Report/usv1.pdf](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/usv1.pdf), A-9

A summary of additional operator characteristics is presented by Figure 8. Mirroring state and national trends, more farmers worked more days off the farm to supplement their income. Between 1992 and 2007, the proportion of operators reporting off-farm work of 200 days or more has increased from 27% to 64%. In 2007, 45% of farmers nationwide reported farming as their primary occupation. Finally, all principal operators in the Copake area have, since 2002, lived on their farms.

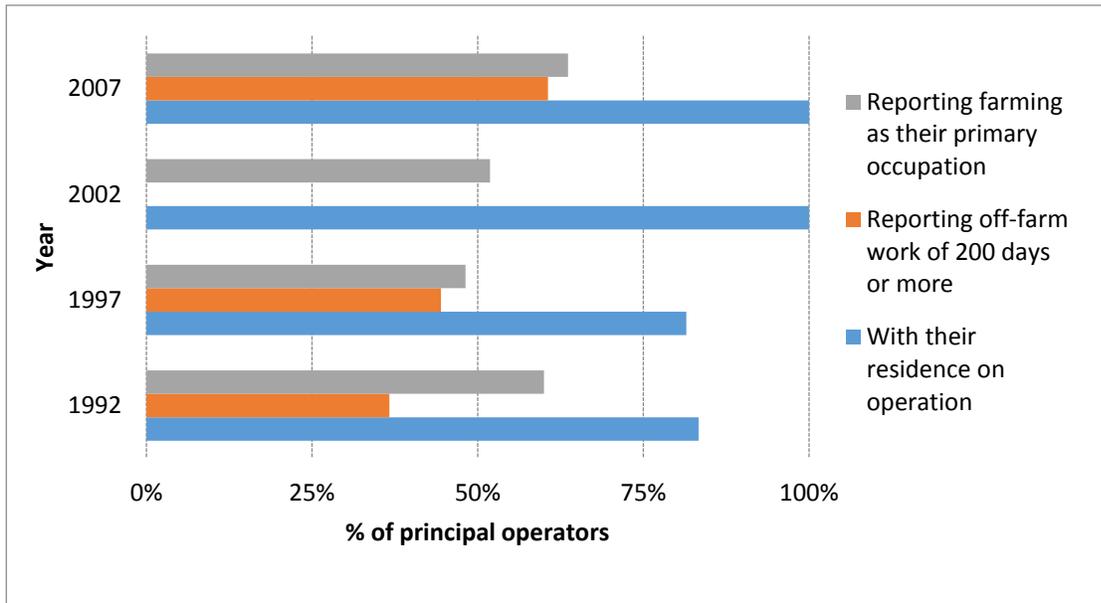


Figure 8. Summary of operator characteristics, 1992 to 2007.  
 Source: *Census of Ag*

### Columbia County Comparison<sup>8</sup>

In 2007, the market value of all agricultural products sold in Columbia County totaled \$65.8 million dollars, which puts the County’s rank at 29 of 61 New York Counties. Adjusted for inflation, this was an increase of \$5.6 million dollars, or a 9.3% increase, when compared to 2002. About 62% of total sales were from livestock, poultry, and other animal products. Most of this was from dairy farms, which accounted for 39% of total sales in 2007. Horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys accounted for 10% of total sales, placing Columbia County among the top such Counties in New York State as well as nationally, according to NASS. The fruits, tree nuts, and berries category—largely apples in Columbia County—accounted for 19% of total sales and close to half of all crop sales (see Table 9).

<sup>8</sup> For comparability with ZIP code data, unadjusted Columbia County data from the 1997 Census of Agriculture is used.

Table 9. Value of sales of selected agricultural products and State and U.S. Rank, Columbia County, 2007.

	<b>Value of sales (\$1,000)</b>	<b>Rank of all N.Y. Counties with item</b>	<b>U.S. rank</b>	<b>2002-2007 sales value Change</b>
Milk and other dairy products from cows	\$25,561	32 of 54	250	-0.7%
Fruits, tree nuts, and berries	\$12,674	9 of 58	126	46.0%
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys	\$6,784	2 of 57	19	348.3%
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	\$3,595	22 of 59	406	27.1%
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas	\$3,476	21 of 54	1,618	40.3%
Other crops and hay	\$2,736	28 of 55	628	18.2%
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	\$2,637	26 of 61	706	-36.8%
Poultry and eggs	\$1,044	13 of 57	989	-24.8%
Hogs and pigs	\$95	26 of 55	1,393	-
Cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops	\$46	42 of 54	613	-23.2%
Cattle and calves	not disclosed	32 of 54	not disclosed	-
Sheep, goats, and their products	not disclosed	1 of 55	not disclosed	-
Aquaculture	not disclosed	24 of 40	not disclosed	-

Source: 2007 and 2002 "County Profile – Columbia County, New York" NASS

As Figure 9 shows, a growing number of small farms could account for the increase in sales value. Note that the County also added six farms with sales of \$250,000 or more in that time frame. The total land in farms, 106,574 acres, decreased 11% over the same period, and the average size of farms decreased from 240 acres in 2002 to 192 acres in 2007.

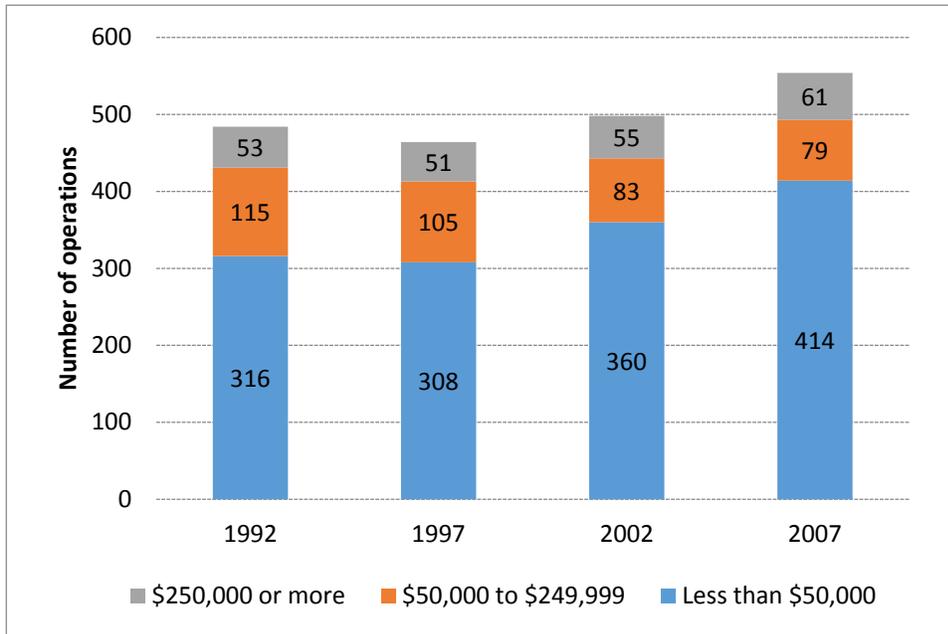


Figure 9. Size of farms by value of agricultural products, Columbia County, 1992-2007.

Source: *Census of Ag*

In 2007, the top crop items were forage (land used for hay and haylage, grass silage, and greenchop), corn for grain, and corn for silage. The importance of apple production to Columbia County is also shown. Important animal-related products were eggs, cattle and calves, and specialty animals, such as pheasants.

Table 10. Top crops and livestock items for Columbia County and State and U.S. rank, 2007.

	Acres or Inventory	Rank of all N.Y. Counties with item	U.S. rank
<i>Crops</i>			
Forage	31573	29 of 54	644
Corn for grain	7296	21 of 53	1290
Corn for silage	6387	29 of 52	237
Soybeans and beans	2399	17 of 46	1372
Apples	2208	6 of 57	30
<i>Livestock</i>			
Layers	31,235	12 of 57	568
Cattle and calves	17164	32 of 55	1551
Pullets for laying flock replacement	not disclosed	14 of 54	not disclosed
Pheasants	6270	5 of 50	116
Sheep and lambs	2355	5 of 55	426

Source: 2007 and 2002 "County Profile – Columbia County, New York" NASS

### Agricultural Support Infrastructure in Copake Area

Farming requires a web of businesses that provide services, goods, processing, and sales outlets. Without these businesses agriculture may not be sustainable over time. One way to characterize this sector in the Copake area is through the use of ZIP code Business Patterns data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau.

