

# FARMLAND PROTECTION WITH NRCS ACEP-ALE

## Why protect farmland?



### Wildlife/ Biodiversity

Clean water, air and soil means healthy wildlife and local communities



### Economic Prosperity

Georgia's multibillion-dollar agriculture industry is a national food and fiber leader



### Food Security

Our high quality soils are critical to feeding our growing population



### Farm Heritage

Farmers pass down knowledge and traditions to future stewards of our land and resources

Farmers are caretakers of nearly one-third of Georgia's land and water resources

## How do we protect farmland?

By using **conservation easements**, which are agreements between a landowner and a land trust (such as Athens Land Trust) that permanently limit use of the land in order to protect a property's natural and agricultural resources.

Landowner retains ownership of property

Conservation Easements can be donated, sold outright or through a bargain sale

Conservation Easements are:

➤ flexible

➤ permanent

➤ private

➤ voluntary

### Valuation of a Conservation Easement (CE)

Fair Market Value (before CE)



Encumbered Value (after CE)



CE Value (30-80%)

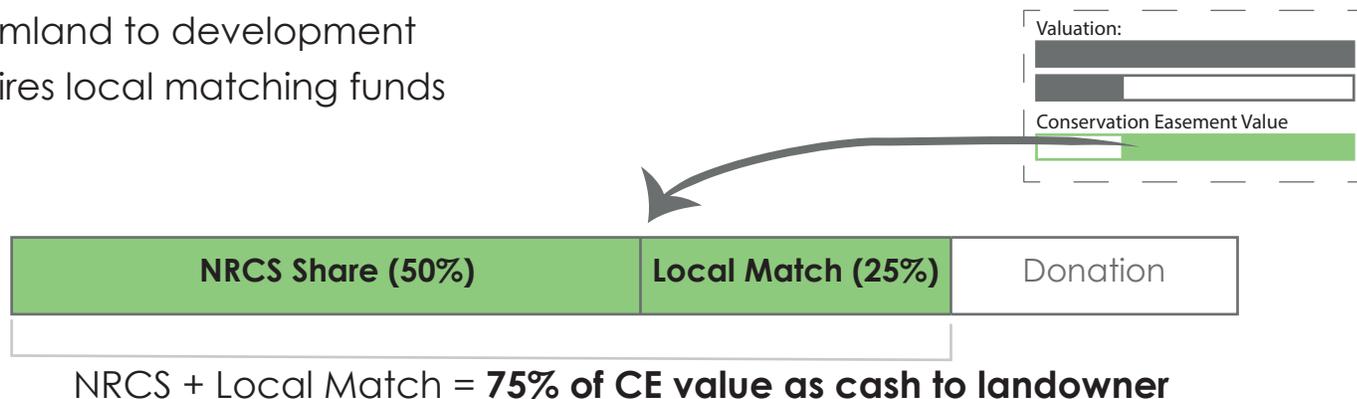


# ACEP-ALE

**ACEP:** Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

**ALE:** Agricultural Land Easement

- ▶ Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) program which helps pay farmers cash for conservation easements on agriculture land for permanent protection
- ▶ Assures the future of the nation's food supply by preventing irreversible conversion of farmland to development
- ▶ Requires local matching funds



Agriculture will continue to contribute \$73 billion annually to Georgia's economy if farmland is protected.

Farmland protection is only possible with local support!

Local funding matches most successfully come from:

- ▶ SPLOST/local budgets
- ▶ Third party funders

## Community Benefits:

### ▶ Job Creation

73,300 Georgians work in agriculture, forestry, or related fields. Having a strong agricultural system means having reliable jobs

### ▶ Keeps Money in Local Communities

Money spent in the community on farm products circulates in the community, supporting additional local businesses

### ▶ Low Cost of Community Services

Agricultural areas offset community service costs for developed areas, receiving only \$.37 in public services for every \$1 contributed versus \$1.16 received in developed areas.

## Why Work With Us?

Athens Land Trust is a certified entity that helps farmers apply for ACEP-ALE. We work one-on-one with landowners to ensure their land continues to be used in a way that serves their needs.



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United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service