

Inclusion through Diversity

# Tompkins County Department of Assessment

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March 8, 2013

## Special points of interest:

- 2013 Preliminary Assessment Roll Filed.
- April 5 deadline to file informal assessment review.
- 15th consecutive year for reappraisal.
- Reducing staffing levels from 19.5 in 2000 to 10 in 2013. (3.5 fewer than the staffing levels in 1970)
- Taxable Value of Agland determined by NYORPTS

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## Department of Assessment Files 2013 Preliminary Assessment Roll

### Our 44th Consolidated Assessment Roll

### The Agricultural Land Edition

On March 8, the Department of Assessment filed the 2013 Preliminary Assessment Roll. This preliminary assessment roll reflects 100% fair market value as of July 1, 2012 for all 34,000+ parcels in the county.

While the real estate market in Tompkins County has remained relatively stable, some areas of the county will experience a change in their assessment. In particular we reviewed vacant land, agricultural land, and residential parcels with a large amount of acreage. For commercial properties, we reviewed the vacant commercial land and did an in-depth review of cellular towers/antennas.

Beginning March 8th, the Depart-

ment of Assessment will begin taking phone calls for informal assessment review meetings that will take place from March 18—April 5 for all property owners whose value has changed since the 2012 Final Assessment Roll.



These informal assessment review meetings are strictly for individuals whose value has changed. However all property owners may either file an informal assessment appeal on-line or through the mail.

The Department of Assessment encourages all property owners to review the 2013 Preliminary Assessment Roll, including the inventory on their property.

After all informal assessment reviews are completed, the Department of Assessment will file the 2013 Tentative Assessment Roll on May 1. At this point in time, all complaints must be formally filed with the Tompkins County Board of Assessment review from May 1 through May 28th.

This is the 15th consecutive year that the Department of Assessment has performed a reappraisal of real property in the county thereby ensuring an equitable distribution of the tax burden.

## Review of Agricultural Land Properties

The last time the Department of Assessment did a comprehensive review of Agricultural properties was in 2008. While the market for agricultural properties has increased steadily from 2008 to today, the values were not adjusted in the interim as the taxable value of these properties would have only changed insignificantly (based upon the agricultural ceiling exemption).

In preparation for the 2013 Review, the Department of Assess-

ment reviewed sales of agricultural lands in Tompkins County and surrounding counties. In addition the Department reviewed large tracts of vacant land in order to determine a tillable acreage value that is specific to the neighborhood the farm is located within.

The purpose of this review is to bring agricultural land assessments to 100% fair market value. The contributory value of the improvements on improved land were not

reviewed. As the majority of the increase was in the value of the agricultural land, the effect on the taxable value should be minimal as New York State determines the taxable value of the agricultural land (see page 3 for more information).

Agricultural land that is not receiving the agland exemption, should consider enrolling in order to minimize this market value increase on their taxable value.

# THE AGRICULTURAL CEILING EXEMPTION

The NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services determines a base agricultural assessment value that is based upon the average capitalized value of production per acre for the eight-year period ending in the second year preceding the year for which the agricultural assessment values are certified. In no event shall the change in the base agricultural assessment value for any given year exceed ten percent of the base value of the preceding year. This base percentage is then reduced between 10-11% as the mineral soil group decreases from 1a to 10.

The taxable value of agricultural land that receives the Ag Ceiling Exemption pursuant to Ag & Markets Law Section 305/306 is determined not by the local assessor but by the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services. Please remember that this requires a yearly reapplication in order to stay in this program.

EXAMPLE: There is a parcel with 132.38 acres and whose land value is \$278,800 with a total value of \$286,200.

Mineral Soil Group	Ag Value		Assessed Eligible
	\$/acre	Acres	
1A	999		
1B	889		
2A	889		
2B	789	23.69	18,691
3A	789		
3B	679		
4A	679		
4B	579	4	2,316
5A	579		
5B	470	46	21,620
6A	470		
6B	370	19	7,030
7	370	18	6,660
8	260		
9	160		
10	50		
Woodland	370	16.69	6,175
Agricultural Assessment			62,492

How the soil is broken down according to the Soil Group Worksheet that is provided by the Soil and Water Conservation District. The breakdown is then multiplied by the Ag Value as determined by NYS to come up with the maximum taxable value of the agricultural land.

