



Newsblast

October 7, 2022

Photo by Meghna on Unsplash

A Message from VBFRC

Hello everyone,
We hope the Fall is treating you well as October settles in. We are excited to send along our monthly newsblast with a number of events coming up in the next few months along with a few announcements. We hope you enjoy!

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 Highlight

VSU's Small Farm Outreach Program (SFOP) is hosting it's Annual Small Farm Conference on the theme "Farming in Challenging Times" in Portsmouth, VA on November 3 and 4.

- Be empowered by expert speakers, panelists, and other farmers!
- Develop relationships during networking opportunities and vendor exhibits.
- Gain insights during panel sessions and bus tours.
- Panelists will discuss financial fitness, crop insurance, marketing, farm safety, mental health, soil health, and disaster preparedness.
- Bus tours include a boxed lunch and visits to these Virginia Farms: Slade Family Farm in Surry, Dayspring Farm in Cologue, and Bees Knees Farm in West Point. Invest in yourself and your enterprise.

Join us and see what blossoms in the year ahead!

Find more information and register on the [VSU-SFOP website](#).

Note: Green underlined text is a link

Announcements

AgriStress Helpline for Virginia

The AgriStress Helpline is a free and confidential crisis and support line that you can call or text 24/7, and interpretation services are provided in 160 languages. The helpline is answered by trained professionals who can offer support and/or help you find mental health resources in your area. We know that agriculture is unique – that is why our crisis specialists have received training on the factors that impact people working in agriculture.



Virginia Market Maker Buy/Sell Forum

Virginia Market Maker is a place where producers can list products they have available for sale. It is a convenient way for businesses to share product availability and needs. Check it out!

Virtual Workshops Highlight Improvements to Whole-Farm Revenue Protection and Micro Farm

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering virtual workshops this fall for agricultural producers and stakeholders to learn about the latest updates and improvements to the Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) and the Micro Farm insurance options, two of the most comprehensive risk management options available. These insurance options are especially important to specialty crop, organic, urban, and direct market producers, and this is part of the USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) efforts to increase participation in these options and crop insurance overall.

RMA will host these workshops for agricultural producers via Microsoft Teams events:

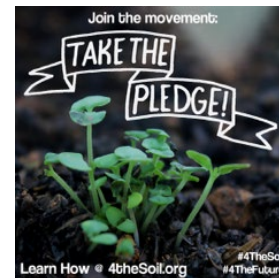
- Tuesday, Oct. 11 at 11 a.m. ET ([click to join](#))
- Thursday, Oct. 13 at 4 p.m. ET ([click to join](#))
- Tuesday, Nov. 15 at 8 p.m. PT ([click to join](#))
- Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 11 a.m. ET ([click to join](#))

RSVP is not required. Attendees will have a chance to submit written questions during the event.

Urban farming program tackles food crisis in Roanoke, trains farmers of the future

Check out this WFXR news article on how Lick Run Community Development Corporation, Garden Variety Harvest, and Agrarian Trust are growing food and training farmers in Roanoke. You can find more information about their project on [the Agrarian Trust website](#). It is also worth checking out the Al Jazeera podcast "[How are Black American farmers reclaiming their land?](#)" that highlights their work.

4 the Soil Highlights



[Featured Video! Taking Care of the Soil – A Soil, Conservation, and Place conversation with Robert Spiers of Spiers Farm LLC and Mark Spiers of Double Branch Farms LLC](#)

Robert H. Spiers Jr. is the co-owner and operator of Spiers Farm, LLC, an 1,800-acre corn, soybean, grain, and tobacco farm in Dinwiddie and Sussex counties of Virginia. Founded in 1884, Robert is a seventh-generation farmer on this land, and is currently working to fully transition the farm operation to his son Mark of Double Branch Farms LLC. In this Soil, Conservation, and Place conversation, Robert and Mark emphasize the importance of taking care of the soil and how cover cropping and no-till farming has mitigated the impacts of drought and wind damage for them. Robert and Mark have not only implemented soil conservation practices on their farm, but have also used their farm as a demonstration site to inspire other farmers in the region to implement these soil health-building and conservation practices. With the recognition that their livelihoods are deeply dependent on the health of the land and care of the soil, Robert and Mark take a long-term perspective to farming that is informed by their conservation ethics and practices.

