

MORE STATEWIDE RESOURCES

What other laws affect farming?

The New York Department of Agriculture and Markets is your primary pathway to information about state laws, labor policies, grants, business development assistance, marketing and environmental issues.

<http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/>

You can contact them at: **New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets: 1-800-554-4501.**

Are farms given special tax considerations?

The state **Office of Real Property Tax Services (ORPS)** handles taxation matters concerning farming. Farms need to submit several documents in order to be assessed for property tax consideration.

http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/orpts/rp305_fill_in.pdf.

Farmers and growers in New York State have a strong partner in the **New York Farm Bureau**, which works with farmers and legislators. <http://www.nyfb.org/>

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

If you're completely new to farming, the thing to do first is to find out what it means to farm in Putnam County. You can meet and talk with established farmers by attending a meeting of the county's **Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board** (contact George Michaud at 845-808-1090).

If you would like information on Agriculture Environmental Management or attending an agricultural workshop or seminar, contact **Putnam County Soil & Water Conservation District** at 845-878-7918.

There are also many online education resources, including the **Cornell Small Farms Program**. A calendar of events and classes is at:

<http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu/calendar/>

A sister organization is the **Cornell Beginning Farmers Project**, which offers extended online courses (from six to nine weeks) in basics like assessing your resources, accounting and record keeping. Other online courses teach specific crop subjects: dairy goats, small fruits, marketing and more.

<http://nebeginningfarmers.org/online-courses/>

If you want to farm organically, get in touch with **NOFA-NY**, the organization dedicated to organic farming. You can begin the process of certification and learn about marketing your organic products.

<http://www.nofany.org/>



So you want to farm in Putnam County . . .

Here's where to start:

- Local resources
- Statewide resources
- Education and



Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board

40 Gleneida Avenue • Carmel, NY 10541

845-808-1090

<http://www.putnamcountyny.com/agboard/index.htm>

So you want to farm in Putnam County . . .

Farming in Putnam County is thriving. Despite our small size, we have nearly 12,000 acres in agriculture (about four per cent of the total land in the county). At an average of 52 acres, most farms are small. About 60% are horse farms, but there are also hay and corn farms, maple syrup operations, apiaries (bees and honey), livestock and dairy farms, greenhouses and orchards. Three local organizations are your primary resources for information and assistance: the Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, the Putnam County Soil and Water Conservation District and Cornell Cooperative Extension.



LOCAL RESOURCES

The more you know, the more you'll be able to judge what kind of farming suits you and your resources. You'll need to have an accurate analysis of your property, and you'll need to be objective about your own readiness to farm. What kinds of information will help?

Does your soil support the growth of crops or animal grazing? The makeup of the soils on the land should be a primary consideration when determining land use. Soils information, types of agriculture, agricultural assessments, Agriculture Environmental Management, erosion control, water management, and GIS mapping can be obtained by contacting the **Putnam County Soil & Water Conservation District at 845-878-7918.** **Lauri Taylor is the District Manager.**

Is your property already classified agricultural? Find out if your property is already within the agricultural district in your town or if you should apply for inclusion. Contact the **Putnam County Real Property Tax Services at 845-808-1090.**

Does your town have zoning limitations that might affect your farm?

In general, the state's Right to Farm laws state that towns shall not unreasonably restrict or regulate farm operations within agricultural districts unless public health and safety is threatened. But there are zoning laws that do apply, such as those pertaining to storing junk vehicles, for example. It's important to contact your town's zoning department, real property department or supervisor to get information about zoning.

What kind of farm operation do you want?

You can grow vegetables, tree fruit, berries and other small fruits, greens or mushrooms. You can raise sheep, goats, pigs, beef cattle, horses, chickens, turkeys, geese and more. Discovering what you can grow, how to grow it most efficiently and how to market it is the kind of information you can get from the county extension office. Contact **Cornell Cooperative Extension at 845-278-6738.** **Dianne Olsen is the Senior Educator.**



STATEWIDE RESOURCES

What is a farm?

According to New York State law, in order to be officially defined as a farm:

- Land generally must consist of seven or more acres that were used in the preceding two years for the production for sale of crops, livestock, or livestock products.
- The annual gross sales of agricultural products generally must average \$10,000 or more for the preceding two years.
- If an agricultural enterprise is less than seven acres, it may qualify if average annual gross sales equals \$50,000 or more.