These data (presented in Table 11) show that a portion of this agricultural infrastructure is likely located in the Copake area. In 2011, there were at least four businesses located in the Copake area that are likely related to agriculture, and serving area farms. These include two markets, a veterinarian, and a specialized trucking firm. Of course, farms in Copake are also likely supported by businesses not located in these three ZIP codes, too.

Table 11. Service and retail establishments supporting agriculture, Copake area ZIP codes, 2011.

Industry Code	Description	No. of Establishments		
		12516	12517	12521
454390	Other Direct Selling Establishments	1		
484220	Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Local		1	
541940	Veterinary Services		1	
445230	Fruit and vegetable markets			1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau/ZIP code Business Patterns

### Population Characteristics and Change

The most current 5-year estimate from American Community Survey (ACS), released in 2011, shows the population in Copake to be 3,573. Between 1990 and 2010, population growth in Copake and several neighboring towns was faster than Columbia County, which saw relatively flat growth over this period.

Table 12. Town of Copake population, 1970-2011.

Year	Total Population	Change	
		Persons	%
1970	2,209	-	-
1980	2,854	645	29.2%
1990	3,118	264	9.3%
2000	3,278	160	5.1%
2010	3,615	337	10.3%
2011	3,573	-42	-1.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, National Historical Geographic Information System

Like many small, rural communities in New York State, the Town's population is getting older. According to the most recent ACS estimates, the Town's median age in 2011 was 48.9, which is an increase of 17% over the figure of 41.7 recorded in 2000. By comparison, the median age in 2011 for Columbia County was 44.9; it was 37.8 in New York State. Also, in 2010, Copake had

proportionally fewer people under the age of 18 (19%) but proportionally more people 65 years and older (18%) as compared to New York State. As Figure 10 shows, much of the population is between 45 and 65 years old; there are fewer people in their 30's; and proportionally fewer people are 24 years old and less. When compared with the age structure in 2000 (gray bars), the age groups between 40 and 64 years old have gotten larger while groups 25 to 39 have generally gotten smaller.<sup>9</sup>

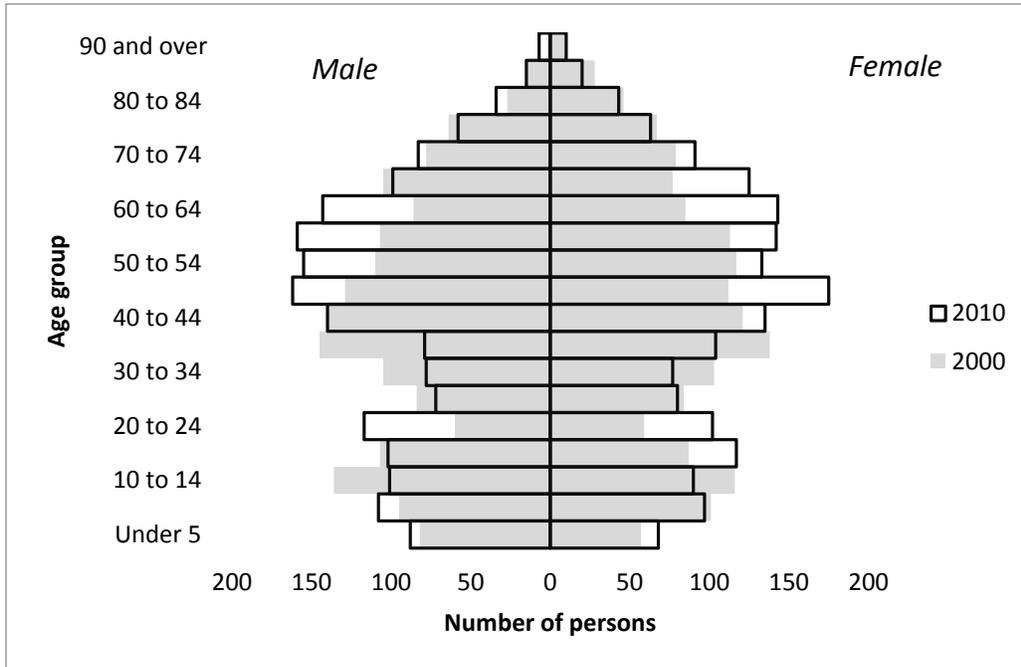


Figure 10. Age structure, Town of Copake, 2010.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>9</sup> One way to understand the underlying reasons for these changes is to examine who stayed in, migrated to, and exited (e.g. out-migration or mortality) Copake between 2000 and 2010. Though it cannot say which individuals stayed, entered, or exited, Census information can show the size of age groups through time. These become age cohorts and are defined here by the five year age group they were placed into by the census in the year 2000. For example, someone aged 11 in 2000 would, ten years later, be in the 20 to 24 age cohort on Figure 11. A retention ratio of 100 (i.e. the horizontal line on Figure 11) means that this group stayed the same size over this ten year period (though it was not necessarily made up of the same individuals). Ratios larger or smaller than 100 indicate entering or exiting the population, respectively.

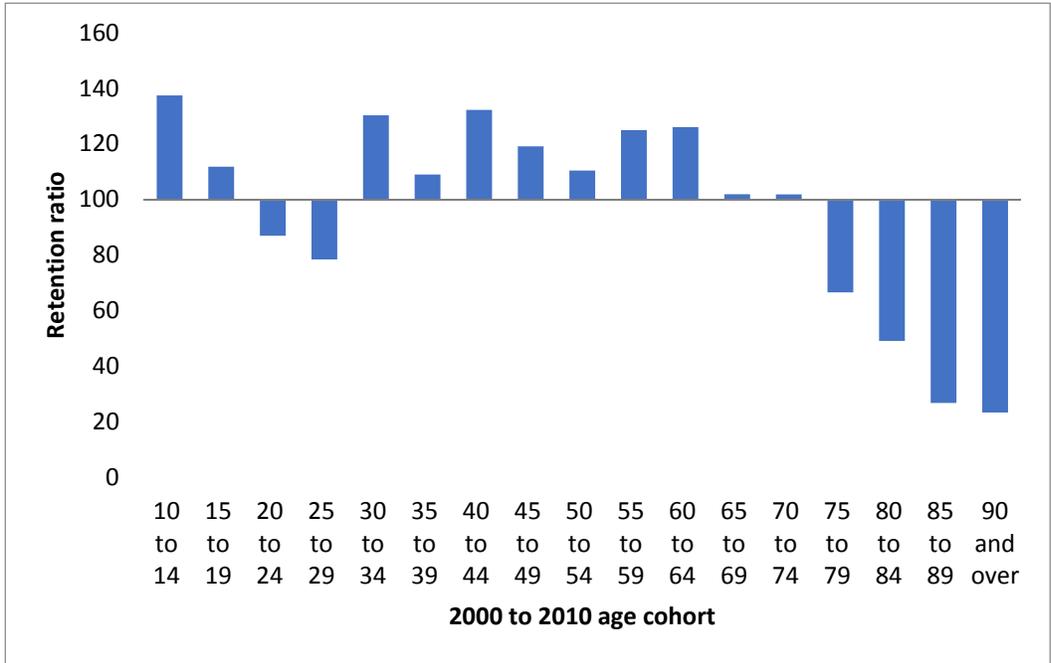


Figure 11. Age cohort retention ratio, Town of Copake, 2000 to 2010.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The population growth in Copake between 2000 and 2010 was also associated with growth in the number of households, which increased by 136 over this period. Average household size was essentially unchanged, but there were more non-family households added than families. When the information in Table 13 is placed against population growth, it indicates that household growth is keeping pace with population growth.

