

A Farmland Protection Plan
for
Davie County, North Carolina

**Prepared for the Davie County Center of
North Carolina Cooperative Extension**

by Smithson Mills Inc.

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Acknowledgement

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1. Executive Summary

This farmland protection plan was commissioned by Davie County government in September 2016, with generous support from the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund.

It is intended to be a working guide to understanding the status of farms in the county, threats to and opportunities for the continuance of agriculture, and practical options for both policies and strategies that will protect agriculture and preserve it for future generations.

Davie County has a land area of 264 square miles, about 35 percent of which is farmland. The 2012 Census of Agriculture listed 59,618 acres of farmland on 640 farms with an average size of 93 acres.

Gross sales of agricultural products are just under \$25 million annually, with approximately 65 percent from livestock and 35 percent from crops. The county falls within the Yadkin Valley American Viticultural Area and is home to several vineyards and wineries supporting the tourism industry in the state.

From 2002 to 2012, the number of farms in Davie County declined by 9.2 percent, while land in farms fell 21.9 percent. The average size of farms dropped from 108 acres to 93. Total cropland fell 30.4 percent, while harvested cropland dropped only slightly: 0.4 percent.

Primary agricultural production was divided roughly equally between poultry production, at 50.2 percent, and crop production, at 49.7. Slightly more than half of all land in the county is in private timberland. Harvested stumpage (the amount paid to landowners) was \$1.2 million in 2012, with a delivered timber product value of \$2.6 million.

Two crops showed impressive increases in production between 2007 and 2012. Soybean production rose 360 percent and wheat production was up almost 100 percent.

Davie County has numerous programs that work to support farming and preserve good farmland. These include programs at the N.C. Cooperative Extension office and the Davie Soil and Water Conservation District program.

N.C. Cooperative Extension is an outreach effort of N.C. State University's College of Agriculture and Life Science and N.C. A&T State University's College of Agriculture and

Environmental Sciences. The Davie County office strives to involve the entire community in educational initiatives designed to help residents pursue economic opportunities, become better stewards of the environment and enhance their quality of life.

The Davie Soil and Water Conservation District offers a voluntary program of education, planning and practices to conserve and protect natural resources. Its staff works with farmers to prevent erosion and run-off and improve soil health. The office provides technical and financial assistance through cost-share programs and educates the public with outreach programs through local schools and civic groups.

Davie County enjoys several infrastructure advantages for both large-scale contract production and local marketing of farm-based products and services. Some key assets include good road access, proximity to markets, prime soils, nearby processing and handling facilities, farmers markets and farm supply and equipment dealers.

An essential part of data gathering for this plan has been to solicit input from agricultural producers and owners of farmland. This was accomplished through a mailed survey to landowners and one-on-one interviews with farmers representative of the diversity of agricultural production in the county. This report includes survey results from 208 farmers. Along with five farmer profiles, this community feedback exemplifies the diversity of agriculture in the county.

Conclusions and recommendations in the report's Plan of Action are based on analysis of demographic and economic trends as well as significant input from farmers, landowners, service providers and citizens interested in the future of agriculture in Davie County. Recommendations indicated by this research include:

- Promote farmland protection through Present Use Value taxation.
- Promote farmland protection through Voluntary Agricultural Districts and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts.
- Promote the value and quality of locally grown foods.
- Promote outreach and education on land taxation, estate planning, conservation easements and development planning.
- Support agricultural training and education at the K-12, community college and university levels.
- Support marketing and production training and facilitate greater diversity in agricultural enterprises.

- Maintain and encourage open dialogue between growers and elected officials.
- Identify and prioritize prime farmland that is most at risk and develop strategies with landowners to preserve their land.
- Strengthen support for agricultural economic development.
- Strengthen disaster preparedness for influenza, drought and other natural disasters.
- Continue promotion of Best Management Practices for conservation of land and natural resources.

Recommendations in this plan are ongoing in nature. The Davie County Board of Commissioners will review recommendations and adopt measures necessary to achieve objectives in calendar year 2018 and will incorporate farmland preservation initiatives into the commissioners' annual strategic plan. This plan will be updated every five years.

2. Introduction to the Plan and Associated Research

This farmland protection plan was commissioned by Davie County government in September 2016, with generous support from the NC Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund.

In accordance with state law, the researchers were tasked with developing a plan for the county that meets or exceeds statutory requirements for farmland protection plans.

Required components for this plan include the following:

1. Contain a list and description of existing agricultural activity in the county.
2. Contain a list of existing challenges to continued family farming in the county.
3. Contain a list of opportunities for maintaining or enhancing small, family-owned farms and the local agricultural economy.
4. Describe how the county plans to maintain a viable agricultural community and address farmland preservation tools, such as agricultural economic development, including farm diversification and marketing assistance; other kinds of agricultural technical assistance, such as farm infrastructure financing, farmland purchasing, linking with younger farmers and estate planning; the desirability and feasibility of donating agricultural conservation easements; and entering into Voluntary Agricultural Districts.
5. Contain a schedule for implementing the plan.

In addition, the researchers were assigned the following key deliverables for this research:

- a) Review and analyze existing data on agriculture in Davie County, including census of agriculture data, county ordinances affecting agriculture, tax maps showing agricultural lands, soil maps and other existing data that supports a full understanding of the agricultural economy of Davie County.
- b) Conduct interviews and meetings with landowners and land managers of farmland representative of the county's agricultural activity.
- c) Identify key infrastructure and other assets supporting agriculture in Davie County.

- d) Conduct a mailed survey with Davie County owners of agricultural land owning 25 acres or more of land in Present Use Value designation for agricultural production.
- e) Prepare a report on survey and interview responses and identify issues pertaining to land ownership and agricultural production of highest priority.
- f) Analyze rates of farmland conversion and identify those areas of most critical need for farmland protection.
- g) Analyze soil types found on farmland in the county and identify areas of the county possessing highest-quality soils as per USDA ranking criteria.
- h) Analyze the current state of farming and potential for future profit enhancement on working farms.
- i) Recommend viable agricultural economic-development strategies that can increase farm profitability and preserve farming for future generations.
- j) Recommend a formula for ranking farmland for priority preservation, using criteria approved by the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund.
- k) Prepare a comprehensive written report with analysis of all research and recommendations for an actionable farmland protection plan for Davie County.
- l) Deliver an oral presentation of findings to project leaders and elected officials.

This document is intended to be a working guide to understanding the status of farms in the county, threats to and opportunities for the continuance of agriculture and practical options for both policies and strategies that will protect agriculture and preserve it for future generations.

3. The Status of Farmland in Davie County

Current Conditions

Davie County is located in the upper Piedmont region of North Carolina. The estimated population of the county in 2015 was 41,753, a 1.3 percent increase from 2010. Census figures indicate that the county has gone from a single population center to two centers, the first being Mocksville, the county seat, and the second being the Hillsdale/Bermuda Run/Advance area.

Davie County has a land area of 264 square miles, about 35 percent of which is farmland. The 2012 Census of Agriculture listed 59,618 acres of farmland on 640 farms with an average size of 93 acres.

Gross sales of agricultural products are just under \$25 million annually, with approximately 65 percent from livestock and 35 percent from crops. The county falls within the Yadkin Valley American Viticultural Area and is home to several vineyards and wineries supporting the tourism industry in the state.

In 2014, 82 building permits were issued, and all of them were for single-family homes. Building permits issued in the past 12 years have fluctuated from 449 in 2005 to only 41 in 2011. With the economy rebounding, real estate development is now picking up.

Davie County Building Permits		
Year	All Permits	% Single Family
2014	82	100
2013	57	100
2012	43	100
2011	41	85.3
2010	66	93.9
2009	55	100
2008	149	98.6
2007	257	98
2006	375	98.4
2005	449	99.1
2004	395	100
2003	329	98.8

The population of Davie County is estimated to have risen slightly from 41,222 in 2010 to 41,753 in 2015. The North Carolina Department of Commerce estimates a very slight population

growth of 0.4 percent between 2014 and 2019. During that time period, total housing is projected to increase 2.4 percent, from 18,621 units to 19,065.

Key Agricultural Statistics

North Carolina as a whole has experienced dramatic decreases in farmland over the past several decades. This is especially true in western counties, where farm tracts are too small for large-scale production, and in Piedmont counties, where population growth and residential development has replaced open farmland.

From 2002 to 2012, the number of farms in Davie County declined by 9.2 percent, while land in farms fell 21.9 percent. The average size of farms dropped from 108 acres to 93. Total cropland fell 30.4 percent, while harvested cropland dropped only slightly: 0.4 percent.

Some other trends of potential concern include:

- The number of farmers whose principal occupation is farming dropped by 21.3 percent, from 384 in 2002 to 302 in 2012, though the number did rise slightly between 2007 and 2012.
- The median farm size, where half of farms are larger and half are smaller, dropped by 42.7 percent, from 75 acres in 2002 to 43 acres in 2012.
- The number of mid-size farms, those between 50 and 179 acres, dropped by 16.9 percent, from 284 in 2002 to 236 by 2012.

Land in Farms and Their Uses

	2002	2007	2012	% Change, 2002-2012
Number of Farms	705	627	640	-9.22%
Land in Farms	76,295	69,872	59,618	-21.86%
Average Farm Size	108	111	93	-13.89%
Median Farm Size	75	56	43	-42.67%
Farm operators whose principal occupation is farming	384	276	302	-21.35%

Farms Less than 50 Acres	329	288	342	3.95%
Farms 50 to 179 acres	284	262	236	-16.90%
Farms Over 179 acres	92	77	62	-32.60%
Total Cropland	43,056	31,192	29,967	-30.40%
Harvested Cropland	27,732	24,681	27,615	-0.42%

Agricultural production rose steadily from 2002 onward, with an 80.69 percent increase of market value of all agricultural products sold from 2002 to 2012.

	2002	2007	2012	% Change, 2002- 2012
Market Value of Ag Products Sold, \$s	14,035,000	18,304,000	25,360,000	80.69%
Average Market Value of Ag Products Sold per Farm, \$s	19,908	29,193	39,624	99.04 %
Avg. Net Farm Income, \$s	-2,760	3,674	2,026	173.41 %
Crops, Incl. Nursery and Greenhouse, \$s	4,338,000	6,051,000	12,612,000	190.73 %
Livestock, poultry and their products, \$s	9,697,000	12,253,000	12,748,000	31.46 %
Cattle and Calves Inventory, Head	15,120	14,025	10,086	-33.29%
Beef Cows Inventory, Head	7,904	6,811	4,990	-36.87%

Primary agricultural production was divided roughly equally between poultry production, at 50.2 percent, and crop production, at 49.7.

An often-overlooked part of farmland and farm income is forestry. NCSU Extension Forestry reported that 53 percent (89,571 acres) of all land in the county is in private timberland.

Harvested stumpage (the amount paid to landowners) was \$1.2 million in 2012, with a delivered timber product value of \$2.6 million.

Two crops showed impressive increases in production between 2007 and 2012. Soybean production rose 360 percent and wheat production was up almost 100 percent.

Grain Crops, 2007 vs. 2012			
Type	2007	2012	% Change
Corn for Grain			
Bushels	470,813	571,969	21%
Acres	4,711	6,439	37%
Farms	25	42	68%
Soybeans			
Bushels	76,854	353,869	360%
Acres	4,433	8,953	102%
Farms	28	40	43%
Wheat for Grain			
Bushels	120,391	238,217	98%
Acres	3,219	4,989	55%
Farms	26	27	4%

Davie County farms also contributed substantially to employment in 2012:

Hired Farm Labor, 2012		
Farms with Labor	Workers	Payroll
122	387	\$2,049,000

4. Efforts to Preserve Farmland and Farming

The Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy states that, “Perhaps no segment of the Davie County community has experienced more change in the past 20 years than the farmer. Although affected by adverse circumstances, farming and the existence of farmland remain important components of Davie County. In addition to their economic contribution, they are a way of life for many families, serving as that special rural setting for a significant part of Davie County’s population.”

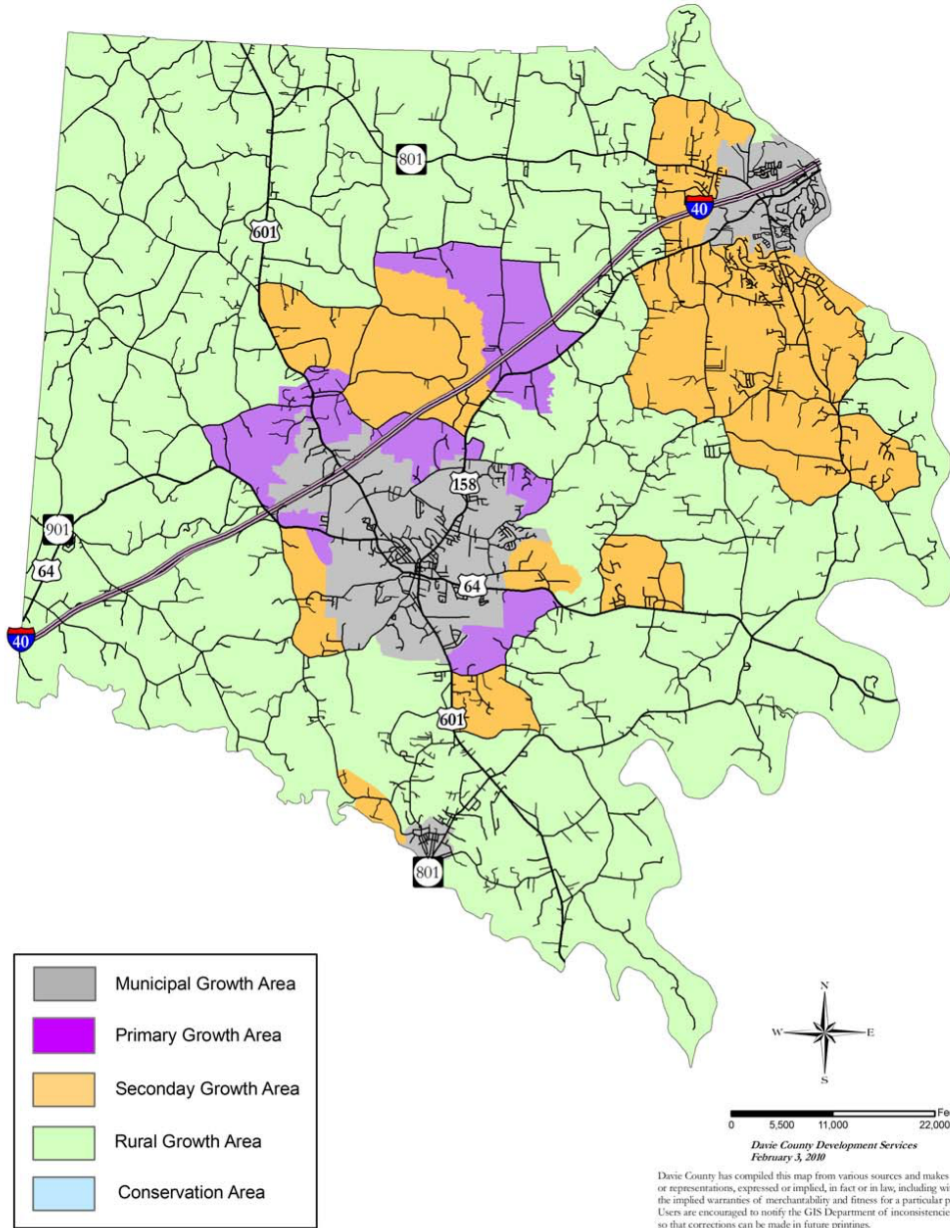
The county has designated Rural Growth Areas where significant high-intensity residential growth is discouraged. The county’s Growth Enhancement Strategy describes these areas:

This specialized area is characterized by traditional agricultural operations, pasture land, forestry, and open space scattered non-farm residences on large tracts of land. Rural scenic vistas are a natural part of the landscape. There is normally an abundance of large, undeveloped tracts not experiencing significant residential development encroachment or pressure. There are natural, scenic, historic, or other heritage assets that contribute to the special characteristics of the area that might require special conservation and management. Land use changes in this area should be designated to protect the rural character and discourage premature public infrastructure demands by sustaining groundwater recharge capacity.

The Rural Growth Areas were selected based on the following criteria:

- the relative abundance of large, undeveloped tracts not experiencing significant residential development encroachment, demand or pressures;
- the natural, scenic, historic or other heritage assets contribute to the special characteristics of an area requiring special conservation and management;
- the existence of special watershed or other environmental restrictions;
- the lack of adequate primary road systems to support intense development; and
- the absence of future public infrastructure expansions.

Growth Enhancement Map



The county's Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines regarding Rural Growth Areas are as follows:

- The County will preserve scenic views and elements of the county's rural character by minimizing perceived density by minimizing views of new development from existing roads through use of natural buffers and open space.
- The County will provide incentives to preserve open land, including those areas that contain unique and sensitive features such as natural areas, wildlife habitats, steep slopes, streams, wetlands and flood plains.
- The County will minimize site disturbance and erosion through retention of existing vegetation and avoiding development of steep slopes.
- The County will encourage creativity in design of residential subdivisions by allowing for greater flexibility in the design, provided that the development is not greater than that normally allowed in the district.
- The County will create compact neighborhoods accessible to open space amenities and with a strong community identity.
- Open space subdivision design will be encouraged to maintain the special features that contribute to the rural character, such as preservation of scenic view, woodlands and farmland.
- New driveway connections will be designed in a way to minimize new locations on existing public roads.
- Each lot in a subdivision planned for single-family residential development will be designed to contain well and septic tank system on the same lot as residence unless alternate system is approved through "open space" design.

To help preserve the rural character, the Growth Enhancement Strategy and other open space-design zoning regulations incorporate a system of density bonuses as rewards for meeting growth-management and community goals. For example, if density bonuses are earned by providing extra open space or public access to open space or preserving a unique heritage feature on the property that the public values, more residences can be approved.

Open-space zoning is based on the technique of "clustering" development. The basic principle of cluster development is to group new homes into part of a development parcel so that the remainder of the land can be preserved as unbuilt open-space and heritage-preservation areas.

Residential subdivision zoning allows the same overall amount of residences that is already per-

mitted by the zoning district; however, the key difference is that this technique requires the new residences to be located only on a portion of the parcel. The remaining open space is permanently protected by recorded easements.

Often, cluster or open-space design is used in Rural Growth Areas when there are certain types of irreplaceable natural-heritage assets and other natural resources that are extremely important to protect.

Education is another important component of the county's efforts to preserve its agricultural heritage. Efforts are being made to support, financially and otherwise, the 4-H and Future Farmers of America programs. Many believe that these programs should be available as early as elementary school. School gardens at elementary and middle schools are also encouraged.

The Davie County Center of N. C. Cooperative Extension works to support the county's rural community and its economy. Over the years, the office has been involved in numerous county projects, including a stormwater management plan and the county solid-waste management plan. Extension also has a role in emergency and disaster preparedness and response.

Cooperative Extension also worked with the Davie County Planning Department to develop one of the first Agribusiness Use Ordinances, which was approved by the county commissioners in 2007.

In January 2008, the Davie County Board of Commissioners appointed a Davie County Agricultural Advisory Board that Cooperative Extension worked with to develop a Voluntary Agricultural Districts program. The Extension office is charged with developing a county farmland preservation plan.

Davie County has numerous programs that work to support farming and preserve good farmland. These include programs at the Cooperative Extension office and the Davie Soil and Water Conservation District program.

N.C. Cooperative Extension is an outreach effort of N.C. State University's College of Agriculture and Life Science and N.C. A&T State University's College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. The Davie County office strives to involve the entire community in educational initiatives designed to help residents pursue economic opportunities, become better stewards of the environment and enhance their quality of life. Extension conducts a number of

educational programs, such as Farm School, Farm Animal Day, Jr. Master Gardener camps, Embryology, Farm to Table and various crop-specific workshops and field days to carry out this mission.

The Davie Soil and Water Conservation District offers a voluntary program of education, planning and practices to conserve and protect natural resources. Its staff works with farmers to prevent erosion and run-off and improve soil health. The office provides technical and financial assistance through cost-share programs and educates the public with outreach programs through local schools and civic groups.

Conservation cost-share programs help farmers and landowners pay for and implement best management practices (BMPs) that address natural resource concerns such as erosion or sedimentation. Examples include planting cover crops or fencing cattle out of streams.

