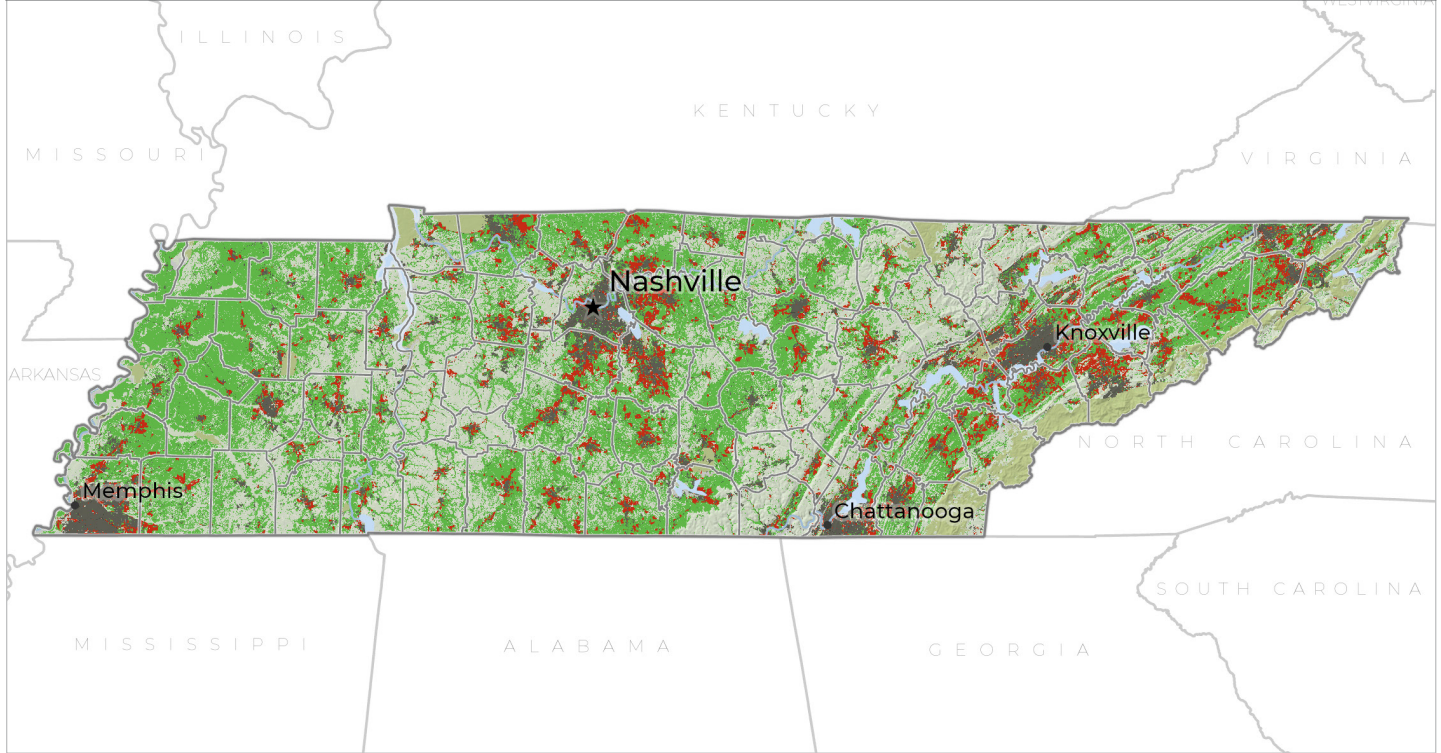


# 2040 Future Scenarios Tennessee

**Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future** mapped three scenarios of development between 2016 and 2040. If recent trends continue, **1,014,600 acres** of Tennessee’s farmland will be paved over, fragmented, or converted to uses that jeopardize agriculture. **That’s 8%**. Tennesseans can slash conversion, save farmland, and safeguard the future of agriculture and the environment by choosing compact development.

## PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL LAND CONVERSION 2016-2040



Projected agricultural land conversion from 2016-2040 in the **Business as Usual** scenario.

### Projected Conversion (2040)

Urban and highly developed (UHD) and low-density residential (LDR)

### Land Cover (2016)

Farmland\*  
Forestland

Federal (no grazing)  
Other lands

Urban areas  
Water

\*Farmland is composed of cropland, pastureland, and woodland associated with farms.

