



ROWAN COUNTY
FARM BUREAU

**ROWAN
COUNTY**

NORTH CAROLINA

Be an original.

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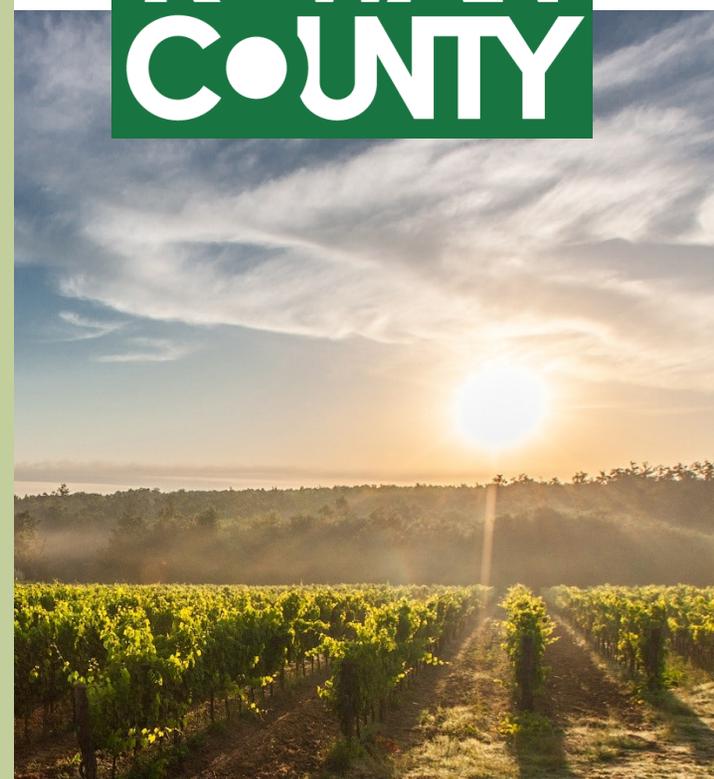
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A photograph of a vineyard at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the rows of grapevines. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds.

**VOLUNTARY
AGRICULTURAL
DISTRICT
PROGRAM**



YOUR AGRICULTURAL LAND IS A VALUABLE ASSET TO THE CITIZENS OF ROWAN COUNTY

Citizens of Rowan County derive many benefits from your farmlands: clean water and air, plant and animal habitat, fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products, horticultural products, and scenic rural vistas. Now you can enroll in a program that demonstrates your pride and commitment to agriculture and celebrates your contribution to the exceptional quality of life in Rowan County.

VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS (VADS) PROMOTE THE PRIDE AND TRADITION OF ROWAN COUNTY AGRICULTURE

Rowan County's Voluntary Agricultural District Program enhances the identity of the agricultural community by encouraging the voluntary preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development.

BENEFITS OF BECOMING A VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

Recognition

The County will provide signs to identify the areas included within Rowan County Voluntary Agricultural Districts. These signs will indicate to passersby that you, the farm owner, are committed to the preservation of the agricultural way of life in Rowan County.

Increased Protection from Nuisance Lawsuits

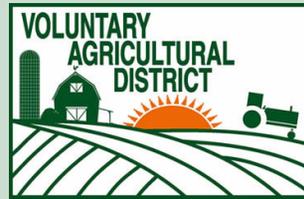
Persons buying land in rural areas will do so with the knowledge that a bona fide agricultural operation exists nearby. All Agricultural Districts will be identified on County maps, which shall be displayed for public view in County offices including the Planning & Development Department and the Register of Deeds office.

Deferment of Water and Sewer Assessments

In addition to the previous protection, landowners within Agricultural Districts will not be required to connect to water and sewer systems owned and/or operated by Rowan County, nor will they be assessed water and sewer charges until their property is connected to such service.

Eligibility for Preservation Funds

Agricultural Districts may be eligible for farmland preservation grants, should funding become available from local, state, or federal sources.



QUALIFYING MEASURES TO BECOME A VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

To become an Agricultural District, a farm must first be certified as Qualifying Farmland. To secure certification, a farm must:

1. Consist of at least five acres.
2. Be managed, if highly erodible land exists on the farm, in accordance with the Natural Resources Conservation Service-defined erosion control practices that are utilized to treat highly erodible land.
3. Have at least one of the following:
 - a. *A farm sales tax exemption certificate issued by the Department of Revenue.*
 - b. *A copy of the property tax listing showing that the property is eligible for participation in the Present-Use Value (PUV) property tax program.*

c. *A copy of the farm owner's or operator's Schedule F from the owner's or operator's most recent federal income tax return.*

d. *A forest management plan.*

AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP REQUIRES A VOLUNTARY, NON-BINDING CONSERVATION AGREEMENT

A Voluntary Agricultural District member will be subject to a **non-binding** conservation agreement between Rowan County and the landowner that prohibits non-farm use or development of such land for a period of at least 10 years, except for the creation of not more than three lots that meet applicable County zoning and subdivision regulations. You may revoke the agreement at any time with a 30-day written notice to the Agricultural Advisory Board.

ADVANTAGES OF BECOMING AN ENHANCED VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT (EVAD)

Those who choose to enroll as Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts will enjoy all of the foregoing benefits, in addition to the following perks:

- * Landowners may receive up to 25% of gross sales from non-farm products and still qualify as a bona fide farm that is exempt from County zoning regulations.
- * Enhanced Agricultural Districts are also eligible to receive up to 90% of cost share funds toward implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) under the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP).
- * Furthermore, State agencies, departments, and institutions responsible for awarding grants are incentivized to give priority to participating landowners.