

Agriculture Economic Development Grant Program Report

Fiscal Year 2022

November 1, 2022

The Durham County Board of County Commissioners approved the Agricultural Economic Development Grant Program funding allocation of \$75,000 for the fiscal year 2022.

The FY 2022 program's purpose was to offer three types of grants:

- Grants for Agriculture Development or Outdoor Environmental Learning Centers in Schools: Up to \$1,000.00
- Grants for Nonprofits that impact the local food system: Up to \$2,000.00
- Grants for Farmers: Up to \$5,000.00

The grant application was released on July 23, 2021 with an application deadline of August 31, 2021. The AED Grant Committee received 32 applications requesting \$109,289 in grant funds and an estimated total project cost of \$170,817. The allocation of \$75,000 funded 14 farm projects, 5 nonprofits and 4 schools for this fiscal year. This Report shows some of the projects completed during this fiscal year.

The Agricultural Economic Development Grant Subcommittee administers the grant program. It is made up of nine (9) members that manage the program and evaluate each application. The committee is comprised of a diversity of agency personnel that assist the farming community as well as members of local non profit advisory boards.

FY2022 AED Grant Committee

David Harris Chair/ Durham SWCD Board	Eddie Culberson Director of Durham SWCD
Terence Priester Durham SWCD Board Associate	Talmage Layton Farmland Protection Adv. Board
Donna Rewalt NC Coop. Extension Director	Tina Miller Farm Service Agency Director
Justin Page NC Farm Bureau member	Matthew Eagle Farmland Protection Adv Board
Craig Lloyd Farmer Foodshare Inc.	Sherry Scully AED Grant Manager
	Lisa Marochak Durham SWCD staff support

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Soil & Water

Agriculture Economic Development Grant Program Farm Applications and Service Productivity Data

Program Impact & Data	FY 22
Funding level	\$ 75,000
Request for funding from applicants	\$ 109,289
Number of applications	32
Number of farm applications	20
Number of M/WBE farm applications	17
Number of non profits that applied	8
Number of Schools that applied	4
Number of farm projects funded	14
Percentage of M/WBE farm contracts awarded	85%
Number of Farms funded for Food Safety Compliance FMSA/GHP/GAP	4
Number of nonprofits funded	5
Number of schools funded	4

Break down of Project types	FY22 Applicants	Funded
Number of farm operations that raise livestock only	7	3
Number of farm operations that raise livestock & produce	6	4
Number of farms that grow produce only	8	7
Projects that improved access/equity/non profits with direct sales	8	5
Schools supporting Agriculture Education	4	4
Other Agriculture Commodities produced	2	2

Agriculture Economic Development Grant Program



The AED Grant Program allowed for enhancements to what is already in place on this farm. Forest mulching opened up an acre that had been taken over by growth of brush and small trees. A shade cloth and circulating fans for the high tunnel allows for a wider variety of crops to be grown in the heat of the summer. In addition, the fertigation unit is exposed to the elements and a shed is needed to cover this.

Another opportunity through this grant is improving WiFi access to allow for on farm purchases. This allows availability for u-pick payments at the farm as well as accessibility to operate the irrigation system.

“There is a strong interest in the farm by our customers who want to share the experience with their children.”



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Many Rivers Farm
A Sustainable Orchard

Many Rivers Farm greatly appreciates the opportunity provided to their operation through the Ag Economic Development Grant Program. They have a well to water orchard but needed access to more water. To do this, they used cisterns to capture roof water and piped to irrigation in the orchards.



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The DPS Hub Farm used grant funds to enhance 3 of their project areas: goat pasture and barn area, duck section, and garden. After purchasing a goat waterer and more bedding, students learned how to install the waterer. Solar electric fencing replacement for ducks will keep them safe from predators. The Hub Farm’s extensive garden lacked basic herbs. Their staff along with students built a brick, circular bed and filled with soil to grow a variety of herbs. Signage for this bed allows others to learn about what is growing. Experiences that the students gain from these projects are incomparable!



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“What a game changer! The assistance with the grant funds gave me the encouragement to completely repurpose our garage we were using for storage. The addition of a cooler for storage of microgreens, flowers and produce has allowed me to harvest throughout the week and store properly rather than harvesting as late as possible on Friday and arrange bouquets through the night for Saturday market.

