



Our vision is to become home to dozens of organizations who become successful business and economic growth graduates. Help create hundreds of jobs and attract millions in invested capital. Serve hundreds of individuals annually through entrepreneurship-related programs, seminars, and marketplaces.

about THE CENTER:

The Mill Spring Agricultural Development Center is a Agricultural Economic Development program and Rural Business Incubator while serving as a community center to all. Owned by the Polk County Soil, Water and Farmland Preservation district, it is a physical place, an affiliated-run program.

Our affiliate-run business incubator services offer support to help the success of start-up and early-stage entrepreneurs. We accomplish this principally through business incubation and acceleration services provided at our 40,000 square foot building located in Mills Spring, NC. The Ag Center seeks to work with entrepreneurial growth companies that are built upon agricultural development, heritage areas, the arts, technology, service-orientation, and product sales.

Our Mission: to balance the growth and progress of Polk County with rural agricultural economic development, sustainable to both our economy and our landscape. We accomplish this through leadership, education, business incubation, and community-centered spirit.



RENOVATIONS & FUTURE PLANS

- Updating Equipment & Systems
- Additional Remodeling
- Installing Supplemental Energy Systems
- Greenhouses
- Gardens
- Elevators
- Banquet Hall for Conferences & Large Events
- Installing Commercial Kitchen
- Agribusiness Development
- Soil & Water Conservation Programs
- Retail Farm Store
- Farm-to-Fork Cafe
- Outdoor Education
- Studio & Gallery Space
- Auditorium
- Green Power Projects
- CSA Distribution Center

OPERATIONAL GOALS:

- Off-site Commercial Kitchen
- Demonstration Kitchen
- Auditorium Upgrades
- Elevator

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Agri-Classes
- Agri-Business Development
- Soil and Water Conservation

CORE PROGRAMS:

- Farmland Preservation
- Farmers Markets
- Grants
- Friends of Agriculture Breakfast
- Workshops & Courses
- Community Gardens

GRANTS:

Overall since its' inception, the Mill Spring Agriculture Development Center has received over \$250,000 in grants and funding. These awards have leveraged nearly \$450,000 in non-granted projects, donations, and volunteer-time matches.

Some Ag Development initiatives that been supported by grants this year:

Southern SARE, Sustainable Community Innovation Grant

PolkFresh™ TradePost Project: A Strategy to Implement Polk County's 20/20 Vision plan for Sustainable Community Development: \$10,000.

ASAP: Appalachian Grown Matching Funds

PolkFresh™ marketing and promotional materials using the Appalachian Grown label: \$5,000.

WNC Ag Options Community Grant

Improve Polk County's local agricultural system by enhancing existing farm ventures, particularly by addressing processing, packaging, marketing and other distribution needs: \$19,400.

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area

Implementing a Program Base for the Mill Spring Ag Center Project: \$24,000.

Foothills Chamber of Commerce

Community Business Center: \$1,000.

Polk Economic Development Commission

Community Business Center: \$5,000.

Polk County Community Foundation

Exterior Roof Repairs: \$19,500.

County, Polk

Water line: \$17,800

Exterior Roof Repairs: \$9,500.

BOARD MEMBERS:

POLK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Richard Smith, **Chairman**

Dave Slater

Frank Smith

Albert McEntyre

Charles Edwards

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dave Slater, **Chairman**

Dot Moyer

William Arledge

Steve Maudlin

Chauncy Barber

Betsy Burdett

Visit us at www.polkcountyfarms.org