Table 13. Household characteristics and change, Town of Copake, 2000-2010.

	2000		2010		2000 to 2010 Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Households	1,280	100%	1,416	100%	136
Families	869	68%	928	66%	59
Non-family	411	32%	488	34%	77
Average household size	2.45	-	2.37	-	-0.08

**Housing Trends**

This section describes current housing trends affecting agriculture in Copake.

**Census Information**

There were 2,382 housing units in Copake in 2010, 59% of which were classified as occupied. About 45% of all units were owner-occupied units. The next-largest category was seasonal (or second) homes, which, at 823 units, made up 35% of all units in the Town. A relatively small percentage of housing was rental units—either occupied or vacant.

Table 1. Housing unit characteristics, Town of Copake, 2000 to 2010.

	2000		2010		2000 to 2010 Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Housing units	2185	100%	2,382	100%	197
Occupied	1280	59%	1,416	59%	136
Owner-occupied	960	44%	1065	45%	105
Renter-occupied	320	15%	351	15%	31
Vacant	905	41%	966	41%	61
For rent	36	2%	25	1%	-11
Rented or sold, not occupied	15	1%	12	1%	-3
For sale only	51	2%	41	2%	-10
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	735	34%	823	35%	88
All other vacant	68	3%	65	3%	-3

Stability in Copake’s mix of tenure and vacancy types characterizes the period between 2000 and 2010. Just over half of the 197 total units added in this period were owner-occupied, and there were several rental units added. Eighty-eight units added, or about 45% of all units added, were seasonal homes; there were net losses in the remaining vacant unit categories.

About two thirds of the housing in Copake was built between 1950 and 1989. Starting in 1990 the rate at which Copake built new units decreased, and the most current data, collected between 2006 and 2011, show that housing construction slowed after 2004. There are also a number of older units: 18% of the housing stock was built in before 1940,

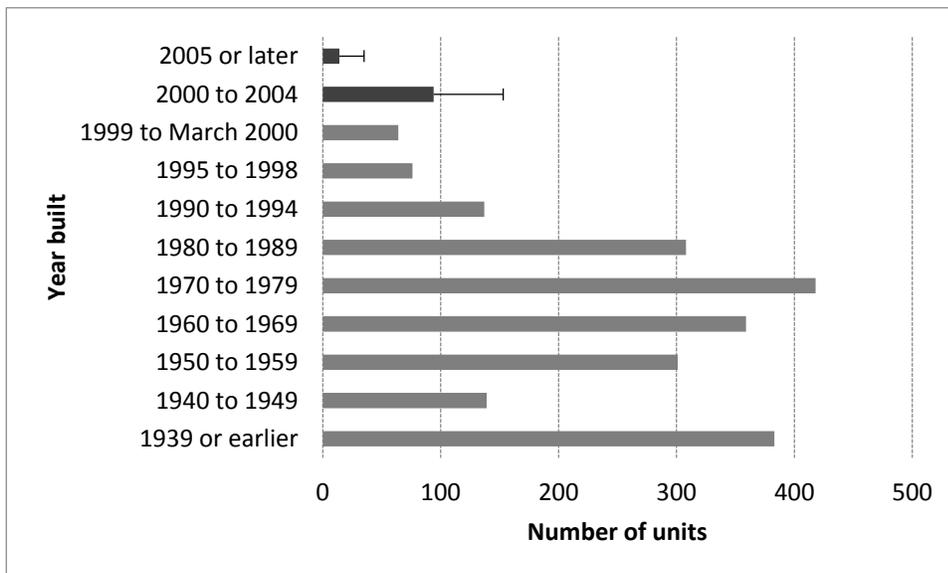


Figure 12. Age of construction of housing units, Town of Copake.

Note: Data from 2000 Census in light gray and data from 2006-2011 ACS in dark gray. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Median value of owner-occupied homes is a common measure of affluence, and changes in house prices can have important implications for the Town's agricultural sector. Adjusted for inflation, the value of housing in Copake appears to have increased substantially (44%) between 2000 and 2011. Values in Copake are comparable to the median home value across Columbia County: Between 2000 and 2011, the County median home value increased from \$146,040 to \$224,100, or 53%, a rate which was slightly higher than Copake's. Increasing property values can mean higher land prices, rents, and property taxes for farmers.

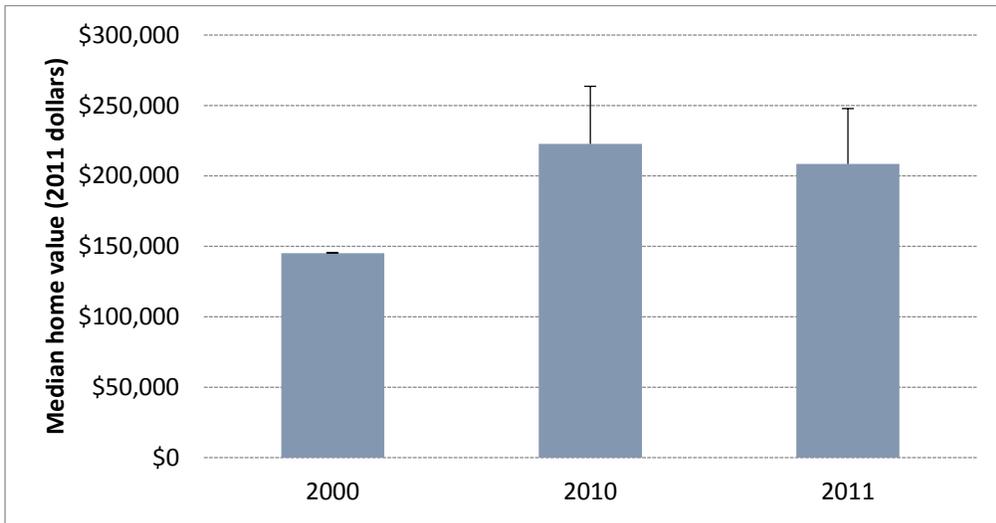


Figure 13. Median home value of owner-occupied housing units, Town of Copake.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Appendix 3: Farm Focus Group Results

A farm focus group was held on December 8, 2013 to discuss issues and needs with Copake Farmers. The following issues, opportunities, and other comments resulted from that meeting:

### **Issues Facing Agriculture in Copake**

- Lack of processing of farm animals
- Negative community response to slaughterhouse proposal
- Lack of agribusiness related services lost from the Town over the years – agribusinesses such as feed and equipment are gone and it is harder now for farms to obtain these products and services easily
- High taxes
- Assessors putting a lot of weight on farm buildings that influences the taxes
- Farmer relationships with non-farmers is not always good or conducive to farming. There was much discussion on how farms can co-exist with non-farms. The community wants to see farms but not hear or smell them. This is an education issue – or rather a lack of farm education on the part of non-farmers.
- When farmer needs cash their only option is to sell their land for non-farm uses. This drives the price of land up and high land prices prevent new farmers from entering farming.
- Lack of trained labor or labor willing to do farm work.
- Agricultural students in high school programs are not likely those who will go on to college for ag-management classes.
- Landowners who dictate to farmers what farming practices can take place on the land. These landowners get agricultural assessments but at the same time dictate to the farmer what or how they can farm. Some felt this was not fair. Related to this is that a large amount of land is rented to farmers in Copake. Thus farmers depend on rented land but this is uncertain land access and loss of rented land could significantly impact ability of farms to continue.
- Most of the farmland in town is controlled by a few famers. This has benefits but also makes it harder for smaller farms to operate.
- Cost of land is high.
- Lack of succession planning.
- Lack of access to land, especially important for small farmers.
- There is a disconnect between young and old farmers, between existing and new farmers, and disconnect between people who want to farm and those who have the land to farm – lack of communication is a barrier.
- Lack of diversification of area farms.
- Lack of ways that local produce grown here gets to be sold here. Generally a lack of access to new customers in the area.

- Need immigrant farm laborers and immigration policy is an issue.

