

Lewis County
Agricultural Development Council

Update of
COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

April 28th, 2025

Submitted by:

The Lewis County Phase I Committee is a board of six appointed representatives and three elected representatives. The committee is governed by a chair and a vice chair with administrative duties being that of the County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources. The committee is as follows:

Officers

Chairman: Tim Douglas
Vice Chairman: John Lykins
Secretary: Sue Harris

Tony Tully representing Farm Service Agency
Sue Harrie representing Farm Service Agency Underserved Audience
Stella Hull, representing Natural Resource Conservation District and Under served Audience
Tim Douglas representing Natural Resource Conservation District

John Lykins, representing Cooperative Extension Service

Frank Crawford representing Cooperative Extension Service

Lucas Sparks, Young Farmer, Member at Large
Cameron Cole, Young Farmer, Member at Large
Lorne Nolen, Young Farmer, Member at Large
Kennedy Cannon, County Extension Agent

Lewis County
**Comprehensive Plan
Update**

County Agricultural Development Councils have the responsibility to evaluate the needs of the local agricultural economy. The updated County Comprehensive Plan should identify programs and projects best suited for agricultural development fund investments in the County.

The Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy staff may provide guidance to county councils throughout this evaluation.

1. Overview of County

489 Farms, Overall 123,357 acres of Farmland with 31,105 acres of Cropland, 14,610 acres of Pastureland, and 73,793 acres of Woodland.

Average farm size is around 252 acres.

Average value of land and buildings per acre is less than \$2500 an acre with many 21% being within the \$5000-\$9,000 an acre.

The average producers age is between 35-64 years old

Market Value of Ag products Sold in thousand dollars:

Crops (including Nursery and Greenhouse) - 12,755
Grain and Oilseed- 9,281
Tobacco- 693
Hay and other Crops-2,357
Livestock and their products-3,526
Cattle and Calves-3,194

- a. Agricultural statistics, trends, & projections (i.e. Census Data)
 - Traditional agricultural production
489farms, 1123,357 acres in
farmland 31,105 acres of harvested
cropland
 - Non-traditional agricultural production
Currently Lewis County has multiple horticulture greenhouses, with a
Farmers' Market located in Vanceburg. Multiple sawmills for lumber
production on and off farms.

- New & emerging agricultural production

10 acres of AMP(Adaptive Multi-Paddock) Grazing

- Tobacco dependency

From 1990 to 1998 burley tobacco has accounted for 54.3% of Lewis counties farm receipts. In 2017 Tobacco accounted for 1,435 sales (in thousand dollars) as of 2022 Lewis County is down to 693 sales. The decrease in tobacco sales have been a devastating blow to our economy. Lewis County ranks 45th in the state for tobacco dependency.

b. Demographic Data

Distance to Major Cities

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| ▪ Social data | Chicago 385 |
| Population 12,973 | Cincinnati 100 |
| ▪ Households 4,905 | Lexington 86 |
| ▪ Per Capita Income \$23,486 | Louisville 159 |
| ▪ Percent in Poverty 22.1% | |
| ▪ Median Family Income \$41,632 | Pittsburgh 311 |
| ▪ Labor Force 45.0% | Cleveland 347 |
| ▪ Travel time to work 42.3 Minutes | |

- Economic data

The numerous resources Lewis County producers have to draw from are listed below in strengths and opportunities section.

2. Assessments of the County

a. Strengths

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Livestock | AA |
| Forages | Highway |
| Horticulture | Railroad |
| Forestry | Ohio River |
| Land Resources Diversity | |
| Cattlemen's Association | Water Access (creeks, ponds, underground water) |
| New Vocational School | |
| Fiscal/Conservation District | |
| Recreation events | |
| Extension Programs | |
| Improved Health Care | |

b. Weaknesses

Marketing
Management
Unemployment Rate
Irrigation Equipment
Irrigation Knowledge
Poverty Level
Work Ethic

Lack of Supplemental Farm Income
Lack of Operating Capital
Lack of Venture Capital Public Apathy
Technology
Lack of Animal Science classes for the Youth
Available Workforce

c. Opportunities

Marketing Expansion
Tourism and Recreation
Livestock Expansion
Horticulture Expansion
Timber Management
Value Added Forestry

Management Improvements
Irrigation Implementation
Forage Expansion
Horticulture Expansion
Value Added Agriculture
Internet Access
New Stockyards

d. Challenges

Available Markets
Flooding
Interest Rates

Fear of New
Practices
Government
Regulations
Capital Barrier

3. County Council Objectives

a. Mission/Vision Statement

The mission of the Lewis County Agriculture Development Board is to preserve and expand agriculture interest and opportunities for all Lewis county producer

b. Short term goals

The short-term priorities are as follows. To improve the livestock herd health, genetics and efficiency; improve the quality of our forages; to improve marketing options for grain producers; to increase productivity and quality of horticulture products while providing marketing opportunities.

c. Long term goals

The long-term goal of the committee is to help producers increase their net farm income by providing opportunities in livestock, forage production, grain production, horticulture, forestry, tourism and recreation. As well as involve and encourage young farmers to continue to farm.

d. Tactics for leveraging funds

- Regional partnerships

Regional Partnerships: Committee members will serve on regional committees to explore and support regional efforts that will provide opportunities for Lewis county producers to increase net farm income in accordance with the county's comprehensive plan.

- State Agricultural Development Board resources

State Ag Development Board resources will be utilized to further the value of Lewis County's programs through cost share, research and guidance.

- Other local/state/federal resources

Other local, state and federal resources will be utilized, as they are available to help implement programs.

3. Evaluation & Review

- a. How are proposals evaluated and does this process need modified?

1. What percentage of producers will this project affect now?
2. What percentage of producers will this project affect in the future?
3. Do small producers have the same ability to profit from the project as large producers?
4. What is the total cost of the project?
5. What will the potential economic benefit be?
6. How long will the payback in benefit to the community's economy be?
7. What percentage of the cost is the group or individual willing to pay?
8. Are there any grants available to help fund this project and how much will they contribute?
9. What percentage of the county's Phase I funds are being requested?

- b. How is success and failure measured?

Success and failure will be measured by determining if the economic impact or participation outlined in the proposal was met.

- c. How will the county comprehensive plan be revised?

The county's comprehensive plan will be revised as needed to better serve the citizens of Lewis County.

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Tammysue.miller@ky.gov

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