



October 1, 2021

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A Message from VBFRC

Greetings! We hope you, your farm, family, and community are well as we enter October. This newsblast features a number of announcements, workshop series, and events coming up.

We send the newsblast out at the beginning of each month. If you would like your event added to our listserv, newsblast, and website, send an email with the event details to the coalition coordinator, Katie Trozzo, at ketrozzo@vt.edu

The Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition is a state-wide and coalition-based Extension program, housed in Virginia Tech's Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education. Funding is sponsored by the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) of the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Award #2020-49400-32326. This funding is led by VSU's Small Farm Outreach Program.

Partner Highlights

We are pleased to announce a new series called [A Taste of Farming: An Online Series for Aspiring and New Farmers](#). We designed this “learn as you go” series so you can get a taste of different farming practices and concepts to help you explore your interests, gain a basic understanding of many different farming topics, avoid common pitfalls, and get to know the Extension professionals in Virginia who are here to assist you.

From October 2021 to March 2022, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) agents and Small Farm Outreach Program Associates will be posting short videos (15-20 min) highlighting key information and considerations about different farming practices and concepts on topics they have had years of experience helping aspiring and new farmers navigate. A week after each video is posted, the VCE professional will offer a live-time Q & A session. Find out more on [our website](#).

Note: Green underlined text is a link

Announcements

A Taste of Farming: An Online Series for Aspiring and New Farmers

We designed this “learn as you go” online series so you can get a taste of different farming practices and concepts to help you explore your interests, gain a basic understanding of many different farming topics, avoid common pitfalls, and get to know the Extension professionals in Virginia who are here to assist you. From October 2021 to March 2022, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) agents and Small Farm Outreach Program Associates will be posting short videos (15-20 min) highlighting key information and considerations about different farming practices and concepts on topics they have had years of experience helping aspiring and new farmers navigate. A week after each video is posted, the VCE professional will offer a live-time Q & A session by Zoom where aspiring and new farmers can ask their questions directly and discuss their needs with the agent.

Farm Manager Position at Allegheny Mountain Institute

Allegheny Mountain Institute (AMI) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization working to cultivate healthy communities through food and education. We seek a Farm Manager who is a self-starter with strong interpersonal and organizational skills to direct the [AMI Farm at Augusta Health](#).

New Grant Program Supporting Local Food and Farming Infrastructure

Governor Ralph Northam today announced a new grant program designed to support equitable and sustainable local food systems for small-scale agricultural producers, farmers markets, and food hubs. It is a new component of the Governor’s Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund.

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 for Livestock, Poultry Contract Producers and Specialty Crop Growers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is updating the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) for contract producers of eligible livestock and poultry and producers of specialty crops and other sales-based commodities. CFAP 2, which assists producers who faced market disruptions in 2020 due to COVID-19, is part of USDA’s broader Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative. Additionally, USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) has set an Oct. 12, 2021 deadline for all eligible producers to apply for or modify applications for CFAP 2.

45th Annual Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tour

Join other forest landowners and natural resource professionals for an educational and fun day in the woods learning about forest and wildlife management. Register here:

<https://forestupdate.frec.vt.edu/onlineregistration.html>

October Events

October 5: Small Ruminant Winter Readiness

Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent Hunter Romano of Bland County will discuss steps producers can take to keep their sheep and goats healthy and productive through the cold months ahead.

October 5: Weed Control with Goats

Join us on Slade Family Farm in Surry, Virginia to learn how to use goats to control weeds on your farm. Topics will include breed considerations, stationary and mobile fencing options, mob grazing, rotational grazing, solar powered fence energizers, predator control, supplementary feeding with hay, housing, watering systems and more. Dennis Williams of Bees Knees Farm in King William Virginia will demonstrate two mobile fence systems that he uses on his farm. Tracy Porter will discuss how to make your own solar powered fence charger to keep your goats in and predators out. And Clif Slade will share with you his first time experience with using goats to keep weeds down in his sweet potato fields.

October 6: Winter Trout Cate Production for Farm Ponds

Rainbow trout is a favorite among sport fishers. Eating trout is even better. If you have a farm pond, you can raise rainbow trout. Growing trout in cages can be fun and enjoyable. Learn how to cultivate rainbow trout in cages during the winter months. The program will cover building a cage, transporting fish to the pond, stocking rates, feeding them, harvesting, and processing them for your use.

October 6: USDA/DCR Informational Meeting

Join us for an inviting conversation with various agencies of USDA including Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Development (RD), and Natural Resources and Conservation Services (NRCS). USDA officials from the local area will share the agencies' programs and opportunities for small farmers and will answer your questions concerning eligibility and participation. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will have the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff on hand to explain their programs as well.

October 6: Estate Planning Essentials: Steps to Protect You & Your Family

This Workshop will explain essential provision you need to include in your documents to accomplish your objectives during your lifetime, when disabled, and upon your death. This is a free in-person workshop. Refreshments will be served and seating is limited. Please register by October 1, 2021 at <https://tinyurl.com/EstatePlanningWorkshopVCE>

October 7: Fall Production in High Tunnels

Participants will learn how to prepare High Tunnels for planting and caring for Fall crops in High Tunnels. Growers will learn about soil test, soil preparation and crop lay outs. Crops include tomatoes, spinach, and leafy greens as well as other specialty crops that will fill in and provide a variety for maximum sales.