[Podcast Episode 22 - 20: Keeping Context and Camaraderie in Mind with Cover Crop Coach Steve Groff Part II](#)

What do you want to accomplish on your farm, in your garden, or in business? Do you have a specific resource concern such as lessening tillage? Do you want to provide your family, friends, and customers with nutrient-dense food? Cover Crop Coach Steve Groff shared in the previous episode about keeping the soil alive and well. The conversation continues with Steve emphasizing that farmers need to learn all they can and understand how soil health concepts, principles, and practices are applicable to their individual farms and context. Similarly, Steve encourages farmers, graziers, and gardeners to visit with other farmers locally as well as virtually for camaraderie and peer-to-peer networking. There are many ways to learn and continue to self-educate ourselves as we face challenges of living longer than ever, and unfortunately, in many cases, being sicker than ever.

[Podcast Episode 12 - 19: Keeping Soil Biology Alive and Well with Cover Crop Coach Steve Groff](#)

What research is emerging around plant health and soil biology in relation to nutrient-dense food? What role can farmers and gardeners play in building soil health to grow nutrient-dense food? Farmer, on-farm researcher, author, and Cover Crop Coach Steve Groff shares his experience and insights on keeping soil biology alive and well for soil and human health. Steve is a third-generation farmer based in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, who was an early innovator in using a roller-crimper in his no-till commercial vegetable operation to manage and terminate his cover crops. His grandfather was an early adopter of cover crops in the 1950s. Steve was at the forefront in using a daikon radish or "Tillage Radish" to naturally bio-till the soil with the plant's tuberous roots to alleviate compaction and encourage biological life. Steve also emphasizes that farmers need to continue to do their own on-farm

research and have an adaptive mindset for the ever-changing world of agriculture, particularly as research on nutrient-dense food as prevention and medicine continues to grow and be rediscovered.

4 The Soil Blog: New posts every week!

Have you visited the [4 The Soil Blog](#) yet? There are new posts every week on the four core principles, soil health champions across the state, and more. Check it out and share with your family, friends, and colleagues!

October

October 7: 46th Annual Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours: Amelia-Henrico-Powhatan Counties

The City Tree and the Country Tree. In many parts of Virginia, the landscape quickly changes from urban to rural and back again. This tour will start in the city, with an exploration of urban forests and a discussion about the value of urban wood. After lunch, we'll move to the country to look at forest & wildlife management practices in a rural setting.

October 8: Improving Rotational Pastures and Pasture Walk (Abingdon, VA)

Rotational grazing is a system designed to maximize grazing efficiency, and protect and improve soil and forage health. The factors to consider when developing a rotational grazing program are the intensity and duration of grazing, recovery period, and the size and number of paddocks. VSU Small Farms Outreach Program Nutrient Management Specialist Tammy Holler will discuss the steps to take and ways that you can work to improve soil and crop production.

October 10: Mapping with Drones for Precision Agriculture (Boydton, VA)

Drones designed for agricultural applications can help small-scale farmers improve yields and lower operational costs. To ensure you understand the benefits and usage of drones for precision agriculture, VSU SFOP is offering a basic introduction. Stacy Somers-Taylor, UAS-FAA Drone Pilot, will explain how drone applications such as map interpretation and utilization can detect soil conditions and plant health. You will learn how drones can collect and process data to create an accurate map. By using the mapping software you can process the captured images into a high-resolution 3D map. The software can determine boundaries, elevation, and crop counting. Drone mapping allows farmers to get a high-resolution view of their property, identify problem areas, and better understand how their fields are performing.

October 12: Recordkeeping on Your Computer or Smart Phone (Virtual)

Farming is a business, and good recordkeeping is essential for a successful farming operation. Using the tools you have, you can keep thorough records. These records will provide valuable information on which methods work best on your farm. They can help plan a realistic forecast for the coming year and may also be a requirement for lending institutions. Greg Carter will lead this workshop. He grew up on a small farm but worked in the corporate world. After retirement, Greg returned to his roots and started a small diversified farming operation, using the lessons he learned in business. Now he shares this knowledge with other farmers.

