



2025 Agricultural Policy Landscape Case Study:
North Carolina's Durham and
Orange Counties





Acknowledgements

Authors: Simon Heinberg and Lindsay Bell, Duke University
Correspondence contact: Lee Miller, leemiller09@gmail.com
Contributors: Lee Miller, Kerilyn Schewel, Jack Daly

Funding acknowledgement: This research was funded by the Duke Climate Research Innovation Seed Program (CRISP).

Disclaimer: The conclusions presented in this publication are solely those of its author(s), and do not reflect the views of Duke University or its other scholars.

Acronyms

ACSP	Agricultural Cost Share Program
ACEP-ALE	Agricultural Conservation Easement Program—Agricultural Land Easement
AgWRAP	Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program
EVAD	Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District
FSA	Farm Service Agency
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
PUV	Present Use Value
RFP	Request for Proposals
VAD	Voluntary Agricultural District

Table of Contents

Acronyms	2
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
State and Federal Agricultural Funding.....	6
Article 46 One-Quarter Cent (1/4¢) County Sales and Use Tax.....	7
Easements	7
County Tax Policy	8
Local Food Sourcing and Value-Added Products	8
Comprehensive Land Use and Climate Resilience Plans	9
References	12



Hogs raised at Dawnbreaker Farm. Credit: Christina Ferrari

Executive Summary

This brief examines the agricultural policy landscape in North Carolina's Durham and Orange Counties as of 2025, highlighting key programs, funding mechanisms, and planning frameworks that shape the future of farming in these communities.

Orange and Durham Counties, along with nearby areas, contain a remarkable density of small-scale, direct-to-consumer farms. This concentration made the region a compelling place to investigate how a comparatively strong local food system took root in climate-resilient practices and to explore what conditions would allow these farms (and the local economies they energize) to flourish in the future.

Durham and Orange County administrations support local farmers using county-level policies and by overseeing state and federal programs, with the overarching goals of supporting farmers and preserving agricultural lands. Both counties administer conservation funding and technical assistance programs, provide tax incentives, support local food economies, and prioritize agriculture in land-use planning.

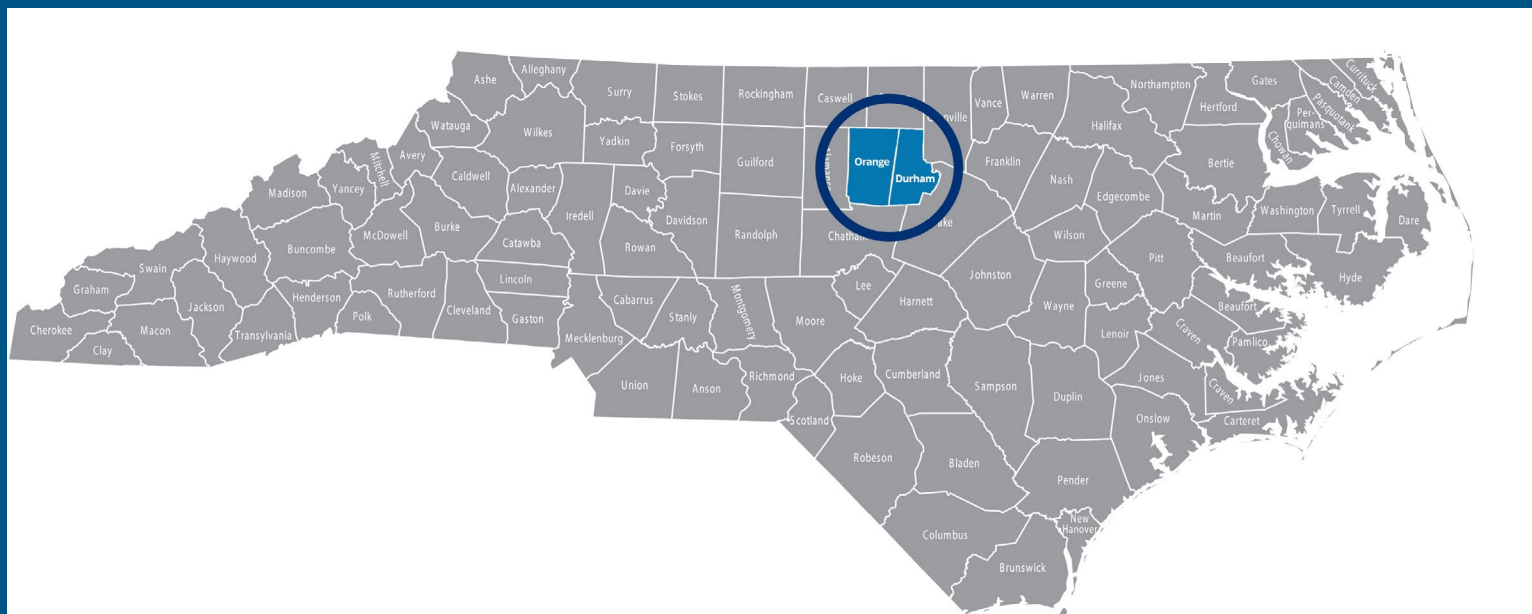
We have detailed below the policies that already support small local farms, and these have given us the comparatively strong local food system that we have now. But still less than 1% of what we eat was raised locally. Realizing the potential of local food systems will require a new age of local investment by counties and the institutions that anchor them, like Duke University. You can find models on the companion website: <https://wfpc.sanford.duke.edu/resilient-communities-built-on-farmer-flourishing/>.