Ineligible Land                      5 acres                      24,000

The agricultural land exemption is only applied to the active agricultural land (and woodland up to 50 acres if on farmer-owned property).

Assessed Value Eligible                      254,800  
 (Land Asmt - Ineligible Land Value)

Any assessed value that is over the Agricultural Assessment Value is then exempted from the taxable value. So, if the agricultural land is valued at \$1,000 or \$1,000,000 per acre, the taxable value is strictly determined by the Ag Assessment determined by NYS.

**Total Agricultural Exemption                      192,308**  
 (Assessed Value Eligible - Ag Assessment)

## Taxable Value of Agricultural Land

The taxable value of agricultural land that receives the Ag Ceiling Exemption pursuant to Ag & Markets Law Section 305/306 is determined not by the local assessor but by the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services.

Regardless of the market value of the land, which is the assessed

value in Tompkins County, the state determines the taxable value of the agricultural land based upon a complex formula that takes into account the prior 8 years productivity, commodity prices and typical expenses for a farm operation.

This estimate of net income per acre of soil, is then applied to each

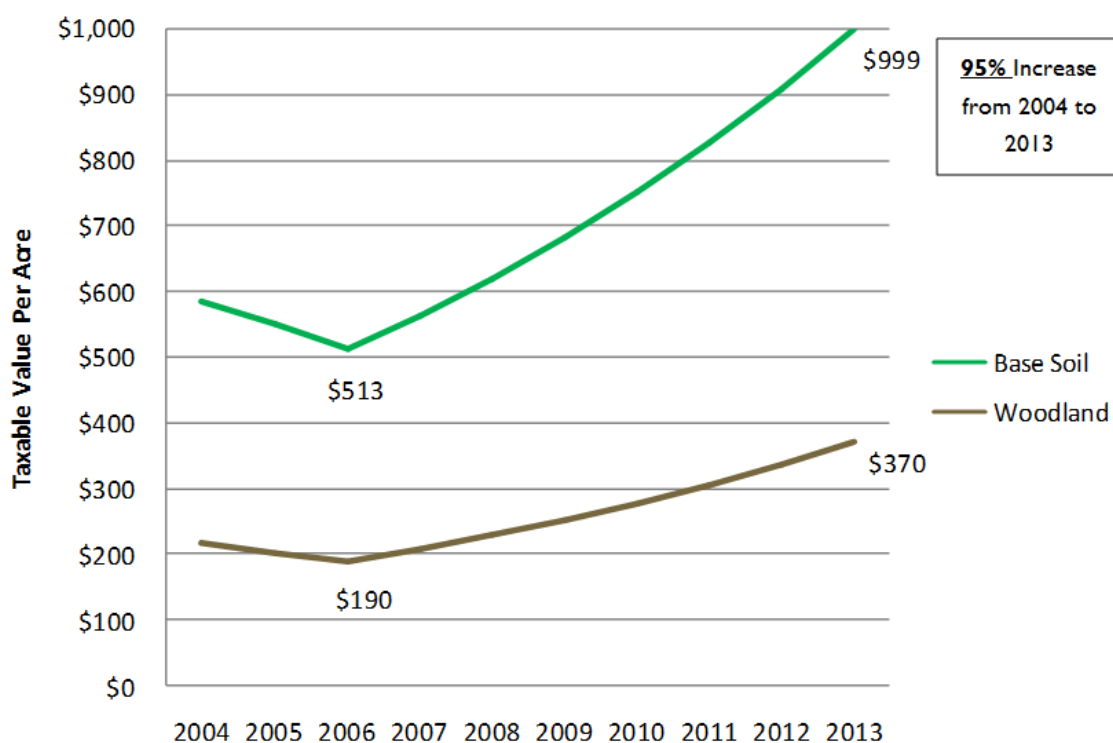
property. Hence a property with better soils will have a higher taxable value than a property with inferior soil types.

While the Department of Assessment can review your assessed value, any change on the agricultural land will not affect the value you pay taxes upon.



