



VIRGINIA  
Beginning Farmer & Rancher  
COALITION PROGRAM

April 23, 2020

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## *A Message from VBFRC*

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We hope this email finds you, your farm, families, and community doing okay amidst the current pandemic. Amidst the shuffle of in person event cancellations and emerging virtual events responding to urgent needs, we have pulled together a snapshot of announcements, COVID-19 resources, recent webinar recordings, and upcoming virtual events in April and May. Our newblast will continue to be sent out every two weeks with the intention of synthesizing upcoming and recent offerings.

If you are interested in an event listed below, you can find more details by clicking the hotlinked titles, or by visiting the Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition website ([Click here](#)). Not all events announced in this email are sponsored by the VBFRC, and not all events in Virginia may be included in this list.

Please share this flyer with your networks. If you would like your event added to our newsletter, website, and calendar, send an email with the event details to the coalition coordinator, Katie Trozzo, at [ketrozzo@vt.edu](mailto:ketrozzo@vt.edu)

Wishing you peace and health as the spring crops begin to take root.

## *Partner Highlights*

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Virginia Cooperative Extension offers a trusted source of information and resources as we navigate the coronavirus pandemic. Check out their updates page and their resources page.

VCE Updates ([Click here](#))

VCE Resources ([Click here](#))

Note: Green underlined text is a link

## Announcements

### Deadline May 29: FARM Intern Recruitment (Abingdon, VA)

The Farmer and Rancher Mentoring Program (FARM) is a 200 hour (minimum) internship offered by Appalachian Sustainable Development. Beginning farmer interns will work closely with their mentors on-farm during the growing season. Together, mentors and interns will work towards reaching individualized learning goals to help put beginning farmers on the path to a successful career in farming. Interns who successfully complete the program will be awarded a \$500 participation stipend.

## COVID-19 Resources

### VCE COVID-19 Updates

Updates from the Virginia Cooperative Extension state office to keep VCE employees and the public aware of decisions from central administration.

### VCE COVID-19 Resources

A compendium of Virginia Cooperative Extension factsheets, guidelines, and trainings related to COVID-19.

### The Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation “The Food System and COVID-19” Resource Page

This online resource aims to 1) serve stakeholders on an off campus with curated public resources, news, and articles related to COVID-19 and the food system 2) share ideas and inspiration about food system and social change possibilities through position articles written by Center associates and fellows, and 3) steward an ongoing dialogue about structural changes needed to address the inequities COVID-19 is highlighting in our food system.

### Virginia Association for Biological Farmers (VABF) “Coronavirus Resources, Farmers, Consumers, and Farmers Market Managers”

A compilation of the most current resources for farmers, market managers, consumers, and other food system stakeholders such that communities can make informed decisions and still have access to fresh, healthy foods in the wake of coronavirus (COVID-19).

### Virginia Farmers Market Association (VAFMA) “COVID-19 and Virginia’s Farmers Markets”

Detailed information related to COVID-19’s effects on farmers markets in Virginia.

### Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) “COVID-19 Emergency Information Center”

Provides relevant and up-to-date guidance and resources related to agriculture and agribusiness concerns.

### Virginia Farm Bureau Federation “Producer Resources Related to the Coronavirus COVID-19”

Information for Virginian farmers relevant to farm operations during this public health challenge.

### COVID-19 Loans, Funding, and Grants for Food and Farm Businesses and more!

Oregon Tilth has compiled a list of loans, funding, and grants for food and farm businesses available at the link above. Scroll down to “Loans and Grants.” Other COVID-19 resources for farmers are also available on this site.

# Recent Webinar Recordings

## [Risky Business: Managing Risk for Produce Success Webinar Series \(Zoom recordings\)](#)

Appalachian Sustainable Development is offering a series of **webinars for produce farms** in central Appalachia and beyond. These webinars will present foundational concepts in a number of topics and point farmers to reliable resources to learn more and implement practices on the farm. All webinars are archived on website and are available for free streaming.

## [Forest Farming in Virginia \(March 26\)](#)

Dr. John Munsell briefly covered the basics of forest farming and shared contemporary opportunities for farming in Virginia's forestlands. He also described the remarkable rise of forest farming in the state and beyond, and discussed the development of an American Forest Farming Council to support forest farmers.

## [Market Ready: Farm to eCommerce Webinar \(April 1\)](#)

Learn the basics of eCommerce marketing including pricing, promotion, and managing risk. Hear from several Virginia businesses that are currently practicing with different eCommerce models.

## [Ag Policy & Market Outlook Forum \(April 2\)](#)

During this webinar, faculty and researchers from the Virginia Tech Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics discussed COVID-19 and its anticipated effects on trade and commodity markets; the CARES Act stimulus package; recent Virginia legislation pertaining to agriculture; the outlook for commercial hemp; and the Trade War. Cosponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension.

## [Expanding Food Safety Protocols in an Evolving Landscape of COVID-19 Series \(April 9\)](#)

In this four part series, Virginia Cooperative Extension Specialists discuss COVID-19 and how it impacts food safety practices. Hear the latest facts and myths about reducing coronavirus transmission, and best practices you can use for your farm and food business. Presented by Virginia Cooperative Extension specialists, Melissa Chase, Joell Eifert, Laura Strawn, Rob Williams, and Amber Vallotton.

