

Seneca County Soil & Water Conservation District
2041 US Route 20, Suite #2
Seneca Falls, NY 13148
(315)568-4366

AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

A.E.M.

Office Contact: Christopher Creelman, District Technician

A.E.M. is a voluntary incentive-based program that helps farmers operate environmentally sound and economically viable businesses.

The A.E.M. program coordinates agricultural and environmental conservation agencies and programs as well as private sector consultants to provide one-stop shopping for services. All agricultural counties in New York State are conducting A.E.M. programs and participation has grown to include over 9,000 farms.

Farmers utilize A.E.M. to address water quality concerns originating from agricultural activities by:

- Assessing environmental concerns associated with their farming operations.
- Documenting current stewardship.
- Developing environmental farm plans.
- Implementing environmentally sound practices to address identified concerns.
- Complying with state and federal environmental regulations.

Local management of A.E.M. program activities allows consideration of site specific agricultural practices, local environmental concerns, and individual business objectives.

How Does A.E.M. Work?

Using A.E.M.'s 5-tiered approach, farmers work with local A.E.M. resource professionals to develop and implement comprehensive, site-specific farm plans.

Tier 1:

A short questionnaire identifies current farm activities, future plans, and potential environmental concerns.

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Tier 2:

A.E.M. worksheets document current environmental stewardship while identifying and prioritizing environmental concerns.

Tier 3:

A plan is developed providing solutions to environmental concerns identified in Tiers 1 and 2. Plans are designed with a farm's mission, goals, and objectives in mind.

Tier 4:

Agricultural agencies and consultants provide farms with technical, educational, and financial assistance to implement Best Management Practices (BMP's).

Tier 5:

Ongoing evaluations ensure that A.E.M. helps protect both the environment and the viability of farm businesses.