

Jefferson County Announces Thirty Day Period for Landowners to Submit Modifications to the Jefferson County North Agricultural District #2

NYS Agriculture and Markets Law requires the County Legislature to review a District every 8 years. The North Agricultural District #2 is located within the Towns of Alexandria, Orleans, Clayton, Cape Vincent, Lyme, Brownville, Pamela, LeRay, Philadelphia, Antwerp, and Theresa. The North 8 year review starts with a 30 day review period beginning on June 1st, 2023 and ending on June 30th, 2023.

During the 30 day review period, any municipality whose territory encompasses the North Agricultural District #2, or any landowner within or adjacent to the District, may propose a modification of the District by completing a survey and submitting it to the Jefferson County Planning Department within the 30 day period.

Benefits to farm operations within certified Agricultural Districts include the following: potential eligibility for an agricultural assessment; maintenance of viable farming in Agricultural Districts through state agency policies; limitations on the exercise of eminent domain; limitations on benefit assessments in certain improvement districts; and limitations on the enactment of regulations that unreasonably restrict or regulate a farm operation.

At the termination of the 30 day period, the District and any proposed modifications will be referred to the Jefferson County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB) for review and recommendation. A public hearing will be scheduled later this year to discuss the current District, any proposed modifications, and the recommendation of the AFPB.

Surveys have been mailed to current farmers within the North District. Farmers/Landowners who wish to submit a proposal to add or remove land may go to the Planning Department webpage to download the form or call the Jefferson County Department of Planning, 785-3144.

Completed surveys must be returned by June 30, 2023 to the Jefferson County Department of Planning by mail, email or fax: 175 Arsenal Street, Watertown, NY 13601, swilson@co.jefferson.ny.us or fax number 315-785-5092. If you have any questions please contact Sam Wilson, Jefferson County Department of Planning, 315-785-3144.