Key Takeaways

Conservation Funding and Technical Assistance

- At the county level, farmers can access various federal funding and technical assistance opportunities through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA).
- At the state level, farmers can tap into state-level conservation funding through their local Soil & Water Conservation District.

Figure 1. Durham and Orange Counties are two of 100 North Carolina counties.



County and Use Tax Programs

- Durham and Orange Counties are among forty-seven North Carolina counties that have implemented a quarter-cent local sales tax under [Article 46 of the state tax code](#), with portions of this revenue supporting agricultural initiatives.
- Both Durham and Orange Counties have implemented versions of [North Carolina's Voluntary Agricultural District](#) (VAD) program to establish conservation agreements with landowners.
- Orange County has further strengthened their program by offering an [Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District](#) (EVAD) designation, which provides additional benefits such as priority consideration for state grants and higher cost-share percentages under the NC Agricultural Cost Share Program.
- Durham County has an additional agricultural designation program through their [Farmland Protection Board for Agricultural Priority Areas](#) that proactively identifies and designates active farming areas with the most productive agricultural soils.

Land Designations and Easements

- Farmers can receive significant tax benefits by donating easements — qualifying farmers, who must earn at least 50% of their gross income from farming, can deduct 100% of their income for 15 years on federal taxes.
- Local governments utilize multiple funding sources to purchase conservation easements, including local level funds, like county Capital Improvement Plans, as well as state and federal grant funds, such as [USDA's Agricultural Conservation Easement Program—Agricultural Land Easement](#) (ACEP-ALE) and the [NC Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund](#).
- Durham County farmers interested in acquiring an easement for their land can secure funding through the Farmland Protection Program, which is part of [Durham County's Open Space Program](#).

- Farmers in Orange County can secure funding through the [Lands Legacy Program](#), which helps fund permanent conservation easements for parks, natural areas, and farms.
- County Tax Law - [North Carolina's Present Use Value \(PUV\) program](#) offers significant property tax relief to agricultural producers through a unique assessment approach mandated by state law.

Local Sourcing and Value-Add Product Support

- Durham and Orange Counties help farmers sell their products locally by providing pathways to sell in local schools. While farmers must obtain food safety certification to participate in these programs, Orange County supports this process by offering financial assistance for [Good Agricultural Practices](#) (GAP) certification.
- The counties also collaborate to help farmers create value-added products through the [Piedmont Food Processing Center](#), a joint venture between Durham, Orange, Chatham, and Alamance Counties located in Orange County.

Prioritizing Protection of Agricultural Lands

- An important part of both the [Durham County](#) and [Orange County Comprehensive Plans](#) is the protection of rural areas from unchecked development, focusing on agricultural land preservation and enhanced conservation practices.





Jane Saiers and Darin Knapp with their beloved goats at RambleRill Farm. Credit: Christina Ferrari.

Introduction

A healthy local food system depends on a critical mass of producers who are nimble, diverse, and rooted in place. It depends on farms close enough to supply local markets, sustain community relationships, and anchor regional identity. Small farms in Durham and Orange Counties provide ecological, economic, and civic benefits that go beyond the produce and meat they produce. They contribute to the region's economic life in ways that large commodity operations rarely do. Small, diversified farms rely on people rather than machines. They create more jobs per acre and circulate more dollars within local businesses. The restaurants, breweries, and food enterprises that give Durham its nationally recognized food culture depend on the steady flow of produce, meat, and flowers from nearby farms. The farmers markets in Carrboro, Durham, Hillsborough, and Chapel Hill are places to buy food, but they are equally civic spaces where people meet, exchange information, and maintain a sense of place that is increasingly rare in fast-growing regions.

Tourism rests on these landscapes as well. Visitors come for farm dinners, orchards, craft beverages, and seasonal festivals. They expect rural landscapes to persist, even as rising demand for housing pushes farmland prices upward. In practice, small farms help preserve the region's rural character and distinguish it from the sprawl overtaking much of the state. They create the kind of authenticity that communities elsewhere spend significant resources trying to manufacture.