October 12: Using Precision Agriculture Drones to Plan and Develop Your Small Farm (Yanceyville, NC)

Are you planning to start a small farm operation, downsize your present operation or reorganize your existing enterprise? Precision agriculture drones can help you develop a comprehensive farm plan to create, design and lay out those enterprises. Agriculture drones can: scout, spray, and seed; collect and use data; distribute irrigation; map your farm and identify borders and property lines; help plan farm structures, security, and workers' safety; determine equipment locations; and help plan planting and harvesting schedules, and crop yield.

October 13: Fall Harvest Festival at the Morningside Urban Farm (Roanoke, VA)

Come celebrate food and community at the Fall Harvest Festival at Morningside Urban Farm! Enjoy fun activities, music, and a free meal with registration. You'll also have the chance to enter a raffle by connecting with local organizations that support well-being! Find out more and sign up here:

<https://cvent.me/qzloN>

October 13: Small Farm Orientation (Virtual)

This two-hour Zoom course is geared to new farmers with zero to five years of experience operating a farm. Herbert Brown, Assistant Director of the VSU Small Farm Outreach Program, will teach the course. He will walk attendees through the process of how to develop a productive and profitable farm. Participants will receive a Small Farm Orientation manual.

October 13: Agricultural Drone Use Demonstration (Amelia, VA)

Drones designed for agricultural applications can help small-scale farmers improve yields and lower operational costs. To ensure you understand the benefits and usage of drones for precision agriculture, VSU SFOP is offering a basic introduction. Stacy Somers-Taylor, UAS-FAA Drone Pilot, will explain how drone applications such as map interpretation and utilization can detect soil conditions and plant health. You will learn how drones can collect and process data to create an accurate map. By using the mapping software you can process the captured images into a high-resolution 3D map. The software can determine boundaries, elevation, and crop counting. Drone mapping allows farmers to get a high-resolution view of their property, identify problem areas, and better understand how their fields are performing.

October 13: Post-harvest Water: Things to Consider (Virtual)

This webinar will feature the engaging Dr. Keith Schneider from the University of Florida. He will cover wash water quality, sanitizer use, methods/pros and cons of monitoring, and some recommendations for post-harvest water management that attendees may apply to their operations. Be sure to stick around for the live only Q&A, where Dr. Schneider will stay and answer audience questions. We are excited to host Dr. Schneider on the Produce Safety Webinar Series. As a reminder: Each webinar will consist of a one-hour presentation followed by 30 min of interactive Q&A. Please join - all welcome!

October 14: Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours: Smyth & Washington Counties

Join landowners, natural resource professionals, and other outdoor lovers for day-long tours that explore a variety of sustainable forestry and wildlife management practices. Tours visit private, public, and industry-owned lands.

October 15: Healthy Land for Healthy Horses: Short Course (Chesterfield, VA)

When horse pastures are managed properly it can lead to good nutrition for your horses, reduced feed cost, and stewardship of the land. During this workshop specialists from Virginia Tech and University of Kentucky, along with local representatives will cover areas such as forages, weed management, soil testing, composting, nutrient management and more. By attending you will be able to network with other local horse farmers, businesses and organizations.

October 15: Small Ruminants: Preparing for Lambing/Kidding (Catawba, VA)

Beginning and experienced sheep/goat producers will learn about best management practices before and after lambing/kidding. 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. Mandy Fletcher, experienced sheep producer and Virginia director for the American Sheep Industry, will provide instruction and demonstration.

October 17: Grants to Fund Trees & Orchards (Kinsale, VA)

Learn how the VSU Small Farm Outreach Program provided grant assistance for Sandra Brackett to realize her lifelong dream of having an English Walnut orchard. Sandra will take us on a tour of the orchard she planted in April with grant funding assistance from SFOP. She will describe all of the steps she took to design, plant and maintain it. Tracy Porter, VSU SFOP Program Assistant for Eastern Virginia, will be on hand to explain the Renewable Resource Extension Act Capacity Grant, and show how he can assist small-scale and beginning farmers with locating tree vendors and designing an orchard, windbreak, pollinator habitat or silvopasture. Grace Summers, VSU SFOP drip irrigation specialist, will explain how to set up a drip irrigation system for trees.

