

Campbell County
Agricultural Development Council

2024
Update of
Campbell COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Campbell County Comprehensive Plan Update

1. Overview of County

Campbell County is located in the northernmost section of Kentucky and is bordered on the west by the Licking River and on the north and east by the Ohio River. Campbell County consists of approximately 95,360 acres, of which 38,774 is classified as farm land. This amount is in 493 farms averaging approximately 79 acres per farm. The soils within the county are basically Eden clay loam with approximately 60,000 acres with slopes between 12 and 35%. Due of the steepness of the land, cultivated crops are limited to a small number of acres with most land being best suited for pasture or hay. Campbell County ranks ninth in the state in population (93,702) with 85% of the county's residents living in urban communities.

a. Agricultural statistics, trends, & projections (i.e. Census Data)

Traditional agricultural production

Traditional agriculture production in the county includes beef cattle, forages (includes some cash hay), grain (corn/soybeans) and commercial fruit and vegetable production. Based on 2022 agriculture census, Campbell County's agriculture production included:

* All cattle and calves	# 4,811
* Beef cows	# 4,801
* Corn	acres 365
* Soybeans	acres 365
* Alfalfa hay	acres 400
* All other hay	acres 8,095

Non-traditional agricultural production

Though considered non-traditional in many counties, Campbell County has always had a tradition of commercial fruit and vegetable production. Campbell County has multiple commercial horticulture producers who have access to 4 farmers markets in the county or can use roadside or on-farm markets to sell their produce. Campbell County Farmers' Markets growers have an opportunity to provide sustained economic growth by taking advantage of the county's proximity to a large population base and 4 local farmer's markets. During the past 15 years there has been an interest

in grape production in Campbell County. There are currently 10 commercial grape producers and 4 wineries in the county. Campbell County has approximately 28 acres of grapes in production. There is a small number of poultry, honey/beekeeping, goats/sheep and Christmas tree producers in the county.

- New & emerging agricultural production

As mentioned earlier, there are good opportunities to increase commercial fruit and vegetable production and grape production in Campbell County. The Campbell County Extension Service has offered programs in these two areas to encourage landowners to consider the production of horticulture crops.

In recent years there has been an increased interest in poultry production, especially for egg production. Campbell County has also seen growth in horse boarding and training facilities. With the development of horse trails and youth and adult horse clubs, there is a good opportunity for boarding horses and training facilities in the county.

Agritourism is vibrant in Campbell County. We have four wineries of which all offer weekly wine tasting opportunities. There is also a wine trail in the county. County activities such as Campbell County Backroads Farm and Neltner Farm Fall Festival help to promote agriculture in Campbell County as well as connect urban citizens directly to on-farm activities and markets. Multiple local farms are offering evening dinners, wedding and special holiday events at their farm.

Direct marketing of freezer beef has greatly increased (partially caused by covid) and farmers are selling freezer beef direct to consumers. Number of animals sold as freezer beef range from 2 to 3 per farm per year to as many as 150 individual animals from one local farmer.

- Tobacco dependency

In 2020 Campbell County had no burley tobacco growers or hemp growers.

- b. Demographic Data

- Social data

Of the 93,702 population 84.8 % are white, 2.5% black, 1.9% hispanic, and 4% other. 53% are female and 47% are male. 10.1% of adults are diabetic, 23.7% of adults smoke, 28.1% of adults are obese.

Of the 493 operating farms, 97% are family owned farms, 80% are fully owned with 30% being owned and operated by females. 57% of Campbell County farms are one person operated, 38% are two person operated and 5% have 3 or more operators. The average age of the principal farm operator is 58 years old. It is estimated that 78% of all farmers have access to the internet.

□ Economic data

Campbell County median household income is \$72,967. The top 5 jobs by industry are: public administration, accommodation and food service, retail trade, healthcare and manufacturing.

2. Assessments of the County

a. Strengths

Campbell County is part of the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan area which has in place an extensive air, highway, rail and water transportation system. There are over two million people within a 20-mile radius of Campbell County. These resources coupled with a high per capita income consumer base, provides Campbell County farmers with a tremendous opportunity to market agriculture products locally. Campbell County 's strengths are based on our diverse population, tourist destinations, existing and potential markets and a diverse production of agriculture products.

Campbell County has an underutilized forage base that, if managed correctly, could provide increased income to our farmers. We also have diverse agriculture and horticulture enterprises that have a tradition of producing crops other than those produced on traditional crop and livestock operations. Even though many of the young farmers have off farm jobs, most have a sincere interest in maintaining a viable family farm.

