

JOINT PRESS RELEASE – Livingston County, March 4, 2024



## News from Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy



Genesee Valley  
Conservancy

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy Announce the Next Round of Farmland Protection Applications

**Geneseo, NY, March 1, 2024** – Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy have announced that the Livingston County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board will be accepting pre-applications from landowners interested in being considered for the next New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets Farmland Protection program or other state and federal farmland protection initiatives that may become available in the future.

The Farmland Protection program buys conservation easements on the State's most productive farmland. The program is completely voluntary, and the seller retains title to the land and can continue farming the property. However, the land will have permanent restrictions on commercial, residential and industrial uses in perpetuity. To date in Livingston County, 20 Farmland Protection projects have been completed protecting over 15,000 acres through the State PDR program.

The State PDR competitive program reimburses farmers up to 87.5% of the value of the development rights on their land. The process of choosing the Livingston County farms to be submitted to the State will begin with a pre-application. All farmers wishing to apply to the State PDR program must complete the pre-application. These will be scored using criteria including amount of development pressure, quality of soils to be protected and farm viability. The highest scoring pre-application(s) will be invited to have full applications submitted to the program. These pre-applications may be used to select eligible farms for other future state and federal farmland protection programs. The Livingston County Planning Department, the Genesee Valley Conservancy, and the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District in Geneseo work cooperatively to manage the pre-application phase.

Prior to submitting the pre-application, farmers must meet all eligibility requirements as specified on the pre-application. Eligibility requirements include having at least 50% USDA Prime Soil or Soils of Statewide Importance; being in good standing with local tax authorities; attending a mandatory pre-application workshop, and other requirements.

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A workshop will be held to provide landowners with information about the program. All interested landowners MUST ATTEND this workshop. Workshops will be held on:

**Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 8:30 PM.**

**Livingston County Government Center, Room 205, 6 Court Street, Geneseo**

The pre-application will be available at the workshop and will be available on April 16th on the County's website at: <https://www.livingstoncounty.us/215/Purchase-of-Development-Rights-Program>.

To obtain paper copies of the pre-application, please contact the Genesee Valley Conservancy or the Livingston County Planning Department at the phone numbers listed below.

The pre-application deadline is May 24, 2024. The new grant round for the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets has not yet been announced, and there is no guarantee the State will release a funding opportunity this budget year. However, establishing a pipeline of interested farms is crucial to demonstrating funding needs and critical to leveraging other non-State funding.

For more information, please contact: Matt Halladay at the Genesee Valley Conservancy at 243-2190; the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District in Geneseo at 243-0043; or the Livingston County Planning Department at 243-7550.

For more information on the New York State Farmland Protection program, visit:  
<https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AP/agservices/farmprotect.html>

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