



# Southold 2020

## The New Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Southold

Below is a compilation of the public input we gathered regarding the draft Chapter. You'll need to use the draft to follow along with the comments. They are numbered to match the goals and objectives in the draft chapter.

### Agriculture Chapter Public Input Meetings

### How your input was used (and if not, why)

	Goal 1	
	Comments from 4/28/12 meeting	
1	Goal 1.1. Obj.1. Good, but also ensure that Town Code follows Ag & Markets policies	Yes, we will add a reference to the importance of Town code being consistent with New York State Agriculture and Markets definitions and policies. (Goal 1.1, Objective 2)
2	Obj. 2.(b) strongly supported must allow for on farm processing based on what the farms/site can handle.	Okay, and we will take out the words "large-scale"
3	Obj.2. (f) Very important to allow and create agricultural opportunities for the future. -Flexibility is essential-keep agricultural rights equal for purchase of development rights and agricultural-rights-intact land	We agree and the draft chapter reflects this.
4	Objective 2.(g) must stress this point to create opportunities going forward	Yes, we agree.
5	(i). Very good/important	
6	(j) lot coverage for greenhouses should be more and closer to 60% (should be much higher than 20%)	This issue is included in the draft chapter, however the exact percentage was not pinpointed because we felt the issue would require a larger discussion and more time, making it more appropriate to address in the implementation phase of the plan.
7	Goal 1.2 yes work with real estate agents, need code enforcement and town resources to ensure compliance. Education and awareness starts with building permits	OK
8	Goal 1.3 objective 4. Planning must ensure buffer is incorporated in permit-previous experience did not address or enforce	OK
9	Goal 1.3 objective five. Contact elected officials to continue to fund preservation fund can't afford to have this come to an end (the 2% transfer tax)	OK
10	Goal 1.6 - Ask the local paper to do a write up of local growers to educate the public and raise awareness.	OK

11	Goal 1.6 - A website or Facebook page about what is available locally grown and from whom each week during the season.	Good idea, but some entity other than the Town would need to create and maintain this website. The Long Island Farm Bureau already has a farmstand locator on their website. Perhaps they could add this feature to their website.
12	Goal 1.7 Probably not feasible now, but look into it	OK
13	Goal 1.7 investigate other places that have successfully done this	OK
14	Goal 1.7. Places on Long Island and in NYC have already done this – so it is possible (see “edible east end edition that is out now) Also see Karen Karp’s website on this type of work.	OK
15	Goal 1.8. There should be voluntary improvements by farmers to control storm water runoff from farm fields.	See Goal 2, Obj. 1. And we added this to Goal 1.8, Objective 1)a.
	<b>Comments from the 4/30/12 meeting</b>	
1	Goal 1.1 Objective 2 Definitions - make them consistent with ag and markets and reference ag and markets in town code.	We added this.
2	Adopt Agriculture and Markets as our policy as 50 other towns in New York have already done this there are grants to help towns adopt Agriculture and Markets policies.	We added this for consideration
3	Development rights sales should not take ag right away	This is addressed as an issue for discussion in the draft chapter
4	Albany (Agriculture and Markets) should provide guidance but not final say on town policies related to agriculture	OK
5	On farm processing: change the wording from "on premises" to "local"	We changed the wording to try and accommodate this idea. We used the word “primarily” to allow for some processing of products not grown by the person doing the processing. The specifics of how much is left for future consideration in the implementation phase of the plan.
6	Build opportunities for locals to afford to stay in the agriculture industry	We agree and believe this chapter points us in this direction.
7	Possible partners: add "Farm Bureau, and Long Island wine Council	Added
8	Most importantly, let the agricultural industry decide industries’ future.	
9	Goal 1.1. Obj 3. If an agricultural practices permitted by New York State Agriculture & Markets, it should also be permitted by the Town.	This idea is in the draft chapter, but of course the chapter also includes balancing public health and safety. The details of this will need to be worked out in the implementation phase of the Plan.

