

# **Wingate University Research and Education Farm Strategic Plan DRAFT**

## **Objectives:**

### Objective 1:

Develop and maintain a diverse agricultural landscape to prepare students for various learning outcomes consistent with skills and understanding of agricultural food systems

### Objective 2:

Manage collaborative project-based demonstration space with program partners to help meet the needs of agricultural education in Union County and enhance the local community

### Objective 3:

Serve Wingate University, Union County, and surrounding areas through food production and hunger relief programs

## **Program Activities:**

### Objective 1:

- Student Success Generator
  - Provide structured student research opportunities in agricultural or food system related fields
    - Conduct one structured project annually
  - Maintain a diverse agricultural landscape for student-led research projects
    - Maintain one annual production area, one permanent production area, and one field crop/cover crop area annually
  - Provide hands-on learning activities for course and lab work conducted by Wingate University faculty and staff
    - Host eight Wingate course or lab classes each semester (16 annually)
  - Utilize a diverse agricultural landscape for dynamic agricultural problem-solving and applied learning

- Conduct one problem-solving activity with student(s) to contribute to emerging agriculture needs annually through internship or course instruction
- Well Oiled Machine
  - Integrate Wingate faculty and staff needs and interests for on-site applied course work
    - Maintain a diverse agricultural landscape to accommodate faculty and staff needs and interests
    - Provide consistent internal communication to inform faculty and staff of on-site opportunities
  - Provide managed space for scholarly research in the agricultural, natural, and applied science fields
    - Maintain a diverse agricultural landscape to accommodate various research opportunities which may include:
      - Mixed fruit and vegetable production
      - Regionally appropriate orchard/viticulture
      - Managed pollinator habitat
      - Cover crop and field crop production
    - Conduct one scholarly research project annually with Wingate faculty and staff
- Regional Solutions Engine
  - Collaborate with community partners to extend agricultural learning via on-site research programming
    - Partner with local or regional seed companies to execute one seed trail annually
    - Maintain a diverse agricultural landscape to accommodate various project opportunities for community partners
  - Incorporate local and regional agricultural needs in developing research and demonstration projects

- Conduct an annual evaluation with program partners and agriculture professionals to gain insight on current agricultural needs
- Create networking pathways for engagement through recruitment and donor partnerships
  - Leverage on-site programming to provide student recruitment opportunities
  - Engage donors and program supporters through programming efforts offered on-site
  - Conduct one annual networking event for students, donors and program partners

#### Objective 2:

- Student Success Generator
  - Incorporate student participation in collaborative project-based demonstrations through coursework and internships
    - Conduct two course lab activities annually in collaboration with Cooperative Extension to provide student experiential learning
    - Host one internship in collaboration with Cooperative Extension annually
  - Provide opportunities for students to engage in multiple facets of the food system industry through on-site collaborations
    - Provide diverse learning opportunities in collaboration with Cooperative Extension to connect on-farm learning with the food system in our region
  - Provide students with opportunities to engage with K-12 agriculture educational programs through teaching and mentorship
    - Participate in 'Wake up to Ag' week annually
      - Develop and execute one activity annually
      - Participate in marketing, preparation, and evaluation process
- Well Oiled Machine

- Provide opportunities for collaborative research projects enhancing Wingate faculty and staff's capacity and reach
  - Engage Cooperative Extension staff as advisors on applicable on-site research
- Connecting Wingate faculty and staff with agricultural professionals to help inform future research pertinent to the regional agricultural community
  - Provide staff training for Wingate employees in collaboration with Cooperative Extension annually to educate and discuss research opportunities in agriculture
- Incorporate regional agricultural professionals to assist in dissemination of on-site research applicable to local farmers or the regional food system
  - Collaborate with Cooperative Extension to develop one farmer-oriented publication annually from research projects, demonstrations, or other programming
- Regional Solutions Engine
  - Build strong working relationships with regional agriculture professionals, food systems organizations, and local businesses through research and education opportunities
    - Host one dinner event annually to facilitate networking and connections for local agricultural professionals, donors and other stakeholders to highlight programming activities
    - Conduct three workshops, field days or other events in collaboration with Cooperative Extension to share research and demonstration information
  - Provide space and expertise to local institutions, in collaboration with other community partners, to extend agricultural education opportunities to Union County learners
    - Conduct one 4 H camp annually with collaboration with Cooperative Extension
    - Conduct four tours annually for K-12 institutions, clubs, and organizations

### Objective 3:

- Student Success Generator
  - Engage students through course, internship and work study opportunities to assist in management of on-site food production and distribution
    - Provide internship opportunities for students to engage in production and management activities
      - Manage on-site food production
      - Conduct annual planning meetings with food distribution partners to determine food production needs
      - Conduct annual evaluations to determine performance and identify improvement opportunities
  - Connect students with food distribution partners involved in increasing food security in Union County and surrounding areas
    - Provide joint internship opportunities with partner organizations to allow cross disciplinary experiences for students
    - Connect students with volunteer opportunities with partner organizations
- Well Oiled Machine
  - Engage faculty and staff with service opportunities offered on-site
    - Provide an annual volunteering event for faculty and staff through One Day One Dog
  - Provide Wingate faculty and staff with convenient and healthy produce options grown on-site
    - Operate a farm stand at Wingate University weekly during the production season to offer a variety of produce
    - Generate income through produce fees to support programming
- Regional Solutions Engine
  - Donate 500 pounds of produce annually to food distribution partners and other partner organizations serving food insecure communities

- Assist partner organizations with events and capacity to raise awareness of community needs
  - Provide support through on-site programming to meet event requests from partner organizations
  - Assist in local events conducted by partner organizations to provide awareness of Wingate Student Farm and food insecurity
- Provide input for local food councils and food system organizations
  - Attend Union County Food Council meetings and provide support through onsite programming to meet needs of the council
  - Attend four meetings annually hosted by local food councils or other food centered organizations