



10-Minute Supervisor Trainings

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

JANUARY 2017

AGRICULTURE DISTRICTS

KRS 262.850 was created to help protect Kentucky's farmland and farm owners. Agricultural districts protect the best agricultural land for food and fiber production and helps prevent the conversion to nonagricultural usage.

What is an agricultural district?

It is at least 250 contiguous acres in active agricultural production. These 250 acres can be all one farm or many farms consisting of at least 10 agricultural acres or 11 acres with a homestead. These acres can be across the road, stream or even straddle county lines as long as they border one another in some way.

Why would a landowner want to be in an agricultural district?

Land that is placed in an agricultural district program:

- Cannot be annexed by neighboring cities
- Is taxed at the agricultural rate
- Is eligible for deferred assessment costs when water lines are extended
- Receives extra points when applying for State Cost Share or to the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) program.
- Cannot be condemned without mitigation.

How long does an agricultural district designation last?

The agricultural district is established for a period of five years. After that time the property must be recertified and any changes to the amount of acres noted. However, if a landowner chooses to withdraw their land before the five years is over, they can contact the conservation district to do so. Acreage coming out of a conservation district does not affect the acreage that remains in the district, even if the leaving acreage causes the agricultural district to go below 250 acres.

Conservation district supervisors can help the landowners in their district protect their agricultural land by making sure that all their landowners know about the agricultural district program.

Speaking to their fellow landowners

Conservation district supervisors should advise their local landowners of the benefits of the agricultural districts. As they speak with landowners about other district services and programs (such as the state cost share program) they can use that conservation as an entry to talk about this program.

How can districts and supervisors get the word out to landowners?

- Hold informational meetings/workshops for landowners.
- Advertise the availability of the agricultural district program.
- Ask NRCS personnel to help spread the word as they speak and work with the farmers.
- Speak to farm groups and at field days about the program.
- Ask all conservation partners to spread the word.
- Develop handouts.
- Ask office personnel to explain the benefits to cooperators when they apply or call about programs and needs.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do you understand the agricultural district program?
- Do you have any ideas to add to the promotion of the agricultural district program in your area?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Agricultural District and Conservation Act: KRS 262.850
- April 2014 10 Minute Training
- Division of Conservation's website:
http://conservation.ky.gov/Pages/Agricultural_Districts.aspx
- Your Field Representative