

**Business Plan  
for the  
Proposed Polk County  
Agriculture Education Center**



**MISSION**

To provide exceptional service through education on modern agricultural methods, technology, and healthy living through practical hands-on experiences in a centrally located multi-purpose Agricultural Education & Resource Center that benefits the entire community.

**[www.FriendsOfAg.org](http://www.FriendsOfAg.org)**

**PO Box 1327, Cedartown, GA 30125**

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## Vision

Create a state-of-the-art multipurpose community based Agricultural Education and Natural Resource Center located in a central area of the county that would be easily accessible to Cedartown, Rockmart, Aragon and all rural areas of Polk County as well as surrounding counties. The purpose is to promote and support modern agricultural methods and technology as well as practical application. It is planned to be large enough to provide space for agricultural training, attract sustainable agri-business, provide conference space, livestock shows and encourage healthy eating with community gardens and a cannery.

## Overview

Agriculture is the largest industry in Polk County with 353 farms with output value of \$276 million and 1530 jobs.<sup>1</sup> Nationwide, “the USDA shows tremendous demand for recent college graduates with a degree in agricultural programs with an estimated 57,900 high-skilled job openings annually in the food, agriculture, renewable natural resources, and environment fields in the United States. However, there is only an average of 35,400 new U.S. graduates with a bachelor’s degree or higher in agriculture related fields, 22,500 short of the jobs available annually.”<sup>2</sup> Our local high schools and middle schools offer the agriculture, food and natural resources path. This proposed center will be open to all ages of students, home-schoolers, adults and businesses to build a strong recognition of the value of promoting agriculture as a viable career.

Funding for the multipurpose Agricultural Education and Resource Center was envisioned to be shared by local, state and federal sources as well as private foundations. If the Polk County government had participated, the facilities were to be provided to all Polk County citizens at a significantly reduced rate. Additionally, office space would be used to consolidate agriculture resources such as FFA Young Farmer, 4-H and the Extension Office. Grounds maintenance could be done by County prisoners while building maintenance, insurance and utilities would be financed by charging non-county and non-agriculture related functions.

The multipurpose Agricultural Education and Resource Center is planned to be the centerpiece in a 23-acre park setting in the center of the county dedicated to celebrating nature, sustainability and agriculture. It will provide much needed office, meeting and conference room space in the county. An indoor arena and livestock show ring capable of holding equestrian events will provide greater opportunities for 4-H and FFA activities with floor space for other events such as an indoor farmer’s market, large training sessions, and others as schedule allows. The open livestock events, farmers market, cannery and a honey room will be open to the public and provide a revenue source to the center while the proposed community garden and walking trail could enhance recognition of how critical healthy, locally grown and sustainable agriculture is to everyone.

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<sup>1</sup> UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development, “2017 Ag Snapshots”. 2017.

<sup>2</sup> PennState College of Agriculture Sciences, “Job Outlook Bright for Ag Students” (2018) available at <http://agsci.psu.edu/futurestudents/careers/in-the-media/outlook>

We propose that the Center be built in the center of the county in two phases to allow for responsible growth, planning and funding. The first phase will include the main facility, parking and a storage outbuilding. The second phase will be to develop space for community gardens and a nature trail.

This proposed Agricultural Education and Resource Center has been strongly endorsed by the Polk County Farm Bureau, Cedartown and Rockmart FFA, the Polk 4-H and school system. It had further support from Representative Trey Kelly and State Senator Jason Anavitarte and former representatives including Senator Johnny Isakson, Senator David Perdue, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, Representative Tom Graves, State Senator Bill Heath,.

We will offer public and business sponsorships to both indicate interest and provide funds. Sponsorships will start at \$100-\$250 for a name on a brick to \$1,000,000 or more for building naming rights. [Appendix A](#) provides a proposed donation schedule.

## Timeline

The original plan had been to build the Agriculture Education and Resource Center with fund from local, state and federal sources as well as private funds including those raised by the non-profit Friends of Agriculture.

Initially a realistic goal to open the Polk Agriculture and Business Center was June 2020 based on support from the Polk County Commission. This was centered on approval of the UGA feasibility study finalized September 28, 2018, and application to USDA for a loan by the end of 2018. The Commissioners did not accept the feasibility study, though they claimed support for the project. After numerous meetings with the Polk County Commissioners, Mr. Jeff Hawkins, FFA Young Farmer and advisor to the Friends of Agriculture Board was notified they would not support the Center in a letter dated April 14, 2021.

After the Commissioner rejected the findings from UGA, Friends of Agriculture was incorporated as a Georgia non-profit on August 7, 2019 and as Tax Exempt 501c3 on September 18, 2020 effective August 2, 2019. Upon rejection by the Commissioners, Friends of Agriculture took over planning and fund-raising efforts to build the Center.

Fundraising began with a goal of financing architectural drawings. Architect Brian Rindt of Marietta, GA was hired to develop the initial plan and assist with zoning approval. The drawings were completed May 6, 2022. A request for zoning approval was submitted shortly afterwards. The plan was unanimously approved at a meeting on June 16 and unanimously by the Polk County Commission on July 12.

Further milestone targets are based on fundraising goals that will be updated as met and the funds used. These were proposed to and accepted by the Friends of Agriculture board on August 22, 2022.

**Fundraising GOAL: \$8,000,000**

The goal is based on the cost to build the facility plus administration, insurance, personnel, maintenance for the first 2-3 years. The following proposed plan was developed to move construction forward while minimizing tax liability for the land donor as well as costs to the Friends of Agriculture. It is based on fundraising goals based on general understanding of construction costs estimated to be approximately \$6.1 million based on Rindt estimate and research on the potential total cost to build a school.<sup>3</sup> Each dollar milestone builds on the previous and is rounded up. The basis for each reflects an average estimate and should be updated once the previous step is completed.

