

## Proposal for the Lease of the former Drexel Industrial Site Thomas Valley Agricultural Producers, LLC.

The Thomas Valley Agricultural Producers, LLC, (TVAP, LLC.) is proposing to lease the former Drexel Manufacturing facility and site, located in Whittier, NC, from Jackson County. The proposed lease will include all grounds and building, and the requested terms are outlined below.

The site is ideal for our local farmers in that it provides a central location for the storage and packaging of their products, as well as a distribution point to wholesale and retail outlets. In return, each grower or producer would be charged a moderate fee for use of the facility to generate revenue for continued operation. This site has a strong history of farming and agriculture in addition to it being a landmark for Northern Jackson County. Acknowledging that this building has limitations as to what can be housed within it, but also recognizing that this site affords multiple benefits specific to this industry making it a great opportunity for this partnership including loading docks, easy access, ample parking, flat land and it being structurally sound for agriculture use.

Utilizing this site would provide a means of supporting economic development in Jackson County with various components that will produce revenue for the maintenance and continuation of development of the site. It will also have the potential impact of adding many jobs to our community.

The TVAP, LLC will provide all equipment necessary for renovation and operation of the facility, as well as making all necessary repairs and upgrades to meet both Jackson County and NC Department of Agriculture regulatory requirements. All of the necessary repairs and upgrades will be paid for by the TVAP, LLC and identified funding sources, with no expense at all for the taxpayers of Jackson County.

The producers are currently in the process of becoming GAP certified, and the facility will receive that same certification once repairs and upgrades are completed. The intent of the TVAP, LLC, should our lease request be granted, would be to have the site operational for the upcoming 2016 growing season.

<b>Lease Terms:</b>	10 years for the sum of \$40.00 per year, with an option to renew after 10 years if conditions are favorable. An early termination option would also be appreciated.
<b>Insurance:</b>	Provided by TVAP, LLC to ensure \$1 Million dollars in liability protection.
<b>Repairs to Building:</b>	To be determined on a phased basis
<b>Electrical:</b>	Repairing and upgrading to comply with Jackson County code regulations; also phased.
<b>Sanitation:</b>	Repaired and upgraded to comply with Jackson County code regulations
<b>Legal Fees:</b>	Paid for by TVAP, LLC
<b>Site Clean Up:</b>	To be completed by TVAP, LLC, inclusive of building interior and site exterior. We would request for Jackson County to furnish trash bins for the removal of debris, as well as waiving or at least offering a nominal fee for waste disposal. Note: all debris has been evaluated and deemed to be non-hazardous.

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The site and acreage are suitable for multiple uses which could provide for additional revenue streams that will support the operation of the facility. Agri-tourism related events such as truck and tractor pulls, car shows, fairs or carnivals, rodeos, etc. would be an economic boost to the Northern portion of Jackson County. Educational and cultural opportunities also exist at the site, which can have a strong impact on the youth and sustainability of this industry of our entire community.

TVAP, LLC will also consider conditional use proposals for the site or building from other individuals or organizations, so long as those proposed uses do not interfere with the operation and/or cleanliness of the packing and storage facility.

The TVAP, LLC has begun identifying funding sources for the necessary building and site improvements, and those include the Tobacco Trust Fund, NC Department of Agriculture, and the Little Tennessee Land Trust. Each of the identified sources, and others, have grant cycles that will be open during 2016.

Therefore, it is critical that we have a lease agreement with Jackson County, so that we may begin making application for any grant funding that could assist with our project in a timely manner.

In addition, the following individuals or organizations have and will continue to offer assistance to the TVAP, LLC project:

- Bill Yarborough – Asst. Commissioner, North Carolina Department of Agriculture
- Sarah Graham – Southwestern Commission COG
- Robert Hawk – Cooperative Extension, Jackson County
- Becky Williamson – USDA Forest Service
- Amanda Buchanan – National Resource Conservation Service
- Barry Stevens – Jackson County Soil and Water
- Chuck Wooten – Jackson County Manager
- Tony Elders – Jackson County Permitting and Code Enforcement
- Rich Price – Jackson County Economic Development
- Bill Gibson – Southwestern Commission (Ret.)
- Tiffany Henry – Southwestern Community College Small Business Center