Both counties have lost a significant share of farmland, and rising land prices make it nearly impossible for new farmers to buy or lease secure acreage. First-generation farmers—who make up the overwhelming majority of those producing food for local consumption—cannot compete with developers or investors. Without stable land access, the region's local food system becomes a story of shrinking possibilities. The counties strive to preserve the agricultural character of the landscape, even as urbanization threatens to convert farmland. The two counties, situated in the rapidly developing Research Triangle region, leverage policy tools to protect farmland from development pressures while supporting agricultural economic viability.

State and Federal Agricultural Funding

Durham and Orange Counties play a vital role in supporting their local farmers through the administration of federal and state funding programs. At the county level, farmers can access various federal funding and technical assistance opportunities through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA).^{1,2} Through programs like the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#), farmers receive support to implement conservation practices, including high tunnels that extend growing seasons and enhance local food supply.³ While farms in Orange and Durham Counties historically received sizable federal conservation payments totaling \$510,086 and \$676,705 respectively from 1995-2023, recent years have seen a significant decline.^{4,5} Between 2019-2023, payments averaged just \$4,617 annually in Orange County and \$368 in Durham County,^{6,7} primarily through the [Conservation Reserve Program](#), which compensates farmers for removing environmentally sensitive land from production for 10-15 year periods.^{8,9}

Beyond federal programs, farmers can tap into state-level conservation funding through their local Soil & Water Conservation District.¹⁰ One program is the [North Carolina Agricultural Cost Share Program \(ACSP\)](#), which provides funding and technical assistance to enable farmers to control nonpoint source pollution emanating from their property.¹¹ In fiscal year 2024, this program allocated \$92,008 to Orange County, with \$66,957 dedicated to financial assistance and \$25,051 to technical support.^{12,13} Durham County received similar support through ACSP, with \$81,347 total funding split between \$51,559 for financial assistance and \$29,788 for technical assistance.^{14,15} Farmers can also access resources through the [NC Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program \(AgWRAP\)](#), which funds water conservation and improved water efficiency, though eligible farmers must earn substantial farming income - either 75% of total income or \$250,000 from farming operations.¹⁶

Article 46 One-Quarter Cent (1/4¢) County Sales and Use Tax

Durham and Orange Counties are among forty-seven North Carolina counties that have implemented a quarter-cent local sales tax under [Article 46 of the state tax code](#), with portions of this revenue supporting agricultural initiatives.¹⁷ Orange County allocates 50% of the tax to economic development initiatives, and several of the programs are agricultural.¹⁸ The tax funds 75% of an Agricultural Economic Development Position - a vital role that helps farmers expand their market reach while working to preserve and attract food-related businesses.^{19,20} The largest agricultural line item funded by the tax is the [Agricultural Economic Grant Program](#), with outlays of \$157,500 for the fiscal year of 2024-2025.²¹ The grant program provides funding of up to \$10,000 to support new farmers, fund infrastructure improvements, or fund equipment purchases.²² The tax also supports smaller initiatives like an annual agricultural summit that brings together farmers, suppliers, government officials, and experts to strengthen the local agricultural sector.^{23,24}

Durham County farmers are also eligible for an Agricultural Economic Grant Program, which similarly provides grants of up to \$10,000 per applicant.²⁵

Land Designation

Since 1985, [North Carolina's Voluntary Agricultural District \(VAD\)](#) program has enabled counties to establish conservation agreements with landowners, and both Durham and Orange Counties have implemented versions of this program.²⁶ These agreements protect agricultural lands by having landowners voluntarily commit to forestalling property development for at least 10 years. In Durham County, where 105 participants have protected 8,911 acres across 248 parcels as of 2024,²⁷ eligibility requires enrollment in the [Present Use Value tax program](#) and minimum land requirements - 20 acres for qualified forests, 10 acres for agricultural production, or 5 acres for horticultural production.²⁸ Orange County's

program accommodates smaller operations, requiring just 1 acre for agricultural or horticultural production, or 20 acres for forestry lands, provided the land serves bona fide farm purposes (as defined in North Carolina General Statutes G.S. 106-743.4(a) and G.S. 160D-903^{29,30}) and follows erosion-control practices defined by NRCS and NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation.³¹ Participation in these programs shields agricultural lands from various challenges, including public project land condemnation, water and sewer assessments, and nuisance complaints. Orange County has further strengthened their program by offering an [Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District](#) (EVAD) designation, which provides additional benefits such as priority consideration for state grants and higher cost-share percentages under the NC Agricultural Cost Share Program. While standard VAD agreements can be revoked, EVAD contracts are binding throughout their 10-year term.³² Together, Orange County's VAD and EVAD programs protect 17,212 acres across 147 farms as of 2023.³³

Durham County has an additional agricultural designation program through their [Farmland Protection Board for Agricultural Priority Areas](#). Rather than requiring farmer applications, this program proactively identifies and designates active farming areas with the most productive agricultural soils.³⁴ This designation gives the lands priority consideration for conservation easements and provides protection from development that would lead to the conversion of farmland, including planning considerations regarding urban growth boundaries. Agricultural priority areas are identified by the farmland board and recommended for adoption by the Board of County Commissioners.

