



2026 TOWN OF BETHLEHEM FARMLAND OPPORTUNITIES

AGRICULTURAL USE LEASE, Round 2 (Weisheit Road Farmland)

Request for Applications (RFA) Packet

- Overview: Farmland and Terms of Lease and Licenses
 - Map of farmland areas included in this RFA
 - Application Form
 - Draft 2026 Lease Agreement
 - Draft 2026 Hay License Agreement

**Application Deadline for Weisheit Road is:
Friday April 10, 2026, no later than 3:00pm**

Submit via email to Lauren C. Axford, Open Space Coordinator: laxford@bethlehemny.gov

Or

In person or by mail to:

Attn: Lauren C. Axford, Open Space Coordinator
Department of Planning and Economic Development, Room 203
Bethlehem Town Hall 445 Delaware Avenue Delmar, NY 12054

2026 TOWN OF BETHLEHEM FARMLAND OPPORTUNITIES

AGRICULTURAL USE LEASE

Overview- Farmland and Terms of Lease

The Town of Bethlehem, by and through its Farms and Forests Conservation Program, hereby requests applications (RFA) from persons, farms, or organizations wishing to:

- Lease tillable acres of viable farmland on Town-owned property at a minimum rate of \$45/acre across several parcels in the Town, and/or
- Receive a seasonal haying license on Town-owned hayfields, at a minimum rate of \$45/acre.

Prospective applicants can apply for one or multiple opportunities.

(See attached chart and map for details).

Please note that only tillable land is included in this RFA.

Applicants may propose a mix of crops to be cultivated and harvested, and though not a requirement, sustainable, regenerative and conservation farming practices are strongly recommended. Bethlehem Town Code PROHIBITS the use of any pesticide containing Class I or II toxicity as determined by the EPA, on Town-owned land. [§ 87-4 of Town Code], and spreading of biosolids is also prohibited.

The intent of offering these opportunities is to enable continuous agricultural use on town-owned farmland throughout 2026 and beyond.

The term of the lease shall be from the execution date in 2026 to December 31, of the expiration year (see chart for terms). In the case of delayed harvest due to field conditions, lessee may harvest crops beyond the lease term, provided that notice is given 30-days prior to the expiration of the lease. Payment shall be made to the Town by May 1, 2026 (and May 1, of each subsequent year for multiple year opportunities) or execution date of the agreement, whichever is later.

Seasonal haying licenses will be valid from May 1, 2026 through October 1, 2026. In the case of unusually warm weather that would allow for cutting in early October, the license may be extended at the discretion of the Town. License holder will be required to communicate this need to the open space coordinator prior to October 1, 2026.

Infrastructure such as water, sewer or electric, farmer housing and accessory structures are not available on-site at this time.

An example lease agreement and seasonal haying license, are attached to this RFA.

Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated and lessee selected based on the following criteria:

- A. Experience in agriculture. Tenure in operating a farm.
- B. Value and proximity of the leasable land related to current or proposed farming operation.
- C. Amount of lease/license offer (\$\$/Acre).

The selection of an application shall be at the sole discretion of the Town of Bethlehem. Prior to the execution of any lease or license agreement, the Town will require the applicant to meet with Town staff to review the terms of the agreement.

Selection will be made without regard race, ethnicity, age, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, political orientation, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

The Town of Bethlehem reserves the right to cancel or withdraw the offer to lease at any time prior to the award of a written lease agreement. The expense of preparing and submitting an application is the sole responsibility of the applicant. The Town of Bethlehem reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFA as in the best interest of the Town. This solicitation in no way obligates the Town of Bethlehem to award a contract.

Tentative Schedule

March 13, 2026:	Request for Applications Posted
April 10, 2026 3pm:	Application Deadline
April 13-17, 2026:	Application Review Period
April 22, 2026:	Town Board considers recommendation for lease/license award(s)
April 2026:	Lease(s)/License(s) Executed

2026 Town of Bethlehem - Agricultural Use Opportunities

Applying For:	ID	Arrangement Type	Term	Acreage	Location
	L5	Lease	1 year	21 acres	Weisheit Road, Selkirk

Please note, the minimum rate is: \$45/acre

Overview Map of all Areas:

