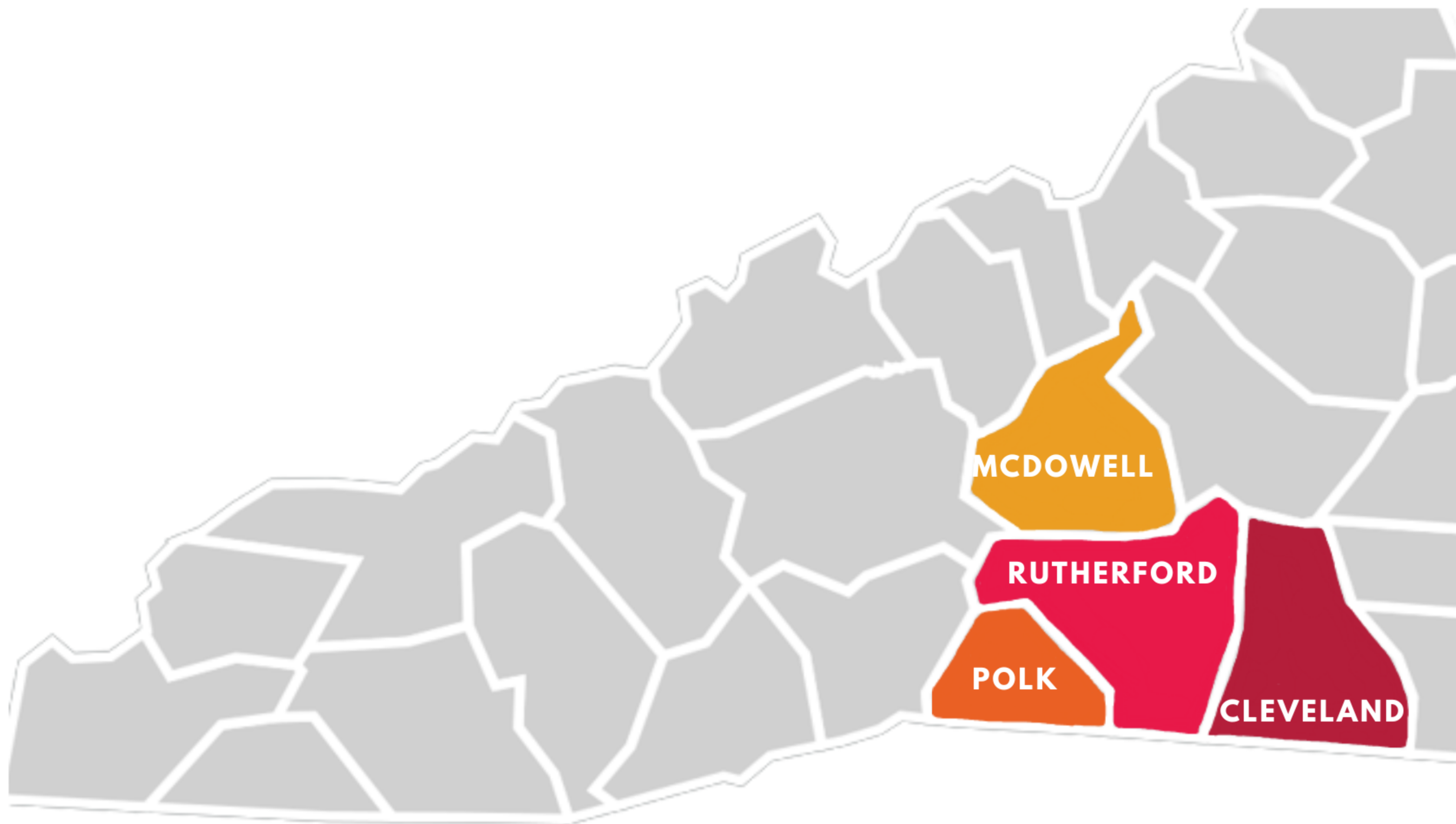




Farmland Preservation, Wealth Creation, and Economic Development



MCDOWELL

RUTHERFORD

POLK

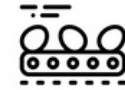
CLEVELAND

N.C. Agriculture's Economic Impact | 2026

Reflects most recent available data from 2024

NC STATE

College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences



Food and Related Products | \$63.8B

- > Food production agriculture (\$15.5B)
- > Food processing (\$11.2B)
- > Food wholesaling and retailing (\$12.4B)
- > Restaurants/food service (\$24.7B)