Current cost-share programs include the following:

The North Carolina Agricultural Cost Share Program (ACSP): This state-funded program focuses on water quality – specifically, preventing sedimentation and streambank erosion on farms. To qualify for this program, farms must have been in operation for three years and have a legitimate sedimentation or streambank erosion problem. Popular BMPs in this program include cattle waterers and stream fencing, drip irrigation for produce farms, grassed waterways to remediate rills and gullies and cropland conversion to pastureland incentives. Since 1991, the ACSP has allocated more than \$1,000,000 to conservation practices in Davie County. In 2013, the ACSP allocated \$42,123 among six projects in the county.

USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): This federally funded program is focused on a broad spectrum of natural-resource concerns. Popular BMPs in Davie County include litter sheds and composters for poultry farms, high tunnels for produce farms, cattle waterers and stream fencing and organic transition assistance. In 2013, the EQIP program allocated nearly \$200,000 to projects in Davie County.

North Carolina Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP): Created in 2011, this state-funded program focuses on water quantity. It provides financial assistance for farmers who need wells or ponds for irrigation or for livestock.

USDA Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP): This federally funded program focuses on improving wildlife habitat. BMPs include native planting warm-season grasses for bobwhite and turkey habitat, planting wildflowers for pollinator habitat and prescribed burning and thinning of forests. Currently, funding for this program remains uncertain.

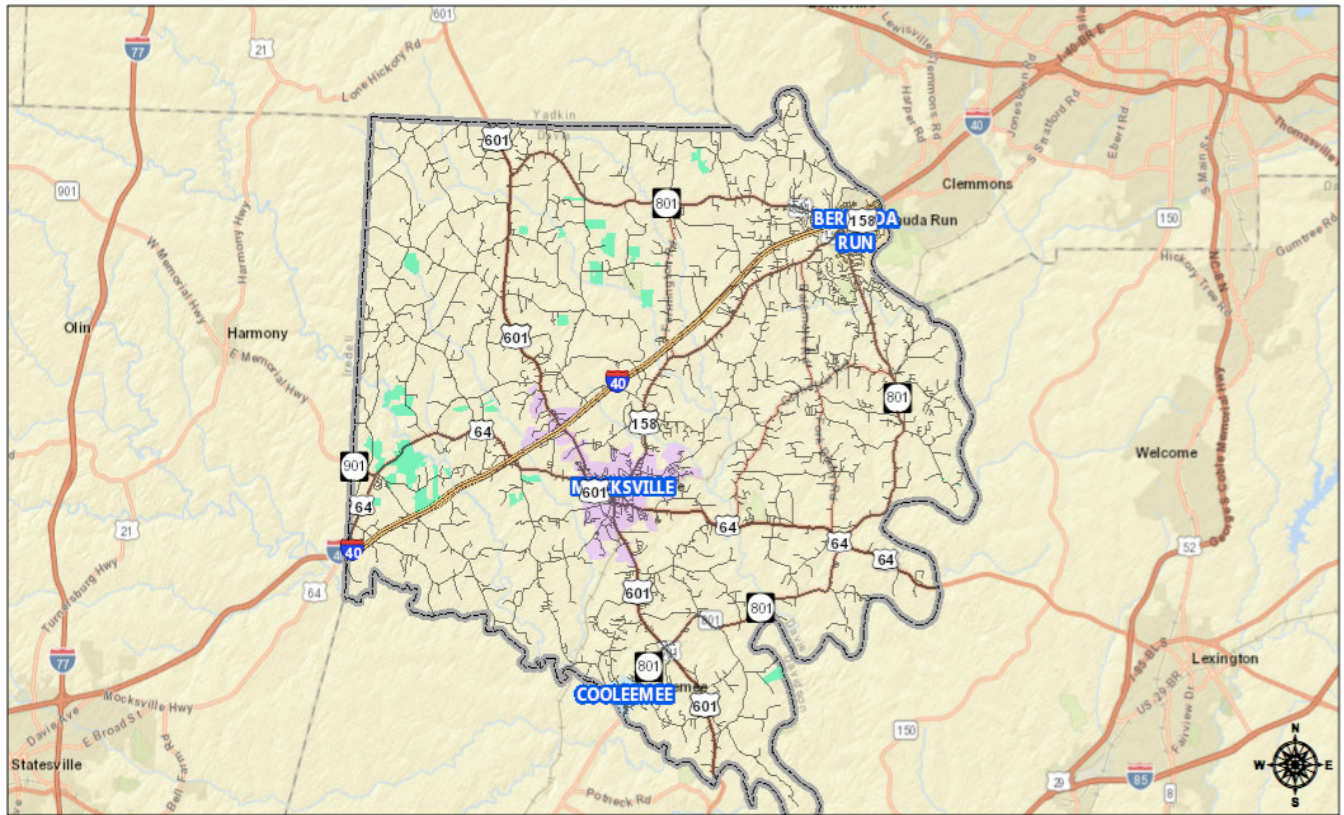
North Carolina Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP): This state-funded program targets landowners and community organizations to improve water quality. BMPs include rain cisterns for school greenhouses, rain gardens, grassed waterways, abandoned well closures and streambank restoration.

Voluntary Agricultural Districts and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts

The Davie County Farmland Preservation Program is a voluntary program that recognizes landowners' commitment to keeping land in farming or forestry use. Farms in the program are allowed to display a "Farmland Preservation Member" sign on their property. Each farm is placed within an Ag District. These farms and Ag Districts are also recognized on Farmland Preservation maps at the Conservation Office and Cooperative Extension and on the GIS layer for the county website. The program is designed to foster pride and awareness of farms in the county.

Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts are 10-year binding easements, while Voluntary Agricultural Districts are nonbinding.

Farms entered into VADs are found throughout the county, as shown on the following map:



May 16, 2017

Voluntary Agricultural District

1:288,895
0 2.5 5 10 mi
0 4 8 16 km
Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), MapmyIndia, NGCC, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

To qualify for the program, farms must:

1. Be real property that is engaged in agriculture as that work is defined by G.S. 106-581.1. To verify that the property meets this definition, the following forms of documentation will be considered among other things:

- Property tax records showing that the property is participating in or eligible to participate in the Present Use Value Tax Program.
- A farm sales tax exemption certification issued by the N.C. Department of Revenue.
- A copy of the farm owner's or operator's Schedule F form from their most recent federal income tax return.
- A sound forest management plan that demonstrates the plan is being applied.

2. Be managed in accordance with the Natural Resources Soil Conservation Service defined erosion-control practices that are addressed to highly erodible land.
3. Be the subject of a conservation agreement, as defined in N.C.G.S. Sec. 121-35, between the county and the owner of such land that prohibits nonfarm use or development of such land for a period of at least 10 years, except for the creation of not more than three lots that meet applicable county and municipal zoning and subdivision regulations.

Applications are approved by the Davie County Voluntary Agricultural Advisory Board. Current VAD board members are Don Brown, Wade Dyson, Mark Hancock, Eddie Leagans, Steve McMahan, Barry Nichols, Henry Walker, and Lynn Yokley.

The Davie County Center of N.C. Cooperative Extension has a plan of action that includes the following efforts:

1. Profitable & Sustainable Agriculture Systems: Commercial agriculture is Davie County's leading industry, bringing \$25 million in revenue to the local economy each year. Major commodities produced on the county's family-owned farms include broilers, beef cattle, forages, row crops, fruits and vegetables and nursery plants. Extension programs and related support services address a broad range of issues that impact profitability and sustainability of local farm enterprises, including: a) adopting new technologies; b) improved marketing strategies; c) assessing opportunities for enterprise expansion and/or diversification; d) managing pests and waste materials with minimal environmental impact; e) enhancing product quality and value; f) increasing profits through value-added production and direct sales, and; g) understanding and complying with food safety, environmental protection and labor regulations.
2. Local-Food Systems: N.C. Cooperative Extension capitalizes on Davie County's growing local-food movement by supporting a local-food system that provides significant agricultural, economic, health and social benefits to the local community. Educational programs and activities help farmers increase their capacity to supply product for direct local-food sales.
3. Safety & Security of Our Food & Farm Systems: N.C. Cooperative Extension provides re-certification training to private pesticide applicators (farmers) in Davie County and delivers farmers' market foods-safety training to farmers' market vendors.

4. Education: N.C. Cooperative Extension offers the NC Farm School, a six-month, intensive program to train beginning and transitioning farmers in how to operate viable small-scale, economically sustainable farms.

5. Key Infrastructure and Assets for Farming

Davie County enjoys several infrastructure advantages for both large-scale contract production and local marketing of farm-based products and services. Some key assets include the following:

Road Access

Davie County has moderately good road access to major markets and transportation routes. Interstate 40 cuts through roughly the center of the county from the northeast to the southwest, and Interstate 85 passes just to the south and east of the county. US Highway 64 crosses the county from east to west, and US Highway 601 carries traffic north to south.

Approximate travel times to major metropolitan areas from Mocksville are as follows:

Winston-Salem: 35 mins. Greensboro: 1 hr. Charlotte: 1hr., 25 mins. Statesville: 30 mins.
Raleigh: 2 hrs., 15 mins. Asheville: 2 hrs. Atlanta: 5 hrs.



Proximity to Markets

Within the shaded circle of a hundred-mile radius from Mocksville, the estimated population is just over 6 million. Major population centers within this radius include Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Raleigh, Durham, Asheville, Spartanburg and Blacksburg.



Davie County farms are located about an hour and a half from downtown Charlotte, the largest center of population in the Carolinas. A growing local-foods movement gives growers of fresh vegetables opportunities to sell direct to consumers and to wholesale to major retailers and distributors. Charlotte is the headquarters of Harris-Teeter Supermarkets. In addition, Albert's Organics has a distribution hub there. To the northwest of the county, Lowes Foods is located just over a half hour away in Winston-Salem. MDI, one of the largest food distributors in the nation, is headquartered about an hour away in Hickory.

Prime Soils

As discussed in the Soils section of this report, 57 percent of the county possesses prime soils as defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Another 27 percent of the county has soils of statewide importance. More than three-quarters of the county has soils suitable for productive croplands that can include vegetables, haylage, fruits and row crops, offering many opportunities for crop diversification.

Livestock Markets

Harward Brothers Livestock Market, 2207 Turnersburg Highway, Turnersburg, NC 28688, (704) 546-2692

Wilkes Livestock Exchange, 106 State Road, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659, (336) 838-3442

Processing

House of Raeford Poultry Processing, 251 Eaton Road, Mocksville, NC 27028, (336) 751-4752

Supplies & Equipment

Bartlett Milling Company, 701 S. Center Street, Statesville, NC 28677, (800) 222-8626

B&J Farm Supply, 2500 Hamptonville Road, Hamptonville, NC 27020-7130, (336) 468-4500

Blackwelder's Trading Post, 124 Highway 901 W. Harmony, NC 28634-2863, (336) 492-5734

Cana Land & Farm Company, 158 McCashin Lane, Mocksville, NC 27028, (336) 998-0239

Crop Production Services, 1038 Tomlin Mill Road, Statesville, NC 28625, (704) 876-8627

Crop Production Service, 244 N Lee Avenue, Yadkinville, NC 27055, (336) 679-8831

Davie Farm Services, 303 Wilkesboro Street, Mocksville, NC 27028, (336) 751-5021

Deal-Rite Feeds, 109 Anna Drive, Statesville, NC 28625, (704) 873-8646

G&M Milling Company, 4000 Taylorsville Highway, Statesville, NC 28625, (704) 873-5758

Gra-Mac Irrigation, 2310 Highway 801, Mocksville, NC 27028, (336) 998-3232

Hoot N Hollar Farms, 694 E Houstonville Road, Harmony, NC 28634-9451, (704) 546-7371

J.P. Green Milling Company, 496 E Depot Street, Mocksville, NC 27028, (336) 751-2126

James River Equipment, 635 Mocksville Highway, Statesville, NC 28625, (704) 872-6411

Johnson & Company Irrigations Sales, 2000 Highway 801, Advance, NC 27006,
(336) 998-5621

Lowry Livestock Feeds, 3300 Harmony Highway, Harmony, NC 28634, (704) 546-2410

Perdue Farm Inc.105 Greenwood Circle, Elkin, NC 28621, (336) 366-2591

Perdue Farms Feed Mill, 9150 Statesville Boulevard, Cleveland, NC 27013, (704) 278-2228

Perrow Enterprises, 4427 Highway 64 W, Mocksville, NC 27028-8462, (704) 539-5532

Sink Farm Equipment, 1840 Highway 64, Lexington, NC 27295, (336) 243-5138

Southern Farm Supply, 2335 W. Memorial Highway, Union Grove, NC 28689, (704) 539-5000

Southern States Co-Op, 2504 Davie Avenue, Statesville, NC 28625, (704) 872-6364

Star Milling Company, 247-F Commence Boulevard, Statesville, NC 28625, (704) 873-9561

Tractor Supply Company, 196 Westwood Village Drive, Clemmons, NC 27012, (336)
766-6326

Wayne Farms Feed Mill, 10949 Highway 268, Elkin, NC 28621, (336) 366-4413

West Davie Power & Equipment, 160 Highway 901, Harmony, NC 28634, (336) 492-5102

Wright Farm Gates, 150 Gateway Lane, Advance, NC 27006, (336) 998-8637

Grain Buyers

Lake Phelps Grain Inc., 5808 Howell School Road, Jonesville, NC 28642, (336) 835-3258

Farmers' Markets

Farmington Farmers Market, Farmington Community Center

Mocksville Farmers Market, Junker's Mill Outdoor Theatre parking lot

Peachtree Farmers Market, Wake Forest Baptist Health-Davie Medical Center parking lot,
Bermuda Run

NC Cooperative Extension Farm School

Business sessions and on-farm trips comprise the core of a seven-month program of the Southern Piedmont Farm School. Business sessions were held in Rowan County and farm trips were taken to Davidson, Rowan, Davie, Union and Anson counties, to name a few.

6. Producer Input to Farmland Preservation

An essential part of data gathering for this plan has been to solicit input from agricultural producers and owners of farmland. This was accomplished through a mailed survey to landowners and one-on-one interviews with farmers representative of the diversity of agricultural production in the county. Results help to inform service providers about the types of programs and services most in demand from the farming community, the challenges farmers face and the opportunities that can be leveraged for long-term health of farmland and the agricultural economy. The following three sections include results from a mailed survey to landowners and farmer profiles from one-on-one interviews.

7. Farmland Owner Survey

In December 2016, the researcher conducted a farmland preservation survey in Davie County. In all, 639 surveys were mailed to landowners in the county owning more than 20 acres of land in present-use valuation tax status. Researchers received 208 valid mailed responses, a total return of 33 percent. These surveys were hand-entered into an online survey compilation system and the results quantified and graphed.

The following is a summary of the survey findings:

Question 1

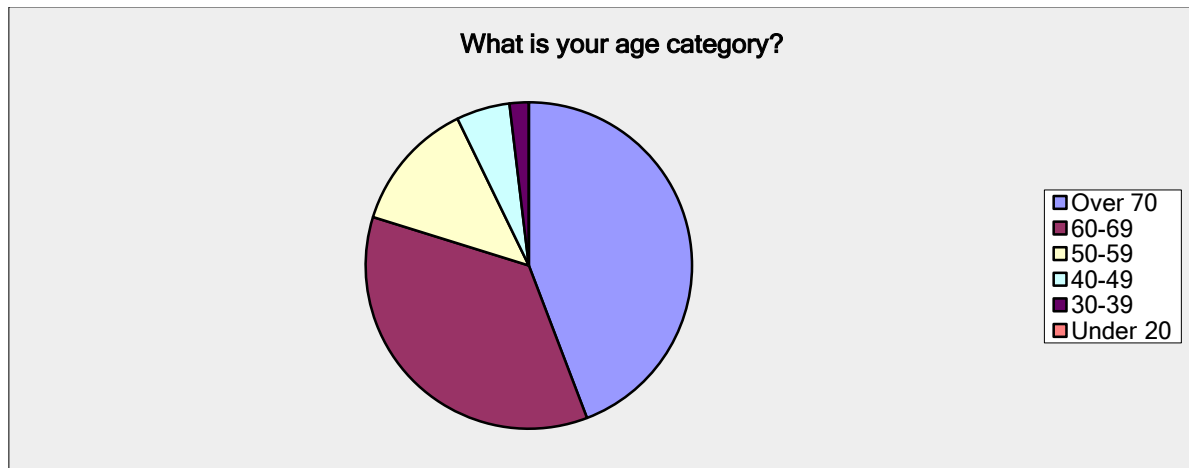
How long has your land been in your family?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 5 years	3.9%	8
Between 5 and 20 years	7.2%	15
Between 20 and 50 years	30.4%	63
More than 50 years	58.5%	121
<i>answered question</i>		207
<i>skipped question</i>		1



Almost nine of 10 of those who responded said their farms have been in the same family for 20 years or more. Fewer than one in 25 farms has been owned by a family for less than five years.

Question 2

What is your age category?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Over 70	44.2%	92
60-69	35.6%	74
50-59	13.0%	27
40-49	5.3%	11
30-39	1.9%	4
Under 20	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		208
<i>skipped question</i>		0

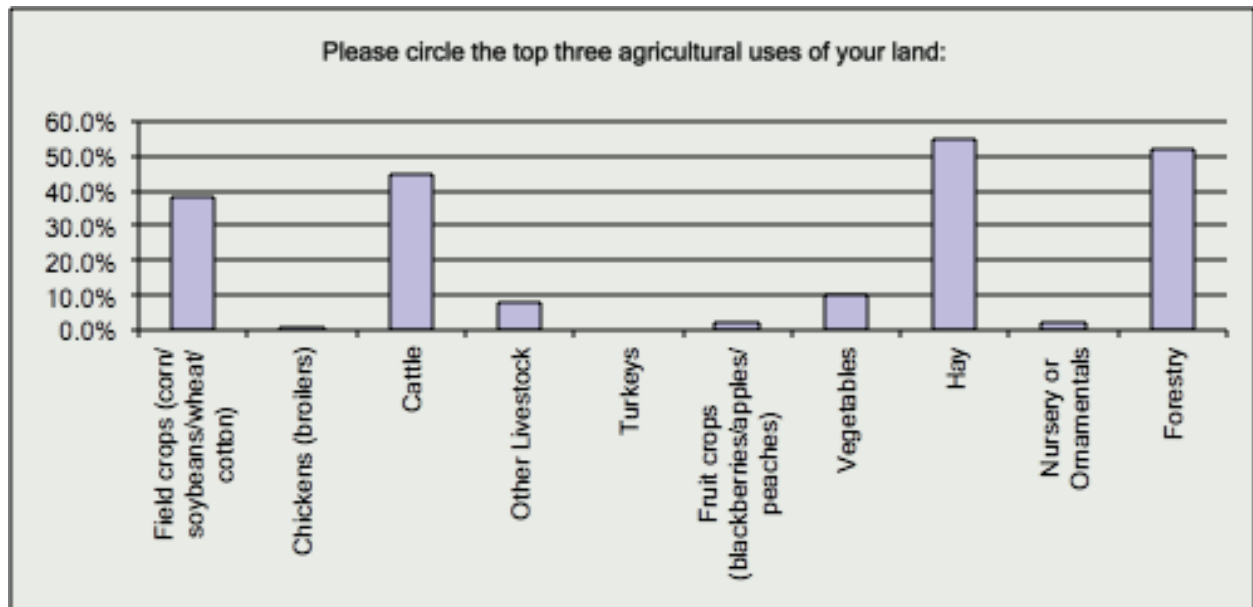


Eight of 10 respondents are 60 or older. Fewer than two in 100 are 30 or younger. Having a succession plan in place is most particularly critical for older landowners. Many survey respondents and several of those interviewed spoke of the need for more education around estate planning. Many also expressed concern about the shortage of young people interested in making a career in farming.

