

Economic Return on Farmland Protection Investment



The State of Our State



\$1 invested in agricultural conservation easements generates **\$1.90** in economic activity in Wisconsin.



Wisconsin's Farming Economy:

Agriculture is fundamental to Wisconsin's economy, generating **\$104.8 billion** in revenue and **437,700 jobs** in 2017.



Losing Our Best Land:

67% of farmland conversion will occur on some of the most productive and versatile land in the country.



The Future of Farmland Loss:

Wisconsin is rapidly losing farmland, with a projected loss of more than **515,200 acres** and **6,400 jobs** by 2040. This loss represents an area more than eight times the size of the City of Milwaukee.

The Impact

A \$30-million investment in agricultural conservation easements would:

Investments in agricultural conservation easements yield indirect/induced **economic activity** from:



Grow Wisconsin's Economy:

Yield a total economic impact of **\$55.7 million** when easement funding is granted to resource-efficient¹ farmers.



Farm employee wages.



Create Agricultural Jobs:

Create **304 jobs** and generate in **\$16.3 million** labor income.



Purchases for seed, equipment, and other farm supplies.



Keep Farmland Farmland:

Permanently protect **12,733 acres** of farmland across **54 farms**².



Purchases made by farm employees.

¹ Resource-efficient: producers who used one or more conservation practices included in the 2022 Census of Agriculture. ² Assuming average farm size of 236 acres (2022) and an average easement value of \$2,356 per acre (2024).

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Investing in farmland protection **yields a 90% Return** on Investment (ROI)

The Why



Rural Communities:

Agricultural conservation easement investments create jobs in rural communities and grow local economies. Securing Wisconsin's agricultural land base is vital to the future of both Wisconsin agriculture and our rural communities.



Local Food:

Wisconsin is a top producer of cheese, cranberries, and potatoes. Agricultural conservation easements protect the land base producing food for Wisconsin residents and are foundational to U.S. food security.



Legacy and Farmer Choice:

Many farmers would like to see their land stay in farming as part of their legacy. Agricultural conservation easements allow farmers to ensure the land stewarded by past generations will stay in farming long after they are gone.



Land Access:

Agricultural conservation easements can assist with farmland transfer and create affordability for new by allowing the transfer of farmland at its agricultural value, instead of development value.

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