10	Bring new farmers to use fallow land-return it to farming. Find grants to encourage youth education and farming. Mentors. Equipment. Have an agriculture symposium in town.	This is in the draft chapter.
11	Development rights-allow diversity and flexibility on preserved land. Allow for various uses. Farmland and practices are changing. Ag Review committee will understand the language more than non-agricultural people.	This is in the draft chapter.
12	Include processing livestock like chickens for consumption.	Added to Goal 1.1 Obj. 2)b.
13	Bring back the 4H programs or revitalize them.	Good idea, but this is a private program.
14	Goal 1.2 some of these objectives are not going to be very effective, for example advertising in the paper won't do much towards achieving this goal. Consider adding objectives to work with local businesses, make a brochure to hand out, work with real estate attorneys instead of brokers or in addition to brokers. The local paper could run an article about this.	We removed the objective about advertising in the local paper and instead added the idea of making a brochure and asking the paper to run an article on the Farmland Bill of Rights.
15	Goal 1.2 Southold is a unique place, consider inviting new home owners in Southold town to attend the board meeting provide them with the town welcome packet with the main town code issues for homeowners	Good idea, though the agriculture chapter is not the place for this.
16	Goal 1.3 Add that this goal should also protect the agricultural uses within the lands that are not converted (on development rights sold land). Are there any economic incentives for ag uses?	This is already addressed in Goal 1.1. Yes there is an incentive for ag uses, called the Agricultural Assessment, which reduces property taxes on agricultural land that meets certain criteria.
17	Goal 1.4 Collaborate with PLT to develop inventory (and other relevant agencies).  On matching new farmers with fallow land – the demand for the land exists. Use broker or third party to match people with land – PLT, Farm Bureau. Buyer needs a proven track record.	We added PLT to Possible Partnerships and we agree with second comment.
18	Goal 1.5.yes, very important goal. Essential for Town and Ag development  Balance with community interests Tourism maintains the ability for agriculture to exist	OK

	Continue support for listed/relevant councils and bureaus (listed in that objective already)	
19	Goal 1.6 Southold probably has the oldest farmland or the longest continuous farms. Could you somehow use this history of the town's agriculture maybe with heirloom vegetables to promote the idea of buying local.	This idea will be useful in the implementation phase of the plan.
20	Goal 1.6 have a website page who is selling what particular week. We need a computer application for this "app" make this information easy to find	This idea will be useful in the implementation phase of the plan.
21	Educate children about where food comes from	We agree this will help with the goal, and have added this as an objective.
22	Have a plum TV show about Southold on a local channel and include agriculture as a main feature	We did not add this as an objective because Channel 12 already does regular features on local agriculture.

## Goal 2

	<b>Comments from 4/28/12 meeting</b>	
1	Emphasize cover cropping	Yes, we agree.
2	Add to objective 4, deer control. Strengthen geese management to 2- a-day limit. Explore additional ways to manage geese.	We added these ideas two Goal 2.
3	Diversity of crops	We added crop rotation to the objectives.
	<b>Comments from the 4/30/12 meeting</b>	
1	Objective 4. Add "deer"	We added deer to the objective.
2	This goal's objectives need more details – more research and better education among the users of cover crops. Very vague objectives and didn't really drive home what is needed.	We improved this goal with more specifics.
3	How can the town promote the effectiveness of existing programs? Clearinghouse role for Multi agency programs. Shared knowledge.	We added Objective to this goal for a web page that has links related to soil conservation to be added to Town's website.
4	Consider revisiting the storm water/irrigation runoff issue from farms to adjacent areas. Breaches in containment can produce large amounts of water/fertilizer/pesticides to run off Revisit this in Town Code for agriculture.	We have an objective to encourage soil conservation planning, and there is also an objective under the water quality objective in Goal 1.8 related to stormwater runoff and farms.

**GOAL 3**

<b>Comments from April 28, 2012 meeting</b>		
1	Provide links to management agencies	Yes, added.
2	Public could learn from the farmers who are applying best management practices	Yes, we agree.
<b>Comments from the 4/30/12 meeting</b>		
1	Remove the term “too much”. Make a more positive statement. Add “variety of sources” so that it isn’t just agriculture	We removed “too much.” The chapter is about agriculture and the goal is specifically related to agricultural use. The additional sources of pesticides and herbicides will be addressed in the natural resources chapter.
2	Communication/public relations to get the word out about this – make it a stronger objective	There will be much more about this in the natural resources chapter.

**GOAL 4**

<b>Comments from April 28, 2012 meeting</b>		
1	Good	
<b>Comments from the 4/30/12 meeting</b>		
1	Develop a coalition of hunting groups for problem areas – Town could maintain the list. So the farmers can easily find hunters to take care of problems.	Good idea. The town’s deer management task force currently maintains a list of hunters for town properties. We can use this idea in the implementation phase.