### **Strengths Related to Agriculture in Copake**

- A high percentage of land is still used for agriculture in town even though the number of farmers has decreased.
- Lots of landowners rent their land to farmers.
- There is decreased development pressure.
- NYC markets

### **Opportunities and Programs that can Benefit Agriculture in Copake**

- Increase exemptions on farm buildings
- Work with non-farmers to build positive relationships
- Agricultural assessments should allow farmers to farm their land in any way.
- Find a way to get small landowners together so that larger acreages of land could be offered to farmers. This was seen as a ‘pool’ of land available for farming. Size of the parcel needs to be taken into consideration.
- There is great need to educate the public on acceptable farming practices.
- Establish funds to place conservation easements on property to preserve lands without penalizing landowner value. This should be a state-funded program.
- Educate labor force – there needs to be a career and technical skills program in agriculture at the high school level.
- There needs to be room for small farmers.
- Establish mid-day meetings again so farmers can get to know each other. The culture of farming has changed and there is little interaction among farmers now.
- Find ways to decrease tax burden on farmers.
- Diversify products and take advantage of NYC markets.
- We need to take advantage of another venue in the area to sell agricultural products.
- Develop stronger links with area restaurants so they use more local products. Build on the farm to table/buy local programs.
- Work with farmers to make local food affordable.
- Do an inventory of all possible land that could be farmed in town – especially for small farmers.
- Find a voice for farmers to help make Copake farm-friendly. Place farmers on Planning Board and ZBA so there is a voice.
- More farmers need to get involved in Town business.
- Find programs to help new farmers start businesses here in Copake – develop a new farmer program.
- Connect unused farmland with farmers – a farmland bank.

- Establish a local development corporation (LDC) oriented to agriculture to help make farmland more affordable. Find ways to help renters in such a program have a long-term option to own that land.
- Educate the public on acceptable farming practices.
- Farmers should work together to form buyers co-ops to reduce their prices/costs.
- Farms in the future will diversify. This is because they can't get bigger, so they will diversify.

#### **Comments on Priority Farmlands in Copake**

- Flat lands in town are very valuable and tend to have the highest soil quality too.
- Critical farmlands also have connectivity to other farmlands.
- We need to preserve good, smaller properties. Size is thus not as important feature. Don't weight size of parcel as much – more important to have that land identified and available and affordable for small farmers.

## Appendix 4: Model Agricultural Disclosure Notice and Agricultural Data Statement

### Agricultural Disclosure Notice:

"It is the policy of this state and this community to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food, and other products, and also for its natural and ecological value. This disclosure notice is to inform prospective residents that the property they are about to acquire lies partially or wholly within an agricultural district and that farming activities occur within the district. Such farming activities may include, but not be limited to, activities that cause noise, dust and odors. Prospective residents are also informed that the location of property within an agricultural district may impact the ability to access water and/or sewer services for such property under certain circumstances. Prospective purchasers are urged to contact the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to obtain additional information or clarification regarding their rights and obligations under article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law."

### Agricultural Data Statement

Instructions: This form must be completed for any application for a special use permit, site plan approval, use variance or a subdivision approval requiring municipal review that would occur on property within 500 feet of a farm operation located in a NYS Agriculture and Markets certified Agricultural District. County Planning Board review is also required. A copy of this Agricultural Data Statement must be submitted along with the referral to the Columbia County Planning Department.

1. Name and Address of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

2. Type of application (Check one or more):

Special Use Permit    Site Plan Approval    Use Variance

Subdivision approval

3. Description of proposed project to include (1) size of parcel or acreage to be acquired and tax map identification number of tax parcel(s) involved; (2) the type of action (single-family dwelling or subdivision, multi-family development, apartment, commercial or industrial, school, non-residential use, etc., and (3) project density (Please provide this information on the reverse side of this application and attach additional description as necessary).

4. Is this parcel within an Agricultural District?                       Yes                       No

5. If Yes, what is the Agricultural District Number? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Is this parcel actively farmed?     Yes     No

7. List all farm operations within 500 feet of your parcel. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

A. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?       Yes       No

B. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?       Yes       No

C. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?       Yes       No

D. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?       Yes       No

8. Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5: Model Right to Farm Law

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ as follows:

### Section 1. Legislative Intent and Purpose

The Town Board recognizes farming is an essential enterprise and an important industry which enhances the economic base, natural environment and quality of life in the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ . The Town Board further declares that it shall be the policy of this Town to encourage agriculture and foster understanding by all residents of the necessary day to day operations involved in farming so as to encourage cooperation with those practices.

It is the general purpose and intent of this law to maintain and preserve the rural traditions and character of the Town, to permit the continuation of agricultural practices, to protect the existence and operation of farms, to encourage the initiation and expansion of farms and agribusinesses, and to promote new ways to resolve disputes concerning agricultural practices and farm operations. In order to maintain a viable farming economy in the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ , it is necessary to limit the circumstances under which farming may be deemed to be nuisance and to allow agricultural practices inherent to and necessary for the business of farming to proceed and be undertaken free of unreasonable and unwarranted interference or restriction.

### Section 2. Definitions

1. "Farmland" shall mean land used in agricultural production, as defined in subdivision four of section 301 of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law.
2. "Farmer" shall mean any person, organization, entity, association, partnership, limited liability company, or corporation engaged in the business of agriculture, whether for profit or otherwise, including the cultivation of land, the raising of crops, or the raising of livestock.
3. "Agricultural products" shall mean those products as defined in section 301(2) of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law, including but not limited to:
  - a. Field crops, including corn, wheat, rye, barley, hay, potatoes and dry beans.
  - b. Fruits, including apples, peaches, grapes, cherries and berries.
  - c. Vegetables, including tomatoes, snap beans, cabbage, carrots, beets and onions.
  - d. Horticultural specialties, including nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees and flowers.
  - e. Livestock and livestock products, including cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, llamas, ratites, such as ostriches, emus, rheas and kiwis, farmed deer, farmed buffalo, fur bearing animals, milk and milk products, eggs, furs, and poultry products.
  - f. Maple sap and sugar products.
  - g. Christmas trees derived from a managed Christmas tree operation whether dug for transplanting or cut from the stump.
  - h. Aquaculture products, including fish, fish products, water plants and shellfish.
  - i. Short rotation woody crops raised for bioenergy.

- j. Production and sale of woodland products, including but not limited to logs, lumber, posts and firewood.

4. "Agricultural practices" shall mean those practices necessary for the on-farm production, preparation and marketing of agricultural commodities. Examples of such practices include, but are not limited to, operation of farm equipment, proper use of agricultural chemicals and other crop production methods, and construction and use of farm structures.

5. "Farm operation" shall be defined in section 301 (11) in the State Agriculture and Markets Law.

### Section 3. Right-to-Farm Declaration

Farmers, as well as those employed, retained, or otherwise authorized to act on behalf of farmers, may lawfully engage in agricultural practices within this Town at all times and all such locations as are reasonably necessary to conduct the business of agriculture. For any agricultural practice, in determining the reasonableness of the time, place, and methodology of such practice, due weight and consideration shall be given to both traditional customs and procedures in the farming industry as well as to advances resulting from increased knowledge, research and improved technologies.

Agricultural practices conducted on farmland shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance if such agricultural practices are:

1. Reasonable and necessary to the particular farm or farm operation,
2. Conducted in a manner which is not negligent or reckless,
3. Conducted in conformity with generally accepted and sound agricultural practices,
4. Conducted in conformity with all local state, and federal laws and regulations,
5. Conducted in a manner which does not constitute a threat to public health and safety or cause injury to health or safety of any person, and
6. Conducted in a manner which does not reasonably obstruct the free passage or use of navigable waters or public roadways.

Nothing in this local law shall be construed to prohibit an aggrieved party from recovering from damages for bodily injury or wrongful death due to a failure to follow sound agricultural practice, as outlined in this section.