Question 3

Please circle the top three agricultural uses of your land:

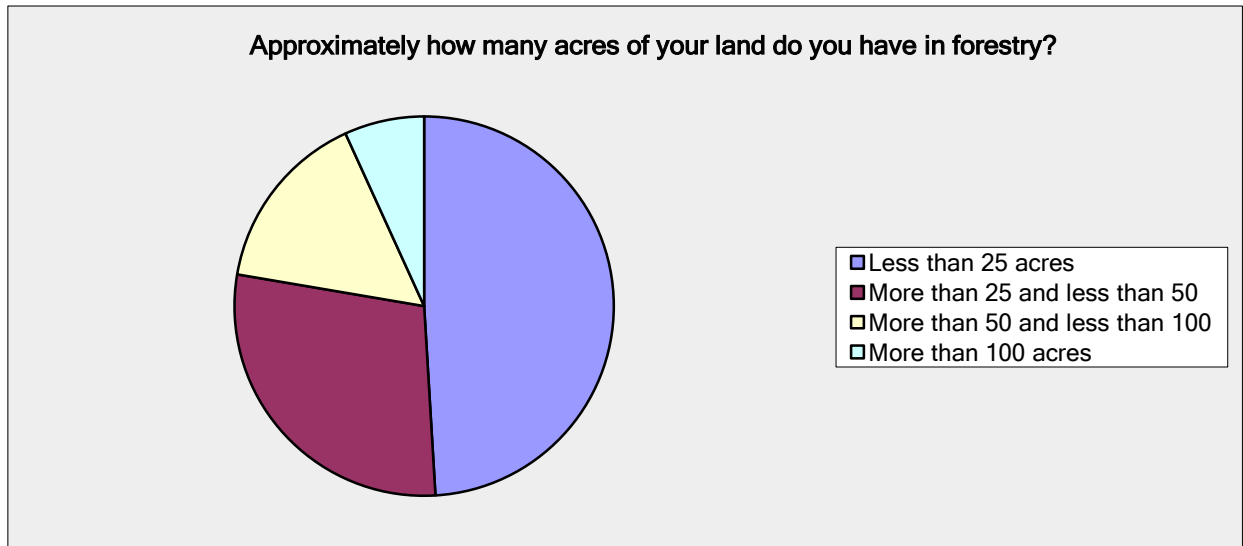
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Field crops (corn/soybeans/wheat/cotton)	38.6%	80
Chickens (broilers)	1.0%	2
Cattle	44.9%	93
Other Livestock	7.7%	16
Turkeys	0.0%	0
Fruit crops (blackberries/apples/peaches)	1.9%	4
Vegetables	10.1%	21
Hay	55.1%	114
Nursery or Ornamentals	1.9%	4
Forestry	51.7%	107
Other (please describe)		14
<i>answered question</i>		207
<i>skipped question</i>		1



Question 4

Approximately how many acres of your land do you have in forestry?

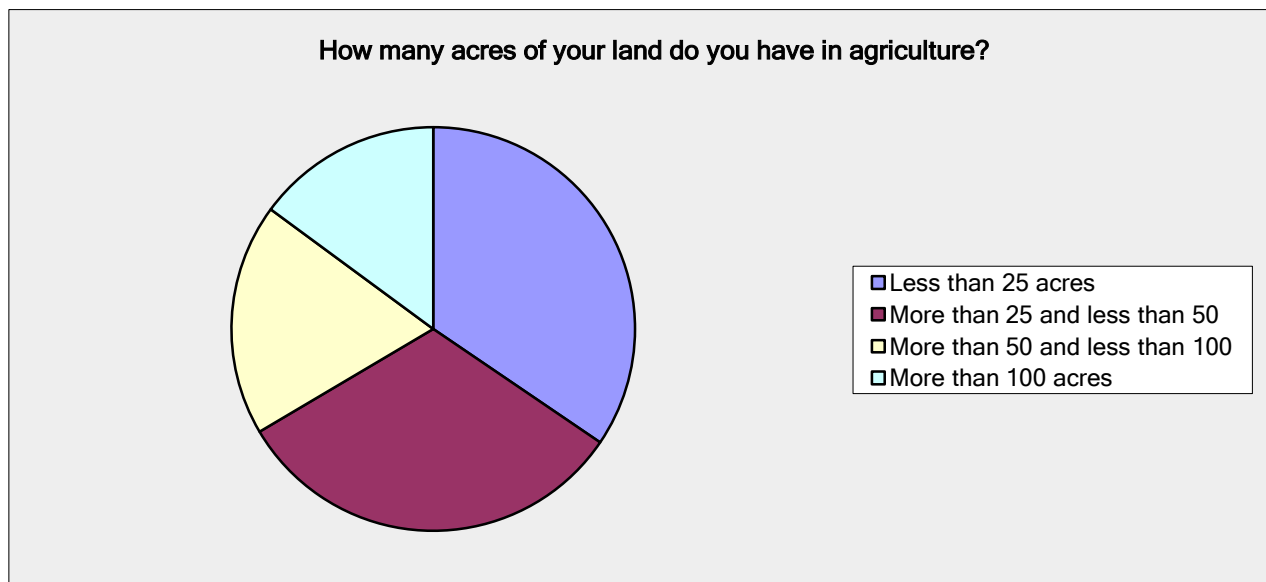
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 acres	49.0%	101
More than 25 and less than 50	28.6%	59
More than 50 and less than 100	15.5%	32
More than 100 acres	6.8%	14
<i>answered question</i>		206
<i>skipped question</i>		2



Question 5

How many acres of your land do you have in agriculture?

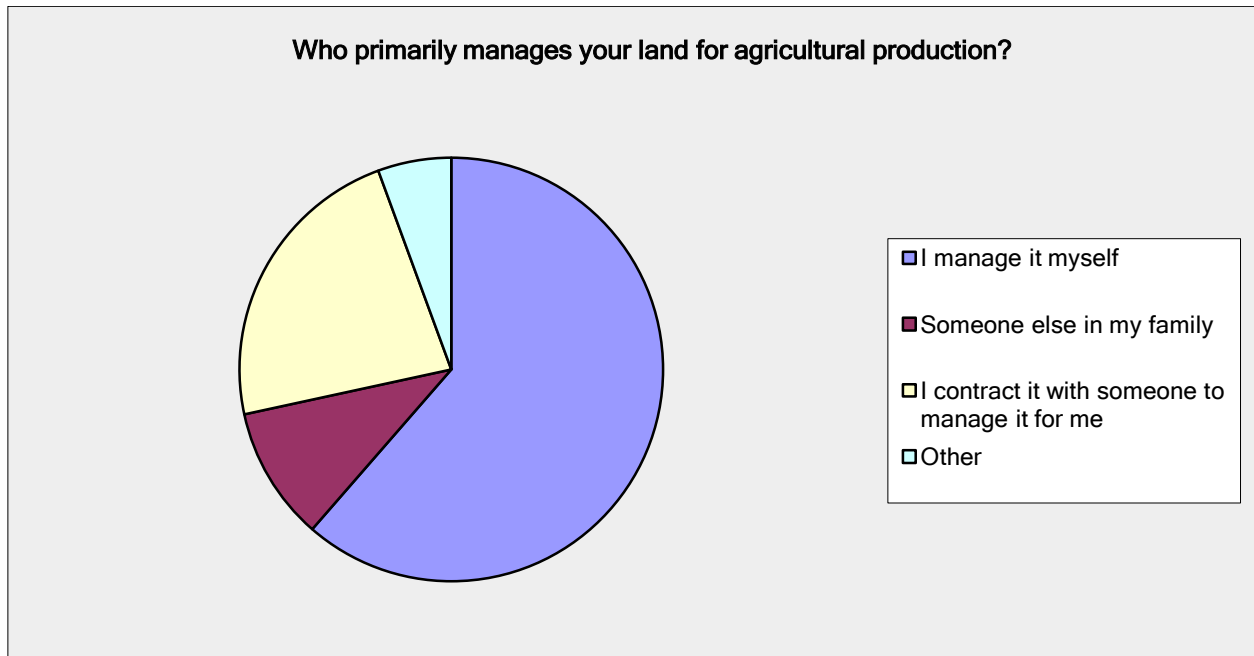
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 25 acres	34.5%	67
More than 25 and less than 50	32.0%	62
More than 50 and less than 100	18.6%	36
More than 100 acres	14.9%	29
<i>answered question</i>		194
<i>skipped question</i>		14



Only 15 percent of respondents are farming more than 100 acres. Larger operations are now more likely to be corporate owned.

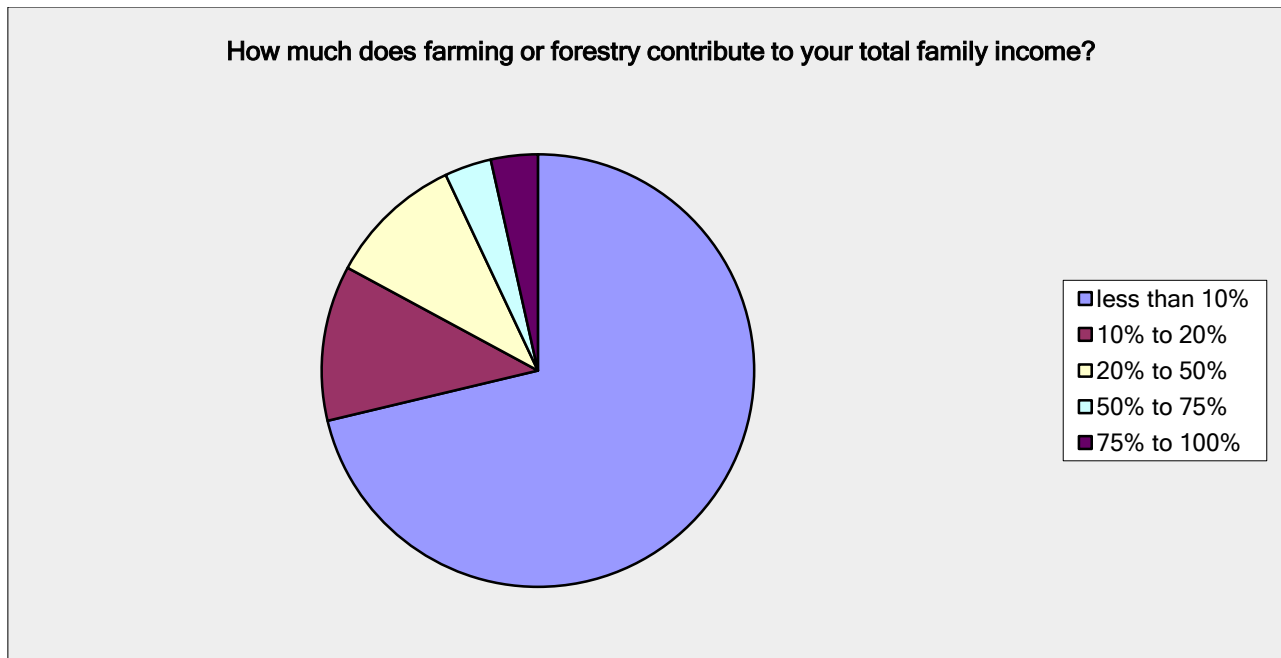
Question 6

Who primarily manages your land for agricultural production?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I manage it myself	61.4%	121
Someone else in my family	10.2%	20
I contract it with someone to manage it for me	22.8%	45
Other	5.6%	11
<i>answered question</i>		197
<i>skipped question</i>		11



Question 7

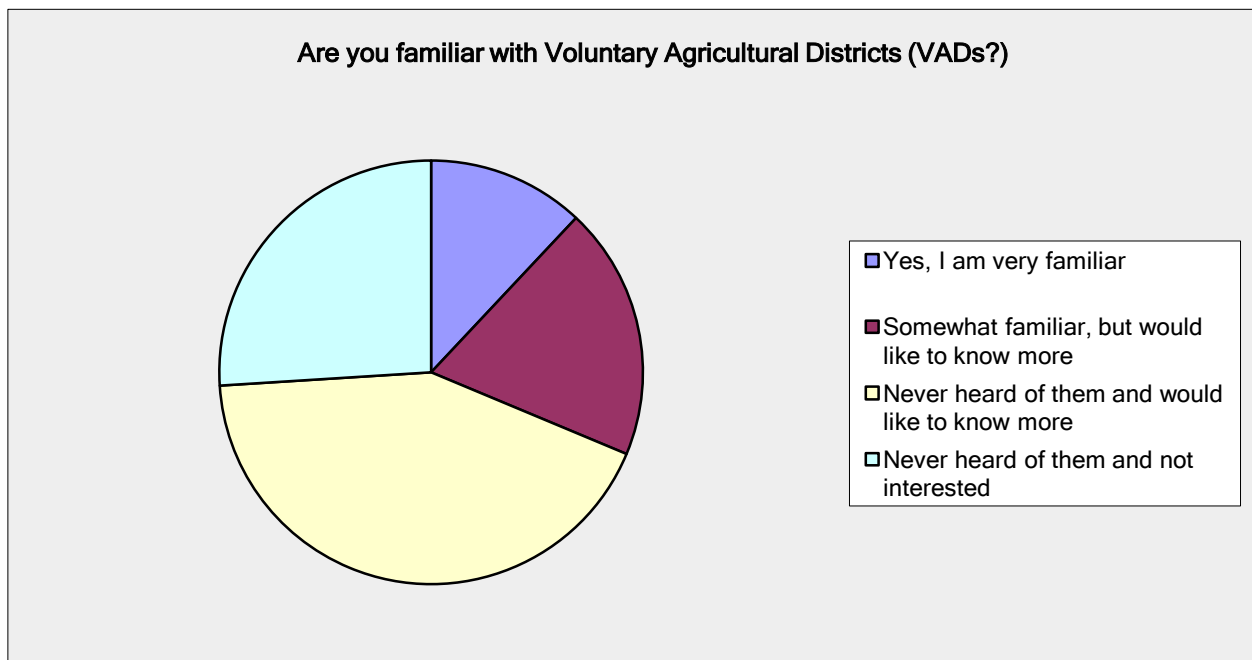
How much does farming or forestry contribute to your total family income?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
less than 10%	71.2%	141
10% to 20%	11.6%	23
20% to 50%	10.1%	20
50% to 75%	3.5%	7
75% to 100%	3.5%	7
<i>answered question</i>		198
<i>skipped question</i>		10



Seven of 10 respondents report that farming or forestry comprise less than 10 percent of their family’s income. Only seven in 100 report that it makes up 50 percent or more. Local growers spoke of the increasing challenges of farming full-time.

Question 8

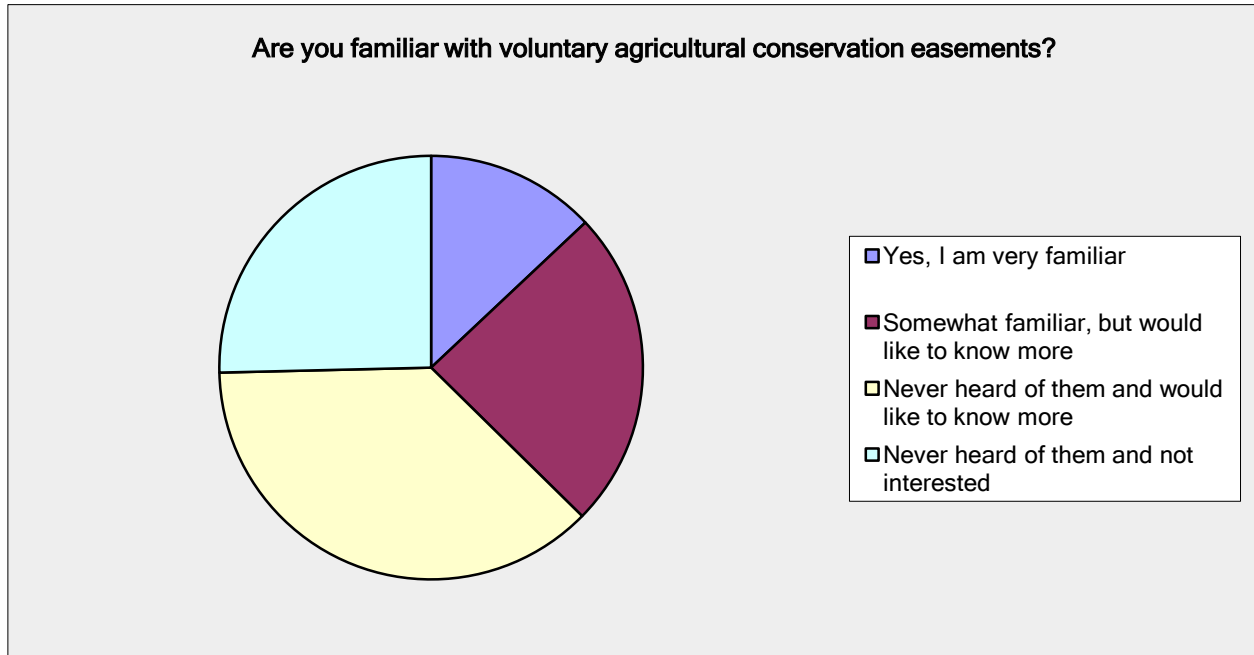
Are you familiar with Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VADs?)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I am very familiar	12.0%	23
Somewhat familiar, but would like to know more	19.3%	37
Never heard of them and would like to know more	42.7%	82
Never heard of them and not interested	26.0%	50
<i>answered question</i>		192
<i>skipped question</i>		16



More than two-thirds of those who responded have never heard of Voluntary Agricultural Districts. Better promotion of the program is needed.

Question 9

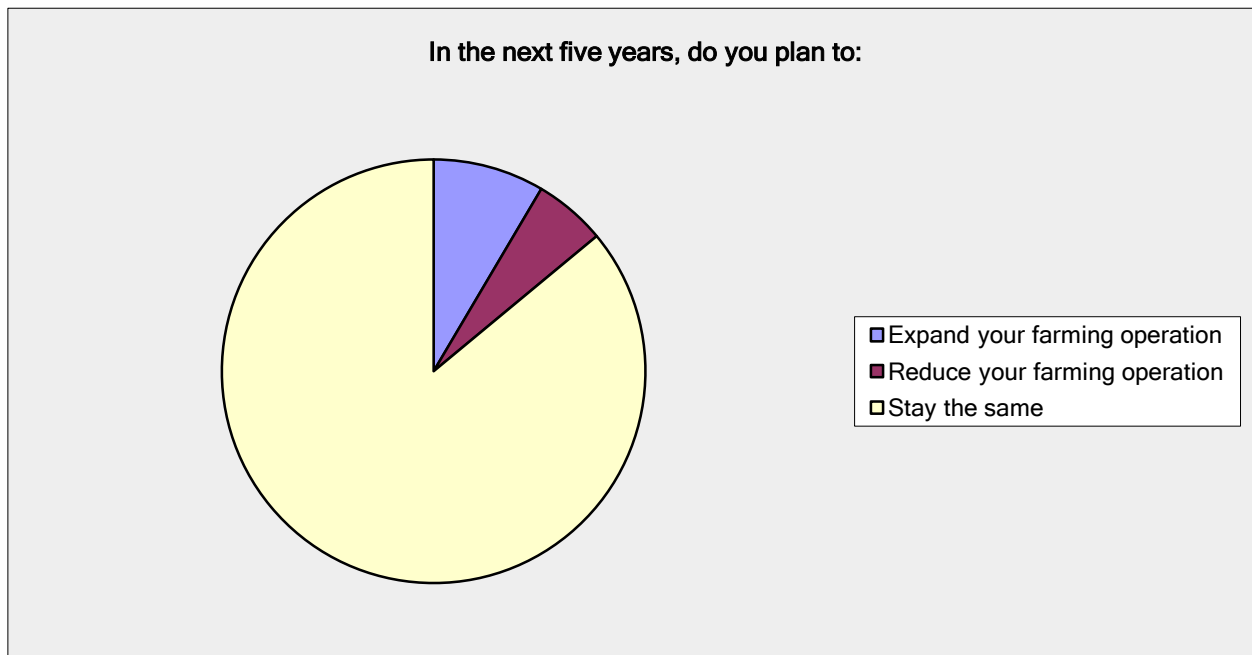
Are you familiar with voluntary agricultural conservation easements?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I am very familiar	13.0%	25
Somewhat familiar, but would like to know more	24.4%	47
Never heard of them and would like to know more	37.3%	72
Never heard of them and not interested	25.4%	49
<i>answered question</i>		193
<i>skipped question</i>		15