**GOAL 5**

<b>Comments from April 28, 2012 meeting</b>		
1	Add the use of existing organizations including Cornell cooperative extension, Long Island Farm Bureau, education, example blight cast and add more Responsible Parties	Added
<b>Comments from the 4/30/12 meeting</b>		

1	Add more Responsible Parties/Possible Partnerships – coalitions, information	Added
2	Weekly column in the paper about this to get the word out.	Good idea, but maybe not feasible for the Town to accomplish.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

	<b>Comments from the 4/30/12 meeting</b>	
1	Not enough has been said about aquaculture in this chapter	We changed Goal 1.8 to be about aquaculture and added objectives.
2	Cooperative horse boarding/riding schools would be a good agricultural use for this area	Yes, good idea.
3	Important to preserve land to prevent algae blooms that are caused from septic systems.  Support young farmers and bring them out here	Yes, will be addressed in natural resources chapter and/or land preservation chapter.  Yes, this is in the draft chapter
4	have a more flexible code so eco-friendly businesses can survive.	This is addressed in the Economic Chapter draft.
5	The North Fork can't geologically support high density.	Sustainability will be addressed in the Natural Resources Chapter and Land Use Chapter
6	If we want to favor agriculture in Southold, we need to understand what agriculture is – definitions to be more specific	Yes, we agree. This is in the plan in goal 1.1.
7	Agriculture is taxed different than other operations, however they have to produce their own products, whereas a gasoline station doesn't have to make its own gasoline, it buys it elsewhere and then resells it.	We see the point.
8	Change name of chapter to "farm operations chapter". We really need to understand and define what we mean by "agriculture" to be able to plan for it. Is it's somebody with a garden in their backyard?	We believe the issue of definitions is addressed in Goal 1.1
9	The town lacks adequate hotel space.	This is an issue for the Economic Chapter
10	The boating population needs to be better educated about aquaculture operations. They need to be aware of their locations, so they don't run through and pull up the buoys, and they need to be careful about pumping out bilges that might be contaminated with algae or some other contaminants.	Added to Goal 1.8

**Written comments submitted**

1	<p>Goal 1.8. Cover crop hotline that farmers can call to have someone come to seed it.</p> <p>“I see farms that are enrolled in NRCS/USDA conservation programs that don’t follow best management practices for highly erodible land This goal is not in line with the Town’s Vision. How can farmers be exempt from MS4 runoff reg’s and also keep water clean for agriculture/aquaculturalists? Big conflict”</p>	<p>Not feasible for Town to organize</p> <p>Added an objective to encourage farmers to voluntarily comply with stormwater runoff regulations.</p>
2	<p><b>Southold Town Transportation Commission:</b> The Commission has a growing concern over safety issues surrounding parking at some farm stands. They have submitted a transportation/parking element that should be considered for addition to the farm stand code. The main ideas are to define the difference between a retail farm stand and a “destination” farm stand. (see attached “Farm Stand Ordinance Transportation Element”)</p>	<p>Added goal 6 to draft chapter. The details would be worked out in the implementation phase of the plan. Also added more about the balance of public health and safety to the introduction.</p>
3	<p>The Town needs to carefully define agriculture, agricultural production and farm operations. The Town should adopt the definitions from NYS Agriculture and Markets, but be sure to tailor it to Southold, in particular keeping in mind the many development rights easements on farms that sold their development rights to make sure the language is consistent with those, and to avoid future conflicts. Be sure to adopt specific language from Ag &amp; Markets into Town Code and not by broad general reference. This will ensure that the Southold-specific issues can be addressed where necessary.</p>	<p>Good points. These will be addressed as the town implements the plan and works on definitions.</p>
4	<p><b>Chapter 72</b> provides no practical way to enforce the “60% grown in Southold by the farm stand operator” rule for retail farm stands. In other words, a retail farm stand can sell whatever they want, whenever they want as long as the value doesn’t exceed 40% of the value of the crop that is offered for sale. There is no practical method by which Town Code Enforcement can measure the value of a crop offered for sale.</p>	<p>Good point. As in many cases, enforcement is an issue the town needs to consider.</p>
5	<p>Farmers recognize the significance of two natural resources: soil and water quality. With poor soil or inadequate water, a farmer encounters greater challenges when raising a field of crops. The Town of Southold has been generally blessed with naturally productive soils and access to fresh water via an aquifer.</p> <p>In the Agriculture Chapter, the Comprehensive Plan 2020 needs to feature <b>soil</b> and <b>water</b> more prominently as part of the Town’s natural resource pool on which the agricultural industry is critically dependent. Significant pressures on either of those resources have profound implications for the livelihood of</p>	<p>Water conservation and aquifer preservation will be addressed in the natural resources chapter in more detail.</p> <p>Soil will also be addressed in more detail in the natural resources chapter.</p> <p>We added more objectives regarding aquaculture and water quality.</p>

farmers, consumers of farm products, and residents of the Town who drink fresh water from the same aquifer.