### Section 4. Notification of Real Estate Buyers

In order to promote harmony between farmers and their neighbors, the Town requires land holders and/or their agents and assigns to comply with Section 310 of Article 25-AA of the State

Agriculture and Markets Law and provide notice to prospective purchasers and occupants as follows: "It is the policy of this state and this community to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food, and other products and also for its natural and ecological value. This notice is to inform prospective residents that the property they are about to acquire lies partially or wholly within an agricultural district and that farming activities occur within the district. Such farming activities may include, but not be limited to, activities that cause noise, dust and odors." This notice shall be provided to prospective purchase of property within an agricultural district or on property with boundaries within 500 feet of a farm operation located in an agricultural district.

A copy of this notice shall be included by the seller or seller's agent as an addendum to the purchase and sale contract at the time an offer to purchase is made.

## Section 5. Resolution of Disputes

1. Should any controversy arise regarding any inconveniences or discomfort occasioned by agricultural operations which cannot be settled by direct negotiation between the parties involved, either party may submit the controversy to a dispute resolution committee as set forth below in an attempt to resolve the matter prior to the filing of any court action and prior to a request for a determination by the Commission or Agriculture and Markets about whether the practice in question is sound pursuant to Section 308 of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law.
2. Any controversy between the parties shall be submitted to the committee within thirty (30) days of the last date of occurrence of the particular activity giving rise to the controversy or the date the party became aware of the occurrence.
3. The committee shall be composed of three (3) members from the Town selected by the Town Board, as the need arises, including one representative from the farm community, one person from Town government and one person mutually agreed upon by both parties involved in the dispute.
4. The effectiveness of the committee as a forum for the resolution of disputes is dependent upon full discussion and complete presentation of all pertinent facts concerning the dispute in order to eliminate any misunderstandings. The parties are encouraged to cooperate in the exchange of pertinent information concerning the controversy.
5. The controversy shall be presented to the committee by written request of one of the parties within the time limits specified. Therefore after, the committee may investigate the facts of the controversy but must, within twenty-five (25) days, hold a meeting at a mutually agreed place and time to consider the merits of the matter and within five (5) days of the meeting render a written decision to the parties. At the time of the meeting, both parties shall have an opportunity to present what each consider to be pertinent facts. No party bringing a complaint to the committee for settlement or resolution may be represented by counsel unless the opposing party

is also represented by counsel. The time limits provided in this subsection for action by the committee may be extended upon the written stipulation of all parties in the dispute.

6. Any reasonable costs associated with the function of the committee process shall be borne by the participants.

#### Section 6. Severability Clause

If any part of this local law is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not effect the remainder of this Local Law. The Town hereby declares that it would have passed this local law and each section and subsection thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more of these sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases may be declared unconstitutional or invalid.

#### Section 7. Precedence

This Local Law and its provisions are in addition to all other applicable laws, rules and regulations.

#### Section 8. Effective Date

This Local Law shall be effective immediately upon filing with the New York State Secretary of State.

## Appendix 6: Farmer Survey Results

**The following reports on the full results of the farmer/farmland owner survey conducted as part of this planning process.**

1. What are your farm activities? (Check all that apply and indicate type or other relevant details.)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Dairy		37.5%	9
Beef		29.2%	7
Horses		4.2%	1
Other Livestock		8.3%	2
Dairy Products		12.5%	3
Fruits		4.2%	1
Vegetables		8.3%	2
Nursery/Horticulture		0.0%	0
Christmas Trees		0.0%	0
<b>Hay</b>		<b>54.2%</b>	<b>13</b>
Cash Crops		20.8%	5
Forestry		8.3%	2
Fowl		4.2%	1
Bee Keeping		4.2%	1
Maple Syrup		4.2%	1
Seeds		4.2%	1
Other		25.0%	6

Please describe more specifically your type of farm, and any other details: 7

answered question 24

skipped question

0

## 2. Is your farm organic?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		13.6%	3
No		81.8%	18
Becoming Organic		4.5%	1
<b>answered question</b>			<b>22</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>2</b>

## 3. What secondary farm and non-farm activities are you engaged in, to diversify your farm? (e.g., farm stands, alternative energy, agritourism, etc.)

	Response Count
<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px;">           Secondary farm activities include farm stands, rental of farmland, home milk delivery, Hudson Valley Fresh construction, and working with people having disabilities.         </div>	10
<b>answered question</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>14</b>

## 4. How many hours a week does each year-round employee typically work?

	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
A. Full-Time Worker	49.57	347	7
B. Part-Time Worker	12.50	50	4
<b>answered question</b>			<b>8</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>16</b>

### 5. How many hours a week does each seasonal employee typically work?

		Response Percent	Response Count
A. Full-Time Worker		100.0%	2
B. Part-Time Worker		50.0%	1
		answered question	2
		skipped question	22

### 6. How many households (including your own) does your farm support?

		Response Count	
		13	
		answered question	13
		skipped question	11

### 7. Check all that apply to your situation:

		Response Percent	Response Count
I am a farmer but rent land from someone else		39.1%	9
I am a farmer and farm land I own		30.4%	7
I am not a farmer myself but rent land to a farmer		56.5%	13
		answered question	23
		skipped question	1

**8. Please list the number of acres that you own and farm in each town.**

		Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Copake		188.81	3,965	21
Ancram		75.00	225	3
Taghkanic		100.00	100	1
Hillsdale		191.00	191	1
<b>Other</b>		<b>365.00</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>answered question</b>				<b>22</b>
<b>skipped question</b>				<b>2</b>

**9. Please list the number of acres that you rent and farm in each town.**

		Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Copake		302.53	5,143	17
Ancram		288.40	1,442	5
Taghkanic		110.00	330	3
Hillsdale		289.33	868	3
<b>Other</b>		<b>1,500.00</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>answered question</b>				<b>18</b>
<b>skipped question</b>				<b>6</b>

**10. For land that you own in Copake, how many acres are used for each of the following?**

	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Farmstead complex	23.00	184	8
<b>Cropland</b>	<b>144.86</b>	<b>2,028</b>	14
Pasture	101.60	508	5
Open, idle land	15.40	77	5
Wooded	76.56	689	9
	<b>answered question</b>		<b>17</b>
	<b>skipped question</b>		<b>7</b>

**11. For land that you rent in Copake, how many acres are used for each of the following?**

	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Farmstead complex	10.00	10	1
<b>Cropland</b>	<b>217.30</b>	<b>2,173</b>	10
Pasture	26.00	52	2
Open, idle land	184.00	184	1
Wooded	141.00	141	1
	<b>answered question</b>		<b>11</b>
	<b>skipped question</b>		<b>13</b>

## 12. How many years have you operated your farm?

The average number of years the respondent has farmed is 28 years, ranging from 8 years to 66 years.

**Response  
Count**

23

**answered question**

**23**

**skipped question**

**1**

## 13. How long has your land been in farm production?

The average number of years the land has been a farm is 81 years, ranging from 10 to 300 years.

