

# Farm Food and Family Education Center

PREPARING FOR A RESILIENT, INNOVATIVE FUTURE IN RANDOLPH COUNTY



# FARM FOOD FAMILY

RANDOLPH COUNTY  
EDUCATION CENTER



# Preparing for a Resilient, Innovative Future in Randolph County

## Mission Statement

The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center is a dynamic, innovative, and collaborative place for people and organizations to build **Farm, Food, and Family** systems that strengthens economies, enhances resiliency, and builds community.

## Farm, Food, and Family Education Center

Resiliency must be intentional and planned. This Educational facility will serve as a "hub" for innovative and collaborative sharing of resources and ideas. The Educational theme will allow us to focus on collaboration, practicum, creativity, modeling, and innovation. The "spokes" of this hub will center around the themes of "Farm, Food, and Family." We feel this communicates in a clear and concise manner what the purpose of the facility is and creates a message that everyone in Randolph County and the surrounding region can connect in some way to these collaborations.

The pandemic has helped to enhance many people's desire to know more and collaborate around the issues of farm, food, and family. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will bring knowledge and innovation to how Randolph County and area residents provide for their essential needs in the future. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will accomplish this task by creating a dynamic, innovative, and collaborative place for learning and skill-building.

## Location of the Center

The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will be part of the 104 acres of land purchased in Randolph County by the Board of Commissioners in 2016. The site is near the intersection of Highway 64 and East Salisbury Street, close to Vista Parkway and approximately a mile and a half from the recently completed 64 bypass. Randolph County is located in the geographic center of the state - approximately an hour away from Charlotte and Raleigh, and 30 minutes south of Greensboro. The site has access to water and sewer and easy access to visitor amenities such as hotels, restaurants, and related business operations. Water and sewer will be provided by the City of Asheboro. There will be offices for N.C. Cooperative Extension and the County Soil Water Conservation District. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will include an open air, roofed arena for livestock educational activities, demonstration plots, pastures for demonstrations, a commercial shared kitchen with cold storage, and educational space for county partners to use while onsite.

An estimated cost (without the benefit of a feasibility study) for the entire project is **\$25 Million**

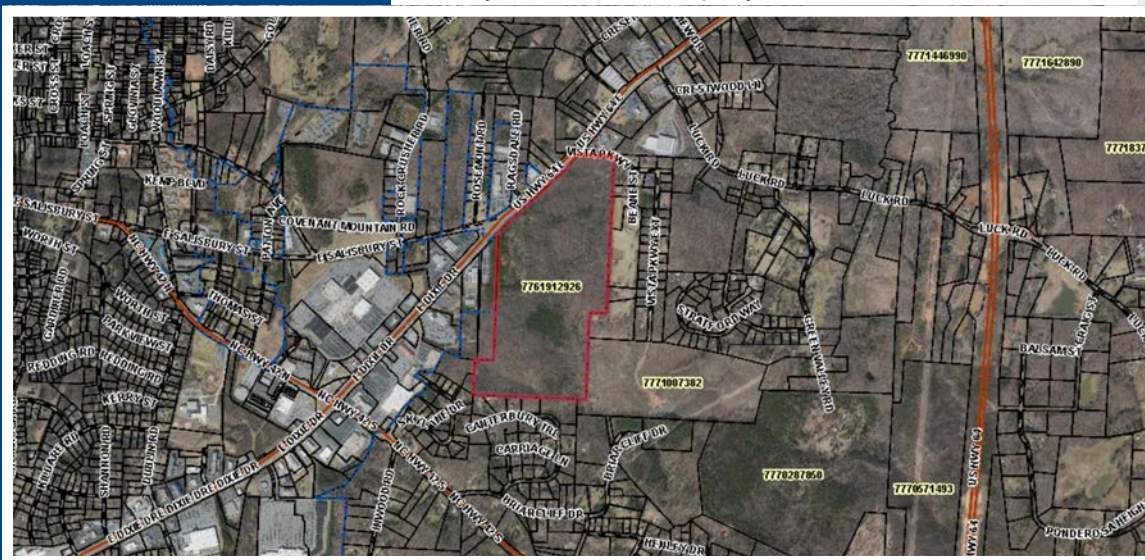


Image taken from Randolph County GIS

**RANDOLPH  
COUNTY'S  
AGRICULTURAL  
STATISTICS  
RANKING IN  
NORTH CAROLINA**

**Randolph County's Agricultural Statistics  
Ranking in North Carolina**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Item</b>
#1	Number of beef cows
#2	Dairy cows
#2	All goats
#2	All cattle
#6	Hay production
#7	Poultry

