



DeSoto County
Economic Development Office

POWERFUL CONNECTIONS

Global reach and competitiveness in the true heartland of Florida: DeSoto County is now opening great opportunities for your business.

The location and logistics for high-speed, low-cost market access.

DeSoto County offers swift movement, inbound or outbound, and fast arrival at domestic and global destinations, thanks to Florida's first-class infrastructure, DeSoto's extensive multi-modal connections, and our strategic location outside urban congestion zones.

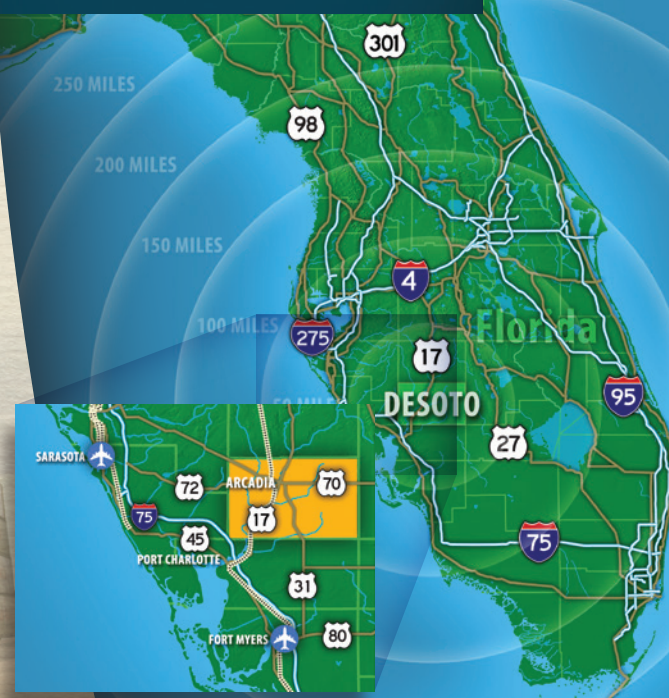
High-powered highway network:

Uncongested 360-highway access to all parts of the state on 1-75, 1-4, the expanded US 17 Corridor and State Road 70.

- Global Air Connections - Within 2 hours drive:
 - Tampa International Airport - **91 miles**
 - Orlando International Airport - **113 miles**
 - Southwest Florida International Airport, Ft. Myers - **61 miles**
 - Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport - **49 miles**
 - Punta Gorda Airport - **25 miles**
 - Everglades International Airport - **78 miles**
 - Arcadia Municipal Airport – Recognized as FDOT's 2020 General Aviation Airport of the Year
- Dual rail access: CSX and Seminole Gulf Railway connect to Florida's state-wide rail network, stretching from Jacksonville to Tampa, Palm Beach to Pensacola.
- State-wide global and domestic port shipping through the "Wharf of America," Florida's peninsula-wide port system of 14 Florida ports, including multiple Post-Panamax ports.
 - Port of Manatee (58 miles)—The U.S. deepwater port closest to the Panama Canal.
 - Port of Miami (176 miles)—Super Post-Panamax capability.
- Logistical Support: As Florida readies to compete aggressively for Southeast Asia import/exports, DeSoto puts your company in prime position to benefit.

Global and regional market access through omni-modal options: highway, rail, air and port.

Chief Executive Magazine ranks Florida #2 in the nation as a location for doing business.



In a state with **zero personal income tax**, a **corporate tax rate of only 4.458%** and a **sales tax rate of only 7.5% (5.5% on lease or license of commercial real property)**, DeSoto County is also generous with tax exemptions, training grants and more.

Opportunity Zones:

DeSoto County offers the advantages of two Federally designated Opportunity Zones, allowing investors to enjoy deferrals or even elimination of taxes on capital gains.

Investment in an Opportunity Zone spurs development, and is done through investment in a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF). If capital gains are invested in a QOF, taxes are deferred on the gains according to length of the investment. If capital gains are placed in a QOF for at least 5 years, the investors' basis on the original investment increases by 10%; the increase rises to 15% if the length is 7 years. If the investment length is at least 10 years, taxes on capital gains are eliminated.

Other valuable incentives:

- **NO Impact fees:** DeSoto County does not have impact fees, which is an automatic savings for companies developing here.
- **Quick Response Training (QRT):** A flexible grant program designed to respond quickly to new employee training needs for new and existing business, covering a range of training resources including instruction and curriculum development.
- **Ad Valorem Tax Exemption:** For qualifying businesses, an exemption for up to 100% of the County Ad Valorem taxation, for a period of up to 10 years.
- **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT):** A grant program to train or retrain existing employees to respond to new technology, retooling, or other challenges to maintain competitiveness.
- **Sales Tax Exemptions:** Includes sales and use tax exemptions on qualified business purchases such as machinery and equipment, research or other items.

The Tax Foundation ranks Florida as #4 in the nation for business tax climate.



DEEPER RESOURCES

Talent and Training:

- Labor pool in immediate region of **more than 400,000 available workers.**
- **Customized support in recruitment and hiring** through CareerSource Heartland.
- **Customized training and continuing education opportunities.** DeSoto County's South Florida State College works with local businesses to help sharpen the skills of its workforce.

Utilities:

- **Water:** A reservoir of **6 billion gallons.**
- **Energy:** **42,000 MWh** of clean power annually from the DeSoto Next Generation Solar Energy Center, a pioneer in Florida solar energy.