**Response  
Count**

19

**answered question**

**19**

**skipped question**

**5**

## 14. How long has your land been in your family?

14. The average number of years the farm has been in the family is 52 years.

**Response  
Count**

20

**answered question**

**20**

**skipped question**

**4**

## 15. What is your age?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25		0.0%	0
25 - 44		17.4%	4
45 - 64		43.5%	10
65 - 74		26.1%	6
75 or older		13.0%	3
<b>answered question</b>			<b>23</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>1</b>

**16. Please rate the following challenges on a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 being Very Challenging and 4 being Not Challenging at All to the future success of your farm.**

	<b>1 - Very Challenging</b>	<b>2 - Somewhat Challenging</b>	<b>3 - Not Very Challenging</b>	<b>4 - Not Challenging At All</b>	<b>5 - Not Applicable</b>	<b>Rating Count</b>
Availability of farm labor	35.0% (7)	10.0% (2)	10.0% (2)	5.0% (1)	<b>40.0% (8)</b>	21
Property taxes	<b>59.1% (13)</b>	18.2% (4)	4.5% (1)	4.5% (1)	13.6% (3)	21
Land prices	<b>45.0% (9)</b>	5.0% (1)	10.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	40.0% (8)	21
Loss of productive farmland	<b>33.3% (6)</b>	16.7% (3)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	<b>33.3% (6)</b>	18
Rental costs of land	15.0% (3)	30.0% (6)	5.0% (1)	15.0% (3)	<b>35.0% (7)</b>	21
Availability of land to own or rent for farming	35.0% (7)	5.0% (1)	10.0% (2)	10.0% (2)	<b>40.0% (8)</b>	21
Fuel cost	<b>30.0% (6)</b>	20.0% (4)	15.0% (3)	5.0% (1)	<b>30.0% (6)</b>	21
Residential encroachment/nuisance complaints	27.8% (5)	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	<b>38.9% (7)</b>	18
Limited succession plans for the farm (few new farmers)	<b>45.0% (9)</b>	10.0% (2)	10.0% (2)	5.0% (1)	30.0% (6)	21
Estate taxes	<b>36.8% (7)</b>	21.1% (4)	5.3% (1)	10.5% (2)	26.3% (5)	18
Environmental regulations	<b>28.6% (6)</b>	23.8% (5)	14.3% (3)	14.3% (3)	19.0% (4)	21
Land use regulations (zoning & permitting)	19.0% (4)	<b>23.8% (5)</b>	<b>23.8% (5)</b>	<b>23.8% (5)</b>	9.5% (2)	21
Water availability (quality & quantity)	0.0% (0)	15.8% (3)	<b>42.1% (8)</b>	21.1% (4)	21.1% (4)	18
Availability or affordability for housing	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	<b>38.9% (7)</b>	11.1% (2)	27.8% (5)	18
Access to adequate financing	25.0% (5)	5.0% (1)	20.0% (4)	20.0% (4)	<b>30.0% (6)</b>	21
Access to agri-services	5.0% (1)	25.0% (5)	10.0% (2)	25.0% (5)	<b>35.0% (7)</b>	21
Access to marketing or business support	25.0% (5)	5.0% (1)	10.0% (2)	15.0% (3)	<b>45.0% (9)</b>	21
Lack of local customers	10.5% (2)	15.8% (3)	0.0% (0)	15.8% (3)	<b>57.9% (11)</b>	18

Lack of processing facilities	16.7% (3)	16.7% (3)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	<b>50.0% (9)</b>	1
Lack of local dairy processing	15.8% (3)	5.3% (1)	10.5% (2)	10.5% (2)	<b>57.9% (11)</b>	1
Lack of commercial kitchen	15.8% (3)	5.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	10.5% (2)	<b>68.4% (13)</b>	1
Sales Prices of your farm products	35.0% (7)	5.0% (1)	5.0% (1)	10.0% (2)	<b>45.0% (9)</b>	2
Machinery costs	<b>47.4% (9)</b>	10.5% (2)	0.0% (0)	5.3% (1)	36.8% (7)	1
Production costs including high cost of feed	<b>47.4% (9)</b>	15.8% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	36.8% (7)	1
High cost of insurance	31.6% (6)	21.1% (4)	5.3% (1)	5.3% (1)	<b>36.8% (7)</b>	1
Restrictive banking practices/lack of access to loans	29.4% (5)	0.0% (0)	5.9% (1)	23.5% (4)	<b>41.2% (7)</b>	1

Other (please specify)

<b>answered question</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>:</b>

### 17. Of the challenges listed in question 16, what are the top three greatest challenges facing your farm?

**Response** **Response**

The most challenging issues were property taxes (59%), land prices (45%), limited succession plans (45%), and production costs. Lack of local customers, lack of processing facilities, access to markets, lack of local dairy processing, lack of commercial kitchen are NOT seen by many respondents as applicable issues to them. The top answers to challenges were (in order) taxes, high operating costs, loss of farmland, labor availability. Other top issues, but not listed by more than one or two people were financial issues, residential encroachment, sale of farm, lack of processing, access to ag services, high insurance costs, too many new farmers, land use regulations, and environmental regulations.

<b>answered question</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>5</b>

### 18. What are the 3 greatest opportunities for your farm?

The greatest opportunities were variable and there as not a consensus on any one or two ideas. The opportunities included selling land, getting a higher amount of income from land, Hudson Valley Fresh, the Copake Ag Center, new markets, continue rental or renting of land, location, pasture work, ag exemptions, local popularity of agriculture, good cooperation with other farmers, diversifying into organic options, decrease of property taxes, higher quality of milk, facebook advertising, use of conservation easements, land value, and reduce the deer population.

	Response Percent	Response Count
answered question		13
skipped question		11

### 19. What trends do you see in agriculture in Copake and nearby? (Please check all that apply.)

		Response Percent	Response Count
A smaller number of large farms		45.5%	10
Farm diversification		36.4%	8
A larger number of small operations		27.3%	6
<b>Movement of farms out of the area</b>		<b>59.1%</b>	<b>13</b>
No significant change		9.1%	2
Other (please specify)		27.3%	6
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>22</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>2</b>

## 20. What farm or farm-related businesses would you like to see in the area?

Other type of farms desired included biodynamic farms (2), organic farms (3), mobile slaughtering, Copake Ag Center, grain facility, more crops, and horse farms (2).

**Response  
Count**

11

**answered question**

**11**

**skipped question**

**13**

## 21. How concerned are you about the loss of farmland in Copake?

**Response  
Percent      Response  
Count**

**Very concerned**



**81.0%**

**17**

Somewhat concerned



14.3%

3

Not very concerned



4.8%

1

Not concerned at all

0.0%

0

Why?

13

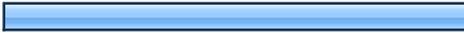
**answered question**

**21**

**skipped question**

**3**

## 22. How are your relationships with your non-farm neighbors?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		30.4%	7
<b>Good</b>		<b>69.6%</b>	<b>16</b>
Not very good		0.0%	0
Poor		0.0%	0
<b>answered question</b>			<b>23</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>1</b>

## 23. What can be done to improve/strengthen the relationship between farms and non-farm neighbors?

	Response Count
<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px;">                     Ways to strengthen relations with neighbors include education and communication (6), farm tours (2) and for farmers to be good to the environment.                 </div>	12
<b>answered question</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>12</b>

**24. Indicate which of the following you plan to do, and within which timeframe. (Check all that apply.)**

	Within 1 year	Within 5 years	Within 10+ years	Rating Count
Expand your farming operation	<b>57.1% (4)</b>	28.6% (2)	14.3% (1)	7
Decrease your farming operation	<b>33.3% (1)</b>	<b>33.3% (1)</b>	<b>33.3% (1)</b>	3
Diversify your farming operation	20.0% (1)	<b>40.0% (2)</b>	<b>40.0% (2)</b>	5
Stay the same size	<b>60.0% (6)</b>	10.0% (1)	30.0% (3)	10
Sell all or a portion of your land to another farmer for farm use	<b>66.7% (2)</b>	33.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	3
Sell a portion of your land for non-farm purposes	<b>66.7% (2)</b>	0.0% (0)	33.3% (1)	3
Sell all of your land for non-farm purposes	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	<b>100.0% (1)</b>	1
Relocate and continue to farm elsewhere	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0
Transfer the farm to a family member	25.0% (1)	25.0% (1)	<b>50.0% (2)</b>	4
Begin a new farming operation on your land	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	<b>100.0% (1)</b>	1
Stop renting your land for farm use	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0
Rent more land for farm uses	<b>80.0% (4)</b>	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	5
Increase agricultural sales	<b>50.0% (2)</b>	0.0% (0)	<b>50.0% (2)</b>	4
Decrease agricultural sales	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0
Eliminate agricultural sales	<b>100.0% (1)</b>	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1
			Other (please explain)	1
<b>answered question</b>				<b>20</b>
<b>skipped question</b>				<b>4</b>