In addition, creating this space gives me a space to create the bouquets rather than bringing into my home and living space. My family really appreciates the transformation as well.”



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Through this program farmers may apply for funds to purchase Specialized Equipment. **Waller Family Farm** purchased a Water Wheel Planter and a Plastic Mulch Wrapper to make their planting season run more smoothly and the removal of the plastic mulch less labor intensive.



Urban Community Agri-Nomics (UCAN) at **Catawba Trail Farm** installed a well to obtain additional water needed for future expansion of their beds. They

provide access to raised beds and help community growers learn how to grow and harvest their produce. UCAN teaches many and has expanded their operation to outreach to young people this past year.



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“This grant propelled the transformation of our community garden into a more welcoming and inclusive space for our students. It also helped us secure additional funding to complete several projects so that the entire space could be transformed in a single year. The biggest improvement though is how the retaining wall and plantings beautify the space and help us with erosion control.”



Agriculture Economic Development Grant Program



Buckwild Gardens was able to expand the sales of their business this year! During the winter, a greenhouse was installed with AEDGP funds. Plant starts were successfully sold the following spring in addition to their vegetable sales.



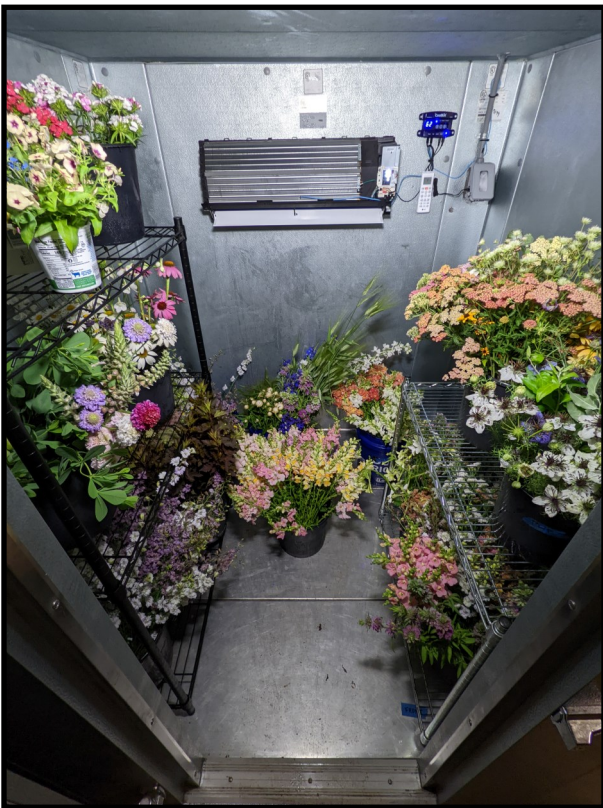
Infrastructure Improvements are helpful to a new and beginning farmer. Expenses, especially during COVID were high to repair a leaking roof and non substantial foundation. Upgrades now allow for storage of feed and straw for poultry flock and garden tools; this prevents waste! Barn is also used for educational workshops.



Hawk's Nest
Healing Gardens

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Coolers help enhance operations by extending the amount of storage time that produce and meat can be held on farm. Grass Grazed and Clear Black Flowers both installed coolers this year to allow them to process animals and pick flowers in a more timely, efficient manner.



Clear Black Flowers

GRASS GRAZED

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R.N. HARRIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

RN Harris Elementary enjoys incorporating their gardens' learning opportunities throughout their many curriculums and in every grade. Something is always growing and ready for harvest in their three raised beds. The school applied for grant money this year to purchase soil, seeds, plants, mulch, floating frost blanket row covers, etc. Students enjoy planting, watering, observing growth of plants, harvesting and sharing their harvest. Student participation in each step of the process bring many hands-on learning experiences!



Agriculture Economic Development Grant Program

View video links on our website at www.dconc/swcd under the **Ag Economic Development** tab to see testimonials of the FY2022 Ag Economic Development Grant Program participants:

[Waller Family Farm](#)

[Tailgate Farm Video](#)