Only true county-wide assessing unit in New York State. Consolidated in 1970

## Agricultural Taxable Values 2004-2013



“The **Taxable Value** of Agricultural Land receiving the Agricultural Ceiling Exemption is determined by NYS and not the Tompkins County Department of Assessment”

## Gas Drilling and Real Property Taxation

The Department of Assessment has been meticulously reviewing the possible impact of potential high-volume horizontal gas drilling on property values within Tompkins County.

At this point in time, we have not been able to determine any possible effect on value, positive or negative, to any property class in any part of the county.

We will continue to monitor this possible effect on value as the possible moratorium on gas drilling might be lifted by the Department of Environmental Conservation by the end of 2012.

Even though towns within Tompkins County have banned drilling within their borders, the fact that drilling might occur in neighboring communities could possibly have

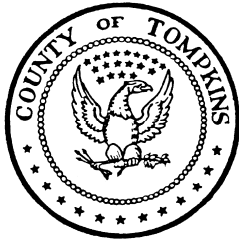
an effect on property values within the county.

The Department of Assessment is also monitoring the effect that gas leases have on the ability of the potential buyer to obtain mortgage financing and title insurance. As more is known about gas drilling, these two essential pieces of purchasing property might become harder to obtain.



Agricultural Building Exemptions are due by **March 1** each year.

Agricultural Land Exemptions are due by **April 1** each year.



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**Important Links:**

Department of Assessment

[www.tompkins-co.org/assessment](http://www.tompkins-co.org/assessment)

Cornell Cooperative Extension

[ccetompkins.org](http://ccetompkins.org)

TC Soil and Water District

[www.tcsxcd.org](http://www.tcsxcd.org)

NYS Ag and Markets

[www.agmkt.state.ny.us](http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us)

Tompkins County Planning

[www.tompkins-co.org/planning](http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning)

NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services

[www.tax.ny.gov](http://www.tax.ny.gov)

## Agricultural Land Review in Numbers

### 965 Farm Parcels were reviewed for the 2013 Assessment Roll

#### 18 Parcels Decreased In Value

-\$19,850 average decreased in assessed value

+\$6,423 average increase in taxable value\*

#### 354 Parcels No Change in Value

+4,852 average increase in taxable value\*

#### 593 Parcels Increased in Value

+\$83,845 average increase in assessed value

+\$12,647 average increase in taxable value\*

\*=The taxable value of Agricultural Land is determined by the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services

### FARMLAND SALE SUMMARY

Muni	Address	Date	Sale Price	Acreage	\$\$ Per Acre
Caroline	Seventy Six Rd	12/3/10	\$325,000	169.00	\$1,400
Dryden	Cortland Rd	1/29/09	\$153,900	35.94	\$4,300
Dryden	North Road	8/13/12	\$160,000	47.45	\$3,400
Groton	Talmadge Rd	11/18/08	\$560,000	202.00	\$1,300
Groton	Old State Rd	9/22/11	\$150,000	76.00	\$2,000
Groton	Old Stage Rd	9/22/11	\$199,500	109.97	\$1,800
Groton	Old Stage Rd	9/22/11	\$206,500	95.17	\$2,200
Groton	W Groton Rd	8/10/12	\$105,000	31.38	\$3,300
Groton	Cortland Rd	6/19/12	\$242,800	48.56	\$5,000
Groton	Lafayette Rd	9/22/11	\$143,500	65.54	\$2,200
Lansing	Fenner Rd	12/29/09	\$162,000	46.87	\$3,500
Lansing	Sharpsteen Rd	10/13/11	\$89,276	19.84	\$4,500
Lansing	N Lansing Sch	5/13/11	\$97,500	38.22	\$2,500
Lansing	Brooks Hills	12/21/09	\$507,500	149.17	\$3,400
Lansing	Dates Rd	4/5/11	\$164,255	75.77	\$2,200
Lansing	Ridge Rd	5/27/10	\$112,000	107.72	\$1,000
Ulysses	Perry City Rd	6/10/11	\$63,954	18.81	\$3,400
Ulysses	Swamp College	5/5/11	\$311,355	94.35	\$3,300
Ulysses	T-Burg Rd	11/24/10	\$28,529	12.96	\$2,200
Enfield	N Buck Hill	2/3/10	\$115,000	52.00	\$2,200
Enfield	Aiken Rd	5/18/12	\$144,573	35.41	\$4,100