October 18: Farm Fresh Dairy Products (Alberta, VA)

The average dairy cow produces approximately 1900 gallons of milk a year. As the number of dairy farms continues to diminish, Golden View Guernsey Farm is providing herd shares so people can continue to enjoy fresh milk and milk products. Stacey West will discuss her cows' breed, their care, the type of milk they produce and its benefits. She will also talk about herd shares and the process of pasteurizing milk for shareowners.

October 18: Prince Edward Cannery Tour (Farmville, VA)

Prince Edward Cannery has been in operation for home canning since 1975. Home and commercial users come to preserve their fruits, vegetables, and meats in this great facility. Would you like to see how Prince Edward Cannery can help you take your produce and meat production to the next level? Come join as Patty Gulick will give a guided tour of the facility and equipment.

October 18-19: 2022 Advanced Grazing School (Rochelle, VA)

Hosted by the Virginia Forage and Grassland Council, American Farmland Trust, and M2B Alliance this event brings the "Ranching for Profit" workshops to Virginia livestock producers. Class size is limited to the first 100 registrants.

October 20: USDA Rural Development Value-added Grants (Farmville, VA)

The Value Added Producer Grant program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to processing or marketing. Generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income are the goals of this program. Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures are eligible to apply for this program. Beginning, Veteran and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, Small-or Medium-sized Farms structured as a Family Farm and Farmer or Rancher Cooperatives may be eligible to receive priority consideration.

October 21: VSU Annual Ginger and Turmeric Workshop and Field Day (Petersburg, VA)

Learn from leading experts about the sustainable production management of ginger and turmeric, integrated pest management, the health benefits of ginger consumption, proper harvesting and packaging techniques, and marketing. Presentations will be shared indoors, after which guests will travel by trolley to the field for demonstrations.

October 22: Farmers Fireside Gathering (Abingdon, VA)

Established in 2014 and carved from overgrowth, Watauga Farm flourishes with fields that grow small fruits and vegetables, paddocks that graze livestock, and a farm stand that sells sundries. This is the perfect opportunity to meet the local forage farmers and see their unique compact hay equipment operation. Join us for a fall gathering by the campfire!

October 21-22: Cattle & Equipment WISE (Women Increasing Skills & Education) (Blacksburg, VA)

We are excited to offer Cattle WISE again and to offer new this year Equipment WISE! Participants can choose to participate in one event or both. Equipment WISE will be on Friday, October 21, and Cattle

WISE will be on Saturday, October 22, at Kentland Farms in Blacksburg, VA. The programs are focused on teaching women hands-on learning experiences such as: chainsaw use, how to back up a trailer, small engine troubleshooting, low-stress cattle handling, BQA chute-side training, dystocia troubleshooting, etc. Cost is \$25 for one day or \$45 for both days. Space is limited due to the hands-on nature of the program.

October 24: Estate Planning and Land Transition (Halifax, VA)

Lillian “Ebonie” Alexander, the Executive Director of the Black Family Land Trust, Inc., lives on her family farm in rural Southside Virginia. According to the US Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), family-owned farms account for 97 percent of the 2.1 million farms in the US, yet only 30 percent of these farms survive into the second generation, and only 12 percent are still operating by the third. Farmland preservation has become especially important with higher prices due to the flood of residential and commercial development. Ebonie will talk about the importance of farm estate planning and show you that it’s not complicated. She will demonstrate why you need to take action and make a plan.

October 25: Timber Management for Landowners (Emporia, VA)

This program will highlight basic and complex strategies landowners need to manage timber. We will discuss management practices such as forest health, wildlife habitat, tree identification, thinning, harvesting and planting of trees. Representatives from Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Virginia Department of Forestry, and the private forest management industry are looking forward to giving participants information to help them manage and maintain healthy forests. Whether you have ten acres of timber or 1,000 acres, this workshop is for you!