Easements

Durham and Orange County farmers can permanently protect their agricultural lands through conservation easements, which represent a more robust preservation tool than VAD programs. While landowners retain full ownership of their property, these easements permanently restrict land conversion to non-agricultural uses, even after changes to ownership of the land.³⁵

There is strong competition for conservation easement programs, as there are many

more eligible lands with strong potential for conservation than there are funds available. Programs evaluate potential easements using defined criteria to rank their conservation value. The value of these easements is determined by professional appraisal, calculated as the difference between the land's unrestricted fair market value and its value with conservation restrictions in place.³⁶ Local governments utilize multiple funding sources to purchase conservation easements, including local level funds, like county Capital Improvement Plans, as well as state and federal grant funds, such as [USDA's Agricultural Conservation Easement Program—Agricultural Land Easement](#) (ACEP-ALE) and the [NC Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund](#).

Farmers can receive significant tax benefits by donating easements — qualifying farmers, who must earn at least 50% of their gross income from farming, can deduct 100% of their income for 15 years on federal taxes.³⁷ Prior to its repeal in 2014, North Carolina offered an additional [Conservation Income Tax Credit](#) of up to 25% of the fair market value of the easement.³⁸ A similar program was included in the Farm Act passed by the NC General Assembly in 2024 that will provide a tax credit for conservation easements donated between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2026.³⁹

Durham County farmers interested in acquiring an easement for their land can secure funding through the Farmland Protection Program, which is part of [Durham County's Open Space Program](#).⁴⁰ The Farmland Protection Program prioritizes applications from Agricultural Priority Areas and VADs. To date, 19 farms totaling 2,422 acres have been placed in permanent protection through conservation easements with Durham County.⁴¹ These lands have an overall easement value of \$14,534,030 but have cost Durham County only \$3,356,635, since they have leveraged \$4.33 in grants and donations for every dollar spent by the county.⁴²

Farmers in Orange County can secure funding through the [Lands Legacy Program](#), which helps fund permanent conservation easements for parks, natural areas, and farms.⁴³ Since its creation in 2000, the Lands Legacy Program has enrolled 4,087 acres in permanent conservation easements.⁴⁴ As of 2017, 20 active farms were enrolled in the program, preserving over 1,930

acres. Over the first 17 years of the program, these easements cost Orange County \$5,195 per acre. The county leveraged over \$5 million in state and federal grants to support the program.⁴⁵

County Tax Policy

[North Carolina's Present Use Value \(PUV\) program](#) offers significant property tax relief to agricultural producers through a unique assessment approach mandated by state law. While most properties are taxed based on their market value or highest-use value, agricultural properties enrolled in the PUV program are assessed based on their current agricultural production value.⁴⁶ Properties under the PUV program are taxed at the same rate, but the tax is levied on a lower property value according to the PUV appraisal.⁴⁷ The program can provide savings of up to 90% on property taxes.⁴⁸ To qualify, a farm must have at least ten acres under production and have an average gross income of at least \$1,000 over the last three years.⁴⁹ If a farm currently enrolled in PUV program is disqualified, then the property owner will owe a "roll back" tax equal to the unpaid deferred taxes from the previous three years plus interest.⁵⁰

Though the PUV program operates across North Carolina, its county-level administration leads to some local variations.⁵¹ North Carolina state law requires that all counties assess agricultural, horticultural, and forestry lands at their working land value rather than highest-use value.⁵² The tax is then implemented at a county level, which leads to slight differences in implementation, such as different enrollment deadlines.⁵³

Local Food Sourcing and Value-Added Products

Durham and Orange Counties help farmers sell their products locally by providing pathways to sell in local schools. Durham County launched a pilot program in the 2023-2024 school year that features locally sourced foods in county schools on the third Thursday of each month, initially working with six local partners including farms and food organizations.⁵⁴ Interested farmers can review request for proposals (RFP) and submit through the Durham Public Schools website under non-construction RFPs.^{55,56} Farmers in Durham and Orange Counties can also access the broader

Table 1. Elements of Durham County's Comprehensive Plan related to presentation of farmland.

