



Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
Division of Agricultural Resource Management
P.O. Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708-8911
(608) 224-4500

Agricultural Enterprise Area Petition

The undersigned persons hereby petition the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), pursuant to s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., to create an Agricultural Enterprise Area (**AEA**) under s. 91.84, Wis. Stats. We have read the guidance provided and submit the following information in support of the petition (*use the space provided or check the appropriate box*):¹

PART I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Name of AEA. Fairfield AEA
- B. County or counties in which the proposed AEA is located. Sauk
- C. All towns, villages or cities in which the proposed AEA is located. Fairfield Township
- D. Number of owners of eligible farms, within the proposed AEA, who are signing this petition. Seven
- E. Total number of acres in the proposed AEA. 9,509
- F. All counties signing the petition have a certified farmland preservation plan. Yes No
- G. All parcels in the proposed AEA are located within a farmland preservation area designated in the certified county farmland preservation plan. Yes No
- H. All parcels in the proposed AEA are contiguous. Yes No
- I. The proposed AEA is primarily in agricultural use. Yes No
- J. Primary agricultural land use in proposed AEA. Cropland, pasture and forest.
- K. Designated contact person for the AEA.

Name: Mike Stanek

¹Personal information you provide may be used for purposes other than that for which it was collected, s. 15.04(1)(m), Wis. Stats.

PART II. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE FOR AEA²

Introduction to proposed AEA (optional):

The Fairfield area of northeastern Sauk county has a well known history of blending profitable agriculture with sustainable conservation practices. The farmers and landowners within the Fairfield AEA hope to strengthen the ag economy of the area while building upon the strong conservation ethic that already exists.

1. State the goals of the proposed AEA for:
 - a. preservation of agricultural land use
 - b. agricultural development

The main goals of the Fairfield AEA are to:

1. Preserve large tracts of agricultural land to reduce the potential conflict of non-agricultural land uses.
 2. Preserve the large, contiguous expanse of highly productive muck soils which have a well established drainage system.
 3. Preserve the agricultural diversity of the area. Cash grain crops, vegetable crops, dairy, beef and hog farms and a mint farm.
 4. Maintain and develop a high level of conservation, water quality and wildlife habitat in the area.
 5. Build upon the FACT (Farming And Conservation Together) partnership group that was created in the year 2000 to integrate farming and wildlife management in the Fairfield Marsh area.
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2. What activities in the proposed AEA aid in achieving the goals stated above? Please identify any past activities, ongoing activities or future activities **and** the primary entity responsible for the activity.

Past Activities: The FACT group began in the year 2000 to help landowners implement conservation practices and maintain family farming in the area. In 2001, U.S. Senator Herb Kohl set aside \$2.1 million for conservation activities in the area and \$1 million of that money was spent on projects such as farm water quality improvements such as grassed waterways, barnyards, nutrient management, managed grazing, and grass filter strips along streams.

Ongoing Activities: Currently, three landowners are working with the LCD to implement nutrient management plans on cropland. All of the signing petitioners are working to achieve full compliance with the ATCP50/NR151 Runoff Rules.

Future Activities: This project is supported by the Sauk County Land Conservation Department and University of Wisconsin Sauk County Extension office, and the FACT landowner group. Together, we expect to use our staff and expertise to implement these activities:

1. Farmer conservation incentive payments, TRM grants for conservation activities to be coordinated by the LCD.
 2. Public outreach and education programs to be jointly coordinated by UW-Extension and the LCD.
 3. Utilize the specialty crops and fields for private crop insurance adjusters training and annual field day. In the past, this activity has been coordinated by Richard Gumz of Gumz Muck Farms.
 4. Reinvigorate the FACT group to implement more conservation activities. Eugen Larsen has been the lead for the FACT group and will continue to do so.
 5. Form partnerships with State/Federal agencies, and non-profit groups to preserve farmland and
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² DATCP will evaluate petitions under s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., and will consider information provided in response to the following questions.

implement conservation. This will be a joint activity by the FACT group, the Town of Fairfield and the LCD.

6. Continue looking into the impacts and opportunities associated with the production of biofuels to work towards achieving the Energy Independence 25 by 25 goal. The Fairfield area has great potential to produce cellulosic ethanol from switchgrass and more diverse plantings. The FACT group has made this one of their future priority activities.