Fundraising and grant applications will continue through all milestones and beyond.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Basis for Goal</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
\$500,000	Based on estimate cost for detailed drawings (8% of building cost) <sup>4</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send out Request for Proposal (RFP) to contract for detailed architectural drawing.</li> <li>• Approve contract.</li> <li>• Work with architect as plans are developed.</li> <li>• Use completed drawings for more detailed construction estimate.</li> </ul>
\$3,500,000	Estimated cost for site prep, foundation and laying basic utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send out RFP to contract for construction based on the architectural drawings.</li> <li>• <b>Land transferred to Friends of Agriculture</b></li> <li>• Approve contract.</li> <li>• Begin site prep including applying for permits, labor and materials</li> </ul>
\$5,500,000	Estimated cost to complete building. (Not including the canning equipment.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send out RFP for final construction based on the drawings (unless included in the RFP discussed above)</li> <li>• Approve contract (if needed)</li> </ul>
Building Inspection Started		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin administrative activities such as hiring, insurance, utilities, etc.</li> <li>• Advertise availability &amp; opening date</li> <li>• Start scheduling events</li> </ul>
\$6,100,000	2022 estimate from Brian Rindt and LevelSet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish construction</li> <li>• Grand Opening</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Tom Scalisi, LevelSet, "How Much Does it Cost To Build a School?" (1/24/2022)  
<https://www.levelset.com/blog/cost-to-build-a-school/>

<sup>4</sup> Source: Ellijay architect

## Location

The mission of this centrally located multipurpose Agriculture Education and Resource Center is to benefit Polk County Georgia along with the surrounding eight county area by offering services and opportunities not provided in those counties. Initially it was proposed for one of three sites centrally located in Polk County. Those details may be found in [Appendix B](#).

The 23+ acres on Sardis Road (Parcels 042-282, 042-289, & 042-288) has been donated by the owner, Sleeping R Ranch, LLC contingent on Friends of Agriculture fundraising successfully meeting agreed upon milestone goals. This land is protected under an Agriculture Land Trust contract between Sleeping R Ranch and the Georgia Alabama Land Trust. Five acres were set aside as an envelope to accommodate the center. [Appendix C](#) contains a summary of the Land Trust contract with a full copy provided to Friends of Agriculture.

On July 12, 2022 an A1 special use permit was granted for planned Agriculture Education Center and Resource Center approved by the Polk County Commissioners Planning and Zoning Board based on the architectural drawing in [Appendix D2](#).

## Facilities

The Agriculture Center will consist of one multipurpose building and an auxiliary building as shown in the attached architectural drawing approved by zoning. Additionally, a second phase is planned for community garden space and may include a small building, also within the five acre envelope, for use by the gardeners to store their tools when not in use.

### *Multipurpose Building*

The multipurpose building will be designed with an eye to being distinctive to Polk County by using local stone or slate and cedar. It will consist of three distinct areas as discussed below:

### **Administration/Conference/Indoor Arena**

A spacious entry that will welcome visitors and provide a location for information about upcoming events on a flat-screen TV. It will be designed with two sets of doors that may be shut if an area is not used to reduce cost of heating and cooling the main building. It will take visitors into a hall that leads to the multipurpose building which will measure **18,100** square feet consisting of administrative offices for the Director and others such as those in the original concept such as the County Extension Office, 4-H, and Cannery Manager. It will include fully accessible bathrooms; a dividable conference/classroom area with access to a kitchen and prep-room.

There will be an indoor arena with retractable stadium style seating that can also be used for additional conference space or special events. A small concession stand will be located between the indoor arena and the commercial kitchen providing both a needed service and potential revenue.

All of these areas will have polished concrete flooring for easy maintenance. The indoor arena will also have a removable, indoor/outdoor turf that can be laid down for livestock shows similar to that used in other agriculture centers. It can be removed, pressure washed and stored in the auxiliary building between uses.

### **Covered Livestock Area**

Additionally, there will be a 6,720 square foot covered livestock facility with movable panels for maximum flexibility in tying-out different species and sizes of animals. It was designed to be large enough for equestrian events. This will include 30 30-amp outlets for blow dryers along the tie-out area. This building will also provide a 70 foot concrete wash-rack area outside. Bathrooms, changing rooms, a second concession stand and a reviewing stand will be located included in this area to ensure that debris from this area is not carried into the multipurpose building. It also allows multiple events may be held simultaneously.

### **Cannery/Honey Room**

The final area within the main multipurpose building is a 3,000 square foot cannery/honey room. This section will include industrial canning equipment for both glass and metal containers to allow for the processing by several different individuals simultaneously. There will also be a small designated honey room (144 sq ft) for the processing and bottling of locally produced honey. That room should be self-contained due to the specialized nature of the process and will require an electric spinner, sink and other equipment.

### **Auxiliary Building**

A 4000 sq ft auxiliary storage building will be set behind the multipurpose building to be used for securing supplies and equipment. This building will house, for example, the facility tractors, mowers, livestock panels, removable turf, hoses, dryers, etc. that should be kept locked up when not in use. It will also have an outdoor area suitable for tying and securing livestock overnight during events. Adjacent to this building will be a covered outside pit for temporary storage of shavings if needed for use in the covered livestock area and an open pit for temporary storage of manure/used shavings prior to disposal.

### **Operations:**

This facility is planned to be a community asset for the entirety of Polk County as well as surrounding counties in Georgia and Alabama. Funding for building, maintaining and staffing the center will be raised through use fees, grants and fundraising.

### **Operating Schedule**

The Polk County Agricultural Center will have posted operating hours, but may extend them during canning season or for special events.

- Operating hours for the Agriculture Center office will be normally 9am to 5pm Monday thru Friday.
- Canning operations will be seasonable and may change based on usage during the first year of operation. The cannery will initially be open May 15 – October 15 with proposed



open hours to be three days per week: Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, 10:00am – 4:00pm.

- Indoor/Outdoor Farmer’s Market to be offered weekly in the indoor arena area. Initially, it will be held during the same months and days as the cannery: 8:00am – noon. This will allow people to purchase fresh produce and immediately preserve it.
- Special event schedules, including use of the multipurpose building, indoor arena and covered livestock area, shall be approved by the facility manager or their appointee.