What constitutes a pressure on either of these resources varies from farmer to season to crop. The Town is well served by taking note of best irrigation practices. Some are clearly more wasteful of fresh water than others. The Town is also well served by encouraging soil management strategies aimed at **reducing, rather than increasing, the total volume of pesticide and herbicide applications.** In the long term, these substances interfere with the natural, regenerative properties of soil and have been implicated in the loss of drinking water quality.

The interplay of soil and water quality has greater resonance for the Town of Southold because Southold can proudly boast of two places where farming thrives: on land and in the Bay. As any land use planner knows, what happens on land usually finds its way to the sea.

In the Agricultural Chapter, Goals 1.8, 2 and 3 are important to address together in Southold as the Town enjoys a unique commercial configuration in which farmers and fishermen live and work side by side. In particular, farming practices on land can impact the burgeoning aquaculture farming efforts in our creeks and bay. Given their proximity, this mutual interrelated dynamic, and the significance of both to the Town's future as an agricultural leader in the region and the state, the Town's comprehensive plan might offer more guidelines regarding better and best practices.

**Goal 1.8** Item. (Improving water quality in creeks and bay for aquaculture.)

**Storm water runoff.** Lawn chemicals and septic systems are identified as appropriate concerns of MS4 initiatives.

Since farmers are exempt from storm water regulations, the Comprehensive Plan might encourage farmers to voluntarily join others in the community in reducing storm water runoff by providing buffers, planting bioswales and other practices suggested by the USDA NRCS. This approach would be beneficial to the aquaculture farmers. These practices might also conserve soil and reduce siltation as suggested in Goal 2. Perhaps additional input from the aquaculture farmers could clarify the potential threats to their mode of farming posed by conventional farming storm water runoff.

**Goal 2.** Item. (Protect prime agricultural soils from removal and excessive erosion.)

We also added the idea that farmers could be encouraged to voluntarily participate in storm water runoff prevention.

	<p>Kudos. Objectives 1- 4 are essential to soil conservation. Yet precious little is said about soil vitality as a way to protect the long term quality of prime agricultural soil in the Town. Healthy soils contain about 5% organic matter, including humus. This may seem an insignificant ratio compared to the mineral, water and air components of productive soil. Without periodic restoration of organic matter (<b>composting</b>), however, soil is stressed and more dependent on chemical inputs for production.</p> <p>The Comprehensive Plan might add objectives under Goal 2 to include <b>soil preservation</b>, or protecting soil quality, by maintaining organic matter in existing soils with the assistance of Cornell Cooperative Extension.</p> <p><b>Goal 3.</b> Item. (Best practices for use of pesticides and herbicides to protect groundwater and surface water.)</p> <p>Legacy chemical residues are present in Southold Town as in most other municipalities with a history of farming or industrial activity. As we now understand, substances applied on crops and the soil can migrate to any number of places: the nearest body of fresh water, creeks, streams, and the bay or the nearest aquifer. The topography of Southold, with 160 miles of waterfront, puts a greater burden on the stakeholders in our agricultural community to take even greater care if the Town wishes to simultaneously protect the aquaculture farmers.</p> <p>Conventional farming relies on pesticides and herbicides. Conventional farmers abide by DEC regulations in their application.</p> <p>Could the Comprehensive Plan add an objective or two? To safeguard the quality of ground and surface water, the Town also encourages sustainable practices including organic farming, IPM (integrated pest management) strategies as well as reducing pesticide and herbicide usage.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Email from a local farmland owner: “The Town keeps talking about helping farming but it doesn’t seem that way to me.” The email focused on stormwater runoff and being asked to use up valuable farmland to install drainage sumps. He wanted more low-tech, low-cost solutions to stormwater runoff that didn’t use up a lot of land by having it used only for stormwater containment.</p>	<p>We added to the objectives regarding water quality that low-tech, low-cost dilutions to storm water runoff that don't use up a lot of land should be developed for farms.</p>