3. How did you determine the boundary (location and size) of the proposed AEA?

The AEA boundary is drawn to include landowners willing to enter into new Farmland Preservation Agreements and to include three farms that currently have FPP contracts. The area defines a large, contiguous block of fertile cropland. 35 crop fields are 40 acres in size or larger, with the largest field having 196 acres. Nine landowners own the majority of the land (5,280 acres) in the proposed AEA.

The AEA contains a large portion of a drained marsh land that is maintained by a well established ditching, tiling and drainage system that began in 1911. The organic and fertile muck soils produce corn, soybeans, peppermint, potatoes, and many other vegetables. Well drained muck soils such as these are rare to Sauk County and protecting them for their agricultural and environmental value is vitally important to the ag economy.

4. Describe (a) all current land uses within the proposed AEA and (b) provide information about land use trends in and around the AEA. *(The proposed AEA must be primarily in agricultural use.)*

The AEA contains 6,416 acres of cropland, and the remaining acreage is woodland, pasture, marsh/other. Agriculture is the primary and continuing land use trend. Only 15 building and septic permits have been issued in the last 5 years.

5. Confirm that the proposed AEA is consistent with any existing local comprehensive plan. Submit a future land use map, if available. *Please do not submit a complete copy of any comprehensive plan.*

The county of Sauk has a comprehensive plan and the proposed AEA is consistent with this plan.

The Town(s) of Fairfield has(have) a comprehensive plan and the proposed AEA is consistent with this plan.

There are no comprehensive plans for the political subdivisions in which the proposed AEA is located.

6. (a) Select which of the following land use controls will support the agricultural uses in the proposed AEA. (b) Explain if the selected control is currently in place or will be implemented in the future and how the control will support the proposed AEA.

Farmland preservation zoning ordinance (provide a copy of the certified zoning map as supporting documentation)

Other zoning ordinances Town of Fairfield Agricultural Preservation Zoning

The Town of Fairfield is unique in that the town has not adopted county zoning and the County's Exclusive Agricultural Zoning District, which is a certified farmland preservation district. However, the town administers their own Agricultural Conservancy Zoning District (ACZD) which shares

nearly identical ordinance language with the County's certified agricultural district. The purpose of the ACZD, as stated in the Town of Fairfield Zoning Ordinance, is as follows:

"The purpose of the Agricultural Conservancy District is to protect, maintain, and enhance woodlands, bluffs, wildlife corridors, scenic areas, significant natural areas, and farmland..."

It becomes evident that through town zoning and as expressed in the aforementioned purpose statement that the town is committed to maintaining natural areas and agriculture as the dominate land use. Additionally, the majority of the Town falls within the ACZD as does the AEA designation. A map showing the location of Fairfield's ACZD and its relation to the AEA can be noted in Appendix A.

- Farmland preservation agreements . The area contains 3 existing FPP agreements on 932 acres. 4 additional and eligible landowners are willing to sign new agreements on approximately 2,383 acres.
- Easements or purchase of development rights
- Transfer of development rights
- Subdivision ordinances
- Cooperative boundary agreements
- Natural area protections
- Other (specify) Town of Fairfield Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Fairfield Comprehensive has set forth a future Land Use Map that categorically designates the town's future land uses. The proposed AEA lies essentially within the Agricultural Conservancy land use designation. The purpose of this designation is as follows:

"The purpose of the Agricultural Conservancy District is to preserve productive agricultural land and productive farms by preventing land use conflicts between incompatible uses. This district seeks to maintain a viable agricultural base to support agricultural processing and service industries, and reduce costs for providing services to scattered non-farm uses."

This statement demonstrates the town's commitment to a sustainable agricultural economy and recognition that agriculture cannot exist without support industries, all of which are critical to a successful AEA.

- Other (specify) Sauk County Comprehensive Plan

Sauk County government has had a long standing commitment to ensuring the continuance of sustainable farming operations within the county. This commitment is further demonstrated in the Agricultural component of the County's Comprehensive Plan which focuses on the continuance of sustainable agriculture.