## **Personnel**

Personnel involved in managing the agricultural center will include a full-time facility manager, administrator and seasonal cannery personnel as well as a voluntary advisory board under Friends of Agriculture.

### ***Facility Manager***

The facility manager for most similar centers is often the Young Farmer Agricultural Teacher<sup>5</sup>. The county receives funds for salary, benefits, and travel to support the Young Farmer Program and provide a minimum of 20 percent of the funds required for program operation. Should the county refuse to allow the Young Farmer to take on this role, a manager will be hired.

The manager will be responsible for supervising the running of the center including but not limited to:

- Creating and presenting agriculture related training
- Maintaining facility schedule and approve special events
- Organizing and setting up facilities as needed by users
- Marketing availability of the Ag Center to potential users
- Be a member of the Advisory Committee
- Office management including record keeping and financial management
- Ordering supplies and equipment
- Hiring and supervising part-time employees as needed
- Maintaining the facility including daily light cleaning

### ***Cannery Personnel***

During cannery operating months, a certified part time cannery manager will be used and can use trained paid personnel, unpaid volunteers, or students to help users. This position will be responsible for supervising cannery operations and safely, efficiently using cannery equipment. They will maintain records of use, collect fees, and ensure supplies are ordered and available

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<sup>5</sup> Georgia Department of Education, “160-4-3-.07 Young Farmer Agribusiness (YFA) Program” (February 1998) available at <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/State-Board-of-Education/SBOE%20Rules/160-4-3-.07.pdf#search=young%20farmers>

during canning season. This individual will also be required to clean the cannery and inspect the honey room at the end of each day.

### ***Advisory Board***

The voluntary Agricultural Advisory Board under Friends of Agriculture Inc will consist of a minimum of five members and a maximum of nine from our stakeholders. Representatives will be invited and approved, by the board, to join based on their interest in promoting agriculture in the county and willingness to actively take part in fundraising, programs, and promotional efforts. These could include those in agribusiness, agritourism, school lunch programs, other farmers, etc. The non-permanent positions will be rotated on a three-year basis.

The Advisory Board will meet at least four times per year. In these meetings, they will

- Plan fundraising events
- Work with the Polk County community at large to determine needs and ideas for future programs
- Meet with the Agriculture Center manager to receive quarterly schedule and financial reports

### ***Fees***

The fee structure will be set based on the purpose of the events: Agriculture related meetings; Cannery; Farmer's Market; and Special Events.

### ***Agriculture Meetings or Classes***

Agriculture related meetings, held by or primarily for Polk County residents, may be charged a minimal fee to use the facilities. These would include groups such as 4-H, FFA, Extension Office training sessions, Polk County Cattlemen, Polk County Farm Bureau, Polk Forestry, Polk Beekeepers, etc. These groups will be charged a refundable cleaning fee of \$50. The fee will not be returned should the group fail to clean up after their meetings to include refuse removal, return of any furniture to its original location and cleaning the areas used.

### ***Cannery/Honey Room***

The fee structure for the cannery/honey room will be set using similar pricing from other county cannery operations. This is usually two-tiered with one fee set for those canning for personal use and a higher hourly rate as a commercial kitchen for those planning to sell their products. The fee for using the cannery will be calculated on a per-can/jar basis to cover the cost of supplies, utilities, personnel, cleaning, and maintenance. Commercial canning can be offered to allow individuals to process foods under license to sell their canned goods. It is recommended we maintain specialized equipment such as a corn creamer and pea shelling machine ~ both of which are popular and have paid for themselves. Most canneries offer the option of buying cans

and glass jars or bringing your own jars for use, though several noted that cans are becoming expensive and recommended using only jars.

The honey room may be used for a flat fee to cover the cost of equipment and utilities. A refundable cleaning fee of \$50 will be charged to ensure users clean the area prior to leaving the facility. Users will be expected to bring their own containers.

**Indoor Farmer’s Market**

Local farmers will be encouraged to participate in a Farmer’s Market held weekly in the indoor arena. Booth space will be provided to each for a fee of \$10 per week. Outdoor space, if preferred, will also be available weekly for the same fee. Participating farmers must be approved prior to being allowed to sell at the market to ensure their offerings are locally grown or raised. An application form and rules will be developed. Appendix D provides an example from the Rockmart Farmers Market.

**Special Events**

Special events such as weddings, graduation ceremonies, and trade shows can be scheduled for either of the arenas or classrooms. User fees will be set by the Advisory Committee for organizations outside Polk County or functions not agricultural related to ensure sustainability. These fees will be coordinated with the facility manager and other financial advisors. Recommended fees would be based on a per hour usage of each area to cover reasonable expenses such as utilities, cleaning, and personnel to set-up, open and close the facility. These fees will be in line with those charged in the area for similar size facilities. Appendix E is shown as an example: Memorandum of Agreement for Rental of the Carroll County Agriculture-Education Center. The fees will be different for each of the facility areas (full or half-conference space; indoor show arena; or covered livestock area).

**Budget**

This fixed cost budget is estimated based on data provided by Polk County with the Annual Cost and Income estimates from the Madison County Agricultural Center feasibility study. The actual cost is shown where known:

***Estimated Fixed Costs:***

	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Land Acquisition .....	\$150,000	Donated
Design.....	\$350,000	
Site Work.....	\$150,000	
Utilities .....	\$500,000	
Construction .....	\$5,085,000	
<b>Total Estimate .....</b>	<b>\$6,100,000</b>	

The University of Georgia’s Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development (CAED) feasibility study completed 8/28/2018 estimated revenue generated from the proposed Ag Center of \$568,958 annually generating a profit of over \$330,000 after established. That estimate was based on the economic feasibility of constructing a similar multipurpose facility to host various agriculture and business events completed for Madison County, Georgia. Their revenue/profit estimate was based on:

- 29,700 visitors to the arena facilities
- 3,600 visitors to the conference/auditorium facility
- 3,600 visitors to the meeting/breakout room facilities
- Cannery 50 people

According to the UGA Feasible Study, the Polk County Agriculture & Natural Resource Center is estimated to generate \$568,958 annually in revenue once established.