Agriculture agencies such as the Campbell County: Cooperative Extension Service, Conservation District, Farm Bureau, and Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service, work closely to improve the productivity and profitability of Campbell County's agriculture community while conserving the county's natural resources.

b. Weaknesses

One of Campbell County's greatest weaknesses is its lack of tillable land. Much of our land is too steep to cultivate and has limited productivity due to its high clay content and shallow depth of topsoil. Even though there is a diversity of agriculture production in the county, many farmers are reluctant to make changes in their farming operations that could improve profitability. Educational programs and on-farm field demonstrations are needed to show alternative agriculture opportunities. There is a need to expand established markets and to add value to existing agriculture products. Distance to traditional livestock markets has also been identified as a concern in Campbell County. There is a need for more public water and broadband internet access in the county.

c. Opportunities

Based on the interest in buying locally grown foods, a large urban population and with five viable farmers' markets, there is tremendous opportunity for farmers to expand into the area of fruits and vegetable production and value-added products. Existing farmers' markets need to be expanded and alternative markets need to be established.

There is tremendous opportunity in agritourism. Farm tours, Fall festivals, hay rides, petting zoo, weddings etc. are examples of agritourism opportunities for Campbell County farmers. There needs to be more marketing/agriculture awareness to the non-farming community.

There is an opportunity to grow grapes for wine production as the four local vineyards do not have enough production to meet their needs. Expansion of the wine trail and other wine tasting activities would help to support other alternative opportunities for local farmers.

Campbell County has an underutilized forage base. Increase revenues are possible if farmers would implement best management practices. By increasing our forage capacity revenues from increased beef cattle and other grazing animal numbers and cash hay enterprises would be a strong possibility. There has been a recent surge in the demand from local consumers for freezer beef.

d. Challenges

The following issues and concerns have been identified as challenges for agriculture production in Campbell County: high price of land, lack of availability of large tracts of land, lack of large animal vets, aging farming population, input costs, available farm labor, lack of farm estate and succession planning and the lack of understanding of the importance of agriculture by

our urban citizens.

Invasive species such as honeysuckle bush and Johnson grass are of major concern in the county. Best management practices for these and other species need to be in place to reduce the impact of invasive species on production agriculture.

A large percent of our young farmers are turning to high paying jobs in the city. As their grandfathers/fathers are getting too old to farm or passing away, some farms are left without that day to day presence of a farm operator to maintain the family farm. Some farms are not well maintained (such as fences and pastures clipped), and after a few years will become less productive for crop or animal agriculture.

Lack of public knowledge about the importance of agriculture continues to threaten existing farming operations. While Campbell County has not experienced as rapid an urban growth as neighboring counties, we nonetheless will continue to see urban development encroaching agriculture enterprises. This will and has impacted traditional county agriculture in two ways. Land values have escalated to the point where their cost is prohibitive for potential producers to initiate new farming enterprises or existing farmers to expand. As urban expansion escalates, environmental concerns will become more of an issue.

3. County Council Objectives

a. Mission/Vision Statement

The Campbell County Agriculture Development Council is committed to enhancing the economic viability of the family farm. We propose to accomplish this with short and long term projects and programs that will expand our production and marketing potential. The Council's unified goal is to foster a creative atmosphere which will enable existing farmers as well as new farmers to initiate agricultural enterprises that offer sustained economic growth. Beginning farmer and youth agriculture programs are needed to support our young and beginning farmers.

b. Short Term Goals

One of the goals of the Council is to support agriculture leadership groups and organizations that sponsor programs and activities that have the potential to strengthen the agriculture economy of Campbell County. We encourage the cooperation among farmers especially in the areas of production and marketing. The Council also encourages continued educational programs that will support existing and alternative agriculture enterprises. Educational programs should focus on production and marketing as well as increasing the public's awareness of the importance of agriculture and where and how to buy local farm products. Youth and beginning farmer educational and grant programs need to continue.

c. Long term goals

One of the long term goals of the Council is to continue supporting the grassroots leadership groups, educational programs and projects that are vital to our agriculture economy. Cooperation among farmers and developing direct marketing outlets for agriculture crops is a long term goal of the Council.

d. Tactics for leveraging funds

Regional partnerships

The Campbell County Agriculture Development Council is open and willing to discuss the opportunities that exist to work with other counties on agriculture development projects. Funding request made by individuals or larger agriculture businesses that have the potential to benefit multiple counties will be considered. Based on the past CAIP programs, we anticipate that the majority of the county applications will be made by individual farmers requesting CAIP funding. Funding sources other than county funds and individual contributions will be encouraged, especially projects requesting state funds.

State Agricultural Development Board resources

Campbell County farmers will be made aware of alternative/additional Agriculture Development Funds (other than CAIP) and how these funds can be used. This information will be communicated to the agriculture community via the Campbell County Agriculture newsletter and social media resources.

Other local/state/federal resources

Farmers will be encouraged to identify and utilize other financial and production resources to improve their farming operations. This will be done primarily during CAIP educational programs and Extension Service program efforts. It is important to education farmers about programs offered by other agriculture organizations such as NRCS and Campbell County Conservation District.