Tobacco and Related Products | \$12.7B

- > Tobacco production (\$0.5B)
- > Tobacco manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing (\$12.2B)



Forestry and Related Products | \$23.3B

- > Timber production (\$0.3B)
- > Wood product manufacturing (\$5.9B)
- > Wholesaling and retailing (\$17.1B)



Fiber and Related Industries | \$2.9B

- > Cotton and wool production (\$0.3B)
- > Textile manufacturing (\$1B)
- > Textile wholesaling and retailing (\$1.6B)



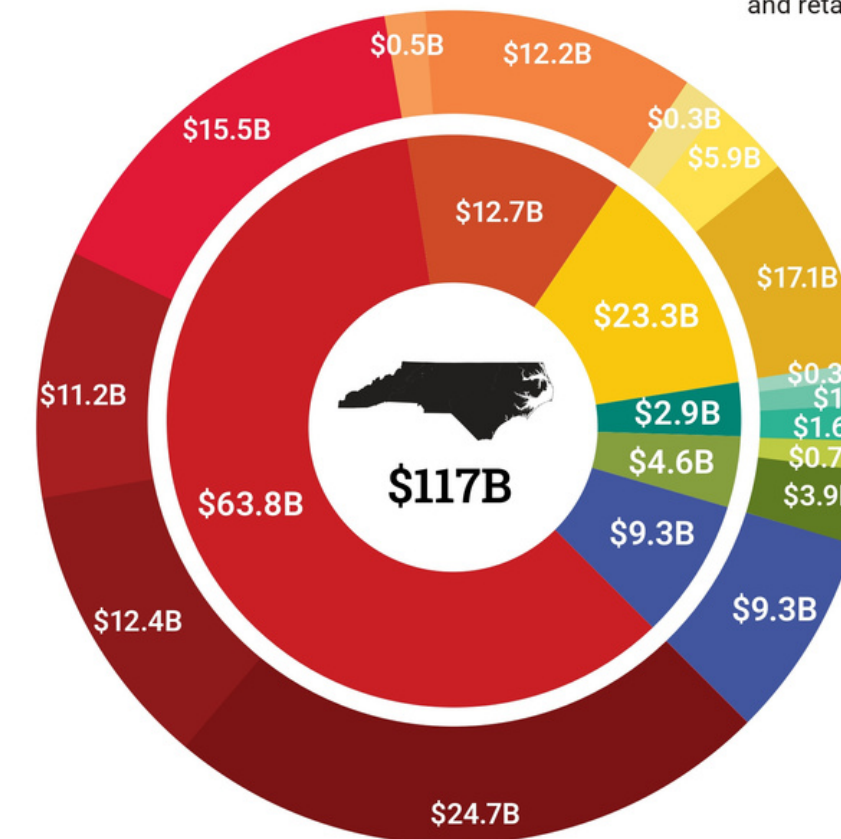
Pharmaceutical Preparation Manufacturing | \$9.3B

Includes pharmaceutical and biomanufacturing industries with inputs from N.C. agriculture



Green Industry | \$4.6B

- > Production of plants and plant materials (\$0.7B)
- > Wholesaling, retailing and landscaping (\$3.9B)



N.C. AGRICULTURE ANNUAL IMPACT: \$117B

Prepared by Jeffrey Dorfman, Hugh C. Kiger Distinguished Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics, NC State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences



State of Agriculture in NC



- Over 1 million jobs statewide
- 14% of total Economic Output in NC
- 1.2 million acres at risk of development by 2040
- 5.9 to 4.7 million acres by 2040
- Average farmer age is 58.1
- 46,000 farming operations

Foothills Work in Agriculture



- Incorporated into the CEDS
- Farmland Preservation Plans
- Cost of Community Services Studies
- Implementation of Farmland Preservation

Lessons Learned from our work



- Farming and running a business are different skills
- USDA & Cooperative Extension have great programs
- Succession Planning is non-existent
- Farmers Markets are not the solution
- Farmland Preservation is politically popular but...

Feelings do not make good policy



- Farming is a business
- The money for selling can be life changing
- Each farm and situation is unique and different
- Consumers say one thing and do another

So what does work?



- Stick to the data
- Carrots not sticks
- Focus on business development
- Apprenticeships and training for young farmers
- Use all the tools available





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