October 25: Hispanic Hoop House Fall Tour (Lawrenceville, VA)

Pedro Lopez, Hispanic Mentor Farmer, will host participants on a Fall Tour of his activities in four hoop houses. The Spring Tour was very successful with participants showing great interest in the innovative activities, so Pedro agreed it would be a good idea to do it again in the Fall. He grows ethnic Hispanic crops, local vegetables, hot peppers, tropical fruits and herbs. Pedro will show participants how he uses reusable geotextile fabric over the beds instead of plastic for total weed control and water conservation. Some innovations include the use of solar panels for lighting and fans, heaters that burn firewood, and a cold storage room to keep vegetables fresh at harvest time.

October 25: Small Ruminants: Preparing for Winter (Virtual)

Fall is often a time of rest for sheep and goat producers. The ewe and doe flock is in varying stages of pregnancy and does not require as much attention. But sound management at this time is extremely important. Proper vaccination programs, mineral supplementation, and other nutritional factors can directly affect success at lambing/ kidding. Join us for an evening of learning and a Q & A session with Dr. Scott Greiner, Extension Sheep Specialist with Virginia Tech.

October 25-26: Controlled Environment Agriculture Summit (Danville, VA)

The Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Innovation Center -- a joint project of the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at Virginia Tech, Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Virginia Tech, and the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) -- and Indoor Ag-Con invite you to join them for the inaugural edition of the CEA Summit East in Danville, VA.

October 26: Feeling Good on the Farm and in the Garden (Roanoke, VA)

Join for a workshop on body awareness and injury prevention for farmers & gardeners. In this workshop, presenters will demonstrate adapted techniques and tools, and share ideas for improving comfort and safety on the farm and in the garden. The program will also cover strategies that allow us to work smarter, not harder. No registration is required.

October 26: Using Precision Agriculture Drones in Lavendar Production (Chatham, VA)

Precision agriculture drones can help you to manage lavender production. Agriculture drones can: (1) collect and use data, (2) map your farm and identify borders and property lines, (3) understanding land, field, irrigation and water distribution, (4) help plan planting and harvesting schedules.

October 26: Catch Your Cattle the Right Way (Crewe, VA)

Holding pens and cattle corrals are areas to keep livestock in one place when sorting, working, ear-tagging or loading cattle. A good handling facility should contain the following components: headgate, squeeze chute, working chute, holding pens, scale, and loading chute. Barbara Ashmore will share her family's innovative new way to work and load cattle with workshop participants.

October 27: The Three Baby Steps to Building Risk-Ready Markets (Virtual)

VSU Small Farm Outreach Program's Dr. Theresa Nartea and State Program Assistant Derrick Cladd will tell you how to build a risk-ready market in three important baby steps. The class is targeted to new and beginning farmers and includes activities to help you better understand what you need to do to create a successful farm business. If you are getting started in farming, this class is for you!

October 27: Sustainable Forestry and Small Wood Lot Management (Halifax, VA)

Sustainable forestry management is complex, with the need to manage trees, wildlife and the environment. We will discuss topics such as determining your management goals; working with forest professionals; timber sales and harvest; water quality; forest health; wildlife and other unexpected factors. We will also provide information on USDA programs and services relating to forestry management, tree planting, and financial assistance. At the end of the workshop, participants will visit two forestry sites.

October 27: DCR Information Session (Virtual)

Join for a conversation with Darryl M. Glover, of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), who will explain DCR's cost-share programs. These programs are administered through local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD). The goal is to improve water quality in our streams, rivers, and the nearby Chesapeake Bay. The cost-share programs support various practices in conservation planning to treat cropland, pastureland, hay land, and forested land. As an incentive, cost-share assistance is offered to implement Best Management Practices. Participation in the programs is voluntary, and the Conservation Districts offer their expertise at no cost. Funding is based on what each District has available and how your small-scale farm ranks compared to the other applications they receive. Funding is not guaranteed.

October 27: 2022 Legacy Planning: Southwest Virginia (Galax, VA)

Join the Generation NEXT Team and experienced conservation, legal, and financial advisors to learn how to pass your land on to the next generation while keeping it intact, in forest, and in family.

October 27-28: Launching Leaders Summit (Roanoke, VA)

The Launching Leaders Summit is a 2 day, interactive, leadership development experience held in Roanoke, VA October 27-28, 2022. Speakers, Dr. Eric Kaufman and Dr. Blake Brown, will cover a variety of topics including business planning, policy affecting young and beginning producers, leading in their communities, and businesses and the industry. Participants can expect interactive and engaging sessions and countless networking opportunities! The summit is geared toward Young and Beginning producers but is open to anyone in the Farm Credit of Virginias service area to attend.

