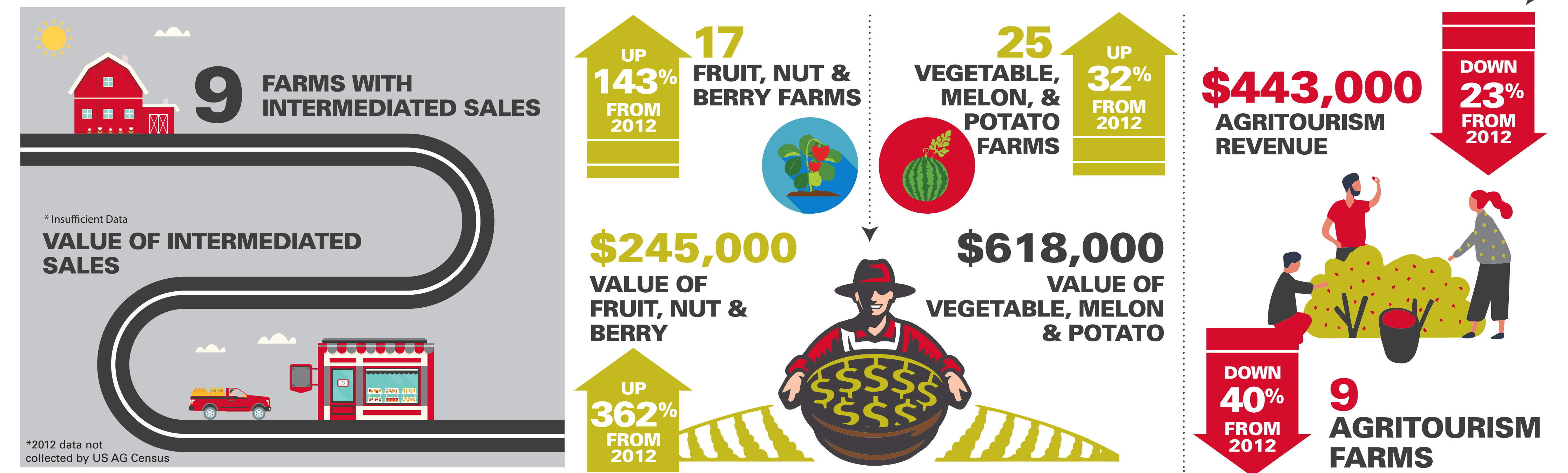
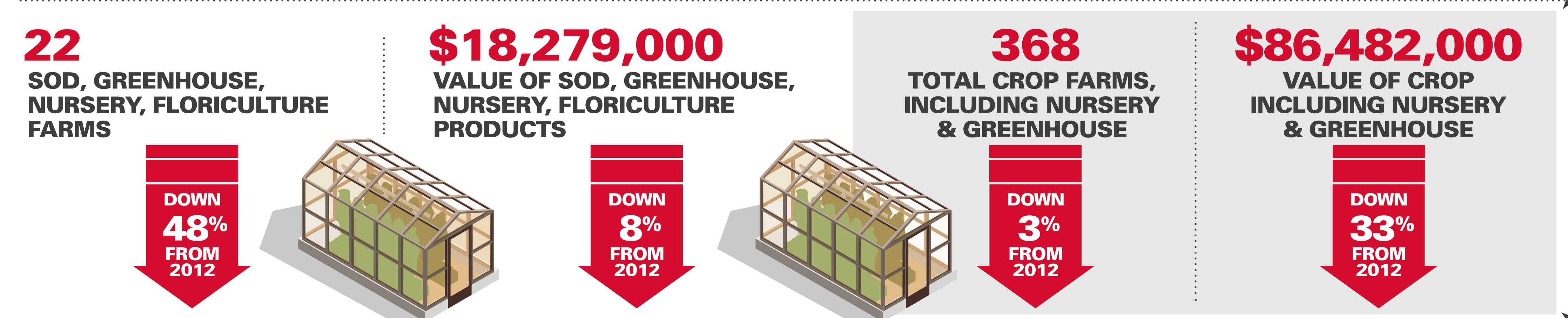
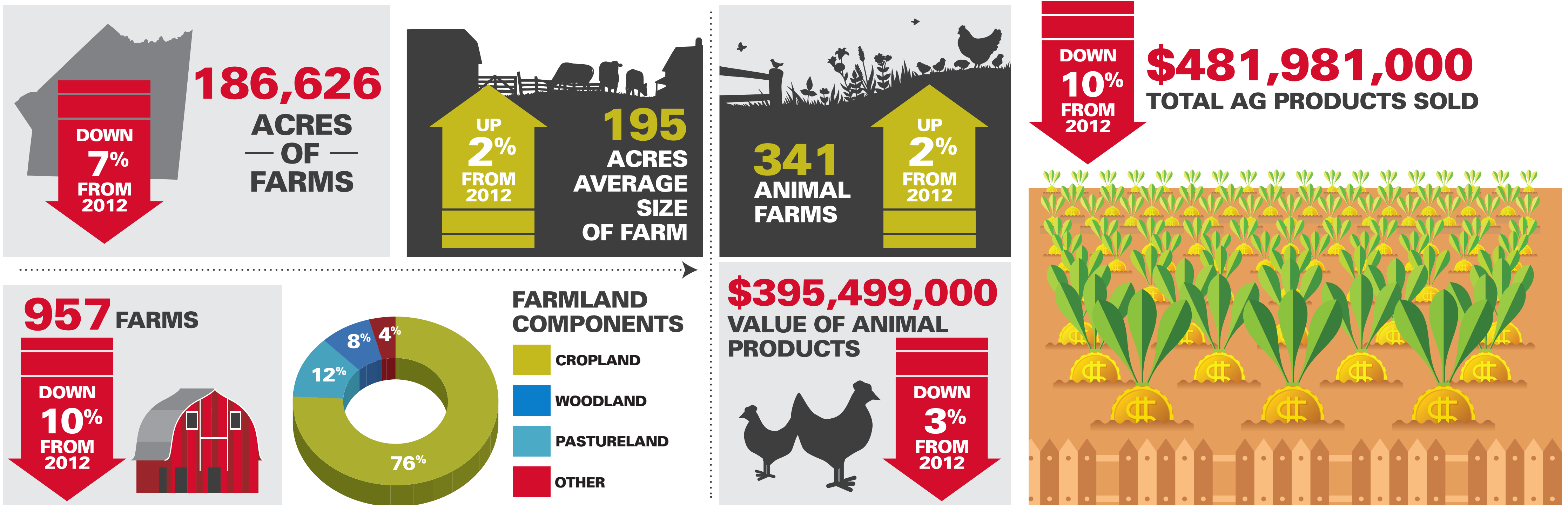