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1,\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/North\\_Carolina/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/North_Carolina/)

## OTHER RANDOLPH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

### Other Randolph County Agricultural Statistics

Total Cash Receipts are \$281 million per year

1,368 active farms encompassing 147,781 acres

\$22,734,000 of certified organic commodities produced, highest reported in the State

Agri-tourism industry income expanded by \$490,000 from 2012-2017

Top 10 counties in the state for the value of food sold directly to consumers

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1,\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/North\\_Carolina/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/North_Carolina/)

## FARM COLLABORATION AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

### Demonstration Farm for Next-Level Opportunities in Agriculture

Applied research and demonstration plots will provide a hands-on learning space to help build in the capacity for small and medium-sized farms. The Farm, Food and Family Educational Center will partner with academic institutions and regional educators to research and demonstrate agricultural practices that support ecological resilience and farm viability to build food production capacity on a macro-level. Educational outreach and events will bring information gleaned from the demonstration farm to residents and showcase strategies to overcome challenges of farming in the Piedmont region of North Carolina.

Community gardens will provide areas for families to grow their own affordable and healthy food. Space for hands-on food gardening demonstrations with community partners will engage citizens in garden-based learning programs and provide a low stress, low cost recreational opportunity to build intergenerational relationships and food production on a micro level.

Also included in the demonstration farm will be an incubator farm, where new and beginning farmers learn as they learn about operating a farm business. This will include equipment rentals and leasing programs that will reduce financial burden for large and small scale food producers regionally. With reduced financial burden through shared equipment programs farms can increase yields, reduce environmental inputs, and conserve non-renewable natural resources.



Images courtesy of NC State University Extension

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS



Since Randolph County ranks high in livestock production this allows us to create a collaborative environment for both new and experienced producers to work together and learn together.

Having an educational center would not just benefit active livestock producers in the county, but would benefit new individuals that are interested in livestock and forage production. Having this center would create the opportunity to have endless innovative programming for Randolph County residents. With a livestock working facility, inexperienced producers could learn how to work and move livestock safely by understanding and practicing low-stress handling techniques. A working facility would also provide an opportunity to teach livestock industry and university standard quality assurance practices for administering vaccines and treatments as well as biosecurity measures and other herd/flock management practices including but not limited to, artificial insemination, deworming, fly control, castration and docking tails, dehorning and weaning techniques.

Field demonstration sites at The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center can be used to show producers different forages they can add into their forage management program such as winter and summer annuals, native forages and other perennial forages other than KY-31 Tall Fescue. Demonstration sites can also be used to show the advantages of utilizing fertilizers, herbicides and different rotational grazing techniques to improve forage quality and production.

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS (continued)



The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center could also be used to help producers learn how to better market their livestock, to add more profit to their livestock. Having a space for live animals could open up the opportunity to bring in livestock marketing experts to explain what buyers are looking for in livestock. The Farm, Food and Family Education Center could also be used to allow multiple livestock producers to combine their livestock and sell tractor trailer loads versus them selling straight to a stockyard. This practice allows producers the opportunity to sell larger groups of more consistent size and weight livestock at once, which makes livestock buyers more willing to pay a higher premium.

The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center could also open up an avenue of educational programming for individuals involved in butchering and selling meat and meat products as well as consumers. Having carcass demonstrations that show how to safely handle meat as well as where different cuts of meat come from on carcasses would also be a programming opportunity.