Comprehensive Plan Policy		Related Action Step
Policy 89	Protect, preserve, and support farmland, working land, and farmers, particularly among BIPOC communities and others who have been historically disadvantaged.	To support farmers and farmland, continue and potentially expand the following programs: Agricultural Priority Areas, Voluntary Agricultural Districts, and Present Use Valuation Programs.
		Remove barriers to and provide support for increased land access and ownership for BIPOC farmers.
Policy 90	Eliminate food apartheid by supporting and creating ways for residents to access healthy foods (encourage small-scale grocery and food markets in communities with limited access to healthy foods and help to facilitate local supply chain distribution between growers and grocery stores).	Assess and address existing regulations that hinder the opening of food-related businesses.
Policy 91	Encourage sustainable and biodiverse agricultural practices.	

state-wide market through the NC Farm to School program, which has facilitated local fruit and vegetable sourcing in North Carolina schools since 1997.⁵⁷ While farmers must obtain food safety certification to participate in these programs,⁵⁸ Orange County supports this process by offering financial assistance for [Good Agricultural Practices \(GAP\)](#) certification.⁵⁹

The counties also collaborate to help farmers create value-added products through the [Piedmont Food Processing Center](#), a joint venture between Durham, Orange, Chatham, and Alamance Counties located in Orange County.⁶⁰ This innovative facility emerged from a 2007 feasibility study funded by Weaver Street Market and Whole Foods,⁶¹ and was established through \$1,127,319 in grants from multiple organizations including the Golden Leaf Foundation, NC Agricultural Development & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, and several other state and federal agencies.⁶² The 10,000 square foot facility is filled with commercial kitchens and other specialized equipment for use by local food suppliers.⁶³ In addition to providing on-site facilities, the processing center offers educational programs, business start-up support, marketing support, mentorship, and other programs to help local food suppliers build their business.⁶⁴

Comprehensive Land Use and Climate Resilience Plans

A Comprehensive Land Use Plan is a set of strategies that counties use to guide decisions about future growth and land use regulations. Required by state law, these plans establish broad goals that county officials must consider when making zoning amendments, land use decisions, and policy and investment choices.⁶⁵ While the policies laid out in Comprehensive Plans are not enforceable zoning laws or regulations, they do impact the application of zoning laws, the trajectory of development in the county, and county budgets and funding decisions—all of which can affect the livelihoods of small-scale farmers in the area. An important part of both the [Durham County](#) and [Orange County Comprehensive Plans](#) is the protection of rural

areas from unchecked development, focusing on agricultural land preservation and enhanced conservation practices. These plans advocate for conservation easements, innovative stormwater management, and wildlife habitat protection. They also include considerations for increasing rural buffer areas to protect against urban sprawl, redirect growth to cities and away from unincorporated areas, and protect farmland, woodland habitat, watersheds, and drinking water supplies.

The Durham County 2023 Comprehensive Plan (see Table 1) includes 197 policies, three of which are explicitly related to agriculture and local food systems.⁶⁶ These policies focus on the general promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, support for farmland and farmers, and expansion of local food economies. These policies are broad goals that state the county's intention to support farmers and farmland, but do not include specific guidance for achieving those goals. Other policies in the Comprehensive Plan will affect farmers through the promotion of land and water conservation practices across the county. Such policies include placing 30% of county land area in permanent conservation, encouraging riparian buffers for wildlife conservation, and reducing water usage.

In comparison to Durham County's Comprehensive Plan, Orange County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan has more than five times the number of policies explicitly related to agriculture. Orange County's plan includes a strong focus on supporting farmers by strengthening agricultural land use protections, supporting local agricultural markets, creating county-level programs to support farms like tax assistance and distribution infrastructure, and advancing climate resilience through the promotion of sustainable practices in land management, energy use, and water resource protections.⁶⁷



Thriving crops in the polytunnels at Red's Quality Acre. Credit Christina Ferrari.

Discussion

While Durham and Orange counties have a variety of programs to support agriculture and local food systems, some are more impactful than others. The county-level programs that offer the most support for Durham and Orange County farmers are funding programs such as the Agricultural Economic Grant Program, which is funded by their [quarter cent tax](#), the PUV tax program, and conservation easement programs. These programs deliver tangible benefits to a broader range of farmers compared to other county-level policies. In contrast, programs like the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) and Comprehensive Land Use Plans, while helpful for identifying and protecting farmland from development, offer fewer direct benefits to farmers. VADs, with their non-binding and time-limited nature, provide few short-term advantages to enrolled farmers and limited long-term land protection. Comprehensive Land Use Plans act as guiding documents for zoning and establish general agricultural support goals rather than creating enforceable policies. Comprehensive Land Use Plans provide some support for agricultural preservation and soil, water, and wildlife conservation practices that can affect agricultural lands. They can also catalyze meaningful investments, as demonstrated by Orange County's investment in the Piedmont Food Processing Center and Breeze Incubator Farm, both of which were direct responses to the Comprehensive Plan's goals of improving agricultural business infrastructure and profitability.⁶⁸

Orange and Durham Counties have had comparably more success leveraging state and county funding than federal conservation funding to preserve agricultural land. The disparity is striking: while Durham County received an average of just \$368 annually in federal conservation payments from 2019-2023, it secured \$81,347 in state funding through a single program (ACSP) in 2024.^{69,70,71} One possible factor is that small farms, like those in Durham and Orange Counties, face barriers in accessing federal conservation funding. The application for federal conservation programs is long and time-consuming, which is a challenge for small farms with limited resources and time.⁷² Many of the federal programs set payment rates per acre, so small farms do not qualify for large grants.⁷³ As a result, the payment rates for small farms are often insufficient to cover the implementation cost of conservation practices.⁷⁴ Demand for federal conservation funding also well exceeds available funding, making federal funding highly competitive. The percent of USDA [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) contracts, one of the largest federal conservation programs, awarded in North Carolina in 2022 was only 15.53%, which was the lowest rate of any state in the U.S.⁷⁵ The competitiveness of federal conservation programs makes it challenging for farmers to secure funding and may disincentivize local farmers from applying at all.