• Meeting/Breakout room Rental	\$ 73,272
• Conference Rental	\$ 54,670
• Arena Facilities Rental	\$ 345,344
• Canning Facility Rental	\$ 15,147
• Farmers Market Revenue	\$ 10,025
• Community events*	\$ 70,500

\*Based on county fair numbers as a proxy.

***Estimated Annual Operations Cost***

The estimated Operations Cost is based on using the Young Farmer position to schedule agriculture events with the help of an Administrator, as many similar center in Georgia do. This position is paid for by the state and Polk County Board of Education. Marketing will continue to be done pro-bono by Laura Robinson to reduce cost during the first three years though the center will pay for the administration costs such as printing and website URL both currently paid by Mrs. Robinson.

• Direct Labor (Administration) .....	\$ 45,000 <sup>6</sup>
• Maintenance .....	\$ 35,000
• Utilities.....	\$ 35,000
• Administration & Marketing.....	\$ 5,000
• Supplies.....	\$ 10,000
<b>Total Estimate .....</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>

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<sup>6</sup> Propose Polk Young Farmer act as a manager. His salary is paid by the state of Georgia and Polk County School District.

### ***Estimated Annual Net Income***

Our plan is to begin to schedule events at least three months before the opening date. We expect to become self-sufficient within three years based on the local need and the UGA Feasibility Study. The current Friends of Agriculture fundraising goal includes a cushion to cover possible construction overruns and the first year of operations. We will continue fund-raising activities including seeking grants, state and local government participation, once the Center is open.

We modified the UGA numbers to more accurately reflect Polk County market and the plan to minimize payment for Polk County agriculture related meetings and events.

The board will be tasked with setting cost to rent each of the facilities based on similar facilities rates in Northwest Georgia. For example, Carroll County charges \$500 per 8-hour period for use of the kitchen and education center<sup>7</sup>. The Rome forum charges \$2500 for 8 hours to rent their 6000 sqft ballroom. Their 840 sqft classroom rents for \$200.<sup>8</sup> Both require the user to clean or pay an additional fee. On average, livestock show participants pay \$20-\$25 for each animal entered. The September 17, 2022 calf show at the Polk County Fairgrounds had 84 entrants. Equestrian events bring as much as \$50 per entrant in our area. Some events may also charge an entrance fee and most will offer concessions.

The plan for the Cannery is to charge for the cost of materials for home canning by county residents and an additional fee for those planning on selling their canned goods or non-Polk residents.

Finally, the original plan was for the county to support this and, in return, use the 3-5 office spaces for the UGA Extension offices and 4-H. Because they chose not to participate, we will be able to rent them for an estimated \$300/month or more depending on local rental fees. The numbers below are rough estimates of Annual NET Profit:

• Meeting Rooms (Outside Businesses) .....	\$ 18,000
• Enclosed Arena Facilities Rental .....	\$ 38,000
• Open-Air Arena Facilities Rental .....	\$ 80,000
• Cannery .....	\$ 8,000
• Concessions/Kitchen .....	\$ 20,000
• Office Rental .....	\$18,000
<b>Total Estimate Annual Net Income</b>	<b>\$182,000</b>

<sup>7</sup> Reservation Application/Rental Agreement Carroll County Agriculture-Education Center, (8/2020) <https://www.carrollcountyga.com/DocumentCenter/View/1520/AG-ED-RENTAL-AGREEMENT-revised-2-13-15?bidId=>

<sup>8</sup> Wedding Spot, "Rome GA Forum River Center" (2022) <https://www.wedding-spot.com/venue/12362/The-Forum-River-Center/>

## Appendix A – Sponsor Levels<sup>9</sup>

All giving levels will be recognized with an invitation to the Dedication Ceremony, name in the Dedication Publication and on the Agricultural Center Wall of Honor. Increasingly higher levels of generosity offer expanded recognition throughout our program.

**Bricks** ..... \$100 - \$500

Bricks will be offered at different levels depending on how many lines of text and location where used.

**Friend** ..... \$501 - \$5000

**Supporter** ..... \$5001 - \$10,000

The following levels offer additional recognition on the Agricultural Center Web site, a banner in the Show Ring and Special Recognition at Dedication.

**Tiller** ..... \$10,001 - \$25,000

**Planter** ..... \$25,001 – \$50,000

**Sower** ..... \$50,001 - \$100,000

**Builder** ..... \$100,001 - \$250,000

**Naming Right Giving Levels:** All of the following include Grower Level appreciation plus a Special Dedication Tribute within the Center as identified.

**Sustainer** ..... \$250,001 - \$500,000

**Naming Right of One Classroom**

**Silver Cultivator** ..... \$500,001 - \$1,500,000

**Cannery Naming Rights**

**Golden Harvester** ..... \$1,500,001 - \$2,500,000

**Indoor or Outdoor Arena Naming Rights**

**Platinum Producer** ..... > \$2,500,000

**Agriculture Education & Resource Center Naming Rights**

Donations may be made directly to the Friends of Agriculture Century Bank in Rockmart using the DONATION button on the webpage or at the bank. Friends of Agriculture also has a brokerage account with Edward Jones in Cedartown. The organization is registered as a Georgia Non-Profit organization and Tax Exempt under IRS Code 501c3. All funds raised will be used to build and maintain the facility and grounds.

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<sup>9</sup> Newton County Agricultural Center Capital Campaign, 2018.

## Appendix B – Proposed Location

The following information was provided to the Commissioners during several meetings as justification for building the Agriculture Center in a central location in Polk County to serve the most citizens.