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH



Image courtesy of NC State University and North Carolina 4-H

Agriculture students and 4-Hers would have a centrally located center where they could come to and attend workshops, presentations, practices, and more. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center would allow agricultural students to come together for county-wide hands-on practices and workshops for 4-H and FFA contests such as livestock judging, plant identification, horse judging, livestock handling, tractor driving, entrepreneurship, cooking, forestry, horticultural science, hunter safety, environmental science, robotics and more. Extension Agents would finally have a location to offer programs that would be equipped to handle the programming needs of agricultural students, teachers, 4-Hers, and community members. This center would provide a space to take learning beyond the current classroom or conference/meeting room.

We could utilize the latest technology to offer high touch, high tech programs. STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) and STEAM (Science Technology Agriculture Engineering Math) programs use hands-on activities in areas such as robotics, computer science and electrical engineering to teach problem solving, creative and critical thinking, and preparing students for real world challenges. In 2019, 5,947 youth increased their knowledge in STEM/STEAM as well as increased knowledge in local food and agricultural systems. An agriculture center would help facilitate learning and development of skills that would prepare youth in Randolph County for a successful career and future.

## AG EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH (continued)



The following educational organizations will be able to use the Farm, Food and Family Education Center to enhance their current efforts.

- **Randolph County School System** (Agricultural Teachers in Every Middle and High School reach 8000 students annually)
  - **Providence Grove High School** has an agreement with Mount Olive University
- **Asheboro City Schools** (Agricultural Teacher and Horticulture Partnership with N.C. Zoo both Middle Schools reaches 492 students annually)
- **Uwharrie Charter Academy** (Agriculture Teacher and Programs Middle and High Schools) reaches 100 students annually)
- **Faith Christian School Ag Program** (They compete nationally in dairy competitions) reaches 50 students annually)
- **Homeschool Students** (Students have access to university research based curriculum through 4-H, and are able to participate/compete in 4-H/FFA events)
- **Randolph Community College** (Agribusiness program and partnership with N.C. Zoo)
  - Pack Track Agreement with NC State University
  - Recent Agreement with Mount Olive University to offer onsite Agriculture Classes

## AG EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH (continued)



### N.C. Cooperative Extension 4-H School Enrichment Programs

- **Farm To Table program**
  - 7 week program offered to early elementary grade levels introducing students to the importance of agriculture to Randolph County, North Carolina and their everyday lives. Each lesson offers a different focus including: an introduction to agriculture and "meeting" the farmers, seed germination, vegetables, dairy cattle, poultry, NC Christmas trees and many more! The program concludes with a field trip to a local farm where they can see what they learned about in person during the Farm To Table program.
- **Embryology**
  - 21 day program offered to second grade students to explore and learn more about the chick life cycle
  - On average, over 80 second grade classrooms participate in embryology reaching more than 2,000 students.
- **4-H Poultry Program**
  - Chicks hatched from embryology are adopted by youth and raised for the 4-H Poultry Show.
  - Youth learn how to raise chickens, what to feed, biosecurity practices as well as life skills such as responsibility, time management, record keeping etc.

## AG EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH (continued)



Image courtesy of NC State University and North Carolina 4-H

- **Dairy Education**

- Bessie the 4-H Dairy Cow was created by the Randolph County 4-H Agent and Randolph County Maintenance Department.
  - The "cow" is a 50 gallon barrel painted to look like a Holstein dairy cow that sits on a wooden stand with wheels. The barrel can be filled with water and youth (and adults) can "milk" the calf replacement nipples.
  - Close to 7,000 people have "milked" her during classroom visits, 4-H Dairy shows, after school events, etc.
- Utilize technology to take virtual reality headsets into classrooms and other activities so youth and adults can experience getting the milk from the cow to their table by watching a 360 video.

## FOOD COLLABORATION AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The pandemic created an unprecedented strain on the food system. When the grocery store shelves were empty and the safety of food products was at stake, consumers turned to direct sales from the farm. This shift had already begun in Randolph County. Between 2012 and 2017 there were 89 direct-to-consumer sale farms (20% increase) that brought in \$2,063,000 (\$440% increase) in Randolph County (USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service 2017). The food insecurity rate is also projected to increase in the Triad Region though, with child food insecurity being the most affected and increasing nearly 10% with rural counties such as Randolph experiencing the most economic impact from the pandemic (2021 Piedmont Triad Regional Food Assessment).