References

- 1 Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. "North Carolina." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/north-carolina>.
- 2 *North Carolina State Programs*. (n.d.). Farm Service Agency. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/North-Carolina/programs>.
- 3 Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. "Environment Quality Incentives Program- North Carolina." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives/north-carolina/environment-quality>.
- 4 Database, E. F. S. (n.d.). *Farm subsidies in Orange County, North Carolina*. Environmental Working Group. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://farm.ewg.org/progdetail.php?fips=37135&progcode=totalcons®ionname=OrangeCounty,NorthCarolina>.
- 5 *Farm subsidies in Durham County, North Carolina*. (n.d.). Environmental Working Group. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://farm.ewg.org/progdetail.php?fips=37063&progcode=totalcons®ionname=DurhamCounty,NorthCarolina>.
- 6 Database, E. F. S. (n.d.). *Farm subsidies in Orange County, North Carolina*. Environmental Working Group. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://farm.ewg.org/progdetail.php?fips=37135&progcode=totalcons®ionname=OrangeCounty,NorthCarolina>.
- 7 *Farm subsidies in Durham County, North Carolina*. (n.d.). Environmental Working Group. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://farm.ewg.org/progdetail.php?fips=37063&progcode=totalcons®ionname=DurhamCounty,NorthCarolina>.
- 8 Database, E. F. S. (n.d.). *Farm subsidies in Orange County, North Carolina*. Environmental Working Group. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://farm.ewg.org/progdetail.php?fips=37135&progcode=totalcons®ionname=OrangeCounty,NorthCarolina>.
- 9 *Farm subsidies in Durham County, North Carolina*. (n.d.). Environmental Working Group. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://farm.ewg.org/progdetail.php?fips=37063&progcode=totalcons®ionname=DurhamCounty,NorthCarolina>.
- 10 Orange County North Carolina. "Soil & Water Conservation District." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/727/Soil-Water-Conservation-District>.
- 11 Orange County North Carolina. "Soil & Water Conservation District." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/727/Soil-Water-Conservation-District>.
- 12 *FY2022-2024 Technical Assistance Annual Allocation*. (n.d.). North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.ncagr.gov/soil-water/swcacsp-fy24-ta-allocation/download?attachment>.
- 13 *FY2022-2024 Technical Assistance Annual Allocation*. (n.d.). North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.ncagr.gov/soil-water/swcacsp-fy24-ta-allocation/download?attachment>.
- 14 *FY2022-2024 Technical Assistance Annual Allocation*. (n.d.). North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.ncagr.gov/soil-water/swcacsp-fy24-ta-allocation/download?attachment>.
- 15 *FY2022-2024 Technical Assistance Annual Allocation*. (n.d.). North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.ncagr.gov/soil-water/swcacsp-fy24-ta-allocation/download?attachment>.