October 7: Small Farm Spotlight Series: Preparing for Lambing/Kidding

Beginning and experienced sheep/goat producers will visit Shepherd's Way Farm to get a glimpse of best management practices for pre-lambing/kidding and post-lambing/kidding from seasoned small ruminant farmer, Lisa Lewis. This workshop includes a hands-on demonstration with a birthing model. Additional topics include preventing lamb/kid loss, the importance of colostrum, strategies for troubleshooting when birthing complications occur, and diagnosing and treating newborn lamb/kid problems. Lee Wright, Superintendent and Sheep Specialist of the Southwest Virginia Agricultural Research Extension Center, will also provide instruction and demonstration.

October 8: Mapping with Drones for Precision Agriculture

With increasingly more potential benefits from the use of drones in Agriculture and the availability of drones designed especially for agricultural applications, it is important for Small Farmers to understand the basic introduction to drones in agriculture. Learn the concept of precision agriculture by means of

drone applications. These applications can readily facilitate information through aerial photography and maps that can help to make decisions to improve yields and lower operational costs.

October 12-13: 2021 Advanced Grazing School Ranching for Profit

The Virginia Forage and Grassland Council has partnered with the American Farmland Trust and the Mountains to the Bay Grazing Alliance to bring the professional Ranching for Profit Workshops to the heart of Virginia. Learn from cattleman, rancher, instructor and CEO of the Ranch Management Consultants, Dallas Mount, in a 2-day Ranching for Profit Workshop.

October 13: USDA/DCR Informational Meeting

Join us for an inviting conversation with various agencies of USDA including Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Development (RD), and Natural Resources and Conservation Services (NRCS). USDA officials from the local area will share the agencies' programs and opportunities for small farmers and will answer your questions concerning eligibility and participation. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will have the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff on hand to explain their programs as well. The local SWCD's have many programs available to small farmers. Join us to stay informed on all the new and current programs USDA and DCR have to assist our Virginia farmers. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) will have staff on hand to discuss the programs and services offered by the Agency.

October 12-14: Mid-Atlantic Urban Agriculture Summit

This event launched five years ago and was formerly known as the Virginia Ag Summit. New in 2021, organizers at Virginia Cooperative Extension have extended it to the entire Mid-Atlantic region to facilitate the sharing of even more knowledge and experiences. They invite urban farmers, gardeners, policymakers, government officials, foodies and other interested individuals to three partial days of: Learning about one of agriculture's fastest-growing sectors, virtual tours of successful urban farms, and virtual networking.

October 14: VDACS Informational Session

Join us for an engaging and informative conversation with various offices of Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). Led by Heather Wheeler, manager of the Office of Domestic Marketing and Promotions, you will be informed of the many programs, services and opportunities VDACS has for small and beginner farmers and will answer your questions concerning eligibility and participation. Join us to stay informed on all the new and current programs VDACS has to assist our Virginia farmers.

October 18: Sustainable Forestry Management

Sustainable forestry management can be complex with the parts and activities to consider in managing trees, wildlife and the environment. This workshop will discuss and make us aware of topics such as determining your management goals, working with forest professionals, timber sales and harvest, water quality, forest health, wildlife and other unexpected factors.

October 19: USDA/DCR Informational Meeting

Join us for an inviting conversation with various agencies of USDA including Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Development (RD), and Natural Resources and Conservation Services (NRCS). USDA officials from the local area will share the agencies' programs and opportunities for small farmers and will answer your questions concerning eligibility and participation. The Department of Conservation and Recreation

(DCR) will have the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff on hand to explain their programs as well. The local SWCD's have many programs available to small farmers. Join us to stay informed on all the new and current programs USDA and DCR have to assist our Virginia farmers.

October 20: How to Dig, Cure, and Store Sweet Potatoes

Tracy Porter, a VSU SFOP Regional Program Assistant will provide a lecture and a pre-recorded video on how to dig, cure and store sweet potatoes. Marketing strategies will also be discussed. Tracy has years of experience planting and harvesting sweet potatoes. This workshop will help all beginning farmers and those looking to increase value.

October 21: USDA Information Session

Join us for an inviting conversation with various agencies of USDA including Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Development (RD), Natural Resources and Conservation Services (NRCS) among others. USDA officials from around the state will share the agencies programs and opportunities for small farmers and will answer your questions concerning eligibility and participation. Join us to stay informed on all the new and current programs USDA has to assist our Virginia farmers.

October 21-22: Solar-powered Water Pumping Systems for Livestock

This in-person and hands-on workshop is focused on water pumping systems for livestock. Participants will learn the principles and applications of solar-electric water pumping. The primary focus will be on solar-powered water pumping systems, however, some other alternatives will be discussed too. Learn more about these systems, some considerations for their use, and hear farmer experiences.