**25. How do you market/distribute your goods or services? (Please check all that apply)**

		<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
<b>Retail, direct to consumer</b>		<b>60.0%</b>	<b>6</b>
Retail, through farm stand		20.0%	2
Retail, through farmer's market		20.0%	2
Milk Company or Coop		50.0%	5
CSA (Community Supported Agriculture)		10.0%	1
Through other retail outlets		40.0%	4
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>10</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>14</b>

**26. For each of the ways you market/distribute your goods or services, list memberships and indicate what percentage of your sales are through each channel of distribution (Total should equal 100%).**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Retail, direct to consumer		83.3%	5
Retail, through farm stand		16.7%	1
Retail, through farmer's market		33.3%	2
Milk Company or Coop		50.0%	3
CSA (Community Supported Agriculture)		16.7%	1
Through other retail outlets		33.3%	2
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>6</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>18</b>

**27. What initiatives or incentives should your town government undertake to help keep farming viable in your town?**

	Response Count
Incentives or initiatives that were generated were varied. There as no one idea that had a consensus. The ideas offered included getting a farm institution together to support and allow sharing information with farmers, relax building restrictions and setbacks for farm buildings, higher milk price, less onerous to get and keep ag exemptions, strengthen tax protections, have a more farm friendly attitude, eliminate restrictive zoning, support NEFA project, eliminate 60% requirement for putting land in an easement (note from Nan - I think this refers to the Ancram conservation subdivision for major project requirement), expand ag examples, decrease taxes, build support for local farm stands, put a horse show arena in the park, and find more tax credits for farmers.	15
<b>answered question</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>9</b>

**28. Please rate your level of support for the following agriculture and farmland protection strategies on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being Strongly Support and 4 being Strongly Oppose.**

	1 - Strongly Support	2 - Somewhat Support	3 - Somewhat Oppose	4 - Strongly Oppose	5 - No Opinion	Rating Count
A. Farm Friendly Zoning (Local regulations that support agricultural activities. Zoning laws that are farm friendly simplify regulations and standards for farms and agricultural businesses, and allow flexibility in agriculture related businesses on the farm)	<b>79.2% (19)</b>	12.5% (3)	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	4.2% (1)	24
B. Flexible Lot Subdivisions (A development design technique that concentrates buildings on a portion of the site to allow the remaining land (minimum 50%) to be used for farming, open space, or recreation)	<b>45.5% (10)</b>	31.8% (7)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (4)	4.5% (1)	22
C. Information Program for Townspeople on Agricultural Assessment Program (Explanation of the state property tax exemption program for farmers)	<b>52.2% (12)</b>	43.5% (10)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.3% (1)	23
D. Information Program for Townspeople on Farming Basics (Educational program on basics of farming)	<b>52.2% (12)</b>	43.5% (10)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.3% (1)	23
E. Promotional material on Copake farms and farm products (Information for consumers on local farms, farm products for sale, and farm tours)	<b>54.5% (12)</b>	27.3% (6)	4.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	13.6% (3)	22
F. Attracting New Farms and Farmers (Promote and encourage new farmers to locate in the town by offering information, incentives and programs to help them get started)	<b>56.5% (13)</b>	26.1% (6)	4.3% (1)	4.3% (1)	8.7% (2)	23
G. Sale or Lease of Development Rights (The voluntary sale or lease of the rights to develop a piece of						

property by the landowner to a government agency or land trust. The price is determined by appraisal. The land is restricted to farming or open space)	<b>50.0% (11)</b>	27.3% (6)	9.1% (2)	4.5% (1)	9.1% (2)	22
H. Transfer of Development Rights (Development rights from one parcel may be permanently sold to be used on another designated parcel in Town. Landowner selling the rights agrees to keep the land farmed or in open space, undeveloped)	31.8% (7)	<b>36.4% (8)</b>	13.6% (3)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (4)	22
I. Discussions with non-farmer landowners (Forum for farmers and landowners to discuss opportunities to make more land available for farming)	<b>52.2% (12)</b>	17.4% (4)	4.3% (1)	4.3% (1)	21.7% (5)	23
J. On-farm fowl processing	<b>42.9% (9)</b>	19.0% (4)	4.8% (1)	14.3% (3)	19.0% (4)	21
K. Copake Community Preservation Fund (A fund created by the Town using real estate transfer fees that could be used to preserve open spaces, recreational areas, agricultural areas, wetlands, watershed areas, beaches and shorelines, rivers, or forest lands, waterfronts, historic places and wildlife habitat)	<b>43.5% (10)</b>	34.8% (8)	4.3% (1)	17.4% (4)	0.0% (0)	23
L. Encourage Farm-related Businesses	<b>66.7% (14)</b>	19.0% (4)	4.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	9.5% (2)	21
					M. Other (please describe)	0
					<b>answered question</b>	<b>24</b>
					<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

**29. Please list the top 3 strategies, either from question 28 above or others, that you feel the Town should pursue to help keep farming viable.**

	Response Percent	Response Count
<p>The top strategies that the Town can take were (in order): have farm friendly zoning (11), educate the non-farm community (8), attract new farms (4) and three or fewer participants listed the following as their top strategies: encourage farm related businesses, lower taxes, sale or lease of development rights, transfer of development rights, start a community preservation fund, discuss with non-farm owners, on farm fowl processing. Of all these, the farm friendly zoning had 11</p>		
<b>answered question</b>		<b>17</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>7</b>

## Appendix 7: Samples for Formation of Agriculture Advisory Committee

### **Purposes**

The purpose of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is twofold: first, to advise the Town Board, Planning Board and other Town agencies on matters pertaining to the preservation, promotion, and ongoing operation of agricultural activity in the Town of \_\_\_\_\_; and second, to implement, or guide the implementation of, the recommended actions in the plan. Of particular importance are 1) help educate non-farmers; 2) promote and market local agricultural products and services; 3) offer regulatory guidance to the Town Board or Planning Board related to agriculture; 4) promote the economic viability of farming; 5) to assist in conflict resolution; and 7) assist farmers by serving as the agricultural navigator to goods, services, and agencies working on behalf of agriculture in the Town.

### **Committee; Personnel; Appointment; Organization.**

There is hereby established in the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ a permanent committee to be known and designated as the "Town of \_\_\_\_\_ Agricultural Advisory Committee" which shall consist of five (5) residents of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ who are engaged in farming, agribusiness, or a vocation related to agriculture; and two (2) residents of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ who shall serve as ex-officio members, one of whom shall be a Town Board member and one who shall be a Planning Board member. Ex-officio members shall only be eligible to serve on the committee while they hold the other cited Town office. The members of the said committee first appointed shall serve for terms as follows: two (2) appointees for three (3) year terms; two (2) appointees for four (4) year terms and one (1) appointee for a five (5) year term. Thereafter, all appointments shall be for terms of five (5) years and vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term only. The members shall serve until their respective successors are appointed. The members of the committee shall receive no compensation for their services.

The committee shall select from among its members a chairperson and such other officers as it may deem necessary and establish rules of order to conduct their business. The Agricultural Advisory Committee shall report to the Town Board at least annually setting forth and detailing the activities and operations of the committee during the preceding year.

### **Committee Assistance and Funding.**

The Agricultural Advisory Committee may request technical assistance and/or specialized advise from any resource it may deem appropriate, including but not limited to other local residents; other Town of \_\_\_\_\_ officials; \_\_\_\_\_ County Planning; \_\_\_\_\_ County Cooperative Extension; \_\_\_\_\_ County Soil and Water Conservation; \_\_\_\_\_ County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board; NY Farmland Trust and NYS Agriculture and Markets. However, no contracts for payment for services or other expenditure of Town funds may be entered into by the Committee.

As a citizen advisory committee, the Agricultural Advisory Committee may not authorize any expenditure of Town funds. Funds necessary for proper committee operation may be requested

by the committee from the Town Board and, in accordance with customary procedures, the Town Board may authorize such funds and approve the expenditure thereof.