October 28: Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours: Louisa County

Join landowners, natural resource professionals, and other outdoor lovers for day-long tours that explore a variety of sustainable forestry and wildlife management practices. Tours visit private, public, and industry-owned lands.

November Events

November 2: Get Ready for Your 2023 Farmers Market Display (Virtual)

Success at the farmers market starts well before you get to the market. In this online class, VSU Small Farm Outreach Program's Dr. Theresa Nartea will help you understand how to plan and set up an attractive market display. This workshop will cover from harvest to market. First, we will suggest essential market items, second, we will give you handy harvesting and packaging tips, third, we'll talk about how to plan loading and unloading the truck. We will wrap up by discussing ideas on setting up your display for maximum sales potential!

November 2: 2022 Legacy Planning: Southeast Virginia (Providence Forge, VA)

Join the Generation NEXT Team and experienced conservation, legal, and financial advisors to learn how to pass your land on to the next generation while keeping it intact, in forest, and in family. Registration opens in August.

November 3-4: Annual Small Farm Conference: "Farming in Challenging Times" (Portsmouth, VA)

Farming in Challenging Times is doable with the information and support networks you'll gain at the 2022 Small Farm Outreach Program Annual Conference. You'll be empowered by expert speakers, panelists, and other farmers! Develop relationships during networking opportunities and vendor exhibits. Gain insights during panel sessions and bus tours. Panelists will discuss financial fitness, crop insurance, marketing, farm safety, mental health, soil health, and disaster preparedness. Bus tours include a boxed lunch and visits to these Virginia Farms: Slade Family Farm in Surry, Dayspring Farm in Cologne, and Bees Knees Farm in West Point. Invest in yourself and your enterprise. Join us and see what blossoms in the year ahead!

November 4: Let's Compost, Roanoke! (Roanoke, VA)

Join The Harvest Collective for an inspiring night connecting the dots of food waste diversion, food sovereignty, good times, and economic justice. A ticket is \$40 and all proceeds will go towards building Roanoke City's first composting facility.

November 5: Controlled Environment Agriculture Production (Disputanta, VA)

This free workshop will provide an overview of controlled environment agriculture production. CEA encompasses a variety of systems that take a technology-based approach to farming. It can range from simple shade structures and hoop houses through greenhouses to indoor or vertical farms. In this workshop we will teach techniques for those interested in pursuing the practice. We will explore different types of systems and how to choose the right one, as well as basic plant needs and maintenance systems. We will also perform some hands-on activities.

November 7: How to Plant Onions and Garlic for Spring Harvest (Petersburg, VA)

Join us to learn how to plant onions and garlic to overwinter for a spring harvest. Clif Slade, retired Extension Agent and SFOP Program Assistant, will be the guest speaker. We will discuss various techniques such as planting under plastic, wood chips, compost and straw to help protect your crop while it overwinters. We will also cover how to install drip irrigation and an electric fence to keep the four-legged pests out of your crops.

November 8: Improving the Soil Health on Your Farm (Floyd, VA)

Improving your farm's soil health increases yields and results in net profit. Using cover crops and good fertility management can provide multiple benefits to your soil's health. Brent Wills, Virginia Association of Biological Farming, and Tammy Holler, VSU-SFOP's Nutrient Management Specialist, along with the local Soil and Water Conservation District Representative, will discuss steps you can take to improve your soil's health. Topics will include understanding soil characteristics; how to take a soil sample and

how to interpret the test results; cover crops that you can use to improve your soils; and what the Soil and Water Conservation District programs can offer. A catered lunch will be provided.

November 9: Vegetable Marketing Information Session (Halifax, VA)

New and beginning farmers will have a chance to learn vegetable production techniques from seasoned vegetable growers at this informative roundtable discussion. Topics will include planting, harvesting and marketing vegetables, as well as a question and answer session. Seasoned farmers from Halifax, Charlotte, and Pittsylvania, as well as surrounding counties within Virginia and North Carolina, will share their knowledge and offer tips on best practices for production.

