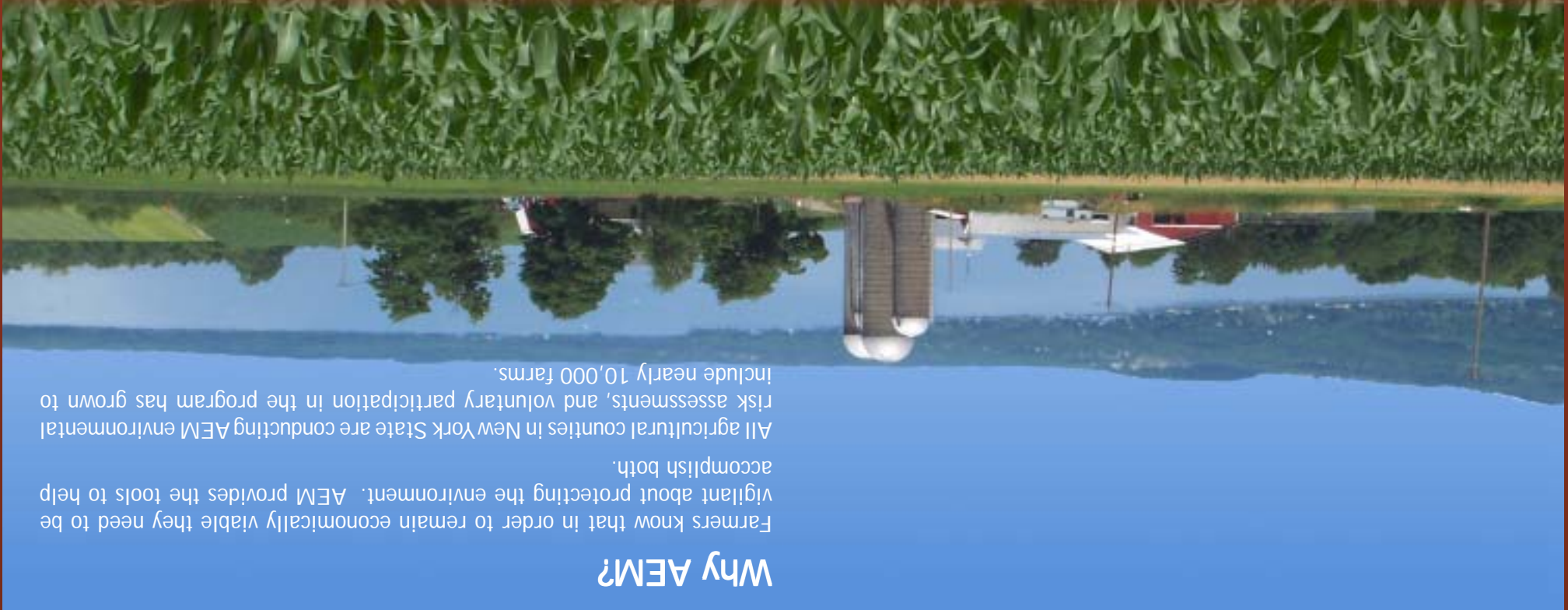


AEM helps manage pollutants such as manure and fertilizer nutrients, handle barnyard runoff and process wastewater, conserve soil, prevent sedimentation, and protect drinking water, all while promoting the economic and environmental benefits of agriculture in a community. An environmentally friendly farm conservation plan can maximize profits by enhancing soil quality, improving herd health, and reducing unnecessary applications of fertilizers and pesticides. Local AEM teams, led by County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in cooperation with USDA, Cornell Cooperative Extension and agricultural industry partners, serve as the link to information on all the agricultural programs that can be of assistance to you. This easy-to-use guide provides a quick overview of conservation programs and funding opportunities. Any of the programs described within may change and new programs may become available. Be sure to contact your County SWCD for the latest program information. District staff can also provide recommendations and guidance about other local or watershed-specific programs not included in this guide, which may be appropriate for your farm.

The *AEM Guide to Conservation Funding* helps farmers identify funding sources to implement conservation practices on their farms. AEM coordinates federal, state and local conservation programs so they complement each other, making it easier for producers to combine conservation practices and do what is best for their operation. Traditionally, as stewards of the land, farmers have done their part to protect soil and water resources. When coupled with effective best management practices, well managed farms are the preferred land use to improve water quality and protect valuable natural resources, which ultimately improves the lives of all New Yorkers. The resources made available to farmers through AEM are particularly important in this time of high production costs to help farmers continue their commitment to environmental conservation.

All agricultural counties in New York State are conducting AEM environmental risk assessments, and voluntary participation in the program has grown to include nearly 10,000 farms.

AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (AEM)



Why AEM?
Farmers know that in order to remain economically viable they need to be vigilant about protecting the environment. AEM provides the tools to help accomplish both. All agricultural counties in New York State are conducting AEM environmental risk assessments, and voluntary participation in the program has grown to include nearly 10,000 farms.



Environmental Risk Assessment

The AEM approach begins with a comprehensive assessment of farm operations to document current land stewardship and identify areas of concern. Benefits include:

- Documenting sound environmental stewardship practices and the benefits a farm provides to the community.
- Assessing vulnerable areas of the farm that may present environmental risk.
- Identifying the practices that may be at risk for regulatory action or neighbor complaints.
- Determining if the farm's well or drinking water supplies nearby are at risk for contamination and how to reduce that risk.



Conservation Planning

AEM coordinates agricultural and conservation agencies and programs, along with private sector consultants, to provide farmers with a one-stop resource for services.

AEM Planners work with farmers to develop site specific conservation plans that strategically incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect water quality and comply with regulatory requirements, while also meeting business objectives. AEM conservation planning provides farmers with opportunities to:

- Acquire sound information needed for long-term business planning.
- Learn about conservation practices that could save time and money.
- Strengthen their applications for state and federal conservation funding to address high risk issues.



For more information
contact your County
Soil & Water
Conservation District



10B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235
(518) 457-3738
www.nys-soilandwater.org



Best Management Practices

The photographs above illustrate a few of the BMPs that AEM can help implement to improve farm management while protecting water quality. Examples shown include implementing a barnyard runoff management system (left) and stabilizing an access road (right) to prevent erosion and protect water supplies. Other practices might include:

- Nutrient Management
- Manure Storage and Treatment
- Soil Management and Erosion Control
- Silage Leachate Control
- Milking Center Waste Water Management
- Pest and Pesticide Management
- Wildlife Habitat Management
- Wetland Creation and Protection
- Wellhead Protection
- Farmland Protection
- Energy Creation and Conservation
- Transition to Organic Farming



- Pasture Management
- Stream Corridor and Floodplain Management
- Feed Management
- Livestock Odor and Air Quality Management
- Water Management and Irrigation
- Forest Management and Tree Planting