The Sauk County Comprehensive Plan defines sustainable agriculture as, "An integration of a triple bottom line concept that broadens the focus of (agriculture) to include objective stewardship of natural resources and improving the quality of life in the farming community while maintaining farm profitability." The Plan goes on to say, " The concept of sustainable agriculture can be fostered by ensuring fair markets for agricultural products, building a local understanding and respect for agricultural land, and securing agricultural land for farming for the next generation of farmers."

Specific policy objectives that address the synergy both internally (within county departments) and externally (between the county and farmers) which can be implemented, in part, by an AEA

include:

“Protect the viability of farm operations by minimizing the fragmentation and parcelization of agricultural land to maintain the operational efficiency of the land.”

“Develop programs and policies within County Departments that create proactive, supportive partnerships with agricultural producers as a means of protecting the natural environment while promoting economic viability”.

And finally,

“Update the Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan and emphasize programs that will ensure the viability of agriculture. Emphasize regional cooperation as part of the Plan update and consider developing regional partnerships with neighboring counties to develop a regionally based and implemented Agricultural Preservation strategy.”

Other (specify) Sauk County Agricultural Preservation Plan

The Sauk County Agricultural Preservation Plan was originally adopted by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors in 1979 and was subsequently updated in 2005 as a precursor to the implementation of the County’s PUD-cluster lot (CUP) program. This Plan set forth the Farmland Preservation Maps for each town. According to the Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Fairfield, the AEA is located within the preservation area.

7. Describe any recent investments made to support agriculture and agricultural-related business in or near the proposed AEA.

A well established locally owned farm seed and fertilizer business is located within a few miles of the AEA, and is supported by the farms in this proposed AEA.

A mint farmer within the AEA distills and markets peppermint oil.

Corn produced within the AEA is sold to at least four area ethanol plants.

Future 3-phase electricity is planned for producers in the area which will provide the necessary power for ag producers to expand. Alliant Energy and the Adams-Columbia Electric CO-OP serve this area.

8. Explain how designation of an AEA may do the following:

- a. promote future agricultural and related investment and cooperation within the AEA;
- b. support or encourage agricultural economic activity within the broader community.

The designation of the AEA should help promote future investment in mint and vegetable crop production and may expand sales to area canning companies and local food retailers. One supporting farmer, Gumz Muck Farms currently produces 1/5th of the states yellow onion sales and hopes to sell more bulk vegetables to local stores such as WalMart, Pierces grocery and Menards.

The AEA should encourage and expand the diversity of farms in the area. More farmers in Sauk County are beginning to direct market meat, vegetables and eggs, while taking advantage of organic certifications to gain a higher value-added profit.

9. Indicate the approximate level of petitioner compliance with state soil and water standards.

Nearly all petitioners are in compliance

- More than half of the petitioners are in compliance
 - Half or less than half of the petitioners are in compliance
 - Few or no petitioners are in compliance
 - Compliance status of petitioners is unknown
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10. If the proposed area is designated as an AEA, what steps will be taken to encourage farmland preservation agreements between landowners and the department?

1. The Town of Fairfield and the LCD will publish articles in their newsletters informing and promoting Farmland Preservation agreements in the Fairfield AEA.
 2. LCD staff will attend a town meeting once a year to discuss current program participation and ongoing activities within the AEA. LCD staff will follow up with interested landowners and meet with them one-on-one to answer questions and encourage new agreement sign-ups.
 3. The town and LCD will place small road signs identifying the boundaries of the AEA and displaying program contact information.
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11. Describe the level of non-petitioner cooperator support for the petition.

Support from landowners in and around the AEA is good. Two area farmers who are not in the AEA boundary have expressed interest in signing the petition "in support" of it. Area farm businesses, and conservation groups such as the Aldo Leopold Foundation support this agriculture and conservation effort.

12. Are there any other compelling reasons to choose this AEA proposal from among competing AEA proposals?

The majority of the land within the AEA boundary is cropland. Undeveloped wildlife habitat areas such as woodland and tamarack marsh help the area maintain its scenic beauty. The harvested grain fields in the fall are a natural migration stop for many species of waterfowl. Seasonally, some of these fields are flooded to provide additional waterfowl habitat. Seasonally, the Fairfield marsh is a migration stop for over 4,000 sandhill cranes, several whooping cranes and wildlife management in the marsh is supported by the International Crane Foundation, and the Aldo Leopold Foundation and Nature Center. The Fairfield marsh is located within viewing distance of the Lower Narrows of the Baraboo River. This is an area of geologic significance and is planned to be a valuable viewing area of the Ice Age Scenic Trail system.

