

AGRICULTURE NEEDS SPACE

A-1 zoning, working farms, water, roads, forests, and rural character form one connected system.

1

A-1 DOMINATES

County officials describe the vast majority of New Kent as zoned agricultural.

2

FARMS ARE FEWER

USDA data cited in the paper identify about 21,533 acres currently in farms.

3

RESOURCE LIMITS

Aquifer, power, wetlands, roads, and habitat constrain large industrial uses.

4

ORDINANCE LEVERAGE

Zoning can prohibit, restrict, or condition data centers by district and permit.

Agricultural zoning covers more than active crops; it protects the broader rural land pattern.

FARMLAND IS WORKING INFRASTRUCTURE.

STACK THE PROTECTIONS

Multiple performance standards work together to keep industrial impacts away from rural land.

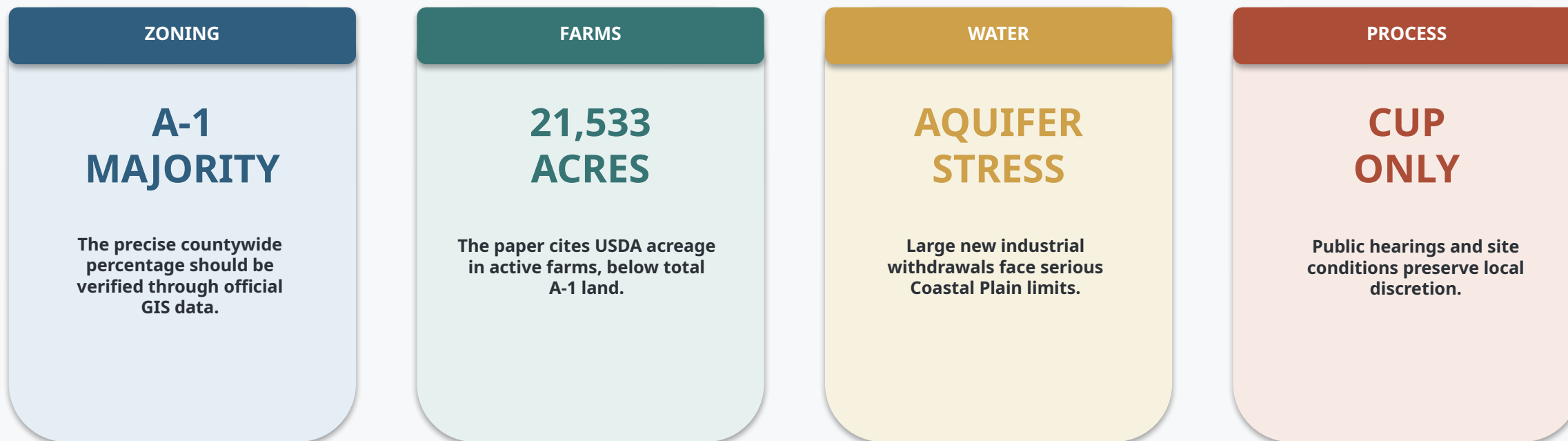
RURAL RISK		PROTECTIVE RULE
Data centers in A-1	→	Prohibit or tightly restrict
Small setbacks	→	300-500+ ft plus buffers
Groundwater cooling	→	Closed-loop or non-potable
Infrastructure spillover	→	Developer pays upgrades

The paper recommends layered rules so one weak condition cannot expose farms, wells, or rural roads.

PROTECT THE LAND WITH MORE THAN ONE RULE.

FOUR AGRICULTURAL FACTS

Zoning, active farm acreage, resource limits, and permit control shape the local choice.



The distinction between agricultural zoning and active farm acreage should stay clear in public materials.

VERIFY THE MAP. PROTECT THE FUNCTION.

THE CITIZEN 4x4

Four steps keep agricultural protection grounded in official maps, resources, and enforceable rules.

- 01

VERIFY THE MAP

Use official zoning data before stating a countywide A-1 percentage.
- 02

PROTECT A-1

Exclude or tightly restrict data centers in agricultural and conservation districts.
- 03

STACK STANDARDS

Combine setbacks, buffers, water, noise, traffic, habitat, and monitoring rules.
- 04

KEEP COSTS PRIVATE

Require the operator to fund reviews, utilities, mitigation, and decommissioning.

A defensible ordinance protects agriculture with verified data and standards tied to measurable impacts.

RURAL LAND SHOULD NOT SUBSIDIZE INDUSTRY.