

Application for Participation In The Randolph County Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Program

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Requirements for Enrollment:

To qualify as farmland eligible for this program, it must be real property that:

- Is engaged in agriculture as defined in N. C. General Statute 106-581.1.
- Meets the size requirements applicable to its class of use as set out in NC General Statute 105-277.3(a) and which therefore requires at least: 5 acres of horticultural land, 10 acres of agricultural land, or 20 acres of forestry that are in actual production.
- Be managed in acceptable soil and farming practices.
- Is managed, if highly erodible land exists on the farm, in accordance with the Natural Resources Conservation Service-defined erosion control practices that are addressed to highly erodible land.
- Be involved in direct agricultural or forestry production in accordance with NC General Statutes.
- Is the subject of a conservation agreement, as defined in N.C.G.S. 121-35, between the county and the owner of such land that prohibits non-farming use or development of such land for a period of at least ten years, except for the creation on not more than three lots that meet applicable zoning and subdivision regulations. This conservation agreement will become null and void if the land is removed from the Voluntary Agricultural District Program.

Why EVAD verses VAD?

The Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District provides participants in districts with greater benefits than farmers in the Voluntary Agricultural District program receive. Participating farms will be allowed to receive up to 25% of their gross sales from certain types of non-farm products and still qualify for the agriculture zoning exemption and be eligible for a higher percentage of cost-share program funding and have priority for other state grant programs.

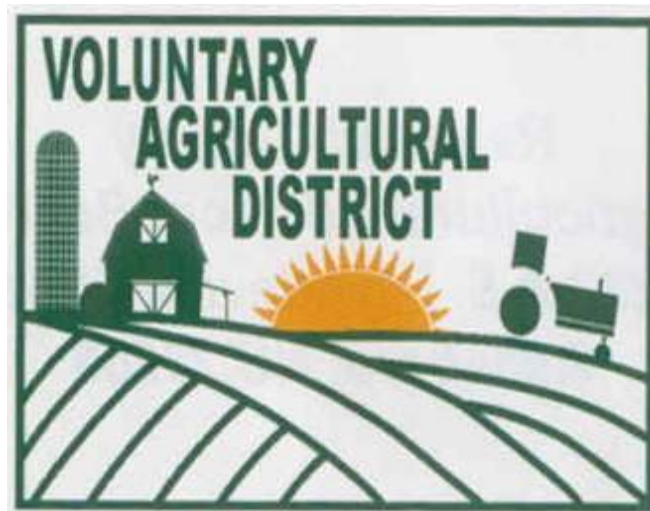
What is different?

Participating landowners in the Enhanced Voluntary Agriculture District enter into a conservation agreement between themselves and Randolph County that is binding on them and all successors and assigns and **CANNOT** be revoked for at least 10 years.

Steps in Application Procedure:

1. Receive application from NC Cooperative Extension office, 112 West Walker Ave., Asheboro, NC 27203 (336) 318-6000.
2. Obtain Conservation plan and signature of a Conservationist in the Soil and Water Department certifying that a conservation plan is in place for the property or properties. If no conservation plan has been developed for the property, consult with the conservationist and obtain the appropriate plan.

3. If your property has 20 or more acres in forest/timber, obtain a signature from the North Carolina Forest Service Randolph County Ranger to certify that you have a forest management plan.
4. Preference is given to property already listed in the county farm present-use-value taxation program. However, land in agricultural use and meets the qualifications of General Statute 105-377.3 may be included upon review. If it is not designated in present use value taxation, a formal review as well as a possible site visit conducted by the members of the Voluntary Agricultural District Board may be required to determine eligibility for participation in the program.
5. The completed application with all required signatures should be returned to NC Cooperative Extension Office. NC Cooperative Extension, 112 West Walker Ave., Asheboro, NC 27205. For questions call, (336) 318-6000, (336) 819-3000 Archdale, (336) 218-4000 Liberty. Application will be given final approval or denial by the Agricultural Advisory Board and County Board of Commissioners. The Voluntary Agricultural District Board typically meets on the second Tuesday night at 7:00 in January, March, May, July, September, and November. Applications that have completed signatures and meet eligibility requirements are voted on at the Board meetings.
6. If approved, applicant will be notified to sign the Conservation Agreement and Notice of Participation. (See on next page)
7. After the documents are signed, information will be forwarded to Register of Deeds, and Planning Department for mapping and recording of the new Voluntary Agricultural District farm. At least one Agricultural District sign will then be posted within six months of approval dependent on the Randolph County Maintenance Department's schedule.



SAMPLE

Having been certified by the Agricultural Advisory Board and approved by the Randolph County Board of Commissioners, I/we agree to sustain, promote and encourage agriculture in this enhanced voluntary agricultural district, support protection against nuisance suits, undesired non-farm development and other negative impacts on participating farms.