**Responsibilities of Committee.** The responsibilities of the committee shall be as follows:

1. To recommend methods, review proposals, and develop proposals and strategies for the implementation of the goals of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, and report their findings to the Town Board. This includes, but is not limited to communication with local farmers, interact with other government agencies, facilitate local presentation of educational programs, to encourage and assist applications to farmland preservation programs, to encourage appropriate farmland protection activities, to study and comment on government proposals that may have an impact on local farms and to write and administer grant applications when approved by the Town Board.
2. To, from time to time, amend and update the Plan as needed and refer such updates and amendments to the Town Board.
3. To identify methods whereby the Town Board, County or State governments can encourage existing farmers to continue in active agricultural operation.
4. To, when requested by the Town Board or other agencies engaged in an environmental review of proposed private or public development projects and/or infrastructure projects, provide input regarding the impacts on agriculture of such projects.
5. To recommend to the Town Board, Town Planning Board and/or other agencies techniques that will help preserve large, contiguous and economically viable tracts of agricultural land.
6. To recommend to the Town Board reasonable and desirable changes to this listing of responsibilities or to accomplish any other tasks referred to it by the Town Board or other local agencies having to do with agricultural related activities.

## Appendix 8. Resource List and Contacts

### New York State

- **NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets** - <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov>
  - Division of Agricultural Development aims to strengthen the viability and consumer awareness of New York's food and agricultural industry; includes activities and services in market development, business development and support.
  - *Specialty Crop Block Grant Program*: Funding to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, defined as "fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)."
  - *Organic Farming Development/Assistance*: Guidance in locating resources on organic agriculture and organically produced foods.
  - Additional funding opportunities announced periodically.
- **Pride of New York Program** - <http://www.prideofny.com/PONY/consumer/viewHome.do>
  - NYSDAM website with information on over 3,000 "Pride Of New York" members and their products.
- **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)** – <http://www.nyserda.org>
  - Offers objective information and analysis, innovative programs, technical expertise, and funding to help New Yorkers increase energy efficiency, save money, use renewable energy, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
  - Programs and funding opportunities for the agricultural sector - <http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Energy-Efficiency-and-Renewable-Programs/Commercial-and-Industrial/Sectors/Agriculture.aspx>

### Federal Government

- **USDA Agricultural Marketing Service** – <http://www.ams.usda.gov>
  - Administers programs that facilitate the efficient, fair marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber, and specialty crops; provides the agricultural sector with tools and services that help create marketing opportunities.
- **USDA Farm Service Agency** - <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA>
  - *Farm Loan Programs*: Direct loans and loan guarantees to help family farmers start, purchase, or expand their farming operation; includes Farm Ownership Loans, Farm Operating Loans and Microloans, Emergency Farm Loans, Land Contract Guarantees, Loans for Beginning Farmers, etc.
  - *Biomass Crop Assistance Program*: Financial assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and non-industrial private forest land who wish to establish, produce, and deliver biomass feedstocks.
- **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service** - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>

- *Agricultural Management Assistance*: helps agricultural producers use conservation to manage risk and solve natural resource issues through natural resources conservation.
- *Conservation Stewardship Program*: helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns.
- *Environmental Quality Incentives Program*: provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation or improved or created wildlife habitat.
- *Agricultural Conservation Easement Program*: provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. *(Note: This is a new program under the 2014 Farm Bill that consolidates three former programs – the Wetlands Reserve Program, Grassland Reserve Program and Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program.)*
- **USDA New Farmers Website** - <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/newfarmers?navid=getting-started>
- **USDA Rural Development, New York Office** – <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/NYHome.html>
  - *Value-Added Producer Grants*: provides agricultural producers with matching funds for value-added ventures that will increase the return on their agricultural commodities; can be used for planning (e.g., feasibility studies, business plans) and/or working capital.
  - *Rural Energy for America (REAP)*: grants and guaranteed loans to help agricultural producers purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements.
  - *Farm Labor Housing Program*: Direct loans and grants for new construction or substantial rehabilitation of safe, affordable rental housing for farm workers.

## **Virtual Food Hubs**

- **New York Marketmaker** - <http://ny.foodmarketmaker.com> – an interactive platform that seeks to foster business relationships between producers and consumers of food industry products and services.
- **Pure Catskills Marketplace** – coming soon (see [http://www.nycwatershed.org/ag\\_pure-catskills-marketplace.html](http://www.nycwatershed.org/ag_pure-catskills-marketplace.html)); will provide Pure Catskills farm, food and forest business members an e-commerce portal through which members can market products to millions of online shoppers.

- **Local Dirt** - <http://localdirt.com> – a national website connecting local sellers (farms, farmers markets, cooperatives) with buyers (individuals, businesses, distributors).
- **FarmersWeb** - <http://www.farmersweb.com> - an online marketplace connecting buyers with local farms and producers.
- **List Your Harvest** - <http://www.listyourharvest.com> - an online marketplace where you can post or browse locally grown or made products currently available in your area; new (spring 2014).

### Other Resources for Farmers

- **Agricultural Marketing Resource Center** – <http://www.agmrc.org>
  - Addresses marketing and business planning for U.S. agricultural producers.
- **American Farmland Trust, New York Office** - <http://newyork.farmland.org>
- **CADE, The Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship** - <http://www.cadefarms.org>
- **Cornell Farm to School Program** – <http://farmtoschool.cce.cornell.edu>
- **Cornell Small Farms Program** - <http://smallfarms.cornell.edu>
- **Farm Credit East** – <http://www.farmcrediteast.com>
  - “The # 1 financial services cooperative for the agricultural industry” in the northeastern U.S.
- **Farmer Resource Network** - [http://www.farmaid.org/site/c.qII5IhNVJsE/b.4375765/k.71EA/Farmer\\_Resource\\_Network.htm](http://www.farmaid.org/site/c.qII5IhNVJsE/b.4375765/k.71EA/Farmer_Resource_Network.htm)
- **Farmers Market Federation of New York** - <http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com>
- **Farmer Veteran Coalition** - <http://www.farmvetco.org>
- **Heroic Food Farm** - <http://heroicfood.org>
  - Hands-on training program to prepare military veterans for careers in sustainable farming, agricultural trades, and food entrepreneurship in a veteran-supportive environment.
- **Glynwood Center – Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator** - <http://www.glynwood.org/incubator>
  - Provides the tools and resources aspiring agricultural entrepreneurs need to develop and manage viable farm enterprises; offers access to land, housing, shared equipment and infrastructure, farm and business mentoring, technical classes, peer learning opportunities, and working capital.
- **National Farm to School Network** - <http://www.farmtoschool.org>
- **National Good Agricultural Practices Program** - <http://www.gaps.cornell.edu>
- **National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service** - <http://attra.ncat.org/index.php>
  - Sustainable Farming Internships - <http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/internships>
- **National Young Farmers Coalition** - <http://www.youngfarmers.org>

- **New England Small Farm Institute** - <http://www.smallfarm.org>
  - Promotes small farm development by providing information and training for aspiring, beginning and transitioning farmers.
- **New York Ag Connection** - <http://www.newyorkagconnection.com>
- **New York Farm Bureau** – <http://www.nyfb.org>
- **New York Farmlink** - <http://www.newyorkfarmlink.org>
- **New York Farmnet** - <http://www.nyfarmnet.org>
- **New York Farm Viability Institute** – <http://www.fvi.org>
- **New York Sustainable Agriculture Working Group** - <http://www.ny-sawg.org>
- **Northeast Beginning Farmers Project** - <http://nebeginningfarmers.org>
- **Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship** – <http://necfe.foodscience.cals.cornell.edu>
- **Northeast Organic Farming Association** - <http://www.nofa.org/index.php>
  - Beginning Farmer, Apprentice, and Mentorship Programs - <http://www.nofany.org/bfam>
- **Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education** – <http://www.nesare.org>
  - Offers grants for funding relevant agricultural research projects.
- **Small Scale Food Processors Association of New York** – <http://www.nyssfpa.com>
- **WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms)** - <http://www.woof.net>
  - Website linking volunteers/interns with organic farms and growers.