Question 10

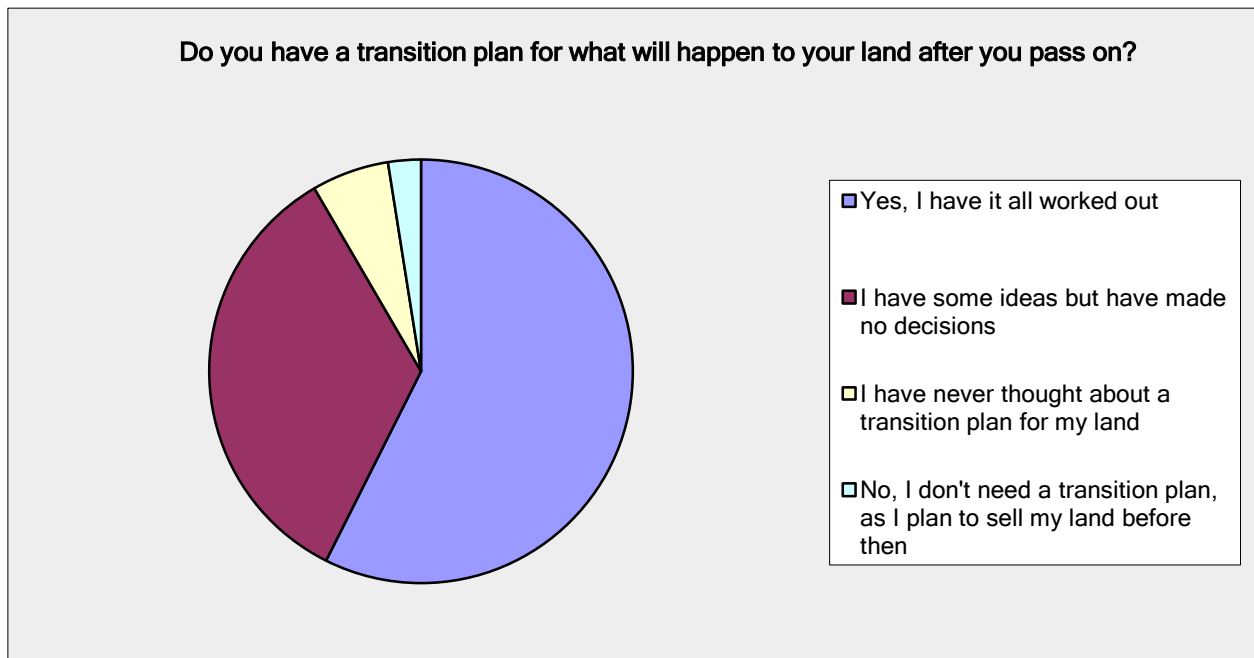
In the next five years, do you plan to:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Expand your farming operation	8.5%	17
Reduce your farming operation	5.5%	11
Stay the same	86.1%	173
Other		7
<i>answered question</i>		201
<i>skipped question</i>		7



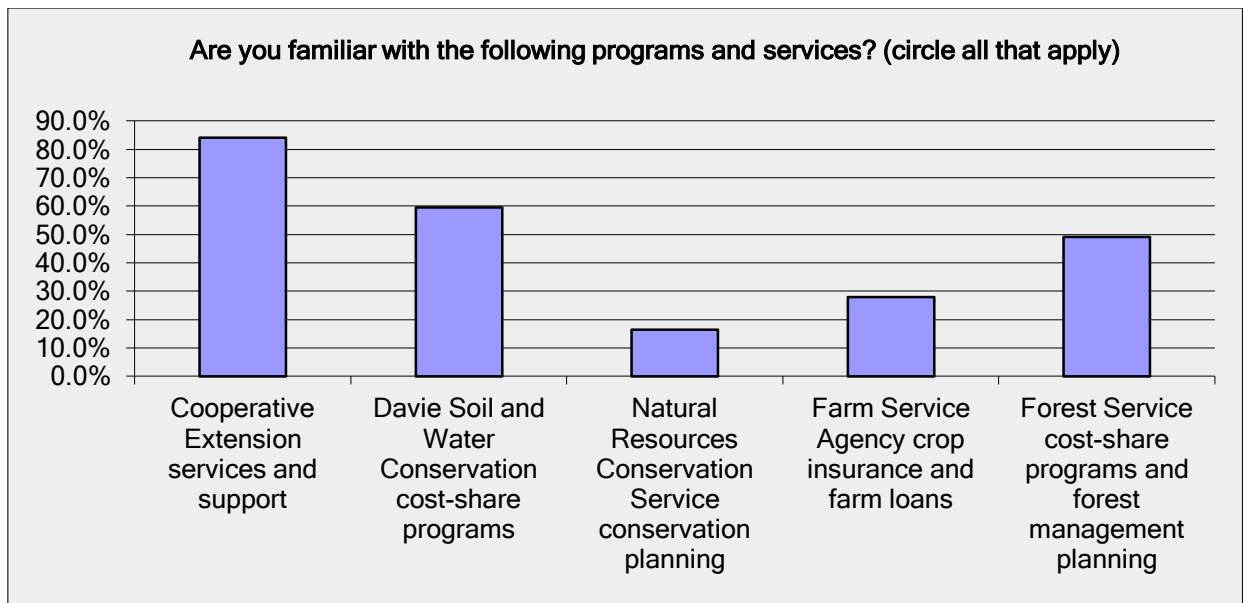
Question 11

Do you have a transition plan for what will happen to your land after you pass on?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I have it all worked out	57.4%	116
I have some ideas but have made no decisions	34.2%	69
I have never thought about a transition plan for my land	5.9%	12
No, I don't need a transition plan, as I plan to sell my land before then	2.5%	5
Other (please describe)		3
answered question		202
skipped question		6



Question 12

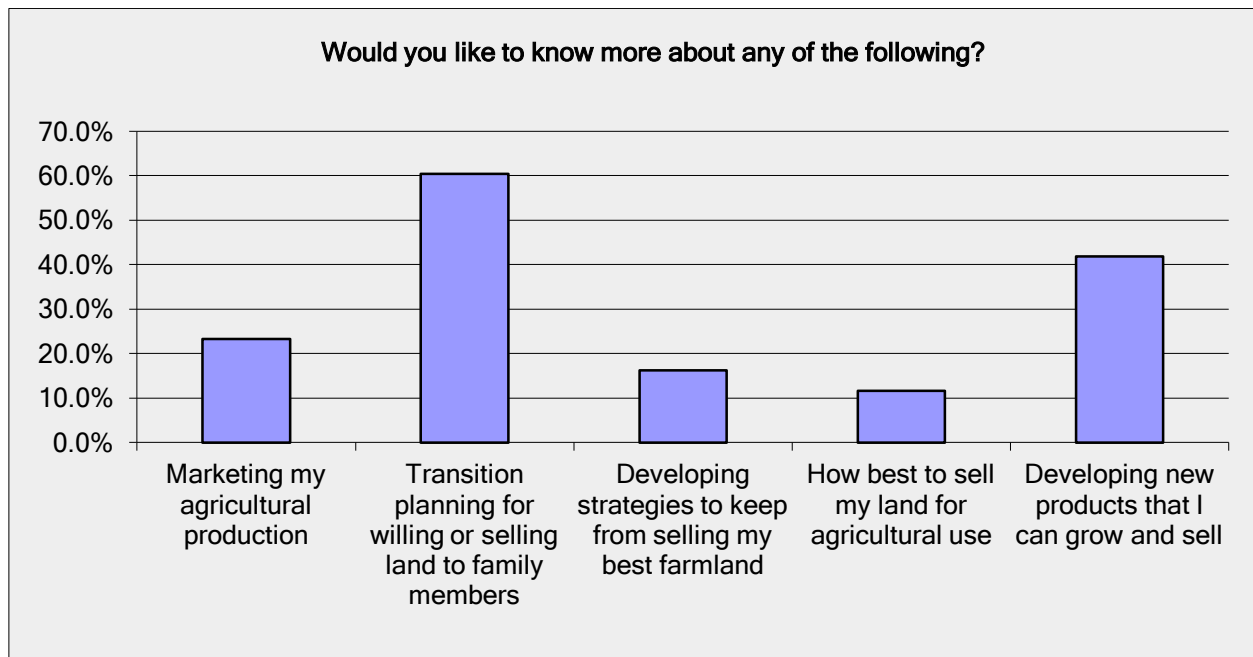
Are you familiar with the following programs and services? (circle all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Cooperative Extension services and support	84.2%	139
Davie Soil and Water Conservation cost-share programs	59.4%	98
Natural Resources Conservation Service conservation planning	16.4%	27
Farm Service Agency crop insurance and farm loans	27.9%	46
Forest Service cost-share programs and forest management planning	49.1%	81
<i>answered question</i>		165
<i>skipped question</i>		43



The Davie County office of N.C. Cooperative Extension is making its presence well known. Those interviewed spoke of the critical role the office plays in the county's agricultural community. Likewise, the Davie County Soil and Water Conservation District office is well established. But the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Farm Service Agency don't have offices in the county. A recommendation is that an effort be made to maintain consistent communications between these offices and local growers.

Question 13

Would you like to know more about any of the following?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Marketing my agricultural production	23.3%	20
Transition planning for willing or selling land to family members	60.5%	52
Developing strategies to keep from selling my best farmland	16.3%	14
How best to sell my land for agricultural use	11.6%	10
Developing new products that I can grow and sell	41.9%	36
Other (please describe)		9
<i>answered question</i>		86
<i>skipped question</i>		122

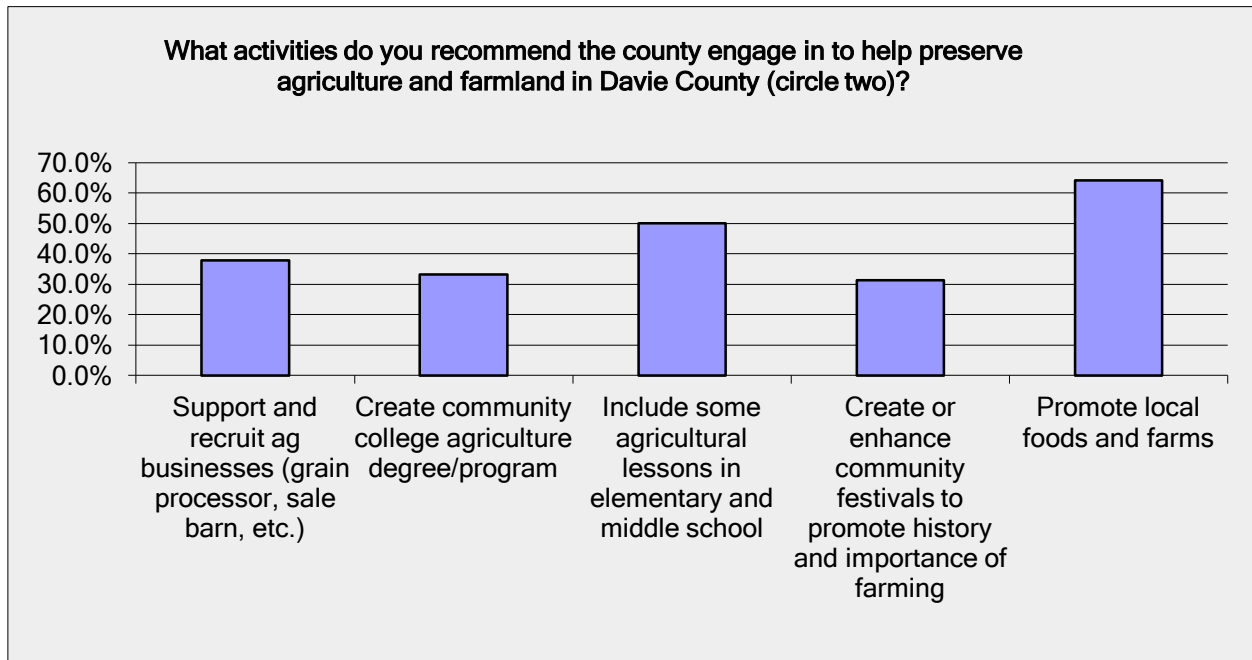


More than half of respondents expressed a desire to learn more about transition planning.

Question 14

What activities do you recommend the county engage in to help preserve agriculture and farmland in Davie County (circle two)?

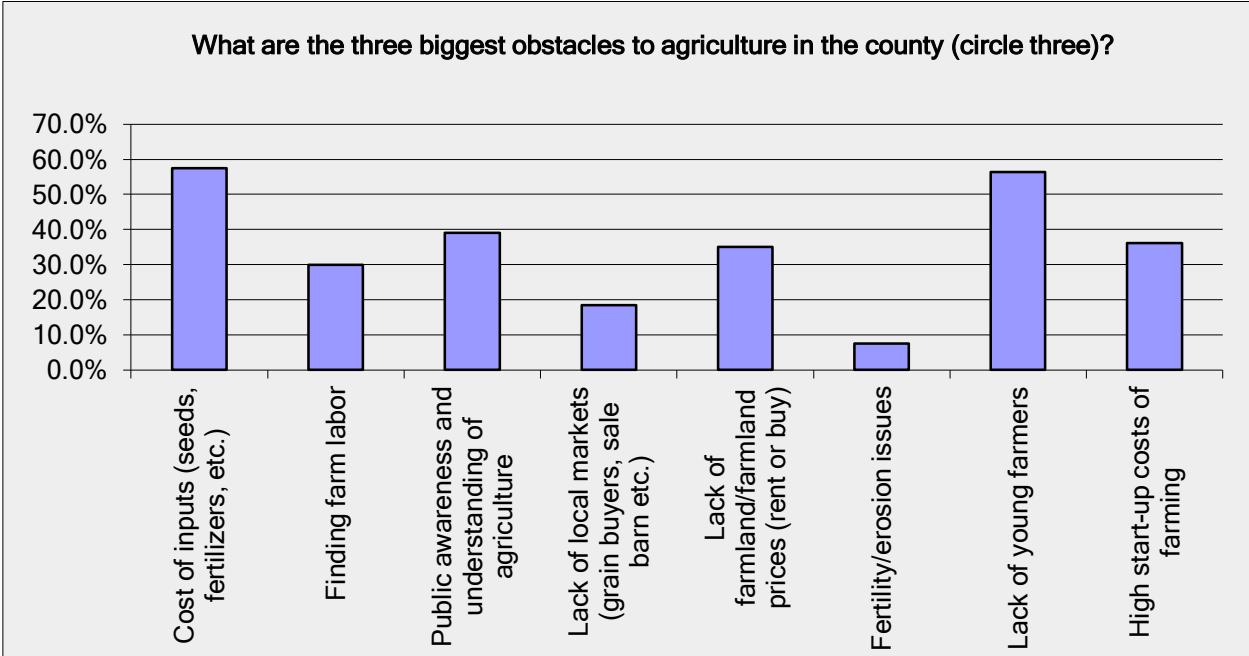
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Support and recruit ag businesses (grain processor, sale barn, etc.)	37.8%	59
Create community college agriculture degree/program	33.3%	52
Include some agricultural lessons in elementary and middle school	50.0%	78
Create or enhance community festivals to promote history and importance of farming	31.4%	49
Promote local foods and farms	64.1%	100
Other (please describe)		7
<i>answered question</i>		156
<i>skipped question</i>		52



A consistent response was the recommendation for enhanced promotion of local foods and farms. Also, more education in the schools regarding agriculture and the role it plays in the community was seen as a vital need.

Question 15

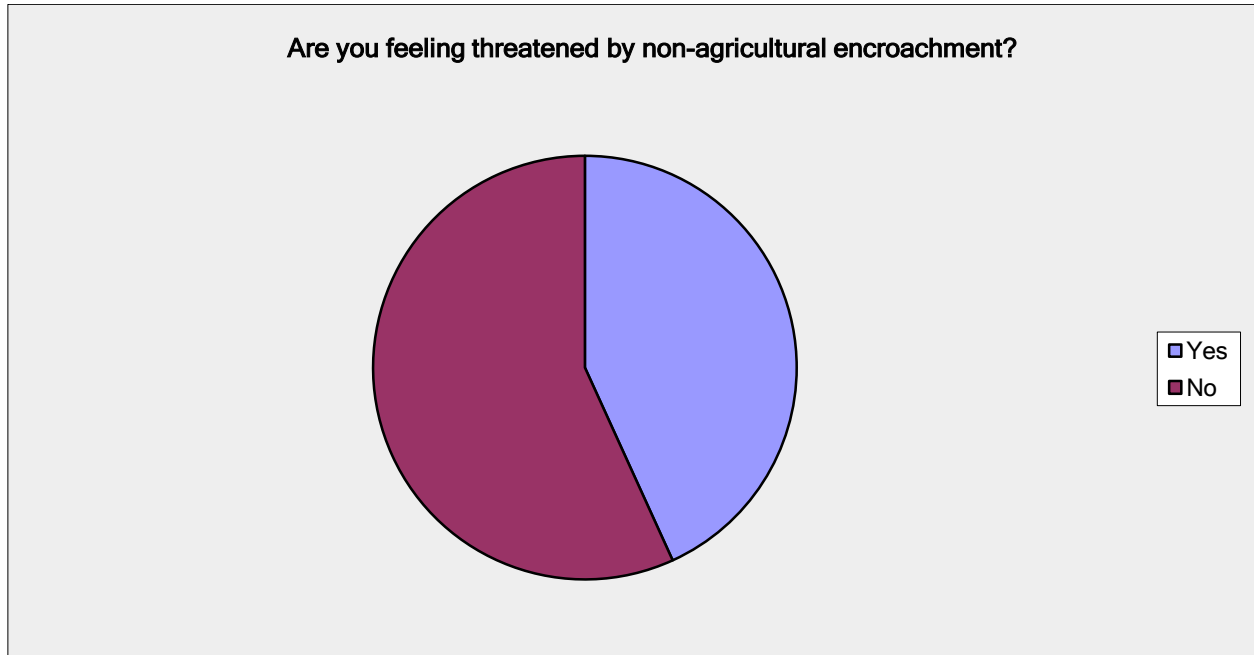
What are the three biggest obstacles to agriculture in the county (circle three)?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Cost of inputs (seeds, fertilizers, etc.)	57.5%	100
Finding farm labor	29.9%	52
Public awareness and understanding of agriculture	39.1%	68
Lack of local markets (grain buyers, sale barn etc.)	18.4%	32
Lack of farmland/farmland prices (rent or buy)	35.1%	61
Fertility/erosion issues	7.5%	13
Lack of young farmers	56.3%	98
High start-up costs of farming	36.2%	63
Other (please describe)		9
<i>answered question</i>		174
<i>skipped question</i>		34



Here again, a concern for the shortage of young farmers was expressed.

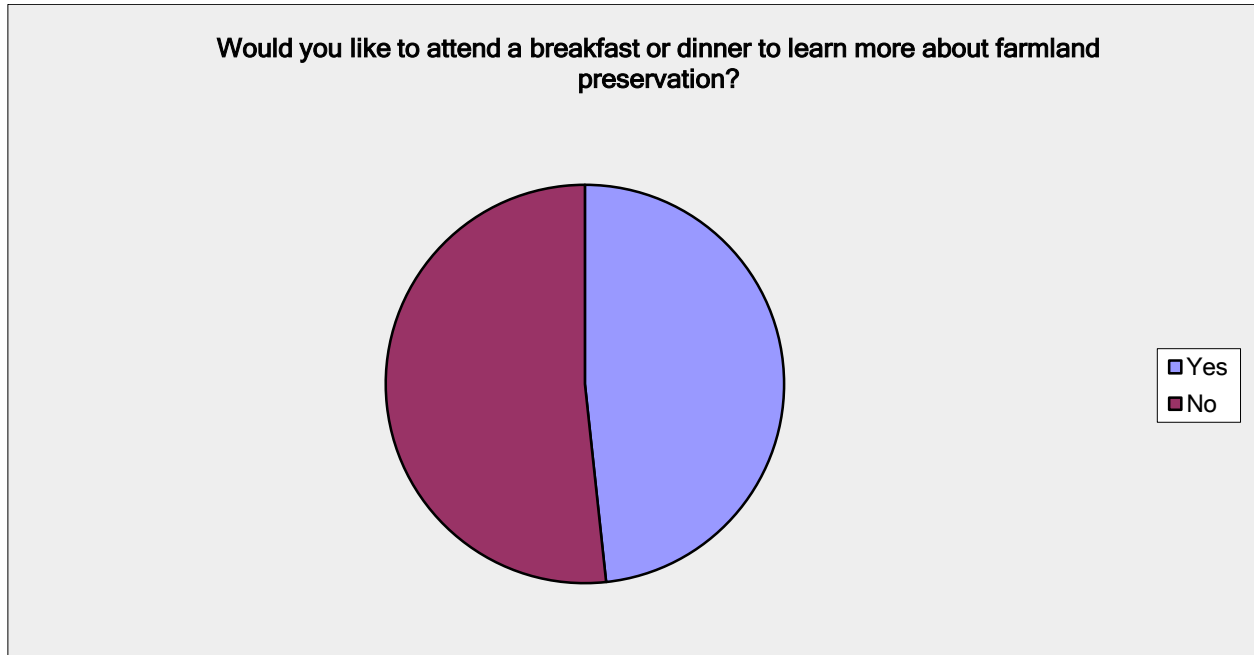
Question 16

Are you feeling threatened by non-agricultural encroachment?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	43.2%	82
No	56.8%	108
<i>answered question</i>		190
<i>skipped question</i>		18



Question 17

Would you like to attend a breakfast or dinner to learn more about farmland preservation?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	48.3%	87
No	51.7%	93
<i>answered question</i>		180
<i>skipped question</i>		28

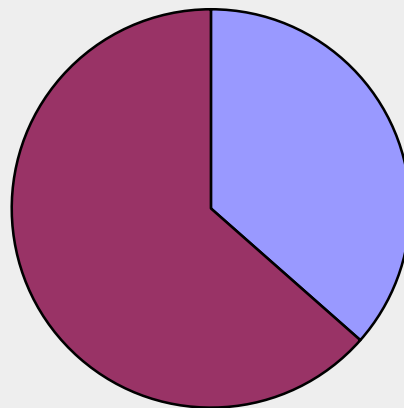


Question 18

We'd like your help and input. May we contact you to learn more about your interests in farmland preservation?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	36.5%	57
No	63.5%	99
If yes, please include your name and phone number		57
<i>answered question</i>		156
<i>skipped question</i>		52

We'd like your help and input. May we contact you to learn more about your interests in farmland preservation?