I/we agree to voluntarily preserve and protect the conservation values of my/our property more completely described on the attachments hereto by prohibiting non-farm use of the property for a period of 10 years from the date of signing of this Agreement, except for the creation of not more than three (3) lots that meet applicable zoning and or subdivision regulations.

This Agreement may not be revoked for at least 10 years. However, if the Voluntary Agriculture District Advisory Board deems the landowner to be in non-compliance with their agreement, the agreement may be revoked by recommendation to and action of the County Commission and therefore result in non-qualifying farm status and loss of eligibility to participate in the Enhanced Voluntary Agriculture District program.

SAMPLE

NORTH CAROLINA
RANDOLPH COUNTY

**NOTICE OF PARTICIPATION IN
VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, following proper application by the undersigned Owners, the property described on (Application) and (Conservation Agreement) owned by the undersigned has been approved as part of a Voluntary Agricultural District by the Randolph County Board of Commissioners by action duly taken in public meeting on the _____ day of _____, 20____, as provided in N.C. Gen Stat. 106-735. The Conservation Agreement is subject to revocation as set out in these applicable laws.

You must have a conservation plan on file with the Randolph Soil and Water Conservation /Natural Resources Conservation Service covering all of the acreage that you intend to enroll. Please contact their office to confirm your conservation plan and obtain the signature of a Conservationist in that office.
(The Soil and Water/Natural Resources Conservation Service office can be reached by calling (336) 318-6490.)

Conservationist signature

(NO PROPERTY WILL BE ACCEPTED IN A VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT UNLESS A CONSERVATION PLAN IS ON FILE.)

If your property has 20 or more acres of forested land, please obtain a signature from the NC Forest Service certifying you have a Forest Management Plan

Forest Service Representative signature

(If you have 10 or more acres in forest on your property and do not have a plan, please contact the NC Forest Service to develop a plan at (336) 879-1773.)

Is all the land listed on the front of this application in farm present-use-value taxation with the Randolph County Tax Office?

YES _____ (Please initial)

NO, _____ If "no", please contact Randolph County Tax Office for requirements. Property may still be accepted in the Voluntary Agricultural District if it meets the qualifications outlined in General Statute 105-377.3, but it must be reviewed by the Committee along with documentation that the land is used in agriculture. Please sign below that you understand that that the Voluntary Agricultural Board may require a visit to your farm to certify that your land is being used for agriculture.

Property Owner Signature

OWNER(S) CERTIFICATION

I (We), the applicant(s), hereby certify that, to the best of my (our) ability, the foregoing application is complete and accurate. We further understand that acceptance into the Enhanced Voluntary Agriculture District is a binding agreement on self, all successors and assigns with Randolph County and cannot be revoked for at least 10 years.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Ag. Advisory Board
Approval

Approval Date

Mail to:
NC Cooperative Extension
Attn: Voluntary Agricultural District
112 West Walker Ave.,
Asheboro, NC 27205

Notification and Certification Sent Date

Certification Returned by Landowner

The Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural District Program

Purpose

To promote agricultural and environmental values and general welfare of the county by increasing identity and pride in the agricultural community and its way of life; encourage the economic health of agriculture; and increase protection from non-farm development and other negative impacts on properly managed farms.

Public Benefits

- * Preserves open space in the county.
- * Provides economic diversity in the county.
- * Increases opportunities to produce locally grown agricultural commodities.

Farmer Benefits

- * Informs new landowners of farm presence and potential of dust, noise and smells associated with agriculture, possibly reducing conflicts between neighbors.
- * Requires that farmland be used as a last resort if land is considered for a public project that condemn land.
- * Land enrolled in the program will not be assessed fees or required to connect to water and sewer service if they plan not to use the service.

Who Qualifies

Landowners qualify for inclusion as a Voluntary Agricultural District if they meet the following conditions:

1. The farm property must meet the qualifications outlined in General Statute 105-377.3:

5 acres for horticulture use

10 acres for general agriculture use

20 acres for forestry use

It is preferred that the farm property already be enrolled in the present use taxation program administered by Randolph County however, it is not required

2. The property must have a conservation plan certified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and/or NC Forest Service.

Stipulations

- Prohibits non-farm use or development of land for 10 years.
- Maximum creation of three lots within 10-year period.
- Participating landowners in the Enhanced Voluntary Agriculture District enter into a conservation agreement between themselves and Randolph County that is binding on them and all successors and assigns and **CANNOT** be revoked for at least 10 years.

For additional information please review a copy of the Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance available at the Cooperative Extension Office.