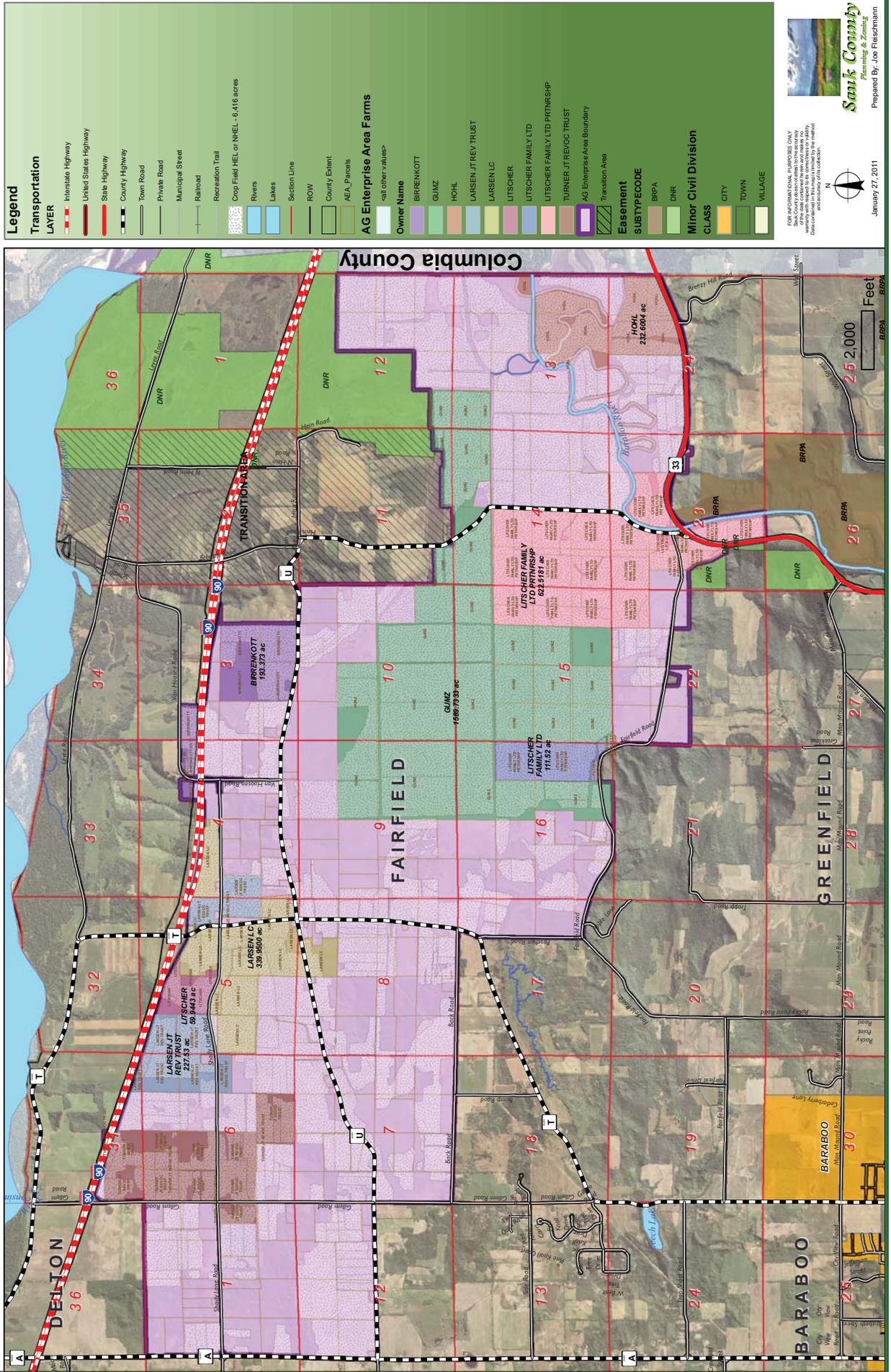
The Town of Fairfield passed a resolution in 1999 to adopt the Wisconsin Office of Energy Independence 25 by 25 goals. The establishment of an AEA will provide assurance to Fairfield residents that they are continuing to make progress towards achieving energy independence .