■ Yes
■ No

Question 19

Do you have any ideas for ways the county can improve agricultural opportunities and preserve farmland?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	55
<i>answered question</i>	55
<i>skipped question</i>	153

The following are some notable comments collected from survey respondents:

- Modern farms are becoming larger, requiring more acreage. Retiring farmers need to generate income from their facilities and land, growing operations need to expand. How can the county play match-maker between the two?
- I feel we need to develop ways for young people to obtain land/equipment to begin farming. It is way beyond the means of most, unless they have family land. Many of the older farmers are not able to farm as they have in the past, and their kids are not interested in continuing the farm operation.
- Promote and recognize agribusiness and agritourism. Promote impact laws for residential developers. Restrictive zoning on designative ag areas that must be in place and reviewed on a tenured basis.
- What about doing some kind of info meetings at the Senior Services to inform or remind seniors to lease their lands to young farmers if there are any!
- Last county tax hike is hurting farmers. Eliminate the \$10,000 income to be eligible for farm tax break.
- Figure out ways to give agriculture back to the small farmers (independent producers) that was indirectly taken away from them by the large companies with contract growers. Buy farm fresh products (meat, vegetables and etc.) directly from the farmer. Educate the public and young people in all of the above and more.
- We have property that we paid \$4,000 per acre for (market value); the tax department appraised it at \$10,000 per acre. Too high for farm or forest use. The property is under the forestry management program. We need new appraisers that know the true value of property in Davie County. Talked with the tax department; they say this is the true value.

- Moratorium on building development of over 10 acres. (A good planner/builder can make money putting houses on 1/2-3/4 acres per lot) Including road, easements, etc., they could easily build lot houses – a nice size neighborhood.
- Start offering more incentives and help to farmers and less to large industries.
- Establish farmland districts where no commercial businesses can be built!

8. Davie County Grower Profiles

J.W. Brown remembers the days of plowing with a mule. His family owned a mule, and one day that mule swam across the river and took up with a family on the other side. It never occurred to the Browns that a mule might swim across a river. It stayed there for a full year.

Such are the stories of a rich agricultural heritage in Davie County.

But times have changed. Mules, of course, are long since gone; tractors today have GPS. That's progress, but not all of this change is for the better. The county's rural culture, and its agricultural economy, face ever-growing risks.

The following profiles of farming families in Davie County are intended to offer a glimpse of the history of agriculture in the county and a snapshot of where it stands today, and to hear from growers their concerns for its future.

Don Brown's grandfather bought the land he now farms, on Foster Road, southwest of Mocksville, in 1956. The family had farmed over toward Cooleemee prior to that. This farm was 300 acres then, and Don has added onto it.

The Browns started a dairy farm. Don's dad, J.W., worked on that farm for a couple of years, went to work off the farm and then came back into farming full-time in 1985. He was raising corn, wheat, soybeans and beef cows. They got out of the dairy business years ago, J.W. says, because it was a time when you had to "get bigger or get out."

In 2000, J.W. turned things over to Don, though he still helps out. They have chicken houses, contracting with Perdue, and also raise beef cows and hay. They've also added greenhouses, growing tomatoes and selling them to some grocery chains. They're working now on getting GAP certified to expand on that.

Poultry is Don Brown's primary source of income now. He has 48 brood cows. The cattle business is kind of fickle, he says; prices go up and down. He's got a neighbor growing grass-fed cows for Whole Foods, and he's looking into getting involved with that, but needs to get GAP certified.

Like his father, Don spent several years working off the farm but has been full-time now for a while. The Brown's used to sell tomatoes out of their home, then opened up a store about three years ago where they sell their own products and a few others.

"It's worked real well for us," Don says. "It starts picking up about March."



J.W. and Don Brown

He advertises in the local paper and through word-of-mouth. He recognizes that he needs to do more with social media.

"I can't remember not farming," Don says. He'd always figured he would. He's 57 now and has one son who's 36 and isn't in farming but has a few beef cows on the side.

"There's more real big farms, fewer family farms these days," he says. Lots of families around him have gotten out. "There was a dairy just a few miles up the road that was passed down to the third generation, but they ended up losing it. It's not easy."

The county has a 4-H program, but Don says it's not nearly as active as it once was. There's no chapter on his side of the county anymore. FFA is struggling at the high school. For a while, there wasn't a program there. Don's on the county Farm Bureau board, and they allocated some money to get it restarted. "Kids don't want to join," he says. "There are only a few in it now."

"If you could do more hands-on, it would help," Don says. "Get them out there and get their hands dirty; I think that would help spark interest."

"It's a hard living," J.W. acknowledges, "and that's going to keep so many out. They don't want that hard work."

"You're going to see more and more corporate farms," Don says. "Even with us, with the chicken houses, I don't know if we could do it without contracting; they absorb a lot of the costs."

Asked what would help, he says that better cooperation from the grocery store chains would go a long way. “They want to be able to advertise that it’s locally grown,” Don says, “but they find ways of disqualifying you. BI-LO has been good to work with though.”

He says he’s not sure there’s much more county government can do to help. He gets a break with farm-use taxes, “and that’s a big help.”

The county supports the farmers’ markets, but Don can’t say that the markets do a lot for growers: “They’re great for the consumer, but it takes a lot of our time, and there’s lots of competition.”

He participates in the VAD program, and thinks it’s a good thing. It helps in case someone was to try to sue him for dust or odor, for example.

He’s gotten some grants in the past, and low-interest loans have also helped.

The county Extension office helps quite a bit, Don says. He took a class through them for help with his GAP certification paperwork. “We need them,” he says. But their funding keeps getting cut.

“Daniel Boone’s family came to Davie County in 1752,” says Henry Walker, “and we were already here.”

Walker grew up in farming: His family had cattle and laying hens and raised grain crops.

“My dad and mom were raised during the Depression; they never wasted anything,” he says.

“We always made a living. We never lived high on the hog, but we had plenty to eat. We don’t know how to do fancy.

“We’re just plain old country folks, that’s what we are.”

Walker’s wife, Sandra, also grew up on a family farm. “You had to work hard,” she recalls, “but you learned a lot. I look back, and I’m grateful for it.”

Today the Walkers farm land west of Mocksville that Henry’s great-grandfather Calvin Godbey bought 145 years ago. Henry and Sandra bought the land from family members in 1968, the year after they got married. They have 500 to 700 head of cattle, depending on the time of year. They also have about 700 acres of grain.

Soon to turn 70, Walker is concerned for the future of farming in Davie County.

“All the family farms are about gone,” he says. “You’ve got your hobby farms, but we’re losing the true family farms. Unless you’ve got chicken houses or a greenhouse for tomatoes, you just can’t do a small farm. You’ve got to have the numbers, the volume.

“There’s really not that many full-time family farms in Davie County. If you do math, it doesn’t pencil out.”



Henry and Sandra Walker

Walker has two sons and a daughter, but only one son who farms. “I couldn’t have done it without him, to tell you the truth,” Walker says. But keeping it all going could be tough.

“I would love to give some young couple a chance,” he says, “but finding them ... If you’re not careful, it could bankrupt you.”

At the top of Walker’s list of threats to the future of agriculture in Davie County is the loss of farmland.

“Land has been broken down into smaller tracts,” he says. “You have people buying large tracts and putting a house in the middle of it.” He’s seeing more and more of that. “It’s using up resources.... Good level farmland is being used up.”

Walker is concerned about realtors and builders developing on good level farmland instead of less desirable land. Also, an unwillingness to look at cluster developments that allow for a more productive use of land.

“Cut the lot size down and then use the rest for ball fields or green space,” he says.

He says NCSU has done a lot of research on this type of development; that research should be better leveraged.

Another of his concerns is a lack of knowledge of farming.

“You have people who are two or three generations removed from farming. Most people view animals as pets, so they go ballistic when you talk about slaughtering an animal.”

Then there are issues with governmental boards and commissions that have no knowledge of agriculture, he says, “or don’t care so long as food is readily available. And they’re making bad decisions regarding agriculture.”

He adds though that he feels good about the present board of county commissioners, and says that he strives to stay in communication with them: “It’s important to talk with governmental officials; they need to hear from knowledgeable voices.”

But there’s no guarantee of that support as seats on the commission turn over. An Extension-hosted Report to the People day is held for local government, at which various issues are discussed, and Walker feels that should be kept up and better promoted.

He also feels good about the work done by the VAD board, but says they need more participation.

Regarding education among community members, Walker thinks it would be a good idea to start FFA in the schools earlier. 4-H Farm Animal Days have been held for second-graders for years; that’s a good thing, he says. There’s also a 4-H Farm to Table program for underprivileged kids; that should be kept up, he says.

Is Walker optimistic about the future of farming in Davie County? “Somebody’s got to be,” he says. “How else are you going to eat? But it’s getting tougher and tougher for the family farms.” He’s concerned about over-regulation, “just keeping people employed with paperwork.”

He agrees that better funding of Extension is needed. The county is sharing agents with Yadkin County; staff is stretched thin. And agents should be paid more, he says; they’re being lost to the private sector. Given the general lack of education in farming, Walker believes, those agents are needed more than ever.

There’s hardly anybody in farming in the county under 40 these days, he says. “Somebody’s got to get interested.”

NCSU offers opportunities to get students from rural communities into school. Students who may not have the grade point average or SAT scores that are customarily required but who have

been active in school activities and expressed interest in agriculture, and have received a recommendation, are accepted and giving assistance in getting up to speed.

This is an important initiative, Walker says; more like it are needed.

Justin Miller grew up 100 yards from where he and his wife, Holly, now farm on Fork Bixby Road in Advance. It's called Cherry Hill Farm.

They've got two boys: Malachi, 5, and Eden, 3.

Justin's family goes back five generations in farming; Holly's goes back three. Their farm is 330 acres, passed down from his family. The original farm was well over 1,000 acres, but it's been divided over the generations. As of yet, they're leasing the land.

The Millers raise strawberries, tomatoes and about 30 other vegetables and some grain. They have a CSA, which they started just last year, and are also now selling some tomatoes, eggplant and spaghetti squash wholesale. Last year was their first year in wholesale; they worked with Foster-Caviness. They're also selling to some local restaurants and convenience stores, and are looking into getting in with some other distributors.

The Millers do the farmers' markets in Mocksville and Advance. They've talked about going to some of the larger ones. Those start at the end of April or first of May and run till November, but things slow down in September.

They have some friends that sell at the farmers' market in Colfax. But, Justin says, it gets discouraging when you spend all day and come back with half a truckload. That's why they've decided to do more wholesale. The farmers' markets take up so much time, he says, and you never know how it's going to go.

Justin never thought he'd farm, and he still keeps a full-time job, at Fuller Welding. He's always enjoyed farming, but he'd been told so often that you couldn't make a living doing it full-time.

Nonetheless, that's the Millers' goal.

The opportunity to take over this land came up five years ago. It was Holly's inspiration to start growing strawberries. No one was doing it; they did the numbers, and it looked worth taking a chance on.



The Miller Family

The biggest challenges for small-scale farmers in Davie County today, they say, are finding available land and reliable labor.

“Nobody wants to work,” Justin says. They have three or four part-time employees during the height of the season: high-schoolers. “I don’t think it was their dream to be farmers when the season was over,” Holly said.

“This is the main issue for us not being able to grow faster than we are,” Justin says of labor. “The cost of H2A workers is so high, it’s impossible for a small, growing farm to be able to afford good labor.

“If the government could make it more affordable for farms like us to use these dependable workers, then we could grow at a faster rate, and therefore have more impact on the community and economy.”

“I’ve run the numbers on health insurance for my family if I were self-employed by the farm,” he says, “and it will probably be one of the biggest things stopping me from going full-time. If I were to buy a new Obamacare plan for my family, it would cost me roughly \$13,000 a year.”

Like so many, he says, he “falls between eligibility for subsidy and being able to afford it.”

“I feel this is stifling for not just small farmers but all small businesses. It really is a roadblock,” he says. “I’ve considered just doing without, but then we will get hit with the fine at the end of the year.”

Justin points out the fact that the county’s Extension office is sharing agents with Yadkin County. “On the other hand, the Davie County economic development has a nice new building,” he says, “and they’ll help you find all kinds of money if you’re a big business. But I’m pretty sure they’d laugh at you if you went in there as a farmer.”

The Millers agree with other growers that better education would make a big difference. Kids don’t know where their food comes from anymore.

In 2015, the Millers attended the Cooperative Extension-run Farm School, which helps train beginning and transitioning farmers. They learned a lot, they say, especially on the business side of things. There are concerns though about its funding being maintained. To lose it, they say, would be unfortunate.

They also worry about the encroachment of development.

Still, they believe they're well on their way to doing this full-time.

"There are a lot of growing pains," Justin says. Cash flow and labor will remain an issue. They would like to have somewhere in the neighborhood of 500 acres to raise grain. "I really enjoy raising soybeans and corn. But I really don't know. It may sound morbid, but I guess somebody will have to die for us to find land."

The Millers would like for their boys to keep farming. "Because I was told so much that I couldn't be a farmer, I will never tell my kids they can't do anything," Justin says. "If they decide they want to farm, by all means, I'll do anything I can to help them.

"It would kind of break my heart if I worked all my life trying to build this up just to have it shut down."

Barry Nichols of Misty Creek Vineyards says he sometimes meets informally with the movers and shakers in the county, and they've given him some insight into the fact that there's no more manufacturing or office space available.

"That's good in that it increases the tax base," he says, "but it's in conflict with farmland preservation."

"When the county has this full employment and every office and manufacturing space is full, they're going to want to build more," Nichols says. "And when they build more, they're also going to need to develop more infrastructure to support that."

When the county builds that additional infrastructure, he says, they're going to look to place it on what is today farmland.

Nichols worked for NASA as an aerospace engineer for 33 years and then got recruited to come to North Carolina in 1996 to work for AON, an insurance company. He then consulted for three years and retired from that.

He and his wife, Kathy, a retired educator, then found the land they're on today. They invested a lot of money in it, putting in roads and ponds.

Though Misty Creek wines win awards – including the N.C. Winegrowers Cup for a Syrah – it hasn't turned a profit since 2002. Things get incrementally better; it might break even this year. Barry Nichols hopes that trajectory continues.

“There would have been better opportunities if we'd just wanted to make money. But this is what we wanted to do.”



Kathy and Barry Nichols

There are few breaks from the work: “We have not taken a vacation since 2002. We're so devoted to making this work.”

They have a Hispanic couple that works for them, but Nichols worries about immigration policies that will make it more difficult for workers to enter the country. It's hard to find good labor, he says.

A trend that concerns Nichols is people leasing or selling their land for cellular towers, a “technology invasion” that will include wind farms and more.

Another issue he cites is that not enough young people are interested in going into farming these days. His own kids love to come visit Misty Creek but aren't interested in taking it over when their parents can no longer manage it. So he and Kathy will probably eventually sell it.

Nichols is concerned that too many growers have no succession plan to keep their operations alive: “When kids come back when the older farmers die, they parcel it up, and many sell. So that’s problematic.”

“The older farmers are not making money. They’re getting less for their crops, expenses are going up, taxes going up. Some of these guys are living right on the edge, and the potential for foreclosure is greater.”

Nichols can’t say that he’s optimistic about the future of agriculture in Davie County.

“I’m not sure farmland preservation is as high on the list as other priorities for the county,” he says. “Not to beat up on the county; this is a good relationship for us. But when it comes down to it, farmland preservation doesn’t put money in the county’s pocket. New business, manufacturing, retail space *does* put money in the county’s pocket, and it helps with greater employment.”

“I like the county government. I like the influx of new business. But again there’s that issue of when you bring it in, where does it go? People look around for farmland that is laying fallow or is in foreclosure.”

More support for agriculture from the state would help – with advertising, for example. A billboard on I-40 costs \$25,000. But one promoting the county’s vineyards, for example, would be a good investment in the county and the state.

“The state pays lip service but doesn’t help the individual winery owners at all,” Nichols says.

“The state of North Carolina doesn’t, I don’t think, see the decline of farming as a critical issue,” he adds.

Nichols does receive good support from the Extension office, but believes it should be better funded. The county is sharing agents with Yadkin County; staff is stretched thin.

He’s a founding member of the VAD board, and feels very good about what that body has accomplished, recognizing that there’s quite a bit more for it to accomplish.

“I believe only about 5 percent of eligible farms are enrolled in the VAD, and as development and foreclosures continue to happen, we’ll have more applicants. I believe it’s successful. The

commissioners are in favor of what we're doing. We hold town meetings. But it takes work to make that happen. And we work 85 hours a week already.”

Nichols says he hears Trump talk about plans for investment in infrastructure. He wants to see some of that reach the agriculture community.

In November 2015, Spurgeon Foster and his family bought the Cooleemee Plantation, about 10 miles east of Mocksville off U.S. 64. The purchase was a vote of confidence in the future of agriculture in Davie County.

Foster, who was born and raised on a farm off Dulin Road, where he and his wife, Sherry, still live, has two sons, Bryan and Wesley. His sons worked on the farm since they were kids, driving combines since they were 10. “Thrilled them to death,” Foster says. “They learned early, and it gave them a lot of confidence.”

Both sons attended NC State, studying agriculture. They certainly wanted to farm, but their dad told them that given the shortage of available land in Davie County, they should probably look elsewhere.



Spurgeon Foster

That’s just what they did, and today the Foster family has a thriving operation in eastern North Carolina, in Tyrell County.

But then an opportunity opened up back in Davie County as well: The Cooleemee Plantation, about 2,000 acres that Foster had farmed under lease since 1979, came up for sale. It’s land that was owned by the Hairston family since 1817.

The Fosters have done quite a bit of work on the plantation – refurbished the barn and a brick oven, remodeled a lake house in a restored cabin. There are numerous outbuildings, many of which were probably slave quarters. Foster says the Hairstons once had 300 slaves.

The main house, which was started in 1853, took two years to build. It's constructed with bricks made on the farm – more than 300,000 of them. Foster plans to hold events there. He sometimes rents the lake house for groups on weekends.

There's a very rare type of granite there that the local people called "leopard stone," Foster says, with black circles in it.

The Foster family is farming 10,000 acres combined: here, in Tyrell County and also in Davidson County. They also lease out land.

Foster has seen a great deal of change in agriculture in the county in his days.

"I've got a picture of the intersection of 158 and 801 from the '50s," he says. "There were two stores; the rest of it was pastureland. And clear to the river, there was nothing but farms."

He remembers when he was on both the soybean growers' and corn growers' boards in the 1970s, and they had just started to talk about land trust. "The intent was to try to stop investors from buying big tracts of land and putting in golf courses and developments, and I liked the idea."

He wants to see protections that allow farmers to stay in business kept in place.

The Fosters' plan is to cut timber on Cooleemee Plantation: a lot of it is "old, big, dying, falling. You thin it, and the wind blows it over," Foster says. But if they can't farm that land, they'll plant trees back. They're working with the N.C. Forest Service on that.

Foster has six full-time employees and more part-time. It's very hard to find good help, he says, echoing other growers. He's lucky to have guys who've been with him for a while.

"In agriculture, there are years you make money and years you don't," Foster allows. "I've seen more bad years than good."

Prices are erratic. "Corn's too cheap. It costs \$500 an acre to grow it, and you don't know if you can get \$4 a bushel out of it. If you can get 200 bushels out of it, you can make money. But if you average 140 or 150, you're lucky."