The three towns that make up Polk County are Cedartown, Rockmart and Aragon. Additionally parts of Braswell and Taylorsville are within the borders of the county. The table below shows the demographic data for the towns and unincorporated areas within Polk County as presented by the US Census Bureau<sup>10</sup> using CCD<sup>11</sup>s:

Geographic area	Population	Housing units	Area in square miles			Density per square mile of land area	
			Total area	Water area	Land area	Population	Housing units
Polk County	41,475	16,908	312.14	1.81	310.33	133.6	54.5
COUNTY SUBDIVISION AND PLACE							
Aragon CCD	5,868	2,352	60.34	0.42	59.93	97.9	39.2
Aragon city (part)	1,185	475	1.06	0.02	1.04	1,139.2	456.6
Braswell town (part)	68	21	0.32	0.00	0.31	217.2	67.1
Rockmart city (part)	0	0	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.0	0.0
Taylorsville town (part)	28	13	0.45	0.00	0.45	61.7	28.6
Remainder of Aragon CCD	4,587	1,843	58.51	0.39	58.12	78.9	31.7
Cedartown CCD	24,695	9,874	186.72	0.66	186.06	132.7	53.1
Cedartown city	9,750	3,899	8.72	0.03	8.69	1,122.1	448.7
Remainder of Cedartown CCD	14,945	5,975	178.00	0.63	177.37	84.3	33.7
Rockmart CCD	10,912	4,682	65.08	0.73	64.35	169.6	72.8
Aragon city (part)	64	24	0.08	0.00	0.08	778.4	291.9
Braswell town (part)	71	26	0.67	0.01	0.66	107.4	39.3
Rockmart city (part)	4,199	1,899	5.70	0.07	5.63	745.7	337.3
Remainder of Rockmart CCD	6,578	2,733	58.62	0.65	57.97	113.5	47.1
PLACE							
Aragon city	1,249	499	1.14	0.02	1.12	1,112.7	444.6
Braswell town (part)	139	47	0.99	0.01	0.97	142.7	48.3
Cedartown city	9,750	3,899	8.72	0.03	8.69	1,122.1	448.7
Rockmart city	4,199	1,899	5.71	0.07	5.64	745.0	336.9
Taylorsville town (part)	28	13	0.45	0.00	0.45	61.7	28.6

Table 1: Population Data by CCD

As seen on the data table, the Cedartown CCD takes up 59.9% of the land area; however, it has a lower population density per square mile at 132.7 than the Rockmart CCD at 169.6. Housing units per square mile is even further apart with the Cedartown CCD at 53.1 compared to Rockmart CCD at 72.8.

The map in Figure 1 shows that same population distribution by city. While the Cedartown has a larger total population it makes up only 23.5% of the population of Polk County. Rockmart city

<sup>10</sup> United States Census Bureau, “American Fact Finder”, available at <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

<sup>11</sup> Census County Division (CCD) Subdivision of a county used by the US Census Bureau for the purpose of presenting statistical data. A CCD is a relatively permanent statistical area delineated cooperatively by the Census Bureau and state and local government authorities.

dwellers make up 10.1% and Aragon 3.0%. This means the remaining 63.4% of Polk County residents live in the unincorporated areas. We proposed a centralized facility (blue box) would be more in line with the population distribution data. This area is known as the Fish Creek Community. It should be noted that the 2020 census indicated an increase in overall population, but no significant change in the distribution of that population.

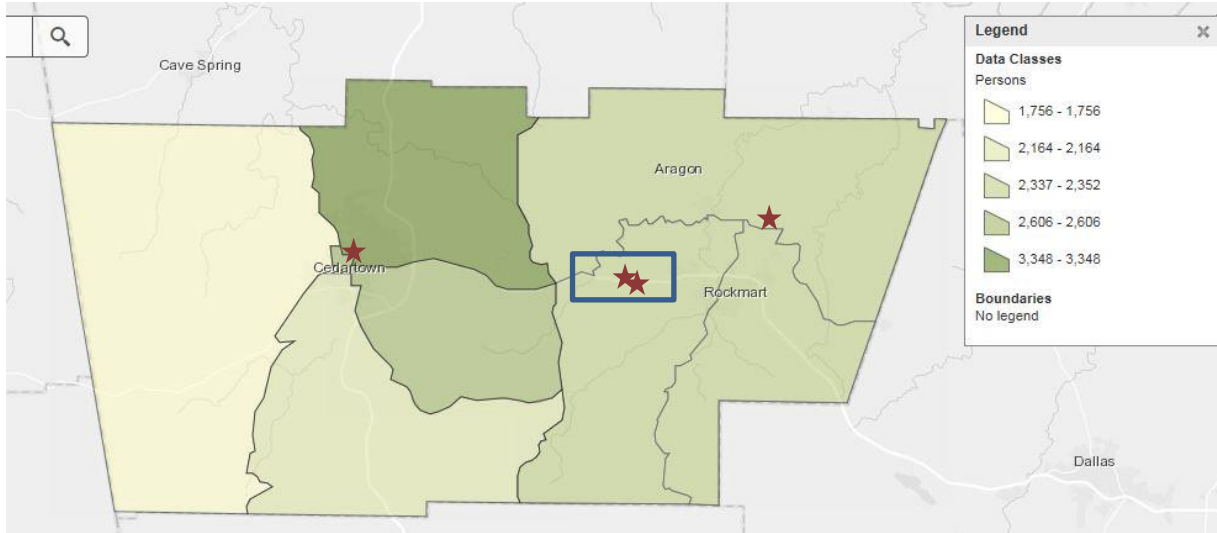


Figure 1: Population Distribution by CCD<sup>12</sup>

Four potential sites, indicated by the red stars, were proposed for evaluation during the feasibility study. The two outside of Fish Creek currently belong to Polk County. Two within the desired area were reviewed and one - Parcels 042-292-293 is 11.68 acres owned by Raymond C Barber, Jr. and located in Fish Creek with direct access to Joe Wheeler Highway 278 - was recommended to the Polk County Commissioners based on the central location, easy access to Highway 278 and the fact that it had been graded so the cost could be reduced. The Commissioners refused to support the project in a letter dated April 14, 2021.