November 9: Black Angus Cattle Operation Tour (West Point, Virginia)

Join us for an in-depth tour of Edgewood Angus, a 1,500 acre Black Angus cattle operation in King William County. The tour will begin at the barn with presentations by the owner, Pete Henderson Sr., ranch manager Justin Sansouchi and others on topics that include genetics, Expected Progeny Differences (EPD), pasture varieties and management, considerations for running a small cattle operation, breeding, calving, health, and vaccine programs. The tour will continue on a hay wagon, stopping at key points to discuss areas of the operation, and ending back at the barn where our host will treat us to a grilled Black Angus hamburger dinner. Please dress for the weather and the environment.

November 9: Growing a Culture of Resiliency and Cooperation: Urban Food Justice Possibilities (Virtual)

Join the Roanoke Foodshed Network for the second session of their Fall Virtual Learning Exchange Series, featuring food systems leaders in the Roanoke Region. Featured speakers for this session will include Cameron Terry of Garden Variety Harvest and Davey Rogner Stewards of the Harvest Collective.

November 10: Small Farm Orientation (Virtual)

This two-hour Zoom course is geared to new farmers with zero to five years of experience operating a farm. Herbert Brown, Assistant Director of the VSU Small Farm Outreach Program, will teach the course. He will walk attendees through the process of how to develop a productive and profitable farm. Participants will receive a Small Farm Orientation manual.

November 10: Learn to Burn: Using Fire to Manage Your Land (Dublin, VA)

This one-day workshop will outline benefits of using fire as a management tool on your property, where to go and who to contact when you need assistance, and how burns are conducted safely and successfully using the equipment you have on hand. You will also have the chance to actively participate in a prescribed burn (conditions permitting).

November 12: Poultry Processing and Production Ag Training (Ruckersville, VA)

Poultry processing is the term used by the poultry industry to describe the conversion of live poultry into raw poultry products fit for human consumption. Attendees to this workshop will learn about the equipment necessary for poultry processing and about American Farmland Trust's low cost portable processing equipment rental program. Through this "learn by doing" experience attendees will learn how to: safely slaughter, scald, pluck, cut, and package poultry.

November 12: Salute to Agriculture Breakfast (Bristol, VA)

This free breakfast, provided by local farmers, will be an occasion to serve and honor the veterans who have served us. Dickie Tilson, US Army Veteran, will share his military experiences and relate stories about supporting small farmers in our region and beyond. Representatives from AgrAbility and VSU SFOP will share information about assistance for veterans and community members.

November 12: Beekeeping for the Beginner (Unionville, VA)

Beekeeping is a pleasurable and rewarding activity if you love to see nature at work. This workshop will

help you become a good beekeeper, whether you intend to start keeping bees or already have them. The class is designed to help both new and inexperienced beekeepers in setting up or improving their style of working with and understanding bees. If you want to learn the basics of beekeeping, register for this class. There is no one correct way to keep bees.

November 15: Composting 101 (Prince George, VA)

Would you like to learn how to turn food scraps and yard waste into a valuable resource for your garden? The benefits of composting include improving soil health, water retention, and less reusable waste going to the landfills and creating methane gases. Join Stacy Taylor, VSU-SFOP Regional Program Assistant, and Brianna Moring, District Manager of the James River Soil and Water Conservation District, as we discuss a variety of ways to compost: including tumbler, vermicomposting, and commercial methods.

November 16: Agricultural Technology Field Day (Middleburg, VA)

This event will spotlight digital tools, Apps, and services available today for livestock, agronomy, horticulture and equestrian operations, whether commercial or recreational. Eleven corporate representatives will showcase their products together with faculty and staff from VSU, VA Tech and more.

November 16: Winterizing Beehives (Petersburg, VA)

Keith Tignor, our State Apiarist, will cover the steps needed to winterize your beehives. Keith will begin the workshop with a PowerPoint presentation in the large classroom at the Randolph Farm Pavilion. Then we will go to the hives at the bee yard on Randolph Farm. Topics will include opening a hive for inspection; pest identification and management; techniques to feed bees over the winter; cover crops and tree species that produce the most nectar and pollen; and when and how to order honeybee nucs in preparation for the spring. Information from this program will help attendees mitigate hive loss over the winter.