Education:

In a state consistently ranked #1 in the nation for higher education, with scores in the top 5 for college affordability, DeSoto adds to educational quality with great access, offering range of excellent higher education options both at home and nearby, including:

- **South Florida State College, DeSoto Campus**
- **Suncoast Technical College (31 miles away)**
- **Manatee Technical College (MTC), (42 miles away)**
- **University of South Florida, Sarasota/Manatee (50 miles away)**
- **Florida Gulf Coast University (60 miles away)**
- **University of South Florida (100 miles away).**

The good life of historic small-town charm: An inviting downtown with repurposed Opera House, more than 400 buildings and homes on the National Register of Historic Places, some of the finest antiques in the state.

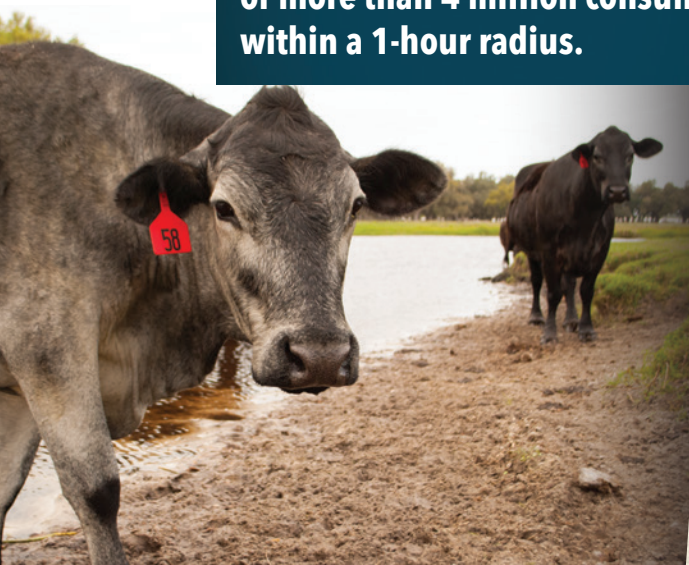
CNBC ranks Florida among the top 5 job-generating states in America.



AGRI-OPPORTUNITY



Serving up a hungry market of more than 4 million consumers within a 1-hour radius.



Abundant land and water, bumper crops, plus outstanding distribution and technical support—agri-business flourishes in DeSoto:

- Ranked # 2 in the state and responsible for over 16% of Florida's total citrus production.
- Florida's 7th top producer in cattle with 63,000 head.
- 67,044 acres of orchards, including peaches, tangelos, lemons and tangerines
- 1,646 acres of vegetables
- 1,092 acres of watermelons; significant harvests in strawberries, blueberries, lettuce, tomatoes, and honey

Bountiful agri-business advantages:

- **Robust consumer market:** Accelerated access to all points of Florida's high-volume, high-dollar consumer market, growing rapidly and hungry for quality, with one of the highest per capita incomes in the Southeast.
- **High-speed global and domestic access:** Multimodal assets include Interstate highway, rail, air and deepwater ports.
- **Rich resources:** Ample land, water and low-cost green electricity.
- **Resourceful support:** Technical support and expertise from Florida Polytechnic University Food Lab and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).
- **A ready-to-work labor force:** A workforce that knows how to grow.
- **Prime acres for processing:** Over 4,000 acres of industrial land available.
- **Thriving cluster location for processing operations:** \$42 million annually in frozen food manufacturing.



MANUFACTURING OPPORTUNITY

Powered by resources such as the DeSoto Next Generation Solar Facility, DeSoto manufacturing is growing profitably even as it produces a more sustainable world.

Cleantech and green energy production:

DeSoto is helping to fulfill the promise of green energy with natural and human resources, including:

- **Abundant land and growing conditions** for an extensive range of crops and agribusiness.
- **Dedicated, trained workforce within 45 minute drive.**
- A deep bench in **entrepreneurial resources**, in a state ranked #2 in entrepreneurial growth in 2019. Your ideas take root and flourish with:
 - Enterprise Florida—Public/private economic development partnership with a focus on clean energy development.
 - GrowFL— Strategic support for second-stage companies
- **No-Cost, professional consulting** from the Florida SBDC at University of South Florida.

The good life of great recreation: City parks, nature trails and the beautiful Peace River for refreshing recreation including boating, kayaking, canoeing, river tours, fishing, camping—even fossil hunting.

Next Generation Solar Energy Center consumes no water and produces no air emissions.



DeSoto Next Generation Solar Energy Center
Photo ©2009 NextEra Energy, Inc.



DISTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITY

Wal-Mart chose DeSoto County for the company's one million square-foot distribution center for one simple reason: DeSoto keeps goods on the go. And for any distribution, warehousing or light assembly/warehousing need, DeSoto offers dynamic assets that add both speed and real value to the enterprise supply chain:

- **Potent consumer access** in one of the nation's most populous states, with a top growth rate and one of the highest per capita personal incomes in the Southeast.
- **Non-stop global and domestic access:** Multi-modal momentum includes:
 - Port shipping through the "Wharf of America," Florida's peninsula-wide port system, with close proximity to ports offering Super Post-Panamax and Post-Panamax capabilities.
 - Highway speed and ease, on an interstate system with no stop lights between DeSoto and the Canadian border.

- **A deep, ready-to-work labor pool:** 400,000 available workers in the region.
- **Prime sites for speed:** Over 4,000 acres available.

THE GOOD LIFE of eventful gatherings: A packed annual calendar of rodeos, county fairs, festivals, concerts, livestock shows, with the 4,000-seat Turner Center providing a welcoming venue.

Post-Panamax shipping offers Florida businesses strategic access to Asian markets.





The Good Life and great opportunity.



Leave the stress of urban congestion behind and thrive in a business-friendly community fully invested in your enterprise success.



DeSoto County
Economic Development Office



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