Foster rues the fact that Smithfield Foods was bought by a Chinese firm. "They've ended up with the packing plants, the feed mills and the hogs, and the government shouldn't have let that happen. That's our food supply."

But he says he's optimistic about agriculture in Davie County. He still considers an investment in the county to be a good one.

"I've been doing this all my life. It's a gamble," he admits. But he's still expanding. "I've been buying land all my life."

He's got six grandchildren; the oldest is 13. Those kids, like their dads before them, are already driving tractors. But Foster doesn't know if any of them will want to go into farming.

"They've got an opportunity; I'll have to say that."

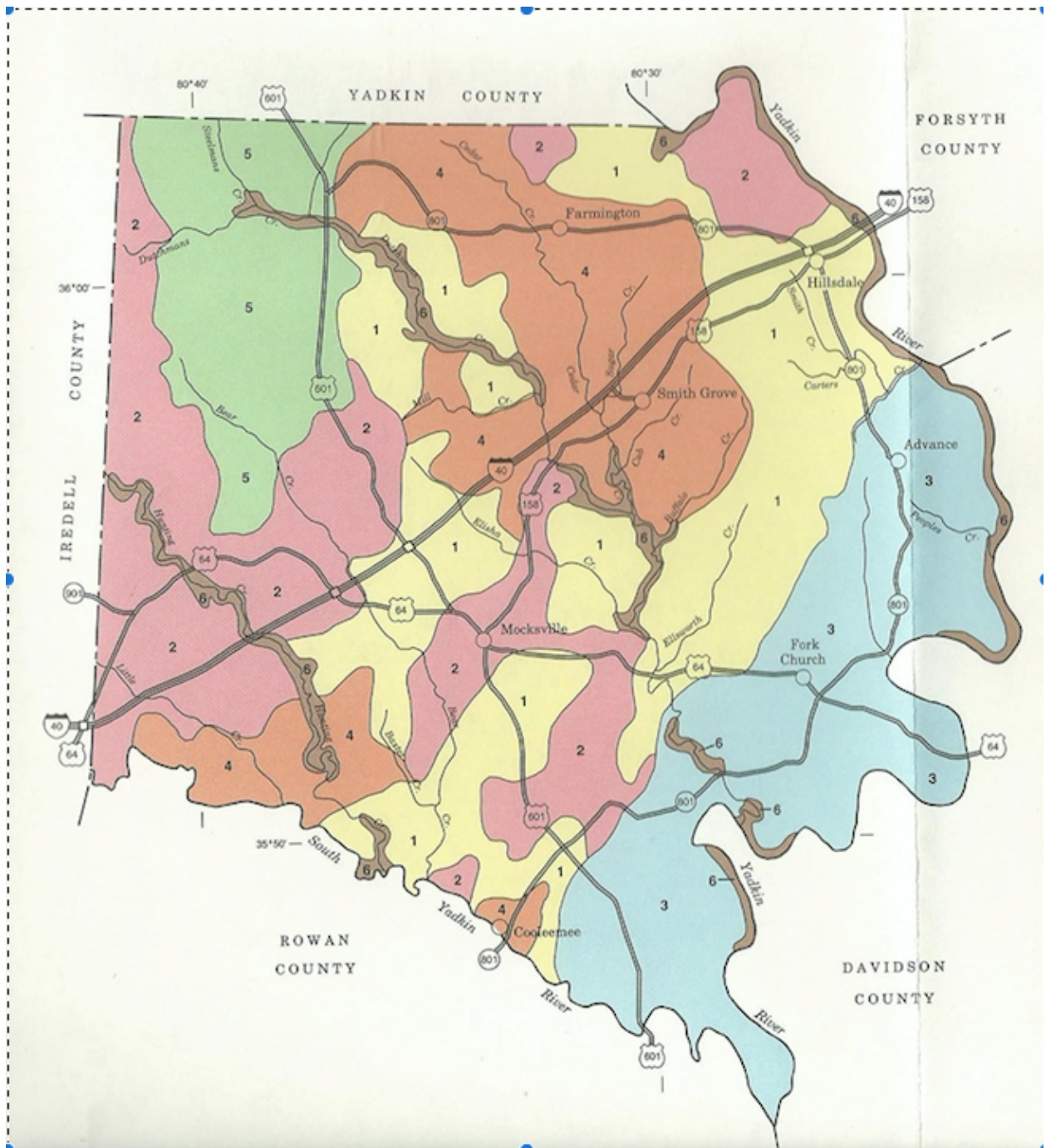
"I think a farm is the best place to raise a kid," Foster says, "the absolute best place."

9. Soils of Davie County

Davie County has a large amount of land with prime soils and soils of statewide importance. The county has six taxonomic classes of soil, with each possessing multiple subtypes. Information and maps regarding soils are from the “Soil Survey of Davie County, North Carolina,” a 128-page document published in 1995 by USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service. Specific area maps showing soil types are available in that document, and should be consulted when determining soil qualities for specific areas of the county.

According to NRCS, the county has 16 soil types that are classified as prime farmland, and 20 types that are classified as of statewide importance. Prime farmland is found in low areas along riverbanks and tributaries of the major waterways in the county. A total of 96,939 acres of land are identified as prime soils, and 46,047 acres of land have soils of statewide importance. Together, prime soils and soils of statewide importance constitute about 84 percent of the county’s landmass.

The County Soil Map is included on the following page. A listing of all Davie County soil types of prime farmland and soil types of statewide importance is presented below. The county is encouraged to consider areas of prime farmland, or soils of local or statewide importance, when seeking to prioritize land for preservation efforts.



LEGEND*

1	GASTON - MOCKSVILLE - MECKLENBURG
2	CECIL - PACOLET - RION
3	PACOLET - WEDOWEE
4	ENON - MOCKSVILLE
5	MAYODAN
6	CHEWACLA - RIVERVIEW

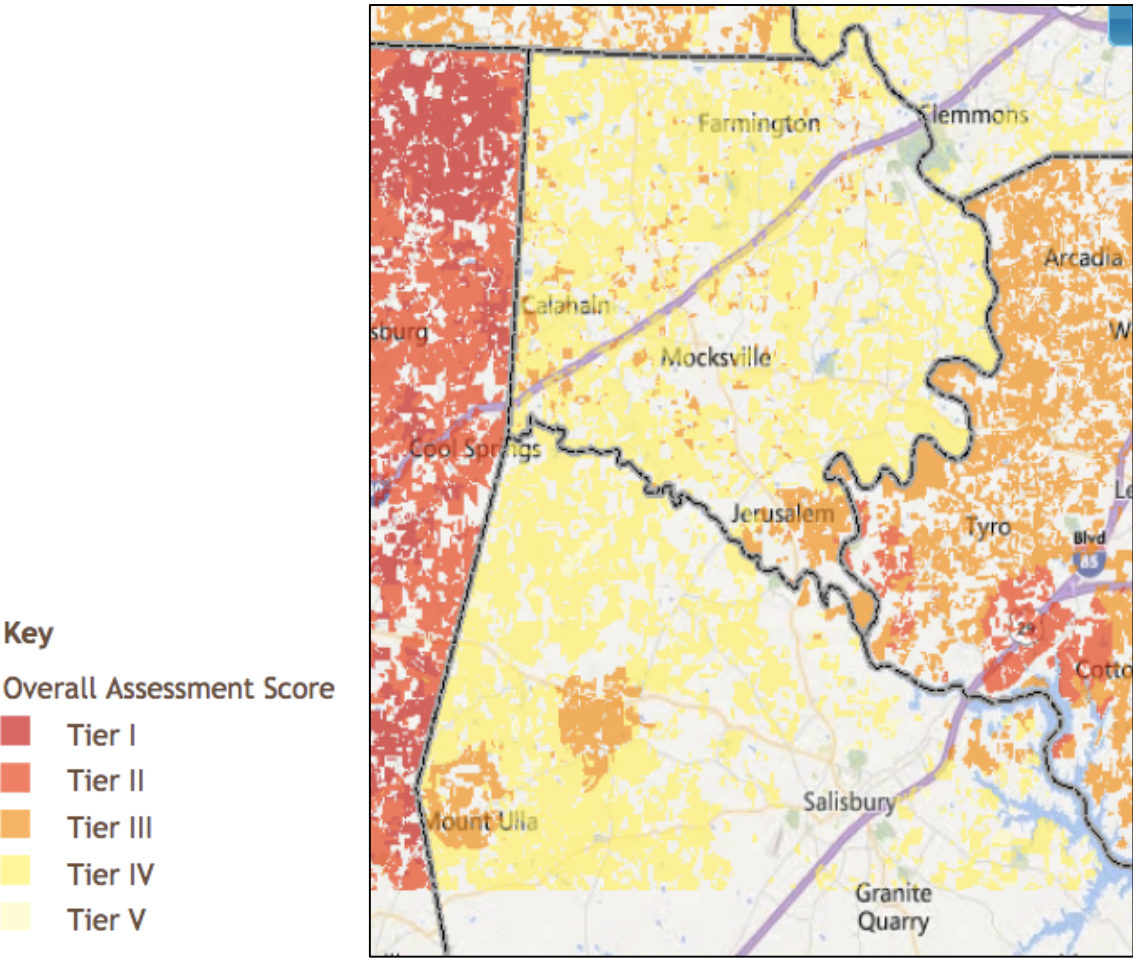
* The units on this legend are described in the text under the heading "general soil map units"

Prime Soils of Davie County			
Soil Symbol	Soil Name	Acres	% of County
AaA	Altavista fine sandy loam, 0% to 2% slopes, occasionally flooded	736	0.4
ApB	Appling sandy loam, 2% to 8% slopes	1,526	0.9
CeB2	Cecil sandy clay loam, 2% to 8 % slopes, eroded	13,159	7.7
ChA	Chewacla loam, 0% to 2 % slopes, frequently flooded (only drained areas either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the season of use)	16,068	9.4
EnB	Enon fine sandy loam, 2% to 8 % slopes	15,552	9.1
GnB2	Gaston clay loam, 2% to 8% slopes, eroded	17,098	10.0
GrB	Granville gravelly sandy loam, 2% to 8% lopes	194	0.1
MaB	Masada fine sandy loam, 2% to 6% slopes	771	0.5
MdB	Mayodan silt loam, 2% to 8% slopes	916	0.5
MnB2	Mayodan silty clay loam, 2% to 28% slopes, eroded	5,886	3.5
MrB2	Mecklenburg clay loam, 2% to 8% slopes, eroded	5,173	3.0
MsB	Mocksville sandy loam, 2% to 8% slopes	1,364	0.8
PcB2	Pacolet sandy loam, 2\$ to 8% slopes, eroded	11,792	6.9
RvA	Riverview loam, 0% to 2% slopes, frequently flooded (only areas protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the season of use)	2,382	1.4
SeB	Sedgefield sandy loam, 1% to 6% slopes	997	0.6
WeB	Wedowee sandy loam, 2% to 8% slopes	3,325	0.2
Totals		96,939	56.8

10. Prioritizing Preservation

Davie County is recommended to adopt objective criteria for ranking farmland in order of priority for preservation. While preservation of prime farmland is an obvious priority, other factors must weigh in the ranking. The Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund (ADFPTF) website hosts a GIS-based agricultural lands assessment tool to assist in prioritizing lands for preservation. This tool, including GIS maps and a description of rankings, can be found at: <http://www.ncmhtd.com/EnvironmentalPrograms/AgAssessment/>

According to the tool, Davie County does not have any agricultural lands that meet the two highest levels of threat for development. A large amount of land in the county is categorized as at a “Level IV” threat, with a few select parcels categorized as “Level III.”



Several counties in North Carolina have developed comprehensive farmland ranking systems that are used to identify and prioritize lands for purchase of agricultural conservation easements. This model includes a soil assessment and a site assessment, and scores for each are added to arrive at the total score. In other counties, these two parts are described as follows:

(1) *Site assessment criteria*. This part of the system consists of 10 factors, most of which are related to development pressures and development capability/suitability of a particular farm parcel and its surrounding area. Each factor is assigned a point value based on its relative importance to other factors.

(2) *Soil assessment criteria*. All soils in the county have been rated and placed into groups ranging from the most productive farmland to the least productive. A relative value has been determined for each group. The best group is assigned the highest value and all other groups are assigned lower values.

For site assessment scoring, the following criteria are used. Point values are listed in parentheses below:

Farm Size (weight: 100 Points). A score of one point per acre is given, up to a maximum of 100 points.

Percentage of Farm in Agricultural Use (weight: 100 points) A score of one ranking point per percentage point of land in production compared to total farm size is given, up to maximum of 100 points.

Proximity to Public Water and Sewer (weight: 100 points)

Existing service area adjacent: 100 points

Existing service area within 1/4 mile: 80 points

Planned service area within 1/4 mile: 70 points

Existing service area within 1/2 mile: 60 points

Planned service area within 1/2 mile: 50 points

Existing or planned service area within 1-mile radius: 30 points

No existing or planned service area within 1-mile radius: 10 points

Probability of Conversion (weight: 100 points)

- Property subject to potential forced sale: 100 points
- Property subject to estate settlement sale: 75 points
- Property actively marketed for voluntary sale: 50 points

Proximity to Planned Development (weight: 50 points)

- Non-Agricultural development planned adjacent: 50 points
- Non-Agricultural development planned within 1/4 mile: 40 points
- Non-Agricultural development planned within 1/2 mile: 30 points
- Non-Agricultural development planned within 1 mile: 20 points
- Planned agriculture within 1 mile 10 points

Proximity to Voluntary Agricultural Districts (weight: 50 points)

- Included in or adjacent to APA: 50 points
- Within 1/4 mile: 40 points
- 1/4 to 1/2 mile: 30 points
- More than 1/2 mile: 20 points

Capital Investment in Farm Operation (weight: 200 Points. Dwellings are not included in this determination other than employee housing.)

- Substantial capital investment within past 5 years: 200 points
- Substantial capital investment within past 10 years: 100 points
- Substantial capital investment within past 15 years: 50 points

Conservation Program (weight: 200 points). A score of two ranking points per percentage point of land meeting the “T” formula of conservation is given, up to a maximum of 200 points. This formula is designed to mitigate loss of soils on highly erodible land and may give opportunity for conservation easements on soils that are not considered prime or otherwise preferred.

Historic, Scenic, Environmental Qualities (weight: 50 points). This scoring gives weight to lands with any of the following: exceptional features favorable to preservation (National Register of Historic Places, exceptional scenic contribution on major highway corridor, exceptional or special environmental circumstances); significant features favorable to preservation (Historic Site Survey, significant scenic contribution of rural roads, significant environmental circumstances); features favorable to preservation

(significant but undocumented historic features, moderate localized scenic contribution and/or limited but recognized environmental features favorable to preservation).

Specialty Products (weight: 50 points). A score of one-half a ranking point per percentage point of land used for production of a locally unique crop or product, up to a maximum of 50 points.

For soil-assessment ranking, most counties have adopted a system whereby prime soils are given much higher scoring than other soils. For Davie County, a reasonable approach to ranking lands by soil type is to give 5 points for each soil type listed as prime farmland, multiplied by the percentage of farmland containing such soils on a given farm. Using the same system, farmland of local and statewide importance can be given 3 points, with 1 point assigned to all other soils.

As an example, a 150-acre tract of land with 75 acres in prime soils, 25 acres of farmland of local importance and 50 acres of other soils would have the following soil assessment score:

Soil Type	Total Acres	% of total farm	Score
Prime (5 points)	75	50	250 (5 x 50)
Soil of local importance (3 points)	25	17	51 (17 x 3)
Other Soils (1 point)	50	33	33 (33 x 1)
Total	150	100	334

Prioritization Conclusion

Adoption of clear objective criteria now will set the stage for proper allocation of resources toward conservation easements in the future. It’s recommended that Davie County amend its existing voluntary farmland preservation ordinance to include a formal ranking system for prioritizing farmland for purchase of agricultural conservation easements.

11. Plan of Action

Conclusions and recommendations in this Plan of Action are based on analysis of demographic and economic trends as well as significant input from farmers, landowners, service providers and citizens interested in the future of agriculture in Davie County. This section recommends policies and actions that both protect agricultural land and improve the viability of agriculture.

These recommendations fall into several categories:

1) Promote farmland protection through Present Use Value taxation.

Several policy tools are available now to Davie County that support new and continuing ways to earn income from the land. Chief among these is Present Use Value taxation, which serves to lower property tax rates on land that is being used for production of timber, agricultural and horticultural products. Under North Carolina General Statute 105-277, PUV lands constitute 10 acres or more for agricultural use, five acres or more for horticultural use and 20 acres for forestry.

Other requirements include:

Production must follow a sound management plan.

Agricultural and horticultural land must have at least one qualifying tract that has produced an average gross income of at least \$1,000 for the three years preceding the application year.

Forestland must follow a forest management plan.

Research shows that the cost of services for agricultural land is significantly lower than costs of services for residential or commercial property, which require greater utility services as well as human services such as police, fire and rescue.

Davie County will support ongoing PUV valuation for qualifying lands and will inform landowners of such lands that they are able to pay taxes under PUV provided that their land is being put to eligible productive use. N.C. Cooperative Extension and the Davie County Soil and Water Conservation District will provide guidance to landowners seeking PUV on viable production options, including forestry, cattle and hay production. The County GIS map will provide a layer named Lands in Present Use Valuation for easy online reference.

2) Promote farmland protection through Voluntary Agriculture Districts and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts.

Davie County has successfully implemented a policy for Voluntary Agricultural Districts, with 37 farms and 4,592 acres entered into the program. This success will be promoted through the county's website, and new VAD enrollments may be publicized through press releases (with consent of the landowners). The county will consider direct mailings to qualifying landowners who are not yet enrolled into the program.

The County GIS map will provide a layer named Voluntary Ag Districts for easy online reference to participating landowners.

Additionally, the county will provide notifications of adjacent or near-by VAD lands when land transactions occur. Signage at the County Register of Deeds office will be posted regarding VAD policies that protect landowners from nuisance complaints or infringements on traditional agricultural production activities.

The county also has Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts (EVAD). EVAD allows landowners to voluntarily enter their land into 10-year binding easements that preclude use of land for any purposes other than forestry, agriculture and horticulture. It provides landowners with an additional tool for managing property transitions and decreases match requirements for Agricultural Cost Share and AgWRAP from 75/25 to 90/10. EVAD also increases scoring for competitive grant applications to these programs.

3) Promote the value and quality of locally grown foods.

Regional demand for locally grown foods appears to be a long-term trend that can be capitalized on through direct marketing at farmers' markets and wholesale distribution to supermarkets and regional produce distributors. Extension personnel will stay abreast of market opportunities and give timely advice to farmers looking for new and expanding markets. Extension will work to help farms diversify their incomes through such options as agritourism and production of high-value specialty crops for farms with limited land and financial resources.

4) Promote outreach and education on land taxation, estate planning, conservation easements and development planning.

Survey responses from landowners indicate a number are interested in learning more about conservation easements and estate planning. Others are interested in development options that also maintain the rural character and allow for some continuance of agricultural production. Davie County will implement a series of informational workshops that give landowners practical knowledge of these options, as well as a pathway for executing their choices. Workshops will be organized using a multi-agency approach including N.C. Cooperative Extension, the USDA Farm Service Agency and the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Given that there are no Natural Resources Conservation Service or Farm Service Agency offices in Davie County, an effort should be made to maintain consistent communication with those offices on matters of interest to farmers in the county. Support should be expressed for meetings to be held on a regular basis in Davie County.

5) Support agricultural training and education at the K-12, community college and university levels.

Numerous farmers, service providers and other community members expressed strong support for increasing the level of agricultural education from elementary school through college. Support was expressed for increased funding for 4-H and FFA programs.

Support was also expressed for continued funding of 4-H Farm Animal days and the 4-H Farm to Table program. Davie S&WCD and Cooperative Extension should work to expand other outreach opportunities to public schools. These include the creation of school gardens at elementary and middle schools and programs for agricultural high school education and clubs. A point person will be identified at each school for development of educational opportunities.

6) Support marketing and production training and facilitate greater diversity in agricultural enterprises.

Training and education is the core mission of N. C. Cooperative Extension and is a cornerstone service of Soil and Water Conservation. Extension links farmers to opportunities for marketing agricultural products through regional collaboration and in providing educational opportunities for production of fresh fruits and vegetables, niche local products and other diversification

strategies. Extension will continue these efforts with greater outreach to commodity groups and regional agricultural marketing programs.

