



UF/IFAS
Office of the Senior Vice President
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September 12, 2022

Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
12 SE 1st Street
Gainesville, FL 32601

Dear Commissioners,

UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) is pleased to provide a letter of support and express our intent to collaborate with Alachua County on developing a Meat Processing Center in Alachua County. Our Animal Sciences Department has a robust program for Meat Sciences for UF students, and our faculty expertise and facilities offer an ideal match for the goals of this center and the training they will develop.

We have seen first-hand through our UF/IFAS Extension Program that small ranchers in our county and local region struggle to find local processors that can meet their needs and timelines due to increased demand. Their problems are compounded by supply chain issues and staffing shortages caused by the consequences of COVID-19. The pandemic exposed the need for more diversified local markets for food, and we have seen an increase in federal and local investment in this area. As demand increases, so does the need for a skilled workforce and the infrastructure to process our meat locally.

UF/IFAS is a part of the pandemic solution and looks forward to working with Alachua County, Santa Fe College, CareerSource North Central Florida, and other partners to develop training that will provide stepping-stones from rapid credentialing to management so we can meet the workforce needs for local jobs and help build a skilled workforce in meat science regionally.

The development of this facility will also provide opportunities to collaborate on cutting-edge technologies to reduce waste, energy, and water use in the meat processing industry. It will allow us to explore new value-added food products and study the impacts of this investment on our local food system.

We look forward to working with Alachua County to build a robust workforce and to help support this critical local food infrastructure for Alachua County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Scott Angle". The signature is written in a cursive style.

J. Scott Angle
Senior Vic President
UF/IFAS