- 16 North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. "Soil & Water - AgWRAP." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/soil-water-conservation/programs-initiatives/agwrap#WhoisEligible-1925>.
- 17 *North Carolina Local Sales Tax Articles As Authorized in G.S. Chapter 105*. (n.d.). Fiscal Research Division. Retrieved November 7, 2024, from https://sites.ncleg.gov/frd/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2024/03/2024_Local_Sales_Tax_Article_2Pager-2.pdf
- 18 *FY 2024-25 Annual Operating Budget Capital investment Plan* (pp. 211–212). (n.d.). Orange County, NC. Retrieved November 7, 2024, from <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/28915/FY24-25-Commissioner-Approved-Budget---Online>
- 19 *FY 2024-25 Annual Operating Budget Capital investment Plan* (pp. 211–212). (n.d.). Orange County, NC. Retrieved November 7, 2024, from <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/28915/FY24-25-Commissioner-Approved-Budget---Online>;
- 20 Edmonds, E., & Dunning, R. (2016, p. 8). *A Guide for Governments on Building Local Food Economies*. The Center for Environmental Farming Systems. https://cefs.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/A-Guide-for-Governments-on-Building-Local-Food-Economies_Sept-2016-4.pdf?x68591.
- 21 *FY 2024-25 Annual Operating Budget Capital investment Plan* (pp. 211–212). (n.d.). Orange County, NC. Retrieved November 7, 2024, from <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/28915/FY24-25-Commissioner-Approved-Budget---Online>.
- 22 *Agricultural Economic Development Grant Program*. (n.d.). NC Cooperative Extension. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://orange.ces.ncsu.edu/agricultural-economic-development-grant-program/>.
- 23 *FY 2024-25 Annual Operating Budget Capital investment Plan* (pp. 211–212). (n.d.). Orange County, NC. Retrieved November 7, 2024, from <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/28915/FY24-25-Commissioner-Approved-Budget---Online>.
- 24 *Orange County Agriculture Summit*. (n.d.). NC Cooperative Extension. Retrieved November 7, 2024, from <https://orange.ces.ncsu.edu/orange-county-agriculture-summit/>.
- 25 Durham County NC. "Durham Agricultural Economic Development Grant Program." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/41681/638615656541100000>.
- 26 North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. "Voluntary Agricultural Districts." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/farmland-preservation/vad>
- 27 Durham County Farmland Protection Advisory Board. "2024 Annual Report." Accessed October 16, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/41357/638574161500730000>
- 28 Durham County Farmland Protection Advisory Board. "Voluntary Agricultural District Program." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/38915/638212127307570000>
- 29 North Carolina State General Assembly. General Statutes 160D-903. https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_160D/GS_160D-903.pdf.
- 30 North Carolina State General Assembly. General Statutes 106-743.4. https://ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_106/GS_106-743.4.html.
- 31 Orange County Soil & Water Conservation District. "Voluntary Agricultural Districts in Orange County." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/750/Voluntary-Agricultural-Districts-In-Oran>
- 32 Orange County Soil & Water Conservation District. "Voluntary Agricultural Districts in Orange County." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/750/Voluntary-Agricultural-Districts-In-Oran>

- 33 Orange County Board of Commissioners. "Action Agenda Item Abstract: June 6, 2023." Accessed October 16, 2024. <http://server3.co.orange.nc.us:8088/WebLink/DocView.aspx?dbid=0&id=70147&page=3&cr=1>
- 34 Durham County, North Carolina, Code of Ordinances. Ord. No. 7-12-99, § II; Ord. of 5-27-03. Accessed October 4, 2024. https://library.municode.com/nc/durham_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeld=COOR_CH14EN_ARTIVFAPRPR_DIV2GU_S14-127AGPRARAP
- 35 Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. "Agricultural Land Easements." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/ale-agricultural-land-easements>.
- 36 Durham County NC. "Farmland Protection Program Plan Appendices." Accessed October 23, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/1854/635548543552170000>
- 37 Land Trust Alliance. (2016). "Using the Conservation Tax Incentive." Accessed October 23, 2024. <https://a.storyblok.com/f/120093/x/c6bcecccd/conservationeasementtaxincentivebrochure2016.pdf>
- 38 Catawba Lands Conservancy. (2024). "What happened to North Carolina's Conservation Income Tax Credit?" <https://catawbalands.org/what-happened-to-north-carolinas-conservation-income-tax-credit/>
- 39 Catawba Lands Conservancy. (2024). "Unanimous Support for the NC Farm Act Benefits Working Farms, Forests, and Trails." <https://catawbalands.org/unanimous-support-for-the-nc-farm-act-benefits-working-farms-forests-and-trails/>
- 40 Durham County NC. "Farmland Protection Program." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/county-departments/departments-a-e/engineering-and-environmental-services/open-space-and-real-estate-division/durham-county-open-space-program/farmland-protection-program>.
- 41 Durham County Farmland Protection Advisory Board. "2024 Annual Report." Accessed October 16, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/41357/638574161500730000>
- 42 Durham County Farmland Protection Advisory Board. "2024 Annual Report." Accessed October 16, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/41357/638574161500730000>
- 43 Orange County North Carolina. "Lands Legacy Program Overview." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7664/Lands-Legacy-Program-Overview>.
- 44 Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation. "Lands Legacy Program Action Plan 2024-2027." Accessed October 16, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7662/Lands-Legacy-Action-Plan-2024-2027>
- 45 Orange County North Carolina. "Lands Legacy Program Overview." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7664/Lands-Legacy-Program-Overview>.
- 46 NC State Extension. "Present Use Value: The Basics of Agricultural and Forest Use Property Tax." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu/land-use-and-zoning/present-use-value-the-basics-of-agricultural-and-forest-use-property-tax/>.
- 47 NC State Extension. "Present Use Value: The Basics of Agricultural and Forest Use Property Tax." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu/land-use-and-zoning/present-use-value-the-basics-of-agricultural-and-forest-use-property-tax/>.
- 48 NC State Extension. "Present Use Value: The Basics of Agricultural and Forest Use Property Tax." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu/land-use-and-zoning/present-use-value-the-basics-of-agricultural-and-forest-use-property-tax/>.
- 49 Orange County, NC. "Present Use Value." Accessed August 22, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/1793/Present-Use-Value>; see Durham County. "Present Use Value." Accessed August 22, 2024. <https://www.dconc.gov/county-departments/departments-f-z/tax-administration/present-use-value>.

