

Group 2 – Policies to protect agricultural lands from premature conversion to other uses and continue the viability of agricultural production through the Collier County Rural Lands Stewardship Area Overlay.

Policy 2.1:

Agriculture lands will be protected from premature conversion to other uses by creating incentives that encourage the voluntary elimination of the property owner's right to convert agriculture land to non-agricultural uses in exchange for compensation as described in Policy 1.4 and by the establishment of SRAs as the form of compact rural development in the RLSA Overlay. Analysis has shown that SRAs will allow the projected population of the RLSA in the Horizon year of 2025 to be accommodated on approximately 10% of the acreage otherwise required if such compact rural development were not allowed due to the flexibility afforded to such development. The combination of stewardship incentives and land efficient compact rural development will minimize two of the primary market factors that cause premature conversion of agriculture.

Policy 2.2:

Agriculture lands protected through the use of Stewardship Credits shall be designated as Stewardship Sending Areas (SSAs) as described in Policy 1.6. The protection measures for SSAs are set forth in Policies 1.6, 1.7 and 1.17.

Policy 2.3:

Within one (1) year from the effective date of these amendments, Collier County will establish an Agriculture Advisory Council comprised of not less than five nor more than nine appointed representatives of the agriculture industry, to advise the BCC on matters relating to Agriculture. The Agriculture Advisory Council (AAC) will work to identify opportunities and prepare strategies to enhance and promote the continuance, expansion and diversification of agriculture in Collier County. The AAC will also identify barriers to the continuance, expansion and diversification of the agricultural industry and will prepare recommendations to eliminate or minimize such barriers in Collier County. The AAC will also assess whether exceptions from standards for business uses related to agriculture should be allowed under an administrative permit process and make recommendations to the BCC.

Policy 2.4:

The BCC will consider the recommendations of the AAC and facilitate the implementation of strategies and recommendations identified by the ACC that are determined to be appropriate. The BCC may adopt amendments to the LDC that implement policies that support agriculture activities.

Policy 2.5:

Agriculture is an important aspect of Collier County's quality of life and economic well-being. Agricultural activities shall be protected from duplicative regulation as provided by the Florida Right-to-Farm Act.

Policy 2.6:

Notwithstanding the special provisions of Policies 3.9 and 3.10, nothing herein or in the implementing LDRs, shall restrict lawful agricultural activities on lands within the RLSA that have not been placed into the Stewardship program.