## [Wallace Center Briefing: Food & Farm Businesses Navigate the CARES Act \(April 9\)](#)

A webinar to assist food and farm businesses navigate the #CARESAct financial assistance programs. This call was for Technical Assistance providers, support organizations, and other advocates who are assisting small to midsize farmers & food enterprises primarily working in local and regional value chains to access emergency assistance.

## [COVID-19 Related Legislation: Labor, Family 1st Act, CARES Act \(April 17\)](#)

A webinar offered by Southern Extension Economics Committee that goes over labor updates and challenges and COVID-19 related legislation.

## [Stress and Safety: Decrease one, increase the other \(April 20\)](#)

This webinar illustrates the relationships between stress, injury and overall health among farmers.



# April Events

## **April 24 9:00am: Small Farmer Listening Session via Zoom**

An online conversation to learn from each other about how the coronavirus pandemic is impacting small farmers, food producers, our patrons and communities as we face new and unprecedented challenges. Representatives from VDACS, USDA agencies, Small Business Administration, Virginia Cooperative Extension and others will also answer concerns.

## **April 24: E-Commerce During COVID-19: Opportunities for Food Producers to Make Direct Market Sales Online**

This webinar will discuss the value of e-commerce for farmers, food gatekeepers and retailers at a moment when customers are shifting their buying habits overnight to minimize exposure to COVID-19.

## **April 24: Livestock Update Webinar Series**

This webinar series offered 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays of the month from 12-1 pm contains timely information for Livestock Producers. This first meeting will cover beef market current considerations, getting ready for the breeding season, and a pasture management update.

## **April 24: Ask a Sista Farmer**

Are you ready to grow your own food and medicine for self-reliance and community resilience? Every Friday, experienced Black womxn\* farmers answer your call-in questions about gardening, livestock, agroforestry, plant medicine, and food preservation. Hosted by Soul Fire Farm.

## **April 27: Collaborative Farming/Multifarm Direct to Consumer Marketing Webinar (Part 1)**

This is the first webinar in a series of two hosted by North Carolina Extension's Local Food Program will highlight collaborative efforts of farmers that are not tied to a food hub. Panelists will include representatives of Vacationer Supported Agriculture, Piedmont Progressive Farmers Group, and Carolina Common Enterprise.

## **April 28: After Veto Session, the Final Word on the 2020 Session Webinar**

A webinar to hear from the VA Agribusiness Council on the VA General Assembly: After the Veto Session, the Final Word on the 2020 Session. This webinar is brought to you by the Farm Credit Knowledge Center. Registration Required.

## **April 30: Collaborative Farming/Multifarm Direct to Consumer Marketing Webinar (Part 2)**

This second webinar of a two part series will highlight food hub efforts to link consumers with local food. Panelists will include representatives of High County Food Hub, TRACTOR, Feast Down East, and Sandhills Farm to Table.

## **April 30: West Virginia Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program Webinar**

Tune in to this free webinar with Dane Gaiser from the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. Dane will be discussing programs and resources that are available to WV veterans and warriors. He will also discuss who can get involved and participate in the programs which can include individuals from across close state lines. Hosted by the Farm Credit Knowledge center. No pre-registration is needed.

# May Events

## May 1: Ask a Sista Farmer

Are you ready to grow your own food and medicine for self-reliance and community resilience? Every Friday, experienced Black womxn\* farmers answer your call-in questions about gardening, livestock, agroforestry, plant medicine, and food preservation. Hosted by Soul Fire Farm.

## May 2: Principles & Practices in Biodynamic Beekeeping ~ Part III

This online webinar offered by Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary provides guidance in beekeeping tasks through the spring and summer months, from swarm catching and growing the apiary to heath checks, expansion, wax management, and more. This is the third class in our four-part series on basic beekeeping and is intended as a continuation of Principles & Practices of Biodynamic Beekeeping. Cost \$50.

## May 5: Farm Transition Planning – Profitability Webinar

Join us as we welcome Dr. Doolarie Singh-Knights to speak on the topic of profitability as it relates to farm transition planning.

## May 8: Ask a Sista Farmer

Are you ready to grow your own food and medicine for self-reliance and community resilience? Every Friday, experienced Black womxn\* farmers answer your call-in questions about gardening, livestock, agroforestry, plant medicine, and food preservation. Hosted by Soul Fire Farm.

## May 8: Livestock Update Webinar Series

This webinar series offered 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays of the month from 12-1 pm contains timely information for Livestock Producers. Topics for this session to be announced.

## May 13: Hemp Panel Webinar

Join us for a panel webinar on hemp farming in Virginia where Kelli Scott, Adam Taylor, and Dr. John Fike, share the ins and outs, dos and don'ts, whys and why nots so you can understand the opportunities alongside the concerns and issues in order to make informed decisions around farming hemp. Each speaker will have a chance to share their experience and knowledge and we will then open the floor to field participant questions.

## May 22: Livestock Update Webinar Series

This webinar series offered 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays of the month from 12-1 pm contains timely information for Livestock Producers. Topics for this session to be announced.

## May 25: Losing a Hive - Understanding & Troubleshooting

All beekeepers must be prepared for the loss of a colony, but it's not always easy to get support that goes beyond the conventional judgements. This online webinar will help you dig deeper. Cost \$50.