- 50 NC State Extension. "Present Use Value: The Basics of Agricultural and Forest Use Property Tax." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu/land-use-and-zoning/present-use-value-the-basics-of-agricultural-and-forest-use-property-tax/>.
- 51 NC State Extension. "Present Use Value: The Basics of Agricultural and Forest Use Property Tax." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu/land-use-and-zoning/present-use-value-the-basics-of-agricultural-and-forest-use-property-tax/>.
- 52 NC State Extension. "Present Use Value: The Basics of Agricultural and Forest Use Property Tax." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu/land-use-and-zoning/present-use-value-the-basics-of-agricultural-and-forest-use-property-tax/>.
- 53 NC State Extension. "Present Use Value: The Basics of Agricultural and Forest Use Property Tax." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu/land-use-and-zoning/present-use-value-the-basics-of-agricultural-and-forest-use-property-tax/>.
- 54 Durham Public Schools. "DPS School Nutrition Services Procurement." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.dpsnc.net/Page/7749>.
- 55 Durham Public Schools. "DPS School Nutrition Services Procurement." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.dpsnc.net/Page/7749>; 1
- 56 *Bidding & RFPs*. (n.d.). Durham Public Schools. Retrieved October 18, 2024, from <https://www.dpsnc.net/domain/http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dpsnc.net%2Fsite%2Fdefault.aspx%3FDomainID%3D87>.
- 57 NC Farm to School. "History." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.ncfarmtoschool.com/about/history/>.
- 58 NC Farm to School. "Food Safety on the Farm." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.ncfarmtoschool.com/farmers/food-safety-on-the-farm/>.
- 59 Orange County NC. "Orange County Agriculture Resources." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/598/Orange-County-Agriculture-Resources>.
- 60 Piedmont Food Processing Center. "About." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.pfapnc.org/about>.
- 61 *Hillsborough NC - Growing Local Food Businesses*. (n.d.). Center for Environmental Farming Systems. Retrieved October 18, 2024, from https://cefs.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016-Case-Study_LFE_PFAP.pdf?x68591
- 62 *ORD-2010-050 Piedmont Food and Agricultural Processing Center Capital Project Ordinance*. (2010, June 21). Orange County NC. <http://server3.co.orange.nc.us:8088/WebLink/DocView.aspx?dbid=0&id=17127&page=2&cr=1>
- 63 Piedmont Food Processing Center. "Our Facility." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.pfapnc.org/our-facility>.
- 64 Piedmont Food Processing Center. "Our Community." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.pfapnc.org/our-commuinity>.
- 65 North Carolina State General Assembly. General Statutes 160D-501. https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/ByArticle/Chapter_160D/Article_5.pdf
- 66 City of Durham and Durham County, NC. "Durham Comprehensive Plan." (2023). Access October 4, 2024. https://www.engagedurham.com/DocumentCenter/View/599/Durham-Comprehensive-Plan-Adopted_October2023
- 67 Orange County Planning & Inspections. "Comprehensive Land Use." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/1238/Comprehensive-Land-Use>
- 68 Orange County Planning & Inspections. "Comprehensive Land Use." Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://www.orangecountync.gov/1238/Comprehensive-Land-Use>

- 69 *Farm subsidies in Durham County, North Carolina*. (n.d.). Environmental Working Group. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://farm.ewg.org/progdetail.php?fips=37063&progcode=totalcons®ionname=DurhamCounty,NorthCarolina>
- 70 *FY2022-2024 Technical Assistance Annual Allocation*. (n.d.). North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.ncagr.gov/soil-water/swcacsp-fy24-ta-allocation/download?attachment>
- 71 Consumer Services. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.ncagr.gov/soil-water/swcacsp-fy24-ta-allocation/download?attachment>
- 72 Levy, S. (2023, p. 18). *Improving on and Increasing Access to Conservation Programs in the Next Farm Bill*. American Farmland Trust. <https://farmland.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Improving-Conservation-Programs-White-Paper.pdf>
- 73 Levy, S. (2023, p. 18). *Improving on and Increasing Access to Conservation Programs in the Next Farm Bill*. American Farmland Trust. <https://farmland.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Improving-Conservation-Programs-White-Paper.pdf>
- 74 Levy, S. (2023, p. 18). *Improving on and Increasing Access to Conservation Programs in the Next Farm Bill*. American Farmland Trust. <https://farmland.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Improving-Conservation-Programs-White-Paper.pdf>
- 75 Happ, M. (2023, p. 4). *Still Closed Out: More progress needed to connect farmers with federal conservation programs*. Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy. <https://www.iatp.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/Closed%20Out%202.pdf>

Duke