October 22-23: Beginning Woodland Owner's Retreat (Central Virginia)

This retreat is hosted by the Virginia Department of Forestry and Virginia Cooperative Extension, is geared towards landowners who are new to forest management, provides information on both hardwood and pine forest management, offers chances for interaction with natural resource professionals from various agencies in Virginia, as well as with other landowners, provides information on estate planning, management planning and certification, and provides hands-on experience with tree identification, forestry equipment, and more...

October 23: Bio-Char: A Bridge from Fossil Fuel to Renewable Energy, Healthy, Soil, and a Better Climate

A two day intensive course on the production and use of bio-char for fuel and soil amending. From simple backyard production to high-tech machinery.

Instructors Dale Hendricks, Gary Gilmore, and Mark Cohen will demonstrate machinery, including the BioGen electricity generator, small engine machinery running solely on biochar, and the production and concepts of soil amendments and carbon sequestration

October 23: Introductory Workshop: Micro-hydro Power Systems

Please join us for an introductory workshop exploring micro-hydro systems and applications for energy generation. Participants will learn the principles and applications of hydro-electric water pumping. Learn more about these systems and some key considerations for their use. The session will begin with presentations in the morning through lunch, followed by an optional site visit in the afternoon to a field site approximately 6 miles away for in-person site assessment work. Please note, rugged terrain and difficult access to field site.

October 26: Sweet Potato Varieties and Taste Test

Carolyn Quinn, the 2020 VSU Small Farmer of the Year Award recipient will host a sweet potato pie tasting with several sweet potato varieties to sample such as the heirloom White Hayman, Hernandez, Ginsing, Marisaki and All Purple. Attendees will cast their vote for their favorite variety of sweet potato pie. Tracy Porter, the VSU SFOP Regional Program Assistant will be on hand to answer any questions about variety selection, integrated pest management for sweet potatoes, and how to plant, drip irrigate, hill, harvest, cure and store sweet potatoes.

October 27: Black Angus Cattle Operation Tour

Join us for an in-depth tour of Edgewood Angus, a 1,500 acre Black Angus cattle operation in King William County. Attendees will tour the farm on a hay wagon; stopping at key points to receive lectures on various operations of the farm by subject matter experts. Attendees will return to the barn where they will continue to hear experts discuss topics during a grilled Black Angus hamburger dinner. Topics will include genetics, Expected Progeny Differences (EPD), pasture varieties and management, considerations for running a small cattle operation, breeding, calving, health and vaccine programs. Please dress for the weather and the environment.

October 28: Value Added Producer Grants Informational Meeting

The Value Added Producer Grant program helps agricultural producers enter into value added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. The goals of this program are generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income. This workshop will be presented by Laurette Tucker of USDA Rural Development.

October 28: Forest Management Workshop

Join VSU's Farm Outreach Program for an inviting conversation with the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDoF). VDoF officials from the local area will share the agencies' programs and opportunities for forestland owners.

October 29: Hands On Cattle Program for Women

Cattle Wise (Women Increasing Skills and Education) is focused on hands-on skill with cattle. The course will include chute side skills such as low stress cattle handling, backing up trailers, calving troubleshooting, and much more! The course will take place on Friday, October 29th, in Buckingham at the BARN. This program has been made possible due to grant funds from the Virginia Cattle Industry Board. Cost is 20 and registration is due October 15th!

November Events

November 5: Mapping with Drones for Precision Agriculture

With increasingly more potential benefits from the use of drones in Agriculture and the availability of drones designed especially for agricultural applications, it is important for Small Farmers to understand the basic introduction to drones in agriculture. Learn the concept of precision agriculture by means of drone applications. These applications can readily facilitate information through aerial photography and maps that can help to make decisions to improve yields and lower operational costs.

November 6: Drip Irrigation Layout

The goal behind drip irrigation is to place water directly into the root zone and minimize evaporation.

The changing and unpredictable climate does not allow us to control water to our crops. This workshop will teach you how to set up a drip irrigation system, that will allow you to control proper water to the roots of the plants.

November 12: Women in Agriculture Gathering (Orange, VA)

This event will equip female farmers, landowners, and agriculture enthusiasts with opportunities to network with peers, hone technical skills, and discuss solutions to the unique challenges they face.

November 13: Women in Agriculture Gathering (Wytheville, VA)

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November 17: How to Winterize Bee Hives

Hosted by VSU's Small Farm Outreach Program. Registration opening soon.

November 17: Alternative Ways to Improve Soil Health

Registration opening soon.

November 19: Small Farm Annual Conference

Join Virginia farmers, landowners and agriculture professionals at the 2021 Small Farm Conference for an opportunity to hear about available resources, smart business strategies, and successful production practices—especially for those new and beginning farmers who want to learn more about what it takes to farm profitability and sustainability.

Fall and Winter Events

January 22-24: 22nd Annual Virginia Biological Farming Conference

The three-day Conference includes: Pre-Conference intensive workshops, 48 sessions, presentations and panel discussions, 50 tradeshow exhibitors, locally sourced farm meals and book sales with author signings. The Conference highlights include a Silent Auction and networking opportunities including regional meetings and fireside chats, morning yoga and the Taste of Virginia Expo & Social.

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