

## What is an agricultural conservation easement?

An agricultural conservation easement is a legal instrument that keeps land available for farming. A landholder voluntarily places an easement on the land to protect its agricultural status. Easements are one of many tools used to keep farmland accessible for farming, including agricultural land preserves, the MN Ag Property Tax Law (Green Acres), and community food and agriculture advocacy.

## What does the easement do?

An ag easement purchases the development rights from the land, limiting nonagricultural development and other uses that are likely to make the future of farming on that land economically unfeasible. An easement can also help conserve soil and water resources by encouraging the adoption of regenerative farming practices.

## How does it work?

A landholder enters into a negotiated agreement with an authorized *easement holder*, which might be a land trust, a county, or an agency like a Soil and Water Conservation District. The easement monitors the farm annually, ensuring it is abiding by the term. The *value* of the easement is either *donated* by the landholder or *purchased* with funds from philanthropic or government sources. The easement then becomes permanently tied to the farm's deed. The *value* of the easement is the difference between the market value of the land without the easement and that value once the restrictions are placed on it.



## Ways to Get Involved

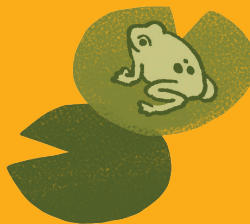
Advocate for your county and the state to adopt agricultural easement programs like those in Dakota and Washington counties.



Call your county and see what their plan is for preserving agricultural land in your area.



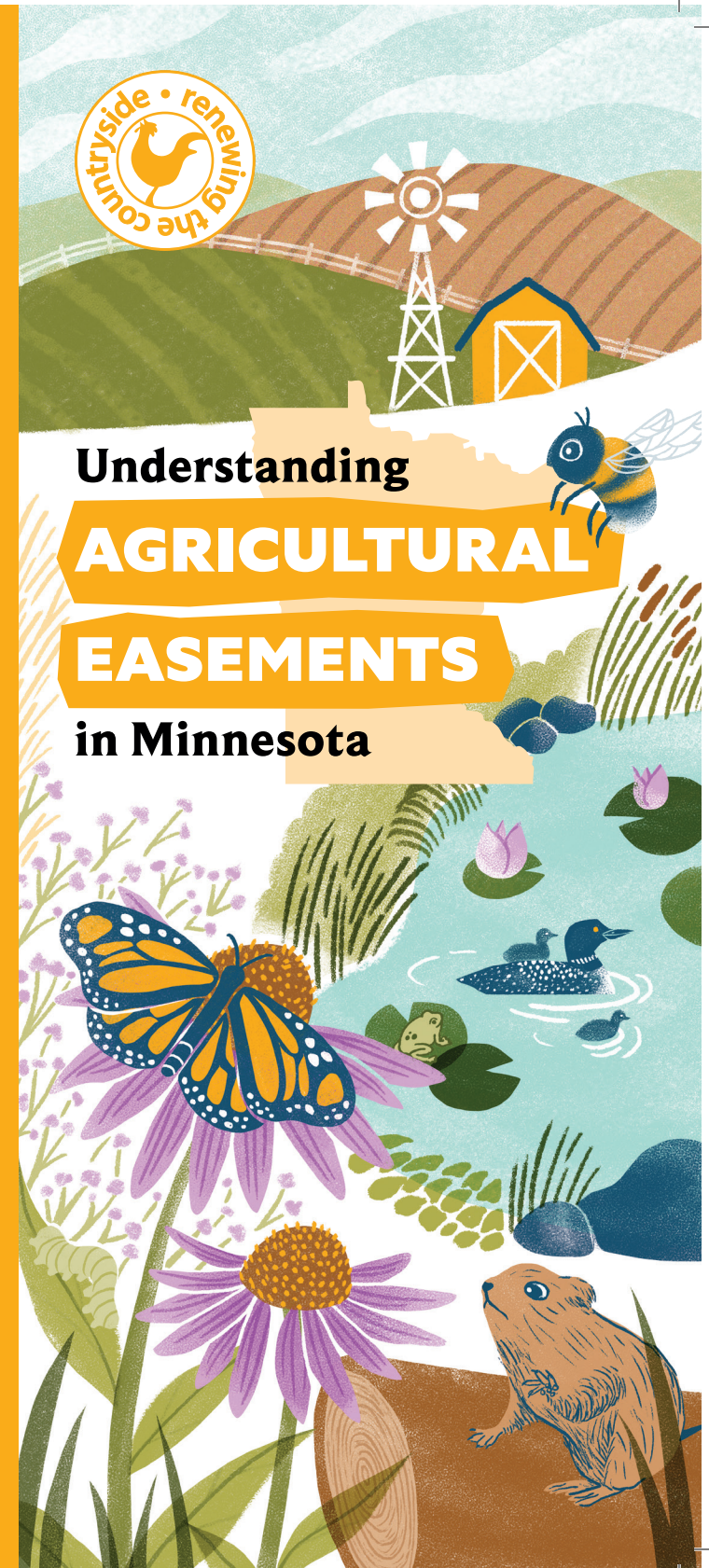
Scan this QR code to learn more.



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# Understanding AGRICULTURAL EASEMENTS in Minnesota





# What does an agricultural easement achieve?

Thoughtful agricultural easements protect the long-term investments that farmers make in their soils, habitats, and communities by preventing conversion of productive working lands to non-agricultural uses. Land protected by agricultural land easements provides additional public benefits, including environmental quality, historic preservation, wildlife habitat and protection of open space.

This protects the land from commercial and low density residential development, preserves habitat, limits fragmentation of the land, and allows landholders to ensure the land they love is protected in perpetuity.



An easement is a voluntary legal agreement that allows landholders to retain title and management of their farm while donating or selling certain development rights to a land trust or someone who will hold the easement (like a county).



Easements often serve as a financial tool for landholders as they plan to transition land to future generations.



protects community's food supply



improves environmental quality



helps reduce debt burden of farm purchase



protects local economy



protects wildlife habitats and open space

## Benefits of Land Protected by AGRICULTURAL EASEMENTS



makes land more affordable for emerging farmers



provides historic preservation



balances needs for commerce and housing with thoughtful long-term planning for farmers



preserves habitat



limits subdivision and fragmentation of land



ensures landholders' land is protected