7) Maintain and encourage open dialogue between growers and elected officials.

It is important that both growers and governmental officials be encouraged to maintain open, ongoing dialogue. Officials should hear from knowledgeable voices about agricultural concerns. Davie County Extension hosts a Report to the People day, at which various issues are discussed. Such occasions should be maintained and better promoted.

8) Identify and prioritize prime farmland that is most at risk and develop strategies with landowners to preserve their land.

Davie County will adopt criteria for ranking prioritization of farmland for preservation through conservation easements or other tools that will preserve superior land for future generations. When appropriate, Extension staff will work with landowners and provide guidance on strategies that will preserve farmland.

9) Strengthen support for agricultural economic development.

Agriculture is often overlooked as a driving economic force in Davie County. The county is positively situated for recruitment of food and agricultural handlers, packers, processors and distributors. Positive characteristics for agribusiness recruitment include superior soils, pro-business leadership, proximity to major population centers and excellent highways. The county has opportunities to attract outside investment and encourage growth of locally owned agricultural businesses.

10) Strengthen disaster preparedness for Avian Influenza, drought and other natural disasters.

Davie County Extension will communicate regularly with state emergency management personnel to remain fully apprised of what to do in the event of an outbreak. Staff will work to assure that poultry growers have a plan in place for safe disposal of poultry in an outbreak situation. Davie County S&WCD staff will assist preventive measures on farms to withstand drought for livestock and crops, with such improvements as wells and holding ponds for water conservation.

10) Continue promotion of Best Management Practices for conservation of land and natural resources.

BMPs are essential to maintaining productive farmland. Davie County S&WCD will continue to proactively train and educate landowners on best management practices for soil and water conservation. Staff will support continuation of programs at the state and federal levels that help farms improve conservation measures.

Timeline of Implementation

The recommendations included in this farmland preservation plan are ongoing in nature. In many instances, recommendations are already being implemented, and the Davie County Extension 2017 Plan of Work incorporates many of the recommendations found here. Each year, the plan of work will incorporate activities in support of farmland preservation.

The Davie County Board of Commissioners will review recommendations and adopt measures necessary to achieve objectives in calendar year 2018 and will incorporate farmland preservation initiatives into the commissioners' annual strategic plan.

In the short term, formal adoption of this farmland protection plan should be completed before the end of 2017, with programmatic implementation to begin in 2018.

This farmland preservation plan will be updated every five years, beginning in 2022. Updates will include demographic and economic data since the previous agricultural census and recommended programming to achieve farmland preservation goals.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Davie County Farmland Protection Plan Survey

1. How long has your land been in your family?

- a) Less than 5 years
- b) Between 5 and 20 years
- c) Between 20 and 50 years
- d) More than 50 years

2. What is your age category (circle one)?

- a) Over 70 d) 40-49
- b) 60-69 e) 30-39
- c) 50-59 f) Under 30

3. Please circle the top three agricultural uses of your land:

- a) Field crops (corn/soybeans/wheat/cotton) g) Vegetables
- b) Chickens (broilers) h) Hay
- c) Cattle i) Nursery or Ornamentals
- d) Other Livestock j) Forestry
- e) Turkeys k) Other (please describe):
- f) Fruit crops (blackberries/apples/peaches) _____

4. Approximately how many acres of your land do you have in forestry? (circle one)?

- a) Less than 25 acres
- b) More than 25 and less than 50
- c) More than 50 and less than 100
- d) More than 100 acres

5. How many acres of your land do you have in agriculture (circle one)?

- a) Less than 25 acres
- b) More than 25 and less than 50
- c) More than 50 and less than 100
- d) More than 100 acres

6. Who primarily manages your land for agricultural production (circle one)?

- a) I manage it myself
- b) Someone else in my family
- c) I contract with someone to manage it for me
- e) Other

7. How much does farming or forestry contribute to your total family income?

- a) less than 10%
- b) 10% to 20%
- c) 20% to 50%
- d) 50% to 75%
- e) 75% to 100%

8. Are you familiar with Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VADs)?

- a) Yes, I am very familiar
- b) Somewhat familiar but would like to know more
- c) Never heard of them and would like to know more
- d) Never heard of them and not interested

9. Are you familiar with voluntary agricultural conservation easements?

- a) Yes, I am very familiar
- b) Somewhat familiar but would like to know more
- c) Never heard of them and would like to know more
- d) Never heard of them and not interested

10. In the next five years, do you plan to:

- a) Expand your farming operation
- b) Reduce your farming operation
- c) Stay the same
- d) Other: _____

11. Do you have a transition plan for what will happen to your land after you pass on?

- a) Yes, I have it all worked out
- b) I have some ideas but have made no decisions
- c) I have never thought about a transition plan for my land
- d) No, I don't need a transition plan, as I plan to sell my land before then
- e) Other (please describe): _____

12. Are you familiar with the following programs and services? (circle all that apply):

- a) Cooperative Extension services and support
- b) Davie Soil and Water Conservation cost-share programs
- c) Natural Resources Conservation Service conservation planning
- d) Farm Service Agency crop insurance and farm loans
- e) Forest Service cost-share programs and forest management planning

13. Would you like to know more about any of the following?

- a) Marketing my agricultural production
- b) Transition planning for willing or selling land to family members
- c) Developing strategies to keep from selling my best farmland
- d) How best to sell my land for agricultural use
- e) Developing new products that I can grow and sell
- f) Other (please describe): _____

14. What activities do you recommend the county engage in to help preserve agriculture and farmland in Davie County (circle two)?

- a) Support and recruit ag businesses (grain processor, sale barn, etc.)
- b) Create community college agriculture degree/program
- c) Include some agricultural lessons in elementary and middle school
- d) Create or enhance community festivals to promote history and importance of farming
- e) Promote local foods and farms
- f) Other (please describe): _____

15. What are the three biggest obstacles to agriculture in the county (circle three)?

- a) Cost of inputs (seeds, fertilizers, etc.)
- b) Finding farm labor
- c) Public awareness and understanding of agriculture
- d) Lack of local markets (grain buyers, sale barn, etc.)
- e) Lack of farmland/farmland prices (rent or buy)
- f) Fertility/erosion issues
- g) Lack of young farmers
- h) High start-up costs of farming
- i) Other (please describe): _____

16. Are you feeling threatened by non-agricultural encroachment?

a) Yes

b) No

17. Would you like to attend a breakfast or dinner to learn more about farmland preservation?

a) Yes

b) No

18. We'd like your help and input. May we contact you to learn more about your interests in farmland preservation?

a) Yes

b) No

If yes, please include your name and phone number:

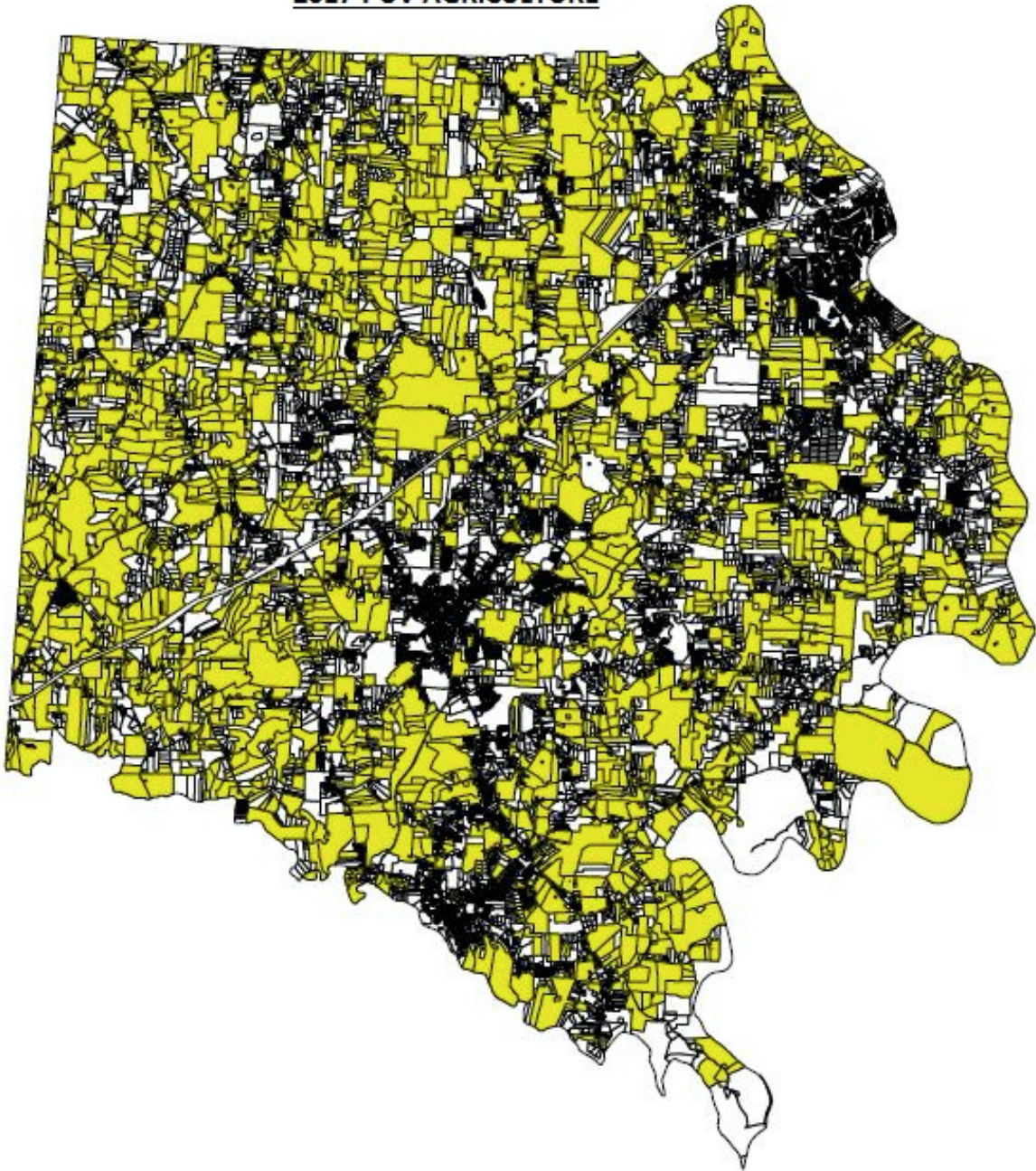
Name: _____

Number: _____

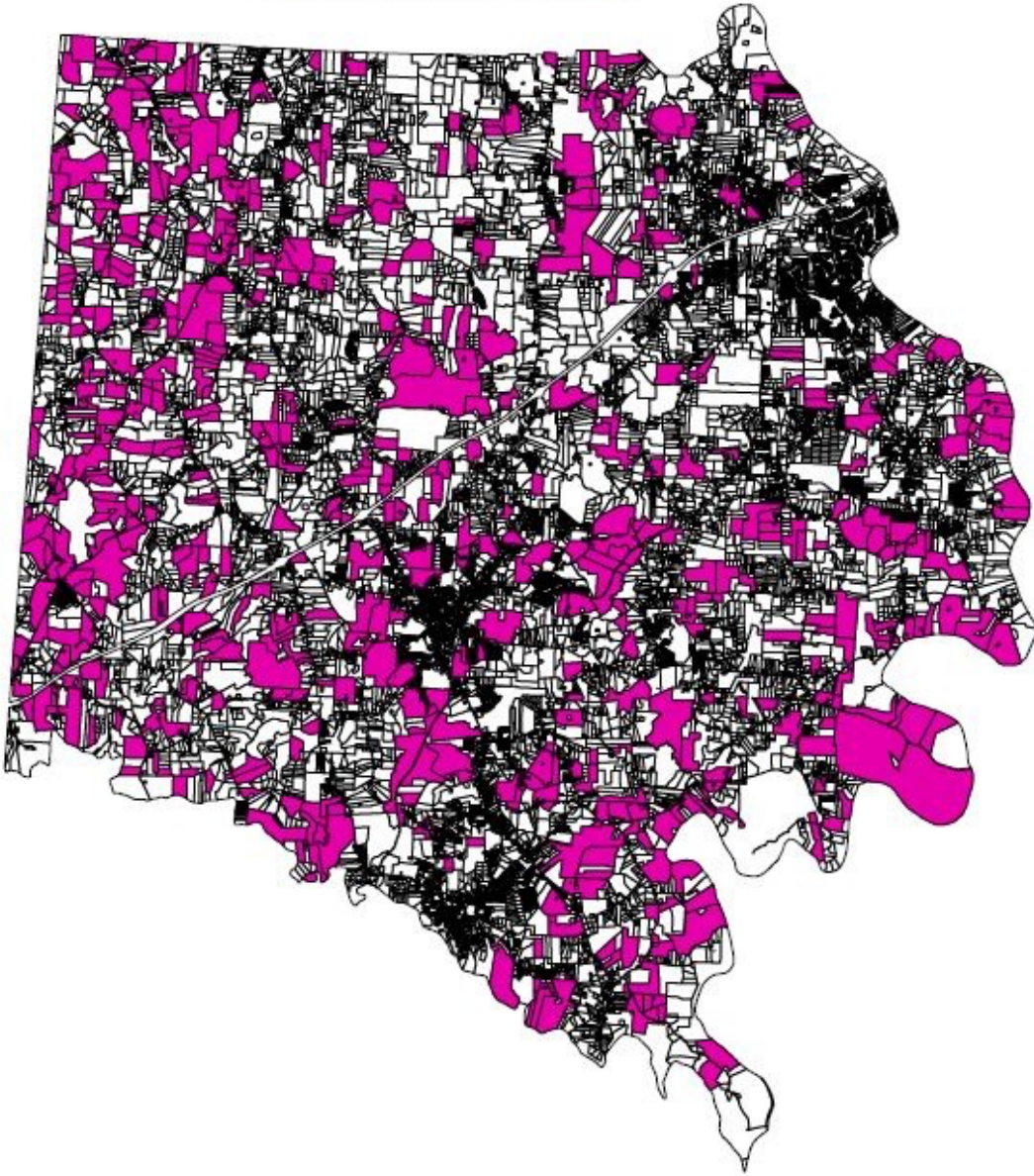
19. Do you have any ideas for ways the county can improve agricultural opportunities and preserve farmland?

Appendix B: PUV Maps

2017 PUV AGRICULTURE

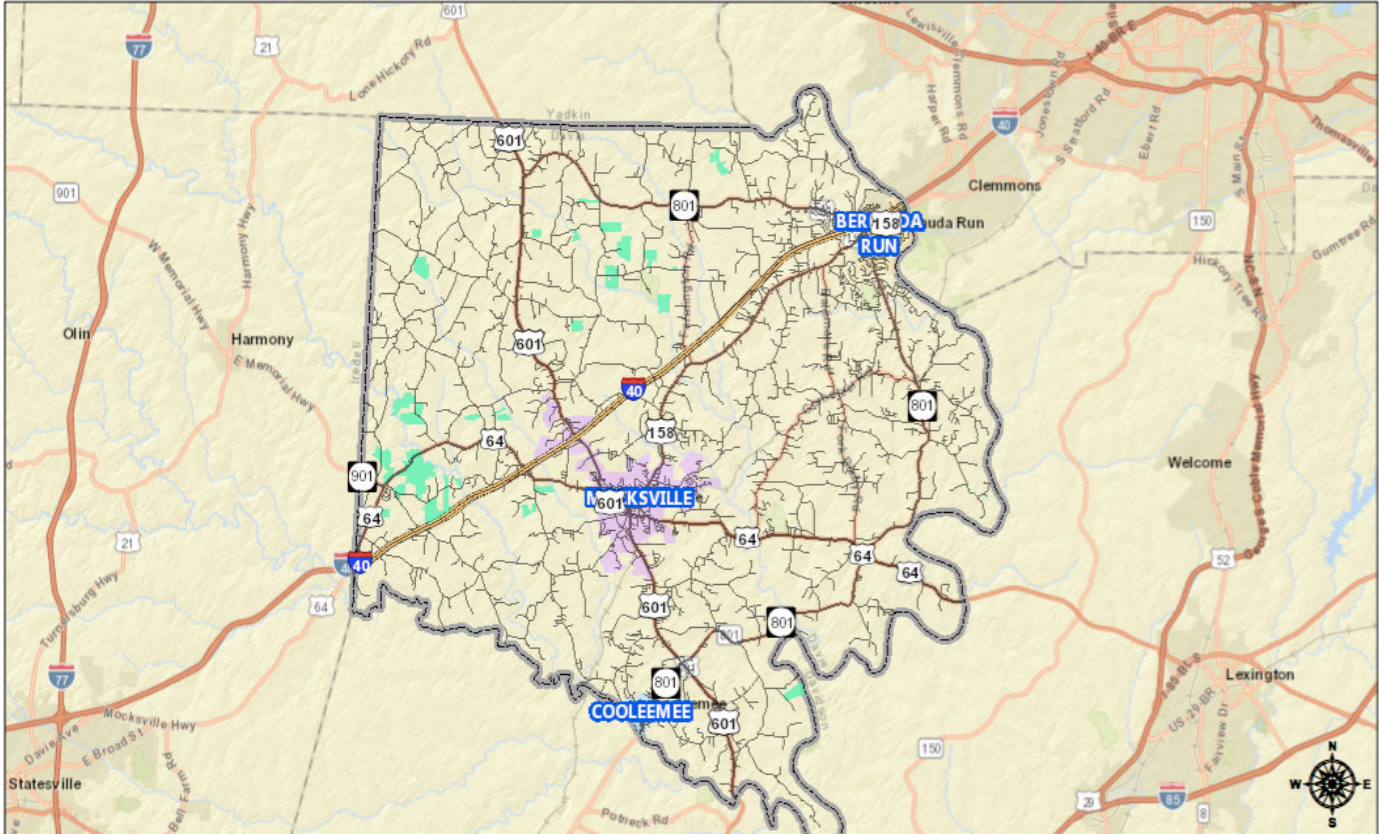


2017 PUV FORESTRY: 20AC +



(A few forestry parcels may also be included in the agriculture map because some agriculture parcels may also include forestry land.)

Appendix C: VAD Map



May 16, 2017

Voluntary Agricultural District

1:288,895
 0 2.5 5 10 mi
 0 4 8 16 km
 Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), MapmyIndia, NGCC, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Appendix D: VAD Ordinance

Approved 1/7/08, Amended 5/7/12

DAVIE COUNTY

**VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT & ENHANCED VOLUNTARY
AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT ORDINANCE**

**ARTICLE I
TITLE**

An ordinance of the Board of County Commissioners of **DAVIE COUNTY**, NORTH CAROLINA, entitled, "**VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT & ENHANCED VOLUNTARY DISTRICT ORDINANCE.**"

**ARTICLE II
AUTHORITY**

The articles and sections of this Ordinance are adopted pursuant to authority conferred by the North Carolina General Statutes sections 106-735 through 106-744 and Chapter 153A.

**ARTICLE III
PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Ordinance is to promote agricultural values and the general welfare of the county and more specifically, increase identity and pride in the agricultural community and its way of life; encourage the economic and financial health of agriculture, horticulture and forestry; and increase protection from non-farm development and other negative impacts on properly managed farms.

**ARTICLE IV
DEFINITIONS**

The following are defined for purposes of this Ordinance:

Advisory Board: **Davie** County Agricultural Advisory Board.

Chairperson: Chairperson of the **Davie** County Agricultural Advisory Board.

District: Voluntary Agricultural District as established by this ordinance.

Enhanced District: Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District as established by this ordinance.

Board of Commissioners: **Davie** County Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE V
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

A. Creation

The Board of Commissioners shall establish an Agricultural Advisory Board to implement the provisions of this program.

B. Membership

The Advisory Board shall consist of no less than **five (5) regular** members and two (2) alternate members appointed by the Board of Commissioners.

C. Membership Requirements

Each Advisory Board member, except those serving in an *ex officio* capacity, shall be a **Davie** County resident or landowner.

At least **four (4)** of the members shall be actively engaged in farming, horticulture and/or forestry. Of the members actively engaged in farming, horticulture and/or forestry there shall be at least one such member from each agricultural district or enhanced agricultural district in **Davie** County. This determination shall be made without reference to *ex officio* members.

The members actively engaged in farming, horticulture and/or forestry as well as other members, shall be selected for appointment by the Board of Commissioners from the names of individuals submitted to the Board of Commissioners by the Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors, the Davie County Office of North Carolina Cooperative Extension, the U.S. Farm Service Agency County Committee, nonprofit agricultural organizations, conservation organizations, agribusiness, horticultural businesses, forestry businesses, and the public at large.