PART III. MAP AND SPATIAL LOCATION DATA

Please send all of the following information, in electronic form, to: DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov (enter "AEA Petition" in the subject line):

Fairfield Agriculture Enterprise Area - Total Acres 9,509

Sauk County Department of Planning and Zoning



Legend

Transportation LAYER

- Interstate Highway
- United States Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Town Road
- Private Road
- Municipal Street
- Railroad
- Recreation Trail

AG Enterprise Area Farms

- Crop Field (HEL or NHEL - 6,416 acres)
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Section Line
- ROW
- County Extent
- AEA, Parcels

Owner Name

- BIRKENKOTT
- GUJWZ
- HOHL
- LARSEN JT REV TRUST
- LARSEN LC
- LITSCHER
- LITSCHER FAMILY LTD
- LITSCHER FAMILY LTD PARTNERSHIP
- TURNER JT REV OC TRUST
- AG Enterprise Area Boundary
- Transition Area

Easement SUBTYPECODE

- BRPA
- DNR

Minor Civil Division CLASS

- CITY
- TOWN
- VILLAGE

FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY
 This map was prepared for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used for legal or other purposes. The information on this map is based on the best available information and is subject to change without notice.

Sauk County
 Planning & Zoning
 Prepared By: Joe Fleischmann

January 27, 2011

Town of Fairfield
Resolution No. 01-1311

Whereas, the Town of Fairfield seeks to preserve large tracts of agricultural land to reduce the potential conflict of non-agricultural land uses,

Whereas, the Town of Fairfield seeks to preserve the large, contiguous expanse of highly productive muck soils which have a well established drainage district.

Whereas, the Town of Fairfield seeks to preserve the agricultural diversity of the area. Cash grain crops, vegetable crops, dairy, beef and hog farms and a mint farm,

Whereas, the Town of Fairfield seeks to maintain and develop a high level of conservation, water quality, and wildlife habitat,

Whereas, the Town of Fairfield seeks to build upon the FACT partnership group that was created in the year 2000 to integrate farming and wildlife management in the Fairfield Marsh area,

Whereas, the Town of Fairfield seeks to continue and enhance the 2009 Energy Independent Community pilot program,

Therefore, be it hereby resolved that the Town of Fairfield supports this petition requesting the designation of the Fairfield AEA by the state under s. 91.84, Wis. Stats.

Tim Stone
Chairperson



Neil Caflisch
Supervisor



Scott Zirzow
Supervisor



RESOLUTION NO. 16-2011

**SUPPORTING A PETITION AND DESIGNATION OF THE
FAIRFIELD AGRICULTURE ENTERPRISE AREA IN THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD**

WHEREAS, an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) is an area of contiguous land, devoted primarily to agricultural use, as designated by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection through the Wisconsin's Working Lands Initiative in response to a local petition; and

WHEREAS, the designation of an AEA identifies an area as valuable for current and future agricultural uses and may help to promote the development of agricultural businesses; and

WHEREAS, an AEA designation enables eligible farmers to enter into voluntary Farmland Preservation Agreements with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection for at least a 15-year period and enables farmers to receive income tax credits in return for preserving their land in agricultural use; and

WHEREAS, the Fairfield Town Board approached the Sauk County Land Conservation and Planning and Zoning departments to assist the town and interested farmers with the development of a petition to establish an AEA in the Town of Fairfield; and

WHEREAS, the Land Conservation and Planning and Zoning departments have prepared a petition entitled the 'Fairfield Agricultural Enterprise Area' which encompasses an area of 9,509 acres and includes seven participating farmers with approximately 3,690 eligible acres; and

WHEREAS, the participating farmers would be eligible for a tax credit of five dollars per acre provided they meet compliance with runoff rules established by ATCP 50; and

WHEREAS, the Fairfield Town Board, in December, 2010 voted to approve a resolution supporting the Fairfield AEA; and

WHEREAS, each participating farmer has submitted a signature page in support of establishing an AEA; and

WHEREAS, in order to fully prepare an AEA petition that can be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, each political subdivision that has land within the boundary of the proposed AEA must submit a copy of a resolution clearly stating that the political subdivision is petitioning the State of Wisconsin on behalf of the AEA; and

WHEREAS, the lands identified to be part of the Fairfield AEA are located within Sauk County, a political subdivision of the State of Wisconsin, and therefore requires the support of the Sauk County Board of Supervisors.

