

# Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE) Parcel Eligibility and Ranking Form

Fiscal Year	
Landowner Name and Address	
Eligible entities names and addresses	
Parcel Location:	Locality (Town/Township):
County:	State:
Are all landowners of record AGI eligible? (Y/N)	
Are all landowners of record HEL eligible? (Y/N)	
Are all landowners of record WC eligible? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming landowner eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:
Is the entity eligible? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming entity eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:
Does the eligible entity have a written pending offer for the parcel? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming written pending offer:	
Name:	Signature:
Does the land (enter a response for each):	
_____ Have 50-percent prime, unique, and important farmland? (Y/N)	
_____ Have historical or archeological resources? (Y/N)	
_____ Protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving land? (Y/N)	
_____ Have land that supports the policy of a State or local farm and ranch land protection program? (Y/N)	
Is the land eligible? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming land eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:

# Connecticut Ranking System for ACEP-ALE Proposals 2019

(NRCS Completes Parcel Ranking)

National criteria score (50 %) + State criteria score (50 %) = Total Score (400 points)

## National Criteria

### 1. Percent of Parcel that Contains Prime, Statewide Important and Local Important Farmland Soils to be Protected

*65 points maximum*

Those parcels that have the most productive soils will receive a higher score than those that do not. The percent of each type of farmland soils will be weighted. Prime soils are weighted by 2, statewide important by 1, and local important by .25.

### 2. Percent of Cropland, Pastureland, or Grassland in Total Parcel to be Protected

*55 points maximum*

Applications that are predominantly crop/hay/pasture land will receive a higher score than applications with components of forestland, wetland, and other land types. The sum of the percentages in the parcel is the factor scale used for ranking (e.g., if 84% of parcel is devoted to cropland, hay land, and pastureland = factor scale of 84). Parcels containing < 33% are not a good fit for ACEP-ALE funding and will receive a factor scale of 0.

### 3. Ratio of the Total Acres of Land in the Parcel to be Protected to the Average Farm Size in the County

*5 point maximum*

Average farm size in a county is based on the most recent (2012) USDA Census of Agriculture. The table provided displays the average farm size by county. A factor scale of 5 is given for ratios of 2 and greater; a factor scale of 2 is given for ratios between 1 and 2; a factor scale of 0 is given for ratios of 1 or less.

### 4. Decrease in the Percentage of Acreage of Farmland in the County in Which the Parcel is Located Based on the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture (2007-2012)

*5 point maximum*

The table provided displays the percent decrease in farmland acreage by county. A factor scale of 5 is given for 7% or greater decrease; a factor scale of 2 is given for 3 to 7% decrease; and a factor scale of 0 is given for no decrease in county farmland acreage.

### 5. Percent Population Growth in the County as Documented by the 2010 US Census

*5 point maximum*

The average population growth for Connecticut during this time was 4.9%. The table provided displays the percent population growth by county. 0 points for less than state growth, 3 points for between 1 and 2 times the state growth, 5 points for 2 times more than the state growth.

### 6. Population Density as Documented by the 2010 US Census

*5 point maximum*

The average population density for Connecticut during this time was 738 persons per square mile. The table provided displays the population density by county. 0 points for less than state density, 5 for more than state density.

**7. Existence of Farm Succession Plan**

*10 point maximum*

The existence of a documented farm succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations as documented on CP-41A.

**8. Proximity of the Parcel to Other Protected Land**

*10 point maximum*

The amount of permanently protected land that is within 1 mile of the parcel. The parcel is benefited by other public and/or private efforts aimed at protecting farmland/open space and minimizing the potential for incompatible development in an agricultural area.

**9. Proximity to Other Agriculture**

*15 point maximum*

Farmland that is part of an agricultural community is more likely to be actively farmed. Amount of agriculture acres within 1 mile.

**10. Parcel Expands Contiguous Acres**

*5 point maximum*

The parcel's ability to maximize the protection of contiguous protected acres devoted to agricultural and/or protected open space use by expanding areas or joining non-contiguous areas.

**11. Parcel Enrolled in CRP**

*5 point maximum*

Currently enrolled in CRP in a contract that is set to expire within a year.

**12. Grassland Protection**

*5 point maximum*

The grassland in the parcel will benefit from the protection under the long-term easement.

**State Criteria Factors**

**13. Landowner has a Current Conservation Plan**

*10 point maximum*

The landowner has a conservation plan addressing soil, water, plant, animal, and other resource concerns. The conservation plan accurately reflects the current operation/management of the parcel (within 5 years).

**14. Parcel Contains Habitat for Species of Interest**

*10 point maximum*

Parcel contains Threatened, Endangered, or Species of Special Concern listed in the state Natural Diversity Database.

**15. Parcel Provides Diversity of Natural Resource Protection**

*30 point maximum*

Parcel contains, borders, or directly influences environmentally sensitive areas or has important ecological functions and values. Points are assigned based on various resources, state scenic road designation (9), public water supply watershed (7), ground water recharge zones (7), or flood storage areas greater than 5 ac. (7).

**16. Parcel is in a Locally Identified Unique Agricultural Region**

*60 point maximum*

Parcels within Connecticut River Valley (Major Land Resource Area 145) – 20 points

Parcels within a USGS urban center – 10 points

Parcel within a National Water Quality Initiative watershed – 15 points

Parcel is within USDA ERS Food Desert area (+1.5 miles) – 15 points

**17. Parcel is Located in an Area Appropriate for Agricultural Use**

*20 point maximum*

The percent compatible land uses adjacent to the parcel measured along the parcel boundary.

Adjacent uses can directly impact many aspects of the farming operation. 20 points >75%,

10 points 25- 75%, 0 points <25%. Incompatible land uses include urban, suburban, schools, and others.

**18. Parcel Contains High Value Farmland Soils**

*35 point maximum*

The parcel has greater than 75% Prime and Statewide Important Farmland Soils – 35 points

Parcel has 65-75 % – 25 points

**19. Parcel Acres Currently in Land Based Agricultural Production**

*30 point maximum*

*The parcel is currently in land based crop and/or pasture.*

> 75 ac – 30 points

50-75 ac – 20 points

10-25 ac – 10 points

< 10 ac – 0 points

**20. Parcel Contains Historical or Archaeological Resources**

*5 point maximum*

The parcel contains registered/documented national/state historic or cultural or archaeological resources that will be protected by easement area.