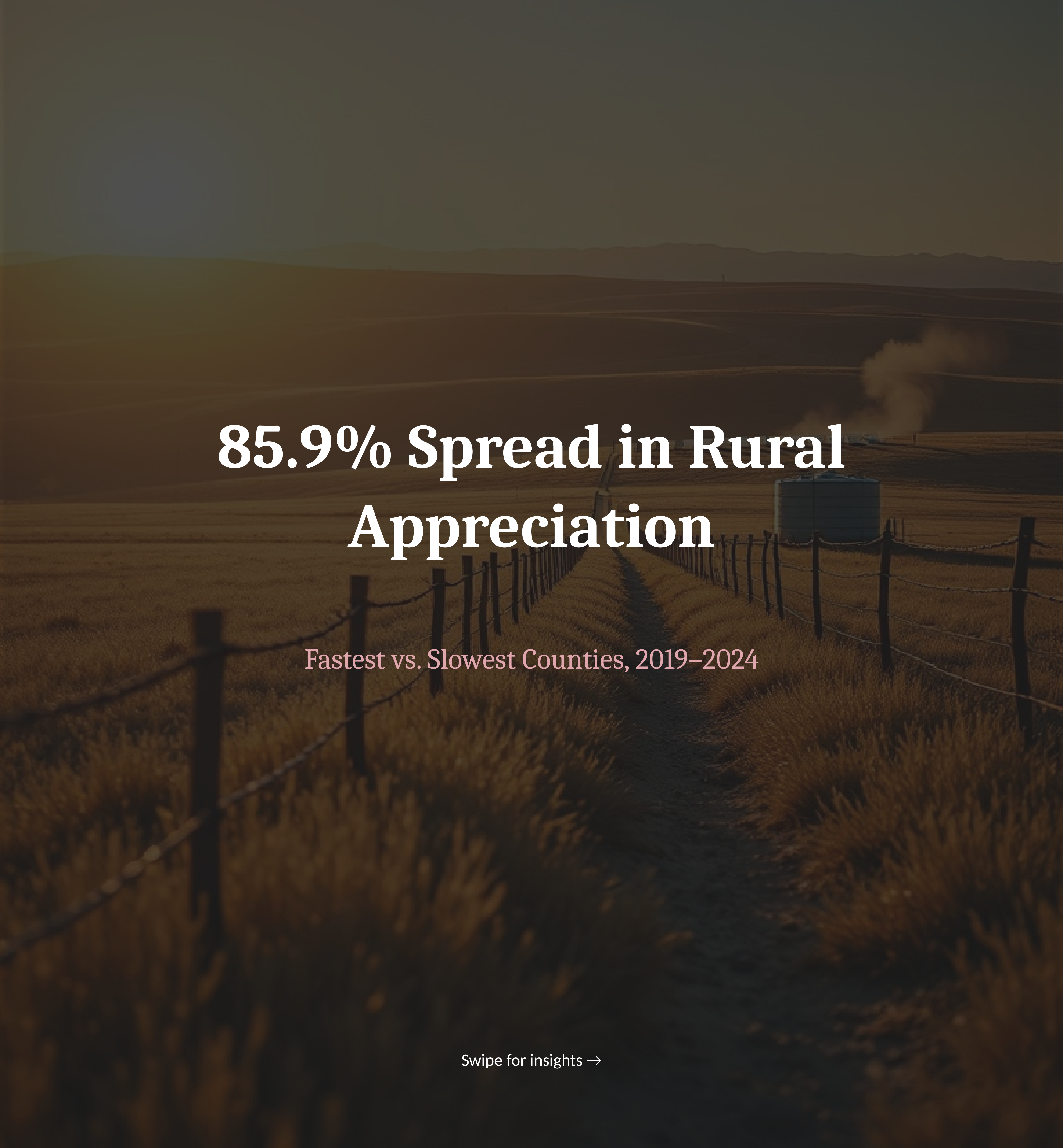
85.9% Spread in Rural Appreciation — ALEX Intelligence 2026



85.9% Spread in Rural Appreciation

Fastest vs. Slowest Counties, 2019–2024

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THE DATA

85.9%

Spread Between the Fastest and Slowest Appreciation (2024)

The gap between Gem County's 154.1% surge and Yauco Municipio's minimal growth reveals a deepening divergence in rural value creation across the U.S.

This 85.9% spread is not a statistical outlier—it's a structural signal. It reflects a new reality in rural land markets: appreciation is no longer uniform. Instead, a small number of high-potential counties are capturing disproportionate value, while others remain stagnant or even decline in relative terms. This divergence is not driven by broad macroeconomic trends but by localized catalysts—infrastructure, zoning, conservation incentives, and private capital deployment—that create compound growth in select regions.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2019 and 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-17-land-land-divergence-home-value-county-us-rural

01

Appreciation is No Longer Geographic

The data confirms that rural land value growth is increasingly non-linear and non-adjacent. A county's performance is not determined by proximity to urban cores or state borders, but by the presence of specific, replicable catalysts—such as AI-driven land modeling, conservation easement demand, or water access. The top-performing counties are not just growing faster; they are creating self-reinforcing ecosystems where capital, data, and policy align to accelerate appreciation beyond baseline trends.

02

The New Rural Alpha

The 85.9% spread defines a new frontier of investment alpha in rural markets. Investors who can identify the underlying drivers—soil suitability modeling, pest resistance planning, or infrastructure readiness—can outperform the median by a factor of two or more. This is not about buying 'rural land' as a category, but about targeting the specific, data-validated micro-locations where value is being created, not just preserved. The future of rural investing is not in volume, but in precision.

Real Estate Strategy & Intelligence Leader. Democratized Blue Ocean Strategist & Operator.

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