

Adair County
Agricultural Development Council

Update of
COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Submitted by:

List County Council Members

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Adair County

Comprehensive Plan Update

County Agricultural Development Councils have the responsibility to evaluate the needs of the local agricultural economy. The updated County Comprehensive Plan should identify programs and projects best suited for agricultural development fund investments in the County.

The Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy staff may provide guidance to county councils throughout this evaluation.

1. Overview of County

In Adair County, Agriculture makes up one of the largest industries in the County, comprised primarily of livestock. Adair County farmers continue to adapt cutting edge technologies and management practices to improve on farm income and their sustainability. In the past 20 years, grain crop production has expanded significantly while tobacco production is very limited. Adair County is home to Lindsey Wilson College. Adair County is fortunate to be observing major improvements in roadways with the new access to the Cumberland Parkway, HWY 55 bypass and the expansion of the Hearland Parkway project.

a. Agricultural statistics, trends, & projections (i.e. Census Data)

- Traditional agricultural production

Adair County consists of 172,062 acres of farmland comprised primarily of hay and pasture. Agriculture in Adair County contributes \$69.3 million dollars to the local economy, making it the largest industry. Primary ag products include poultry (\$21.3 million), dairy (\$13.2 million), beef (\$13.2 million), and grain (\$11.2 million).

- Non-traditional agricultural production

In Adair County, small scale fruit and vegetable production has continued to grow in the past few years through the Farmer's Market, additional CSA's and retailing of local produce to local consumers. Freezer beef/meat interest continues to grow as new farmers expand the market base. Sweet corn production has also increased with good supply and demand in nearly all communities. There is an increased interest in sheep and goat production.

- New & emerging agricultural production

The poultry industry has expanded by over \$10 million since the 2012 Ag census. Grain farmers have shifted toward the production of soybeans as transportation and storage costs are more favorable when compared to corn.

- Tobacco dependency

Tobacco dependency continues to decline. In 1997 Adair County farmers sold \$9 million in tobacco compared to only \$3.4 million in 2017.

b. Demographic Data

- Social data

As of 2019, Adair County had a population of 19,299; a 3.3% increase since 2012. The population is 4.4% non-white, 16.1% older than 64, 22% living in poverty, and 37.6% under the age of 18. 71.2% of the population that is 25 years or older has a high school diploma or GED.

- Economic data

In 2019, Adair County had a total of 4,456 jobs compared to 4,790 in 2012. The median household income was \$36,575. Current projections suggest jobs will continue to decrease with an expected total of 4,414 in 2029.

2. Assessments of the County

a. Strengths

In general, most Adair County farmers have experience, land, facilities, and knowledge needed for further developing ag enterprises.

*Adair County has a very progressive agricultural community including a very active Cattlemen's Association, Farm Bureau, 4-H and FFA chapter.

*Adair County ranks third in the state in dairy production.*Adair County is suitable for developing forages. *There are good roads leading in/out of the county. *Vast expansion of Broadband internet in the county *Chamber of Commerce Training and Development Center *Industrial Development Park *Lindsey Wilson College

b. Weaknesses

- *Adair County lacks the cropland needed for large expansion of row crops.
- *Adair County is located far from any urban center. (Markets)
- *Adair County is in an economically depressed area of the state due to the relocation of the garment industry.
- *Most farmers have little capital in which to start new ventures.
- *Lack of knowledge of consumer trends.
- *Lack of nearby grain markets.
- *Broadband is improving, but still lacks service in parts of the county.

c. Opportunities

- *Adair County has a large number of youth willing to go into farming if the profit is there.
- *Adair County is located near two major tourist attractions, Green River Lake and Lake Cumberland. This could provide potential market opportunities.
- *There is a significant amount of timber on many of the farms in Adair County.
- *Population of retired citizen's (consumers) is increasing.
- *Adair County has a large school system, Lindsey Wilson College and Adair Regional Juvenile Detention Center that may serve as an outlet for locally produced food.

d. Challenges

- *Many young people are moving away.
- *Rising land costs and volatile profit margins make it difficult for young people to begin farming.
- *Lack of good jobs available for those who farm part-time.
- *Lack of quality, available workforce.

3. County Council Objectives

a. Mission/Vision Statement

To improve on-farm income through sound investments of county funds that will have a direct impact on farmers income, quality of life, and well-being.

b. Short term goals

The Council believes the following are our top short-term priorities:

*There is an excellent opportunity to increase farm net profits by improving forages in Adair County. Priority will be to improve net farm income through improved forage quality, quantity and efficient use.

*Improved genetics for dairy and beef production. The development of livestock handling facilities for the purpose of adding value through herd health improvement, genetic improvement and cooperative marketing.

*The council encourages and will consider proposals for the development of entrepreneurial enterprises that offer new market opportunities.

c. Long term goals

Long-term goals include evaluating projects to assure increased profitability, establishing marketing structures and value-added opportunities. Educating farmers on new enterprises and involving potential young farmers in the agriculture community are also priorities.

d. Tactics for leveraging funds

- Regional partnerships
NRCS, FSA, Extension, Commodity Associations

- State Agricultural Development Board resources
CAIP projects and Special project applications
KADF Loans

- Other local/state/federal resources
Local leaders and elected officials

3. Evaluation & Review

- a. How are proposals evaluated and does this process need modified?

Proposals are measured against their ability to meet the mission statement and the short and long term goals of the council.

- b. How is success and failure measured?

Successes and failures will be measured by having funded applicants report back on the success of their program, and by the number of local farmers the project has positively impacted.

- c. How will the county comprehensive plan be revised?

The county comprehensive plan will be revised as new ideas and proposals are reported, every five years by the County Ag Development Council, or as instructed by KY GOAP.

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