November 16: Preparing Soils for Spring Planting (Farmville, VA)

Participants in this workshop will learn about soil sampling: what it is, how it is done, why it is important to do it and how often should it be done. Tammy Holler, VSU-SFOP State Program Assistant and Nutrient Management specialist, will be the speaker for this workshop. She will explain how to understand soil test results and show how the various nutrients affect crops. She will also share information about cover crops and composting.

November 16: Using Precision Agriculture Drones in Berry Production (Halifax, VA)

A presentation on how precision agriculture drones can help you to manage your berry production. Agriculture drones can collect and use data; map your farm and identify borders and property lines; help you to understand land, field, irrigation and water distribution; and help plan planting and harvesting schedules.

November 17: USDA Information Session (Virtual)

Learn about eligibility requirements and how to apply for USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct or guaranteed loans as well as programs, service and cost share opportunities from other USDA agencies. Beginning, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers can get help to prepare applications for farm ownership and operating loans and learn about the requirements for borrowing.

November 18: Farm Equipment Safety (Wytheville, VA)

This workshop will review practices to help you remain safe on the farm, including how to use the tractor safely and properly, conducting pre-operational safety checks, and taking special precautions necessary for operating equipment on rough terrain and slopes. We will also review the use of personal protection equipment. A catered meal will be provided.

November 22: Backyard Rabbit Marketing (Emporia, VA)

Veteran farmer Al Becker of Emporia Rabbitry will discuss how he uses social media to market a successful rabbit breeding operation. He sells his processed rabbits at farmers markets and animal swaps. He will also talk about equipment, feeding and care, the importance of recordkeeping, and ways to improve breeding stock.

November 28-29: 2022 Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention (White Sulfur Springs, WV)

The Virginia Farm Bureau is offering their annual convention at the Greenbrier Resort this year. Come join them for exhibits, presentations, and meetings.

November 29-December 2: HACCP for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Packinghouses (Virtual)

The course will teach participants how to develop and document a food safety management program based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) for their specific operations.

Winter Events

December 1-2: Cumberland Shenandoah Fruit Workers Conference (Winchester, VA)

The 98th Annual Cumberland-Shenandoah Fruit Workers Conference will include a Plenary Session with a keynote presentation along with our traditional call of the states. Following the Plenary Session, you can expect presentation sessions dedicated to research and extension topics in tree fruit horticulture, plant pathology and entomology. We are planning on a registration deadline of Tuesday November 1st with a conference early registration fee of \$100 per attendee. Online registration after November 1st will increase to \$150, and finally the registration fee will be \$200 at the door.

December 4-6: Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD) Annual Meeting (Roanoke, VA)

Join the VASWCD for their 2022 Annual Meeting at the Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center for what will be great networking and educational sessions.

December 7: Cultivating Care from the Ground Up: From Mobile Markets to Community Art (Virtual)

Join the Roanoke Foodshed Network for the third session of their Fall Virtual Learning Exchange Series, featuring food systems leaders in the Roanoke region. Featured speakers for this session will include Bernadette (BJ) Lark of CommUnity Arts Reach and Kelly Key and Connie Kenny of the Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP).

January 6-8: 23rd Annual Virginia Biological Farming Conference (Roanoke, VA)

Save the date for the 23rd Virginia Biological Farming Conference will be held January 6-8, 2023 at The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center in Roanoke, VA. Speaker proposals are being accepted now for half and full-day pre conference workshops and conference sessions. [Find the Speaker Proposal form on their website.](#)

January 12-14: 24th Annual Future Harvest Conference (College Park, MD)

Save the date! Now accepting workshop proposals for our 24th annual winter conference, which will take place in person January 12 - 14, 2023. The deadline to submit a proposal is September 15, 2022 and speakers will be notified by October 14, 2022.

January 18: Regenerative Food Production: Healthy Soil, Ecosystems, and Community (Virtual)

Join the Roanoke Foodshed Network for the fourth session of their Fall Virtual Learning Exchange Series, featuring food systems leaders in the Roanoke region. Featured speakers for this session will include

Anna and Brent Wills of Bramble Hollow Farm and Adam Taylor of the Virginia Tech Catawba Sustainability Center.

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