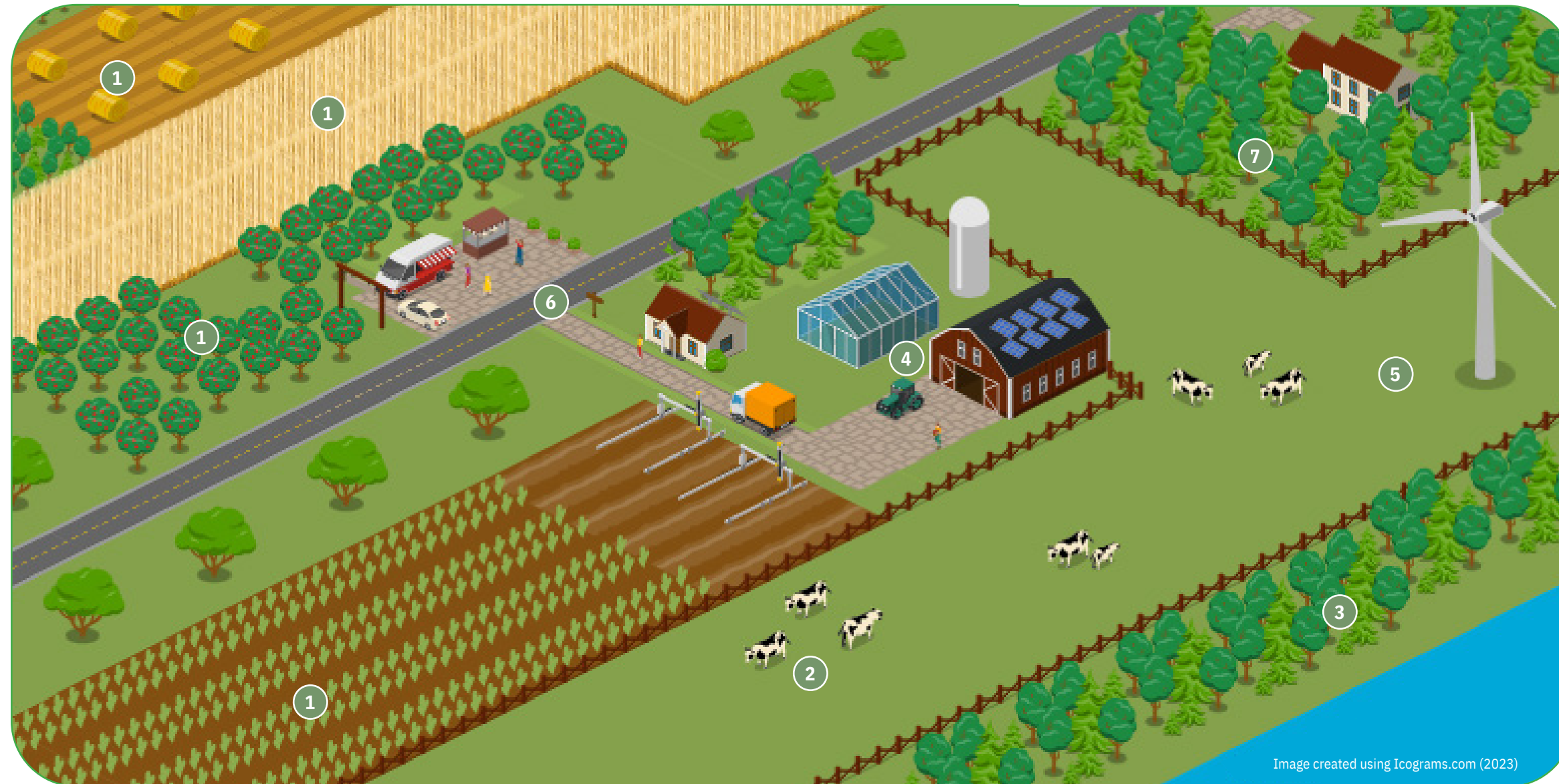


FARMING COMMUNITY

The farming community is composed of farmers of different ages and farms of different types and sizes. Over time, there has been a loss of mid-sized farms and an aging of farm operators. These changes shed light on the needs facing farmers and current agricultural markets.

FOOD SYSTEM

Beyond farms, the food system includes processing, distribution, and waste/recycling systems. Each of these steps shapes interactions and experiences with food and, in turn, impacts people's relationship to agriculture.



1 CROP DIVERSITY

Onondaga County's climate and rich farmland soils allow for a variety of crops to be grown, ranging from grains and vegetables to berries and apples. Agricultural diversity in turn promotes economic diversity.

2 DAIRY

Dairy is the predominate agricultural product in Onondaga County and far surpasses revenues generated by other farm products. Much of the agricultural land in the County is linked to dairy, including grazing areas and cropland for growing feed (e.g., corn and soy).

3 STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL AREAS

Farmers are stewards of the natural environment. Agricultural lands often include forest and woodlots on steep slopes and marginal farming lands. Stream buffers or other runoff controls can protect water quality and serve as extensions of broader greenway and blueway systems.

4 EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Improved access to broadband and other rapidly evolving technologies are making farming even more efficient while connecting communities from around the world.

5 RENEWABLE ENERGY

The intersection of agriculture and renewable energy is timely and important as communities aim to balance clean energy and food production with farm viability and viewshed protection.

6 AGRITOURISM

Agritourism can improve the economic viability of the agricultural sector while also providing opportunities for learning, experiencing, and enjoying agriculture.

7 RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORS

Agriculture lands are working lands. Occasionally, there can be smells and noises near residential areas. Local laws exist to protect the flexibility needed to run operations. Rural planning tools, like conservation subdivision design, can help to avoid conflicts between residential areas and working lands.