In Randolph County, 15% of adults fall below the poverty rate and there was a 12% increase in food nutrition services needed by residents and a 9% projected increase in child food insecurity from 2019 to 2020. However, Randolph County is home to 620 food businesses that bring in \$2.9 billion in annual sales, with \$199 million of food sales staying within the Piedmont Triad (2021 Piedmont Triad Regional Food Assessment).

The pandemic increased public interest in purchasing local products and supporting area farms, but many businesses need resources and education to adjust to different sales platforms, delivery, or distribution to navigate the supply chain and marketing challenges the pandemic represents. For example, there is a need for cold storage facilities in the Piedmont Triad Region that are accessible to agricultural industries. Only six facilities within the Piedmont Triad have accommodations for cold storage food and beverage agricultural products leading to a significant lack of mid-scale producer-sized cold storage facilities accessible to regional farms (2021 Piedmont Triad Regional Food Assessment).

When the supply chain is disrupted due to natural disaster, or public health emergencies people want and need to be able to produce and prepare their own food. Another aspect of the pandemic was a return to gardening and at home food preservation. At the onset of the pandemic, there were unprecedented seed sales and companies struggled to keep up with demand.

## FOOD SAFETY



Foods safety researcher Ben Chapman checks out fresh produce at the State Farmers Market. PHOTO BY ROGER WINSTEAD

Extension offices and retail operations saw increased interest in gardening and food preservation equipment. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will serve Randolph County residents by teaching them the proper methods to produce and process foods at home. Food preservation prevents spoilage, keeping locally produced foods available and safe for human consumption for extensive periods of time. However proper recipes, procedures and equipment must be used to keep consumers safe.

By connecting health concerns, education and local farmers and processors The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will address diet-related problems in youth, develop an appreciation for the importance of agriculture, and give agricultural producers resources that allow them to more quickly adapt to consumer demands.

## FOOD PREPARATION



The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will have a commercial kitchen space where residents learn food preparation, processing, and preservation skills through events and hands-on workshops. Access to education on producing healthy foods, paired with education on food safety and preparation will help families establish healthy eating behaviors.

The commercial kitchen will house shared-use kitchen space, cooler, freezer, and dry goods storage areas appropriate for licensed, health department inspected needs. Workspace, specialized equipment, and flexible secure access for community partners and local entrepreneurs to prepare, cook, and process foods while adhering to regulatory standards. Access to the kitchen will allow food businesses to keep their start up cost low and boost their bottom line while remaining part of our community and keeping dollars local.

The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center's kitchen would be a space for implementing Farm to School initiatives that link food items from local farmers, food hubs, and processors to school lunch programs. Commercial kitchens would be used to develop farm to school recipes for students to taste test and utilized to train cafeteria staff in farm to school initiatives that enrich child nutrition programs.

## FOOD ACCESS



The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will serve as a physical meeting point and educational resource for food access work to establish a stronger community-based approach to health and wellness. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center's facilities for cold and dry storage space will serve as a distribution point specifically for food pantries in Randolph County.

The space has endless potential to address food system-related issues:

- Nutrition Education
- Cooking Demonstrations
- Food Box/Meal Packing
- Food Policy Meetings
- Market Access for Local Producers
- Information Sharing & Networking
- Transportation and Distribution
- Season Extension
- Producer-Consumer Connections
- Technical Assistance
- Food Safety Training
- Food Donation Center

## FAMILY COLLABORATION AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

N.C. Cooperative Extension's mission is to improve the well-being of the family through programs that educate, influence public policy, and help families put research-based knowledge to work in their lives. N.C. Cooperative Extension's Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Program is a community-based educational program that strengthens and transforms families by providing education on the most important issues that affect them.

Cooperative Extension has always been a source for non-formal education that addresses the needs of people. The Farm, Food and Family Education Center will provide the venue for that. Just as farmers needed new skills to keep current with farming practice, everyone will need skills to live in a digital and technical economy. The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center will house a digital skills learning lab and a makerspace that will assist people making the transition to more digital/technical means of work and life.