<sup>12</sup> United States Census Bureau, "American FactFinder", available at <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>



Parcel 042-282, below, has been donated in the central Polk County proposed by the Friends of Agriculture after the Polk County Commissioners refused to provide it in that area. The land transfer is contingent on raising at least \$3,500,000 as approved by the Board of Directors in August 2022. On July 12, 2022, this land was approved by zoning as A1 – Agricultural Special Use to allow the building of the Agriculture Education and Resource Center.

[Parcel 042-282](#) is 22.18 acres owned by the Sleeping Ranch, LLC and located in Fish Creek off Sardis Church Road.



## Appendix C – Summary of Land Trust Contract

**Background:** A legal document between Georgia/Alabama Land Trust, Inc and Glenn and Laura Robinson/Sleeping R Ranch was negotiated and finalized on 21 October 2021. The contract establishes our land, approximately 200 acres, in Polk County GA as perpetually agriculture. That land is in two sections known as Sleeping R Ranch, LLC (aka “Southern Tract”) and Sardis Farm (aka “Northern Tract”). This document, along with our wills, are designed to leave all specified land, buildings, equipment and livestock to Friends of Agriculture, Inc.

**Purpose:** To ensure that our estate remains agriculture to be used as (1) the site for the proposed Agriculture Education and Natural Resource Center on the Sardis Farm; (2) a natural area to be used by the community for things in an educational walking tour or community gardens as determined by the Friends of Agriculture board; and (3) a live-in “agriculture incubator” for large animal vet graduates on the Sleeping R Ranch land.

**General.** The contract provides details in three basic areas:

- **Laws** under which the Conservation Easement program falls and how it relates to federal, state, and local programs.
- **Rights and responsibilities** of the Land Trust and Owners of the property.
- **Specific limitations** of what can/cannot be done on the property.

**Rights & Responsibilities:** The contract:

- Allows for the transfer of the property through a will, sale, or gift.
- Defined current buildings on both properties to be preserved within “building envelopes”.
- Allows for additional agriculture support buildings such as a repair shop may be built within the existing “building envelope” on the Sleeping R Ranch.
- Sets aside “building envelopes” for pre-specified projects including:
  - Five acres for a proposed Agriculture Education and Natural Resource Center on the Sardis Farm
  - Five acres for the current residential and agriculture working facilities on the Sleeping R Ranch
  - Two acres for up to three cabins located on the Sleeping R Ranch for vacation rentals and/or use by students
  - A possible family graveyard (one acre) on the Sleeping R Ranch
- Allows for maintenance and improvements made to existing facilities
- Requires the Georgia/Alabama Land Trust to ensure that the property is used for those agricultural purposes specified in the contract.
- Specifies that the Georgia/Alabama Land Trust may visit the land annually or more often if needed to ensure that the contract is properly enforced.

- Requires the owner to alert the Georgia/Alabama Land Trust of any projects planned prior to starting that project or within a reasonable time. For example, the land is under a managed forestry program, so trees may be thinned, but not clear-cut.

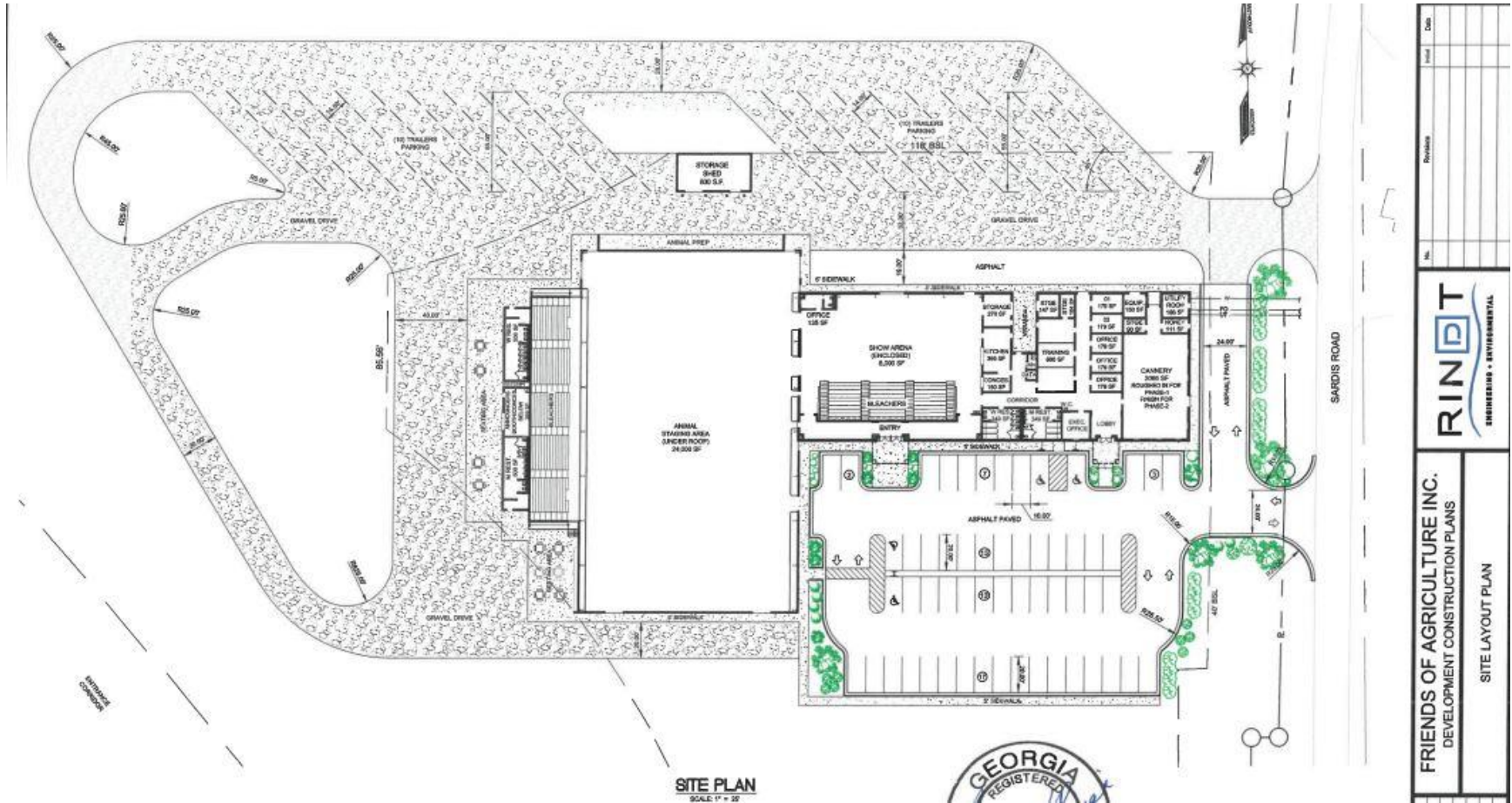
**Limitations.** The contract specifies:

- Property cannot be sub-divided into more than three parcels:
  - Northern Tract (Sardis) may be separated from the Southern Tract for the use of the proposed Agriculture Education and Natural Resource Center
  - Southern Tract (Sleeping R Ranch) may be divided into two sections under limited circumstances approved by the Land Trust
- New structures can only be made using the “building envelopes” described in the contract
- Prohibitions such as:
  - Potentially destructive practices: drilling for minerals, gas, etc; dumping garbage; making changes that promote soil erosion or water pollution; clear cutting forests; introduction of non-native invasive species except when controlled and specifically for use in agricultural education; antennas such as cell towers, etc.
  - Roads or signs beyond what were pre-approved for the proposed Agriculture Education and Natural Resource Center and to identify the Sleeping R Ranch
  - Utilities such as solar farms or other except for those allowed under the contract for allowable new structures

Appendix D1 - Architectural Rendering



## Appendix D2 - Architectural Plan



## Appendix E – Farmer’s Market Approval Process (Example)

This is an example of an approval process from the Rockmart Farmers Market that could be used as the basis for a market at the Agriculture Center. It was put in place to ensure that only fresh, locally grown produce and meat was sold at the market.

### **Market Board**

A board of directors manages the Rockmart Farmers Market. All decisions regarding vendor involvement in the market, changes to the rules, and any complaints related to the market, including vendor disputes, are handled through the board.

### **Vendor Selection**

Vendors for the Rockmart Farmers Market will be selected by the market board. Admission to sell at the market will be based on: product quality, market mix, and prior market vendor history.

The number of vendors will be limited whose primary products are in the following categories: breads, sweet breads, jams & jellies and any other specialty food categories. Arts & Crafts are only permitted as secondary products for food vendors and only on a case-by-case basis. Vendors must include pictures and descriptions of their craft products with their application. Those vendors who have duplicate products may be put on a waiting list.

The Rockmart Farmers Market reserves the right to refuse any applicant or ask any vendor to leave the market at any time.

### **Vendor Qualifications**

Selling space is limited to producers whose primary place of business is located within a county which is located within a 60-mile radius of the boundaries of Polk County, GA. Those included counties are: The Georgia Counties of; Bartow, Carrollton Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dade, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Floyd, Forsyth, Fulton, Gilmer, Gordon, Gwinnett, Hall, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Lumpkin, Meriwether, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Polk, Rockdale, Spaulding, Troup, Union, Walker, Walton and Whitfield. The Alabama Counties of; Blount, Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Cleburne, Clay, DeKalb, Etowah, Jackson, Marshall, Saint Clair, Talladega, Tallapoosa and Randolph.

**Vendors are responsible for meeting the local, state and federal requirements to sell their products. Examples include food safety requirements and licensing. For more information, vendors may contact the Georgia Dept. of Agriculture’s Consumer Protection Division at 404-656-3627.**

**Vendors are required to provide The Rockmart Farmers Market with a copy of all appropriate licenses and certifications.**

## Vendor Approval Process

The approval process, including Farm Visit and Board vote can take three to four weeks to complete, please allow ample time for processing. **Applications to be at Opening Day MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 6th, 2017.**

## Vendor Responsibilities

The Rockmart Farmers Market is a Producer-Only market. No reselling of any product shall be permitted at any time. Intentional deception of a product's origin is cause for immediate expulsion from the market. ***Vendors must agree to farm visits by a minimum of two board members and the market manager.*** Visits may be conducted at any time during the year and may occur on multiple occasions if necessary to verify that the vendor is producing the products sold or intending to be sold at the Rockmart Farmers Market.

Vendors are only allowed to sell items listed on their original application. Vendors wishing to add new items must submit an amended application to be approved before selling new items.

All vendors must accept the food stamp tokens for approved food items at the Farmers market. Vendors will return all tokens at the end of each market to the market manager and tally the total amount. Vendors will then be reimbursed for the amount by check via mail. There are no exceptions.

- Vendors must notify the market manager two days prior if unable to attend a market.
- Vendors may not set up prior to 12:45pm without prior permission.
- Vendors may not smoke on the market premises at any time.  
Vendors must arrive no later than 15 minutes before the market begins.
- Vendors may only park or set-up in the spaces designated by the market manager.
- Vendor booth space priority will be assigned based on percentage of markets attended.
- Vendors must leave their space as they found it with no trash or other debris.
- Vendors may not park in the SouthCrest Bank parking lot.
- Vendors may not leave the market early except by permission from the manager.
- No vendor shall communicate in a disparaging way about other vendors or their products to customers or other vendors.

Please provide detailed product information (including pictures) on the Monday before market via email **RockmartFarmersMarket@gmail.com** or by calling **(404) 436-1818** and leaving a message. This information will be used to promote the market and our vendors on the website, Facebook, newspapers, and other promotional materials. Communicating accurately to our customers' increases sales for everyone.

## Rain Policy

The market will open and stay open unless the weather is dangerous. Dangerous weather is defined as high winds or lightening. The decision to attend during inclement weather is solely the vendor's responsibility.

