

Prime and other Important Farmlands

This table lists the map units in the survey area that are considered important farmlands. Important farmlands consist of prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide or local importance. This list does not constitute a recommendation for a particular land use.

In an effort to identify the extent and location of important farmlands, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in cooperation with other interested Federal, State, and local government organizations, has inventoried land that can be used for the production of the Nation's food supply.

Prime farmland is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Because the supply of high-quality farmland is limited, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recognizes that responsible levels of government, as well as individuals, should encourage and facilitate the wise use of our Nation's prime farmland.

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. The water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Prime farmland is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent. More detailed information about the criteria for prime farmland is available at the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For some of the soils identified in the table as prime farmland, measures that overcome a hazard or limitation, such as flooding, wetness, and droughtiness, are needed. Onsite evaluation is needed to determine whether or not the hazard or limitation has been overcome by corrective measures.

A recent trend in land use in some areas has been the loss of some prime farmland to industrial and urban uses. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated.

Unique farmland is land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, and other fruits and vegetables. It has the special combination of soil quality, growing season, moisture supply, temperature, humidity, air drainage, elevation, and aspect needed for the soil to economically produce sustainable high yields of these crops when properly managed. The water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Nearness to markets is an additional consideration. Unique farmland is not based on national criteria. It commonly is in areas where there is a special microclimate, such as the wine country in California.

In some areas, land that does not meet the criteria for prime or unique farmland is considered to be *farmland of statewide importance* for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. The criteria for defining and delineating farmland of statewide importance are determined by the appropriate State agencies.

Generally, this land includes areas of soils that nearly meet the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Some areas may produce as high a yield as prime farmland if conditions are favorable. Farmland of statewide importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by State law.

In some areas that are not identified as having national or statewide importance, land is considered to be *farmland of local importance* for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. This farmland is identified by the appropriate local agencies. Farmland of local importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by local ordinance.

Report—Prime and other Important Farmlands

Prime and other Important Farmlands—Essex County, Vermont		
Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Farmland Classification
3A	Charles silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	Farmland of statewide importance, if drained
6A	Adams loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
6B	Adams loamy fine sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
6C	Adams loamy fine sand, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
6D	Adams loamy fine sand, 15 to 25 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
6E	Adams loamy fine sand, 25 to 60 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
8B	Nicholville silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
11A	Sheepscot gravelly fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
11B	Sheepscot gravelly fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
14B	Vershire-Lombard complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, rocky	All areas are prime farmland
14C	Vershire-Lombard complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, rocky	Farmland of statewide importance
14D	Vershire-Lombard complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes, rocky	Not prime farmland
20B	Buckland loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
20C	Buckland loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
20D	Buckland loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
21B	Buckland loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
21C	Buckland loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
21D	Buckland loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
25A	Kinsman sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance, if drained
30A	Ondawa-Sunday complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	All areas are prime farmland
31A	Podunk fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	All areas are prime farmland

Prime and other Important Farmlands--Essex County, Vermont		
Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Farmland Classification
32A	Colton-Duxbury complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
32B	Colton-Duxbury complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
32C	Colton-Duxbury complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
32D	Colton-Duxbury complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
32E	Colton-Duxbury complex, 25 to 60 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
38A	Croghan loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
38B	Croghan loamy fine sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
56C	Vershire-Glover complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland
56D	Vershire-Glover complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland
56E	Vershire-Glover complex, 35 to 60 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland
100	Pits, sand and Pits, gravel	Not prime farmland
104B	Urban land-Adams-Nicholville complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
214B	Vershire-Lombard complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
214C	Vershire-Lombard complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
214D	Vershire-Lombard complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE8	Wonsqueak, Pondicherry, and Bucksport mucks, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
SIE11	Cabot silt loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE11N	Cabot silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance, if drained
SIE12	Cabot-Colonel complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE12N	Cabot-Colonel complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance, if drained
SIE21	Wilmington-Colonel complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE21N	Wilmington-Colonel complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance, if drained
SIE32	Colonel-Peru complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE32N	Colonel-Peru complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
SIE33	Peru-Colonel complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE33N	Peru-Colonel complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
SIE34	Peru fine sandy loam, 35 to 60 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE41	Tunbridge-Peru-Wilmington complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE41N	Tunbridge-Peru-Wilmington complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, rocky	All areas are prime farmland
SIE42	Tunbridge-Colonel-Cabot complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE42N	Tunbridge-Colonel-Cabot complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, rocky	Farmland of statewide importance, if drained
SIE43	Tunbridge-Peru-Colonel complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE43N	Tunbridge-Peru-Colonel complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes, rocky	Not prime farmland
SIE44	Tunbridge-Peru complex, 35 to 60 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE52	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland

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Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Farmland Classification
SIE53	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland
SIE54	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 35 to 60 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland
SIE55	Lyman-Knob Lock-Rock outcrop complex, 60 to 80 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE60	Moosilauke very fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE60N	Moosilauke very fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Prime farmland if drained
SIE61	Sunapee-Moosilauke complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE61N	Sunapee-Moosilauke complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Prime farmland if drained
SIE62	Monadnock-Sunapee-Colonel complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE62N	Monadnock-Sunapee-Colonel complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
SIE63	Monadnock-Sunapee complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE63N	Monadnock-Sunapee complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
SIE64	Monadnock fine sandy loam, 35 to 60 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
SIE92	Ricker-Londonderry complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland
SIE93	Ricker-Londonderry-Saddleback complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky	Not prime farmland
SIE94	Ricker-Saddleback-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 60 percent slopes, very stony	Not prime farmland
W	Water	Not prime farmland

Data Source Information

Soil Survey Area: Essex County, Vermont
 Survey Area Data: Version 22, Sep 25, 2015