# Union County

## LOCAL FARMS AND FOOD PROFILE

DATA FROM 2017 & 2012 USDA CENSUS



NC FarmLink



NC Local Food



# Agriculture as Economic Development



North Carolina’s agricultural industry, including food, fiber and forestry, contributes \$91.9 billion to the state’s economy, accounts for more than 17 percent of the state’s income, and employs 17 percent of the workforce. \*

North Carolina is one of the most diversified agriculture states in the nation. The state’s 46,418 farmers grow over 80 different commodities, utilizing 8.4 million of the state’s 31 million acres to furnish consumers a dependable and affordable supply of food and fiber. The state ranks eighth nationally in Total Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold. Net income per farm in the state is over \$86,645.

This Local Food and Farms infographic is designed for economic developers, planners, local food advocates, and community members to understand the impact of their county and region to the overall NC agricultural economic impact. The economic indicators provided here can help local governments as they design ways to support agricultural businesses as key components of vibrant and resilient, local and rural economies. Each region in North Carolina presents a unique set of opportunities for sustainable economic growth and entrepreneurship.

Consider one example: When school systems purchase food from local farmers, students benefit from access to healthy fresh produce, farmers benefit from sales into local schools, and the community benefits because these local sales are spent at other local businesses. This type of local business opportunity keeps farms in production, maintaining North Carolina’s agricultural asset base both in terms of land and farming know-how. And it keeps dollars spent on food circulating among other local businesses.

As decision makers consider policies, programs and practices to support the agriculture sector there are numerous examples and supporting reports providing guidance:

NCSU / Center for Environmental Farming Systems / NC State Extension Local Food  
Local Government Guide to Developing Local Food Economies  
<https://cefs.ncsu.edu/food-system-initiatives/local-food-economies/local-government-guide-to-food-economies/>

Food System Initiatives (includes NC case studies)  
<https://cefs.ncsu.edu/food-system-initiatives/local-food-economies/>

The NC 10% Campaign Initiative  
<https://www.nc10percent.com/>

NC Local Food  
<https://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/>  
<https://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/food-system-supply-chain/>

USDA  
The Economics of Local Food Systems: A Toolkit to Guide Community Discussions, Assessments, and Choices  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Toolkit%20Designed%20FINAL%203-22-16.pdf>

For up to date information on this project go to  
[go.ncsu.edu/agcensus](http://go.ncsu.edu/agcensus)

This material is based upon work supported by NC State Extension [Local Foods Program](#), NC State Extension [FarmLink](#), and the [EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems Project](#) of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems.