## **2017 Market Dates**

The 2017 Market will open every Thursday from 2-6pm beginning May 4th and continue year-round with special Holiday Markets Thursdays in November and December, excluding Thanksgiving. Vendors may also participate in two additional events Welshfest the 3rd Saturday in March and The Riverwalk Festival the 3rd Saturday of October.

## **Market Complaints**

Any vendor or person who wishes to place a complaint concerning the market must submit their complaint to the Board in writing to:

The Rockmart Farmers Market  
PO Box 554  
Rockmart, GA 30153.

## **Vendor Fees**

A one-time, non-refundable fee of \$25.00 is due with application. A weekly fee of \$15.00 is due at the beginning of each market. Checks can be made payable to the Rockmart Farmers Market.



## Appendix F – Memorandum of Agreement for Rental of Carroll County Center

Memorandum of Agreement for Rental of the  
Carroll County Agriculture-Education Center  
900 Newnan Road  
Carrollton, Georgia 30117

Anyone requesting permission to use the Ag-Ed building must complete this form in duplicate and return both copies to the UGA Extension Carroll County office at least two (2) weeks prior to the date desired for use of the facility. Some general conditions must be observed at all times unless changes are agreed to in writing by the Carroll County Extension Office, which is in charge of booking.

1. All dates are tentative until this Memorandum of Agreement has been approved and returned by the UGA Extension Carroll County office. Carroll County or its employees are not responsible for commitments made to a third party without this approval. The facility cannot be subleased by, or to, a third party or organization.
2. Uses of the Ag-Ed building planned or actively sponsored by (1) UGA Extension Carroll County or (2) the Carroll County Board of Education have precedence over all other uses.
3. The facility may be unavailable between events to provide time for cleaning and maintenance.
4. Smoking will not be allowed inside the facility, and use of alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited. It is the responsibility of the renter to enforce this policy.
5. Food service is not provided. The renter is expected to make these arrangements.
6. This building is not designed to hold livestock for an extended period of time. Therefore, animals will not be received more than two (2) days prior to a show or sale and must be confined to the immediate facility. The renter will be expected to furnish his/her own bedding, feed, water equipment, security and other special materials used in preparation of the facility.
7. Structural damage done to the building and/or grounds while assigned to any individual or organization must be reported promptly to the UGA Extension Carroll County office. The renter assumes responsibility for all damages beyond normal wear and tear.
8. The permission hereby given to the renter is to be used and enjoyed at his/her sole risk, and in consideration of the benefits to be derived here from, the renter hereby releases, relinquishes, and discharges and agrees to indemnify, protect, and save harmless the county of Carroll and any of its agencies, of and from any and all claims, demands or liabilities for any injury to, including the death, of persons, (whether they be third persons or employees of either of the parties thereto) any loss or damage of property including injury or death of livestock or other animals, (whether it be that either of the parties hereto or third persons) causes by or growing out of or in any way happening in connection with its exercise or the privileges herein granted.

9. All meetings, gatherings, or events at the Ag-Ed facility to which the public attendance is invited or solicited must be on a non-discriminatory basis. All facilities must be available to all persons without regard to sex, race, color, or national origin. Duplicate but equal events, which maintain segregation on these bases, will not be permitted.

10. When approval has been confirmed by return of this executed memorandum, preparation for the event may be arranged by calling the **UGA Extension Carroll County office at 770-836-8546.**

**11. Categories for Rental Agreement:**

A. UGA Extension Carroll County, the Carroll County Board of Education, and other Carroll County government functions that serve the people of the county will use the building at no charge.

B. All other renters are charged \$300.00 per day for use of the Ag-Ed Center, \$200.00 per day for the kitchen only, or \$500.00 per day for use of the center *and* kitchen. A *day* in this instance is an *eight-hour* day. Set-up time is included in the time for which clients will be charged.

C. For short-term uses of the Ag Center, a special price of \$50.00 per hour will be charged, *with a minimum of three hours* (\$150.00), at the discretion of the facility manager and if agreed upon in advance.

D. Refundable deposits: \$150.00 facility security deposit. \$25.00 key deposit. These deposits must be paid when the renter comes to pick up the building key(s), or in any case in advance of the event, and will be refunded upon return of those key(s) and after the facility meets inspection.

12. Make all checks payable to *Carroll County*.

RENTAL AGREEMENT FOR SHORT-TERM USE OF THE  
CARROLL COUNTY AGRICULTURE-EDUCATION CENTER

This application should be properly filled out and, when signed by both parties in the spaces provided, this document becomes a contract between the named using organization and Carroll County. Both parties will be bound by the terms and conditions set forth in the *Memorandum of Agreement for Rental of the Carroll County Agriculture Education Center* (pages 1 & 2 preceding this document).

Renter's Name or Organization:

Time Period requested:

Date(s) Times

Description of Event: *Provide more details on reverse side.*

Request use of:

Conference Room A (15 persons) Conference Room B (30 persons) Arena (Area C) Dining Room (D)  
Buffalo Creek Garden (G) Homestead (H)  
Kitchen (K) Livestock Area (L) School House (S) Buffalo Creek Trail (T)

**If you will be using the facility after regular business hours, on holidays, or on weekends, you must check out a key from the Extension Office prior to use. Need Key(s)**

Responsible Party – Name, title, **mailing address**, and **telephone number** of organization's representatives:

TELEPHONE NO.

**Please, make any and all special requirements or set-ups clearly known well in advance.**

**Signature:**

**Today's Date:**

**Return for approval to:** Carroll County Ag-Ed Center  
900 Newnan Road Telephone: 770-836-8546  
Carrollton, GA 30117-6477 Fax: 770-836-2959

**Approval:** The Carroll County Ag-Ed Center agrees to rent the Agriculture-Education facility to the above individual or organization for and under the terms outlined in the attached agreement.

Date Carroll Co. Ag-Ed Center Authorized Signature