Images courtesy of NC State University Extension

## Digital Skills Lab



The Food, Farm, and Family Education Center will be a place where youth and families can build skills and the capacity to thrive in the post-pandemic world. The Digital Skills Lab will operate under the Vision and Mission Statements of Randolph County Digital Alliance which are the following:

### Digital Skills Lab Vision Statement

In Randolph County, every household and business will have the opportunity to **EARN, LEARN, and BE WELL** by accessing needed digital resources.

### Digital Skills Lab Mission Statement

The Randolph County Digital Alliance will work with organizations to eliminate the digital divide by helping improve access, adoption, and utilization of digital resources.

RANDOLPH  COUNTY  
**DIGITAL ALLIANCE**  
EARN · LEARN · BE WELL

# Makerspace

A makerspace is a shared workspace constructed to support regional innovators, designers, engineers, students, and entrepreneurs in their creative processes. It encourages design and creation in an affordable shared space that houses the necessary equipment to help develop products, collaborate with others, and learn. In addition to the aforementioned purposes, research has identified other roles of makerspaces as “social spaces, in supporting wellbeing, by serving the needs of the communities they are located in and by reaching out to excluded groups” (Taylor et al., 2016). Below is an example of what the space and equipment may encompass:

Woodworking Shop	Electronics	3D Printing & Scanning	Creative Arts	Training Lab
CNC Router Table	Precision Tools	MakerBot Replicator 3D Printer	Laser Engraver	Computer Workstations
Table Saw	Soldering Station	LulzBot TAZ 3D Printer	Juke 1541 Industrial Sewing Machine	23" LCD Monitors
Router	Breadboard	3D Scanner	Large Work Tables	55" LED Smart TV
Miter Saw	Multimeter	Printerbot 3D Printers	Stove	Resource Library
Band Saw	Caliper		Dishwasher	Design Software
Grinder	Wire Cutters		Refrigerator	
Bench Jointer	Magnifying Work Lamp			

Credit: Adapted from Brookings Economic Development Corporation, <https://brookingsedc.com/makerspace/space-and-equipment/>

## How will The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center Work?

N.C. Cooperative Extension is uniquely positioned to serve as the stewards of The Farm, Food, and Family Education Center because of the county, state, and federal relationship at the foundation of the organization.

- N.C. Cooperative Extension is the largest outreach program of the land-grant universities in North Carolina.
- Extension agents are trained in educating others by using proven methods to reach a range of learning styles and demographics.
- We are also trained in evaluating programs and changes in behavior by showing measurable impacts, then adjusting the course if necessary.
- Much of the work in our program areas within Extension can be compared to the task at hand, which is promoting market growth, outreach, and evaluation of progress, among which is agricultural education projects in Randolph County.

With our training pedagogy and rural development expertise, we are strategically positioned to help the community leverage resources to preserve and promote farmers, food, families, and economic prosperity.

- The current Agricultural Cooperative Extension Agents will have the responsibility of creating the Demonstration Farm including the pastures, gardens, and crop demonstrations.
- The 4-H Agent and Program Assistant will be responsible for building the programs that county-based students can use at The Farm, Food and Family Education Center, including agricultural labs and STEM activities in the Makerspace.
- The current Family and Consumer Science Agent will manage the educational activities of the commercial kitchen and manage its use.
- The Local Food Systems Coordinator will coordinate the use of the cold storage and food access work.
- The Digital Literacy and Skills Coordinator will use and manage the Digital Skills Lab Makerspace to teach digital skills that will increase the employability of Randolph County residents and foster entrepreneurship.



## Valued Partnerships and Collaborations

The Farm, Food and Family Education Center can be used by our partners to enhance their services and programs. Anticipated users include:

- **Randolph County School System**
- **Asheboro City Schools**
- **Randolph Community College**
- **Uwharrie Charter Academy**
- **Faith Christian School**
- **Homeschool Students and Co-ops**
- **Randolph County Soil and Water:** Develop and carry out programs for the conservation, protection, and development of soil, water and related plant and animal resources.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Services:** Provide Technical and Financial Assistance allowing producers to manage issues and concerns related to natural resources.
- **Farm Service Agency:** Delivers federal agriculture programs for producers.
- **NC Department of Agriculture:** Provides support in many areas including labs for agronomic testing, regional agronomists for technical support, pesticide licensing and more.
- **North Carolina Cattlemen's Association:** Provides educational assistance for North Carolina cattlemen by sponsoring programs and research as well as coordinates the promotion of beef and the beef industry, assisting cattlemen in legislative, regulatory, and production issues.
- **North Carolina Forage and Grasslands Council:** A member-led organization that connects forage and livestock producers, agribusinesses, public servants and university professionals to support the effective use of North Carolina's grassland resources.
- **North Carolina Sheep Producers Association:** Provides educational assistance and encourages support, promoting, and assisting sheep producers in North Carolina to strengthen and advance the sheep industry.
- **North Carolina Dairy Producers Association:** Promotes dairy education and represents the interests of N.C. dairy farmers on important issues, including regulatory and legislative issues.
- **NC Forestry Service - Randolph Office:** This office provides technical support as well as resources for forest landowners including management plans, wildlife issues, emergency response to wildfires and more.
- **Area Consulting Foresters:** Professional foresters that manage forests and timber product sales for forest landowners.

## Potential Funding Partners

The Farm, Food and Family Center will provide unique opportunities to facilitate collaborations between potential funders and individuals and organizations within the Farm, Food, and Family areas. The Center can mutually benefit from partnerships that seek to consolidate efforts to impact the areas of Farm, Food and Family. Right now, many individuals, farms, organizations, etc seek help with these issues, but there is a lack of consolidated effort to teach and reach funding sources.

The center will serve as a place to use funding to enhance educational and outreach opportunities in the areas of Farm, Food and Family. Also, the center can serve as a connection place for potential grantors to connect with individuals, farms, businesses. Grant-writing workshops and other events can serve as education and connection points.

### **USDA - Agriculture Innovation Center Program**

What does this program do?

The Agriculture Innovation Center Program makes grants to Agriculture Innovation Centers that may be used by the Centers to provide technical assistance to agricultural producers to help them develop and market value-added agricultural products using a variety of options, except joint marketing efforts.

Program Funding: \$7.4 million.

Maximum Grant Amount: \$1,000,000 (may be less at the discretion of the Agency).

Who may apply for this program?

Public bodies, Federally-Recognized Indian Tribes, institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations and for-profit corporations.

How may funds be used?

Grant and matching funds may be used to operate an Agriculture Innovation Center and to provide the following services to agricultural producers:

- Financial advisory services related to the development, expansion, or operation of a business owned by an agricultural producer;
- Process development services, such as engineering services, scale production assessments, and systems development;
- Organizational assistance, including legal and technical advisory services;
- Outreach assistance; and
- Technical assistance for product development (excluding research and development).

## Potential Funding Partners (continued)

### USDA - Agricultural Marketing Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) works to improve domestic and international opportunities for U.S. growers and producers. AMS works with a variety of organizations to support to rural America and the Nation's agricultural sector. AMS grant programs include the:

- Acer Access and Development Program
- Dairy Business Innovation Initiative
- Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (implemented as FMPP and LFPP)
- Federal State Marketing Improvement Program
- Meat and Poultry Inspection Readiness Grant Program
- Micro Grants for Food Security Program
- Regional Food System Partnerships
- Sheep Production and Marketing Grant Program
- Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (implemented as SCBGP and SCMP)

AMS is helping communities scale up local and regional food systems and strengthen their economies. Whether you are an individual farmer looking to extend your growing season, a cooperative of growers looking to rebuild a food hub, a farmers' market that wants to accept SNAP benefits, a school that needs cold storage to store locally procured meat, or anyone in between, we can help you identify funding opportunities to support your local food efforts based on where you are in the supply chain.

**Agricultural Marketing Service:** Market your product or improve intermediary supply chain activities.

- Farmers Market Promotion Program
- Local Food Promotion Program
- Organic Cost Share Programs
- Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
- Specialty Crop Block Grant Multi-State Program
- Farm Service Agency: Loans and assistance programs to establish, improve, expand, transition, and strengthen your farm or ranch.
- Farm Loan Programs
- Farm Storage Facility Loan Program
- Microloans
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

## Potential Funding Partners (continued)

**Food and Nutrition Service:** Find opportunities to promote and fund nutrition programs.

- Farm to School Grants Program
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

**Forest Service:** Funding for agro-forestry and environmental stewardship.

- Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program

**Natural Resources Conservation Service:** These opportunities maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and help producers adopt additional conservation activities.

