

# Newsblast

VIRGINIA  
Beginning Farmer & Rancher  
COALITION PROGRAM

November 6, 2020

Photo by Erik Jan Leusink

## *A Message from VBFRC*

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Wishing you well as the leaves fall and we transition into cooler weather. Below you will find a number of webinar offerings from November to February.

If you are interested in a listed event, you can find more details by clicking the hotlink 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)

## *Partner Highlights*

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VSU's Small Farm Outreach Program is hosting the Veteran Farmers Conference: Boots to Roots virtually on November 12th!

Join military veteran farmers, landowners and agriculture professionals virtually for an opportunity to hear about available resources, smart business strategies, and successful production practices—especially for those new and beginning veteran farmers who want to learn more about what it takes to farm profitability and sustainability. Registration is free and open to the public.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Note: Green underlined text is a link

## Announcements

### New Tool! The Virginia Farm Emergency Plan

The Virginia Farm Emergency plan details why an emergency plan is an essential communication and training tool for every farm and offers a template for a farmer to fill in with important contacts, farm maps, directions and details about the farming operation for emergency service providers. The plan includes details on where and how the plan should be stored and used, and who should be made aware of the plan and who should have access to it. This is an important emergency preparedness tool that every farm and farm family should take advantage of. A video of Livvy Preisser walking through the tool is available via the link in the header.

### Virginia Cooperative Extension's Desktop Farm Day Web-based Resource

This site was created in response to requests for information on agriculture topics since the traditional in person youth agriculture field days have not been held due to the pandemic. Check out the available videos.

## November Events

### November 9: An evening with Nephi Craig

Virginia Tech is hosting Nephi Craig, a chef from the White Mountain Apache nation, featured in the film Gather for his work starting an indigenous cafe as a nutritional recovery clinic. Participants are also invited to a community screening of Gather on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

### November 9-12: 2020 National Young Farmers Leadership Conference

The Young Farmer's annual Leadership Convergence is online from November 9 through 12. This year's program is very exciting, with a theme of "Achieving Equity through Agriculture." While Convergence 2020 is an invite-only event, they will have limited public tickets available for the two keynote addresses by Leah Penniman and Chris Newman. Stay tuned on their website for those links!

### November 10: Managing Finances During Uncertain Times

Dr. Alex White of the Dairy Science Department at Virginia Tech will be offering this webinar as part of the Farm Transition Webinar series hosted by Pulaski Extension. Register at this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/farmtransition2>

### November 12: Veteran Farmers Conference: Boots to Roots

Join military veteran farmers, landowners and agriculture professionals virtually for an opportunity to hear about available resources, smart business strategies, and successful production practices—especially for those new and beginning veteran farmers who want to learn more about what it takes to farm profitability and sustainability. Registration is free and open to the public.

### **November 13: Grains to Glass: Exploring the Farmer, Maltster, and Brewer Partnership**

Join farmers, maltsters, and brewers for a conversation about adding value to the mid-Atlantic grainshed from field to glass. What does it take to leverage local grains for brewing and distilling? We'll talk to players across the supply chain about how they approach the small grains market, variety selection, post-harvest processing, relationship building, business partnerships, and, of course, your drinks! This event is free; suggested \$10 donation. Hosted by Future Harvest and the Common Grain Alliance.

### **November 17: AgCast—Industry Broadcast News**

Mark your calendars! Starts November 17th at 9:00am EDT. November's guest speaker: Eric Snodgrass, Principal Atmospheric Scientist for Nutrien Ag Solutions, where he develops predictive, analytical software to help agricultural producers manage weather risk. Eric will be discussing weather outlooks and its effect on agriculture productivity.

## December

### **December 1: Chef Dave Smoke-McCluskey on Onon'onsera ~ Squash. The Shadey One**

Join Mohawk Chef, Author, and Indigenous Foods Educator, Dave Smoke McCluskey, for the third of three evenings of learning and native culinary arts about the Three Sisters Manifesto. This virtual session focuses on Onon'onsera ~ Squash: The Shadey One.