## On recent trends, from 2016 to 2040:

Tennesseans will pave over, fragment, or compromise

**1,014,600 acres** of farmland.

**52%** of the conversion will occur on Tennessee’s best land.<sup>1</sup>

That’s the equivalent of losing

**8,700 farms,**  
**\$258 million**

in farm output, and

**14,600 jobs**

based on county averages.<sup>2</sup>

Hardest-hit counties:

- ▶ **Rutherford**
- ▶ **Sevier**
- ▶ **Williamson**

<sup>1</sup> Freedgood et al. 2020  
<sup>2</sup> Census of Agriculture 2017

## WHICH FUTURE WILL WE CHOOSE?

How Tennesseans choose to develop will shape the future of farming. The scenarios in **Farms Under Threat 2040** show the impacts:



**Business as Usual:** Development follows recent patterns. Poorly planned development and low-density residential sprawl continue to rapidly convert farmland and ranchland.



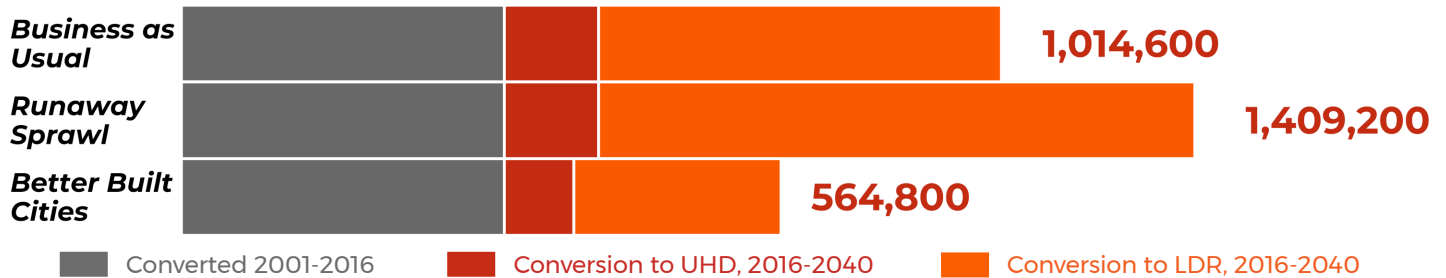
**Runaway Sprawl:** Development becomes even less efficient than in *Business as Usual*. Low-density housing sweeps across the countryside, displacing farmers and ranchers.



**Better Built Cities:** Policymakers and land-use planners promote compact development and reduce sprawl, saving irreplaceable farmland and ranchland from conversion.

## COMPACT GROWTH CAN SAVE FARMS

### Acres of Projected Conversion 2016-2040



### Tennessee's farmland will be converted to:

**Urban and highly developed (UHD)** land use includes commercial, industrial, and moderate-to-high density residential areas.

**Low-density residential (LDR)** land use includes scattered subdivisions and large-lot housing, which fragment the agricultural land base and limit production, marketing, and management options for the working farms and ranches that remain.

### LDR PAVES THE WAY FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural land that was in LDR areas in 2016 is

**6 TIMES MORE LIKELY**

to be converted to UHD by 2040, compared to other agricultural land.

### DEVELOPMENT CHOICES MATTER

By choosing the *Better Built Cities* scenario instead of *Runaway Sprawl*, Tennesseans can save

**844,500 acres**

of farmland.

That's the equivalent of saving

**7,100 farms,**

**\$223 million**

in farm output, and

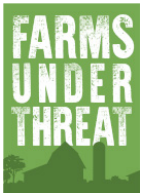
**12,200 jobs**

based on county averages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Census of Agriculture 2017

## WHAT POLICYMAKERS CAN DO

- **Encourage compact development** to minimize sprawl.
- **Permanently protect our best farmland** with voluntary conservation easements.
- **Forge a path to success** for a new generation of farmers.



**Farms Under Threat** is American Farmland Trust's multi-year initiative to document the status of and threats to U.S. farmland and ranchland and to identify policy solutions to protect and conserve America's diverse agricultural landscape. For questions and to access the data, please contact AFT's Farmland Information Center: [www.farmlandinfo.org](http://www.farmlandinfo.org) or (800) 370-4879.

Explore our interactive maps and read the full report at

[www.farmland.org/farmsunderthreat](http://www.farmland.org/farmsunderthreat)