- Conservation Stewardship Program
- Conservation Technical Assistance
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (includes High Tunnels)
- Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
- Conservation Reserve Program
- Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

**National Institute for Food and Agriculture:** Collaborate with leading scientists, policymakers, experts, and educators to solve impact food, agriculture, natural resources, and human science issues.

- Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Agricultural Economics and Rural Communities
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program
- Community Food Projects
- Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives Program
- Small Business Innovation Research
- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education funding

**Risk Management Agency:** Find funding to protect your assets and learn how to manage long-term risks and challenges.

- Risk Management Education and Outreach
- Whole-Farm Revenue Protection Program

## Potential Funding Partners (continued)

**Rural Development:** Apply for loans, grants and loan guarantees to support essential community services or obtain funding to improve supply chain activities.

- Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program
- Community Facilities
- Rural Business Development Grants
- Rural Cooperative Development Grants
- Rural Energy for America Program
- Value Added Producer Grants

### **Golden Leaf Foundation - Open Grants Program**

The Open Grants Program is designed to make it easier for applicants to submit a proposal to Golden LEAF and to make funding opportunities available throughout the year. Eligible applicants are governmental entities and 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organizations. This program is for Economic Development projects in the priority areas of Job Creation and Economic Investment; Workforce Preparedness; Agriculture; and Community Competitiveness, Capacity, and Vitality.

**Priorities:** The Golden LEAF Foundation is committed to using the funds entrusted to it for projects that show the most potential for strengthening North Carolina's long-term economy, especially in tobacco-dependent, economically distressed, and/or rural communities. Golden LEAF awards funding for projects that the Foundation's Board of Directors believes have extraordinary merit and address the Foundation's purposes as set forth in its Charter.

## Building on the Strengths of Randolph County



The towns of Archdale, Asheboro, Franklinville, Liberty, Ramseur, Randleman, Seagrove, Staley, and Trinity are located within Randolph County with Asheboro being the county seat. Asheboro is approximately 70 miles from Raleigh, the State Capital, and from Charlotte, the state's largest city.

Randolph County is a part of the Piedmont Triad region, an eleven-county area whose central location puts it within 90 miles of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west and within 200 miles of the Atlantic Ocean to the east. The county sits in the middle of the Eastern Seaboard, within 500 miles of half of the nation's population and largest markets. The region is united by the Piedmont Triad International Airport, interstate highways, a score of colleges and universities, and a rich cultural life.

Although Randolph County is a part of the largest metropolitan area located entirely within North Carolina, it is still small-town living at its best - close enough to larger cities to have access to the amenities, but small enough to escape such urban problems as traffic congestion, higher unemployment, and an increasing crime rate.

Randolph County is home to the North Carolina State Zoological Park, the nation's largest natural habitat zoo with 500 acres of exhibits and over 1,000 animals. Also located in Randolph County are the Richard Petty Museum, (celebrating NASCAR's all-time career victory leader), the Uwharrie National Forest, The NC Pottery Center, and the Seagrove area potteries, which enjoy an international reputation for exceptional hand-thrown pottery.

Agriculture is a very strong industry in Randolph County, with cash receipts totaling over \$281 million per year. Randolph County has 1,368 active farms encompassing 147,781 acres. The average farm size is 108 acres. Major crops include hay (22,682 acres), soybeans (14,242 acres), corn for grain (6,778 acres), corn for silage (6,422 acres), wheat (3,492 acres), and tobacco (740 acres), according to the USDA Ag Census Report for 2017. Randolph County is #1 in North Carolina for beef cows, #2 in dairy cows, #2 in all goats, #5 in sheep and goats combined, #2 in all cattle, #7 in poultry, #6 in hay production and #9 in livestock, poultry and products.



## RANDOLPH COUNTY CENTER

We Grow North Carolina through Education and Research



AGRICULTURE  
& FOOD



HEALTH &  
NUTRITION



4-H YOUTH  
DEVELOPMENT