

Biographical Information for Laura Meadows

On March 1 of last year, Laura Meadows was appointed Associate Vice President for Economic Development for the University of Georgia. In this new position at UGA, she reports directly to the provost and senior academic officer, and is charged with developing strategies to more comprehensively link the vast resources of the university in research, teaching and public service to economic development efforts around the state.

Prior to joining UGA, Laura worked for three and a half years as Assistant Secretary of State, serving as the agency's chief operating officer. Before serving in that position she worked for more than a decade in the community economic development field in three different organizations. Laura served as Commissioner of the Department of Community affairs, a comprehensive planning, community economic development and housing finance agency that is the main state agency supporting local governments. She was tapped to be the first director of the OneGeorgia Authority in 2000, which was created to deliver one third of the state's tobacco settlement for economic development projects that create jobs in the most economically distressed areas of the state. Prior to starting that program, Laura served for eight years as the state director of the rural development arm of the United States Department of Agriculture, which delivers millions of dollars to rural Georgia to finance projects that support the development of water & waste water systems, important health care facilities, affordable housing and rural business opportunities.

Laura has also served as legislative director of the state's largest farm organization, the Georgia Farm Bureau, after starting her career at UGA as a county extension agent.

Laura grew up on a peach farm in Cochran, Bleckley County, Georgia, where she attended the public schools, was active in the 4-H clubs and received an Associate of Science degree from Middle Georgia College. She holds a Bachelor of Science (Food Science) degree in Agriculture from the University of Georgia and a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Brenau University.