State Of Wisconsin)
) s.s.
County of Sauk)
I hereby certify that this resolution/ordinance is a
true & correct copy as passed by the Sauk County
Board of Supervisors.
Beverly J. Mielke
(Seal) Beverly J. Mielke, Sauk County Clerk

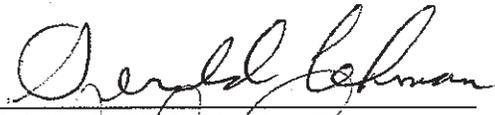


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors met in regular session, that the County of Sauk supports the petition and designation of the Fairfield Agriculture Enterprise Area by the State of Wisconsin under Wis. Stat. § 91.84.

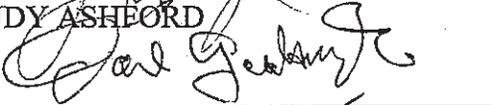
For consideration by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors on February 16, 2011.

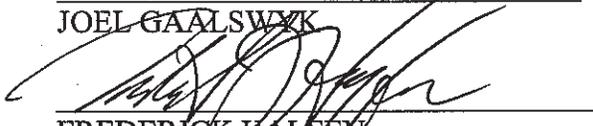
Respectfully submitted,

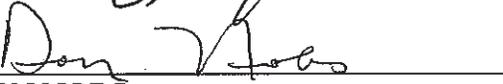
**PLANNING, ZONING &
LAND RECORDS COMMITTEE**


GERALD LEHMAN, CHAIR

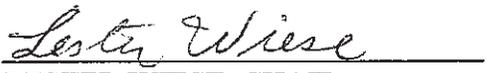

JUDY ASHEORD

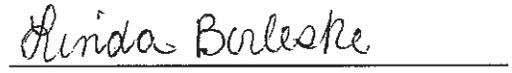

JOEL GAALSWYK

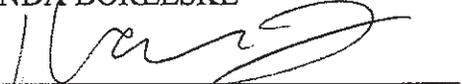

FREDERICK HALFEN

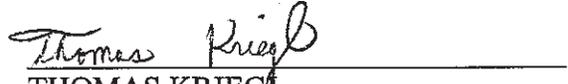

DON NOBS

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE


LESTER WIESE, CHAIR


LINDA BORLESKE


KATHERINE A. ZOWIN


THOMAS KRIEGL


PETER T. MURRAY


RANDY PUTTKAMER

Fiscal Note: Cost to ^{the} administer program requirements on lands enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program amount to about 1 staff per 250 participants. About 35% of the staff time spent on administration of the FPP program is offset by state staffing grants. *AMT*
MIS Note: No Direct Impact

Town of Fairfield
Sauk County, WI
Resolution 01-2209

Resolution to Adopt the Wisconsin Office of Energy Independence 25 by 25 Goals

WHEREAS, the state of Wisconsin has a long history of being a national leader in energy efficiency and renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Fairfield recognizes that the public sector must be a leader in implementing energy efficiency and renewable energy in public facilities and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, success in advancing the economy of renewable power, renewable fuels and bio-products will reduce Wisconsin citizens' and businesses' dependence on imported petroleum; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Consortium on Bio-based Industry identified the bio-industry as one of Wisconsin's greatest opportunities to become a national industry leader, and in doing so, create good jobs, new sources of revenue for farmers and woodland owners, overall economic growth and environmental benefits, all at the same time; and

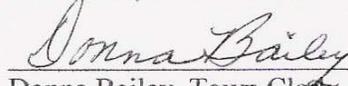
WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Office of Energy Independence is seeking partnerships with local units of government to further the State of Wisconsin's efforts to replace current electricity and transportation energy use with 25% renewable sources by 2025 (25 x 25),

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Town of Fairfield, resolves to advance Wisconsin's vision for energy independence by generating 25 percent of the Town's electricity and 25 percent of our transportation fuels from renewable energy by 2025.

Adopted this 2nd day of February, 2009



Tim Stone, Town Chairman



Donna Bailey, Town Clerk