Additional members may be appointed to the Board in an *ex officio* capacity from the Soil and Water Conservation District, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, the U.S. Farm Service Agency, or other agencies, as deemed necessary by the Board of Commissioners. Members serving in an *ex officio* capacity shall neither vote nor count toward quorum requirements.

D. Tenure

The initial board is to consist of **two (2)** appointees for terms of one year; **two (2)** appointees for terms of two years; and **three (3)** appointees for terms of three years. Thereafter, all appointments are to be for terms of three years, with reappointment permitted.

E. Vacancies

Any vacancy on the Advisory Board is to be filled by the Board of Commissioners for the remainder of the unexpired term.

F. Removal

Any member of the Advisory Board may be removed by the Board of Commissioners upon a two-thirds vote of the Commissioners. No cause for removal shall be required.

G. Funding

The *per diem* compensation, if any, of the members of the Advisory Board may be fixed by the Board of Commissioners and funds may be appropriated to the Advisory Board to perform its duties.

H. Advisory Board Procedure

1. Chairperson

The Advisory Board shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson each year at its first meeting of the fiscal year. The chairperson shall preside over all regular or special meetings of the Advisory Board. In the absence or disability of the chairperson, the vice-chairperson shall preside and shall exercise all the powers of the chairperson. Additional officers may be elected as needed.

2. Determination of Procedure

The Advisory Board may adopt rules of procedure not inconsistent with this Ordinance or with other provisions of State law.

3. Advisory Board Year

The Advisory Board shall use the **Davie** County fiscal year as its meeting year.

4. Meetings

Meetings of the Advisory Board shall be held at the call of the chairperson and at such other times as the Advisory Board may specify in its rules of procedure or upon the request of at least a majority of the Advisory Board Membership. A meeting shall be held at least annually and notice of any meetings to the members shall be in writing, unless otherwise agreed to by all Advisory Board members. Meeting dates and times shall be posted as far in advance as possible on the door of the meeting site and by advertisement in local newspapers or by other means of public dissemination of the meeting dates as may be agreed upon by at least a majority of the Advisory Board Membership. All meetings shall be open to the public.

5. Majority

Vote and Quorum Requirements All issues shall be decided by a majority vote of the members of the Advisory Board present, except as otherwise stated herein. A quorum is defined as at least two-thirds of the voting members in attendance. No business

may be conducted by the Advisory Board without a quorum present.

6. Records

The Advisory Board shall keep minutes of the proceedings showing the vote of each member upon each question, or if absent or failing to vote, indicating such fact, and shall keep records of its examinations and other official actions, all of which shall be filed in the office of the Advisory Board, or its designee, and shall be a public record.

7. Administrative

The Advisory Board may contract with the **Davie County Cooperative Extension** office to serve the Board for record keeping, correspondence, application procedures under this, and whatever services the Board needs to complete its duties.

I. Duties

The Advisory Board shall:

1. Review and approve or disapprove applications of landowners for enrollment qualified farmland, horticultural land, or forestland in either Voluntary Agricultural Districts or Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts;
2. Make recommendations concerning the establishment and modification of agricultural districts;
3. Conduct public hearings;
4. Advise the Board of Commissioners on projects, programs, or issues affecting the agricultural economy and agricultural, horticultural or forestry activities within the county that will affect agricultural districts;
5. Review and make recommendations concerning proposed amendments to this ordinance;
6. Develop a draft countywide farmland protection plan as defined in N.C.G.S. §106-744 (e) for presentation to the Board of Commissioners;
7. Study additional methods of protection for farming, horticulture, forestry, and the attendant land base, and make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners; and
8. Perform other agricultural, horticultural, and forestry-related tasks or duties assigned by the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE VI

**CREATION OF VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS AND
ENHANCED VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS**

- A. Regions **Davie** County is hereby divided into two (2) regions as defined below: 1. **North of Interstate 40 (I-40).**

2. South of Interstate 40 (I-40).

B. Implementation

In order to implement the purposes stated in Article III, this program provides for the creation of Voluntary Agricultural Districts which meet the following standards:

1. The District or Enhanced District shall contain the minimum acres of agricultural land, forest land or horticulture land that is part of qualified farmland. All land enrolled in a region, defined in section A, above, shall be part of a single district, whether enrolled in the District or the Enhanced District. If a single farm has acreage in two or more regions, the farm shall participate in the district where the largest acreage is found. All land in a region as defined in section A, above, shall be treated as a single district whether enrolled in the District or the Enhanced District.

C. Education

The county may take such action as it deems appropriate through the Advisory Board or other entities or individuals to encourage the formation of the Districts and Enhanced Districts and to further their purposes and objectives, including the implementation of a public information program to reasonably inform landowners of the agricultural district program.

D. Addition and Withdrawal

1. Qualifying farmland in a region with an existing district shall be added to the district as herein provided.

**ARTICLE VII
CERTIFICATION AND QUALIFICATION OF FARMLAND**

Requirements

To secure county certification as qualifying farmland in either a Voluntary Agricultural District or Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District, a farm must:

1. The farmland must be real property that is engaged in agriculture as that work is defined by G.S. 106- 581.1. To verify that the property meets this definition the following forms of documentation will be considered among other things:
 - Property tax records showing that the property is participating in or eligible to participate in the Present Use Value Tax Program.
 - A farm sales tax exemption certification issued by the N.C. Department of Revenue.

- A copy of the farm owner’s or operator’s Schedule F form from their most recent federal income tax return.
- A sound forest management plan that demonstrates the plan is being applied,

AND

4. Is managed in accordance with the Natural Resources Soil Conservation Service defined erosion control practices that are addressed to highly erodible land; and
5. Is the subject of a conservation agreement, as defined in N.C.G.S. Sec. 121-35, between the county and the owner of such land that prohibits non-farm use or development of such land for a period of at least ten years, except for the creation of not more than three lots that meet applicable county and municipal zoning and subdivision regulations.

**ARTICLE VIII
APPLICATION, APPROVAL, AND APPEAL PROCEDURE**

A. Application Procedure

1. A landowner may apply to participate in either the Agricultural District or the Enhanced Agricultural District program by making application to the chairperson of the Advisory Board or a designated staff person, and must designate the application as for either Voluntary Agricultural District status or Enhanced District status. The application shall be on forms provided by the Advisory Board. The application to participate in a district may be filed with the application for certification of qualifying farmland.
2. A conservation agreement (required by N.C.G.S. §106-737 and defined in N.C.G.S. §121-35) suited to district type (Voluntary Agricultural District or Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District) designated by the landowner to sustain, encourage, and promote agriculture must be executed by the landowner and recorded with the Advisory Board, which shall record a certified copy of such with the **Davie** County Registrar of Deeds. Permitted uses include agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and outdoor recreation. Conservation agreements for the Enhanced Agricultural District program may, at the election of the parties, include provisions requiring that any disputes between the county and the landowner be resolved through arbitration or mediation, and, in the event of litigation, that the prevailing party be awarded costs, including reasonable attorney fees. The Conservation Agreement for the Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District shall be binding upon all successors

in interest to the landowner, except for successors in interest resulting from the exercise of rights under a security interest or lien that preceded the Conservation Agreement.

B. Approval Process

1. Upon submission of the application to the Advisory Board, the Advisory Board shall meet to approve or disapprove the application. The chairperson shall notify the applicant by first class mail of approval or disapproval of participation in the district.
2. Upon receipt of an application, the chairperson will forward copies immediately to the following offices which shall be asked to provide comments, if any, to the Advisory Board prior to the date set for the Advisory Board vote on the application:
3. a. The **Davie** County tax assessor;
4. b. The **Davie** Soil and Water Conservation District office;
- c. The **Davie County Development Services Office**; and
- d. The Natural Resources Conservation Service.

C. Appeal

If an application is denied by the Advisory Board, the landowner may, within ten (15) days of notification of disapproval of the application, request in writing that the Advisory Board reconsider its decision. The request for reconsideration shall state the reason(s) therefore. Upon either an initial denial, if no request for reconsideration was made, or denial after reconsideration, the landowner shall have thirty (30) days from the date of notification to appeal the decision to the Board of Commissioners. Such appeal shall be presented in writing. The decision of the Board of Commissioners is final.

**ARTICLE IX
REVOCATION, ENFORCEMENT AND RENEWAL OF CONSERVATION
AGREEMENTS**

A. Revocation and Enforcement

1. District. By providing 30 days advance written notice to the Advisory Board, a landowner of qualifying farmland within a Voluntary Agricultural District may revoke the Conservation Agreement or the Advisory Board may revoke the

same Conservation Agreement based on noncompliance by the landowner, subject to the same provisions as contained in Article VIII(C) for appeal of denials. Such revocation shall result in loss of qualifying farm status and loss of eligibility to participate in a district. Absent noncompliance by the landowner, neither the Advisory Board nor the Board of Commissioners shall revoke any Conservation Agreement prior to its expiration. If the Advisory Board shall revoke this Conservation Agreement for cause, the landowner shall have the appeal rights set forth in Article VIII(C). Transfers of land in a Voluntary Agricultural District due to death of the landowner, sale or gift shall not revoke the Conservation Agreement unless the land no longer qualifies for the present-use-value taxation program or, in the event that there are water or sewer assessments held in abeyance, the new owner(s) fails to agree in writing to accept liability for those assessments in the event that the land is withdrawn either voluntarily or involuntarily from the district. Enforcement of the terms of a Conservation Agreement for land enrolled in a Voluntary Agricultural District shall be limited to revocation of the Conservation Agreement and the benefits derived therefrom.

2. Enhanced District. Conservation Agreements for land within Enhanced Districts are IRREVOCABLE for a period of 10 years. Enforcement of the terms of the Conservation Agreement may be through an action for injunctive relief and/or damages in any court of competent jurisdiction. The County may also terminate any benefits to the owner under this program either permanently or during the period of violation, as appropriate. If the Advisory Board shall revoke this Conservation Agreement for cause, the landowner shall have the appeal rights set forth in Article VIII(C). The right to terminate program benefits is in addition to any legal rights that the County may have under either this Ordinance or the terms of the applicable Conservation Agreement. The County may seek costs of the action including reasonable attorney fees if such a provision is incorporated into the Conservation Agreement.

B. Renewal

1. District. A Conservation Agreements for land within a Voluntary Agricultural District shall be automatically renewed unless the landowner provides 30 day written notice to the Advisory Board of intent not to renew. Absent noncompliance by the landowner, neither the Advisory Board nor the Board of Commissioners shall fail to renew any Conservation Agreement unless this Ordinance or its authorizing legislation has been repealed.
2. Enhanced District. A Conservation Agreement for the Enhanced Voluntary

Agricultural District shall be deemed automatically renewed for an additional term of 3 years, unless either the Advisory Board or the landowner gives written notice to the contrary prior to the termination date of the Conservation Agreement. At the end of each 3 year term the Conservation Agreement shall automatically renew for an additional 3 year term unless notice of termination is given.

ARTICLE X WAIVER OF WATER AND SEWER OR ALL UTILITY ASSESSMENTS

A. No Connection Required

1. A landowner belonging to the District shall not be required to connect to **Davie** County water and/or sewer systems.
2. A landowner belonging to an Enhanced District shall not be required to connect to **Davie** County utility systems.

B. Abeyance

1. Water and sewer assessments shall be held in abeyance, without interest, for farms in a District, until improvements on such property are connected to the water or sewer system for which the assessment was made.
2. Utility assessments shall be held in abeyance, without interest, for farms in an Enhanced District, until improvements on such property are connected to the utility system for which the assessment was made.

C. Termination of Abeyance

When the period of abeyance ends, the assessment is payable in accordance with the terms set out in the assessment resolution.

D. Suspension of Statute of Limitations

Statutes of limitations are suspended during the time that any assessment is held in abeyance without interest. The landowner may be required to sign an acknowledgement (that may be incorporated into the Conservation Agreement) of the abeyance of the statute of limitations upon collecting water and sewer assessments, or other utility assessments.

E. Other Statutory Abeyance Procedures

Nothing in this section is intended to diminish the authority of the County to hold assessments in abeyance under N.C.G.S. §153A-201, or other applicable law.

- F. Conflict with Water and/or Sewer System Construction and Improvements Grants
To the extent that this section conflicts with the terms of federal, state, or other grants under which county utility systems are constructed this section shall not apply. This section shall not apply to utilities that are not owned by the County unless the County has entered into an agreement with the entity(ies) owning the utilities and that agreement provides that this Ordinance shall apply.

ARTICLE XI ADDITIONAL ENHANCED AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT BENEFITS

Land enrolled in the Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District program is entitled to all of the benefits available under the Voluntary Agricultural District program, and to the following additional benefits:

- A. Sale of Non-farm Products
Landowners participating in Enhanced Districts may receive up to twenty-five percent of gross sales from the sale of nonfarm products and still qualify as a bona fide farm that is exempt from county zoning regulations under N.C.G.S. §153A-340(b). A farmer seeking to benefit from this subsection shall have the burden of establishing that the property's sale of nonfarm products did not exceed twenty-five percent of its gross sales. A county may adopt an ordinance pursuant to this section that sets forth the standards necessary for proof of compliance.
- B. Agricultural Cost Share Program
Landowners participating in Enhanced Districts are eligible under N.C.G.S. §143-215.74(b) to receive the higher percentage of cost-share funds for the benefit of that farmland under the Agriculture Cost Share Program established pursuant to Part 9 of Article 21 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes for funds to benefit that farmland.
- C. Priority Consideration
State departments, institutions, or agencies that award grants to farmers are encouraged to give priority consideration to landowners participating in Enhanced Districts.
- D. Utility Assessment Waiver
As provided in Article X above, waiver of all county utility assessments in addition to waiver of water and sewer assessments is available to all participants in Enhanced Districts.

ARTICLE XII PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Purpose

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §106-740, which provides that no state or local public agency or governmental unit may formally initiate any action to condemn any interest in qualifying farmland within a District until such agency or unit has requested the Advisory Board to hold a public hearing on the proposed condemnation.

B. Procedure

1. Upon receiving a request, the Advisory Board shall publish notice describing the proposed action in the appropriate newspapers of general circulation within **Davie** County within five (5) business days of the request, and will in the same notice notify the public of a public hearing on the proposed condemnation, to be held within ten (10) days of receipt of the request.
2. The Advisory Board shall meet to review: a. Whether the need for the project has been satisfactorily established by the agency or unit of government involved, including a review of any fiscal impact analysis conducted by the agency involved; and b. Whether there are alternatives to the proposed action that have less impact and are less disruptive to the agricultural activities of the District within which the proposed action is to take place.
3. The Advisory Board shall consult with the County Agricultural Extension Agent, the Natural Resources Conservation Service District Conservationist, and any other individuals, agencies, or organizations deemed by the Advisory Board to be necessary for its review of the proposed action.
4. Within five (5) days after the hearing, the Advisory Board shall make a report containing its findings and recommendations regarding the proposed action. The report shall be made available to the public prior to its being conveyed to the decision-making body of the agency proposing the acquisition.
5. There will be a period of ten (10) days allowed for public comment on the report of the Advisory Board.
6. After the ten (10) day period for public comment has expired, the Advisory Board shall submit a final report containing all of its findings and recommendations regarding the proposed action to the decision making body of the agency proposing the acquisition.
7. The total time period, from the day that a request for a hearing has been

received to the day that a final report is issued to the decision making body of the agency proposing the acquisition, shall not exceed thirty (30) days. If the agency agrees to an extension, the agency and the Advisory Board shall mutually agree upon a schedule to be set forth in writing and made available to the public.

8. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §106-740, the Board of Commissioners shall not permit any formal initiation of condemnation by local agencies while the proposed condemnation is properly before the Advisory Board.

ARTICLE XIII NOTIFICATION

A. Record Notice of Proximity to Voluntary Agricultural District

1. Procedure

When **Davie** County computerizes its County Land Records System the following requirements outlined in this section shall be implemented and enforced. Upon certification of qualifying farmland and designation of real property as a District, the title to that qualifying farmland and real property, which is contained in the **Davie** County Land Records System shall be changed to include a notice reasonably calculated to alert a person researching the title of a particular tract that such tract is located within one-half aerial mile of a Voluntary Agricultural District.

2. Limit of Liability

In no event shall the County or any of its officers, employees, members of the Advisory Board, or agents be held liable in damages for any misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance occurring in good faith in connection with the duties or obligations imposed by this.

3. No Cause of Action

In no event shall any cause of action arise out of the failure of a person researching the title of a particular tract to report to any person the proximity of the tract to a qualifying farm or Voluntary Agricultural District or Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District as defined in this Ordinance.

B. Signage

Signs identifying approved agricultural districts shall be placed along the rights-of-way of major roads that pass through or next to those districts as many as may be deemed appropriate by the Advisory Board

C. Maps

Maps identifying approved agricultural districts shall be provided to the following agencies or offices:

1. Planning Department
2. Register of Deeds;
3. Natural Resources Conservation Service;
4. North Carolina Cooperative Extension;
5. Soil and Water Conservation District; and
6. Any other such agency or office the Advisory Board deems appropriate, including maps denoting the location of agricultural districts within the **Davie** County planning jurisdiction.

**ARTICLE XIV SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AND ZONING
ORDINANCE REVIEW**

Developers of major subdivisions or planned unit developments shall designate on preliminary development plans, the existence of the Districts within **0.5** aerial mile(s) of the proposed development.

ARTICLE XV COUNTY LAND-USE PLANNING

A. Duty of the Advisory Board

It shall be the duty of the Advisory Board to advise the Board of Commissioners or the agency or office to which the Board of Commissioners delegate authority to oversee county land use planning, on the status, progress, and activities of the county's agricultural district program and to also coordinate the formation and maintenance of agricultural districts with the county's land use planning activities and the county's land use plan if one currently exists at the time this is enacted or when one is formed.

B. Posting of Notice

The following notice, of a size and form suitable for posting, shall be posted in the office of the Register of Deeds, and any other office or agency the Advisory Board deems necessary:

Davie County has established agricultural districts to protect and preserve agricultural lands and activities. These districts have been developed and mapped by the county to inform all purchasers of real property that certain agricultural and forestry activities, including but not limited to pesticide spraying, manure spreading, machinery and truck operation, livestock operations, sawing, and other common farming activities may occur in these districts any time during the day or night. Maps and information on the location and establishment of these districts can be obtained from the North Carolina Cooperative

Extension Services office, the office of the Register of Deeds, the County Planning office, or the Soil and Water Conservation District Office.

C. Growth Corridors

At such time as the county might establish designated growth corridors, agricultural districts shall not be permitted in the designated growth corridors, as delineated on the official county planning map without the approval of the Board of Commissioners. Districts located in growth corridors designated after the effective date of this program may remain, but shall not be expanded within the growth corridor area without the approval of the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE XVI CONSULTATION AUTHORITY

The Advisory Board may consult with North Carolina Cooperative Extension, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and with any other individual, agency, or organization the Advisory Board deems necessary to properly conduct its business.

ARTICLE XVII NORTH CAROLINA AGENCY NOTIFICATION

Annually Report to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

A copy of this shall be sent to the Office of the North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Board of Commissioners, the County Office of North Carolina Cooperative Extension, and the Soil and Water Conservation District office after adoption. At least annually the county shall submit a written report to the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services on the county's agricultural district program, including the following information:

1. Number of landowners enrolled;
2. Number of acres enrolled;
3. Number of acres certified during the reporting period;
4. Number of acres denied during the reporting period;
5. Number of acres for which applications are pending;
6. Copies of any amendments to the this Ordinance; and
7. Any other information the Advisory Board deems useful.

ARTICLE XVIII LEGAL PROVISIONS

A. Severability

If any article, section, subsection, clause, phrase, or portion of this is for any reason found invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this.

B. Conflict with other ordinances and statutes

Whenever the provisions of this Ordinance conflict with other ordinances of **Davie** County, this Ordinance shall govern. Whenever the provisions of any federal or state statute require more restrictive provisions than are required by this Ordinance, the provisions of such statute shall govern.

C. Amendments

This Ordinance may be amended from time to time by the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE XIX ENACTMENT

The Davie County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts and enacts the preceding articles and sections of this Ordinance.

Adopted this the 7th day of January, 2008.

Motion for adoption by Commissioner Frye and seconded by Commissioner Anderson.

DAVIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Thomas G. Fleming, Chairman

ATTEST:

Brenda B. Hunter, Clerk to Board of Commissioners

Approved as to form:

Sally W. Smith, County Attorney