### **December 1: Economics, Justice, and Systems Thinking from the Soil Up**

Join for a conversation on soil health, economic justice, transition planning, and systems thinking with Ira Wallace of Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, Robert Spiers of Spiers Farm, LLC., and Mike Phillips of Valley View Farms.

### **December 3: Mentors, Markets, and Evolving Adaptation**

A discussion of mentorship, business planning, finding markets, optimizing soil health volunteers, and continual adaptation with Anne Geyer of AgriBerry Farm & CSA, Danny Boyer of Four Winds Farm, and Phil Witmer of Grazeland Dairy, Inc.

### **December 3-5: Virginia Farm Bureau 2020 Annual Meeting**

Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's 2020 Annual Meeting of Voting Delegates will be held in early December. The meeting will be in lieu of the traditional VFBF Annual Convention, which will not be held this year due to complications associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic.

### **December 8: Equity, Dignity, and Health in Food and Agriculture**

Listen, learn, and be inspired by their agroecological stories, actions, and visions for community and systemic change with Renard Turner of Vanguard Ranch LTD., Jonathan McRay of Silver Run Forest Farm, and Janet Aardema of Broadfork Farm.

### **December 11: Soil Farming, Pollinator Habitat, and Engaging with Community**

Learn from the experiences and journeys into soil and water conservation, biodiversity, soil farming, and community outreach with Amy Hicks of Amy's Organic Garden and Gerald Garber of Cave View Farms.

# January

## January 7: Virginia Farmers Market Conference

The Virginia Farmers Market Conference will be held January 7, 2021 ONLINE! This full day event will focus on current issues faced by farmers markets including marketing, conflict de-escalation, food safety, COVID-19, professionalism and racial equity. We will also include the annual meeting for VAFMA members.

## January 11-April 2: On-line Woodland Options for Landowners

A twelve week self-paced online course that teaches the fundamentals of forest management. Upon completion of the program, you can have a draft forest management plan. Natural resource professionals serve as mentors and the class winds up with an optional end-of-the-semester hands-on field trip. Costs \$45 per family.

## January 29-31: Young Farmers of Virginia Convention

The Young Farmers of Virginia will hold their annual convention in Petersburg, VA in January 2021.

# February

## February 19-20: Woods and Wildlife Conference

Over 10 million acres of Virginia's woods are privately owned. The Woods & Wildlife Conferences provide information, tools, and personal contacts to help private woodland owners keep their woods, and the wildlife that live in them, healthy and productive.

# Webinar Recordings and Videos

## Master Gardener Virtual Classroom

Check out the Master Gardener Virtual Classroom with over 30 archived webinars on topics from urban agriculture to sustainable landscaping.

## Preventing the intoxication of farm operators from nitrogen dioxide during silage handling

Nitrogen dioxide is a silent or invisible hazard in dairy and beef farms. Nitrogen dioxide is an extremely toxic gas produced during the ensiling process. Exposure to nitrogen dioxide is not a hazard under normal environmental conditions. However, occupations in agriculture can have a great exposure to nitrogen dioxide. This video, which was funded by the Southeast Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention, explains the main concepts to be known by workers when working around silos. The overall intent of the video is to increase the awareness of nitrogen dioxide as an occupational hazard in dairy and beef cattle farms.

**Becoming a Radical Gardener Building Queer Roots & Resilience Through Chicanx & Indigenous Histories [Oct 29]**

Hear about how gardening is an act of queer resistance.

**Mindfulness and Self Care for Farmers [Sept 30]**

This webinar will cover the ways farmers can take care of themselves to protect their physical and emotional health through the seasons. Here, Kara Dodson will review yoga postures, movements, and other forms of bodywork that can help to relieve stress; heal tired, aching muscles and tendons; and restore energy. Dodson will also cover the reasons why self-care should be a priority for all farmers and the ways that taking care of one's body and mind can improve the vitality and viability of life on a farm.