

Newsblast

October 2, 2025

Photo by Roger Starnes

A Message from VBFRC

As October settles in with cool breezes and golden landscapes, farmers continue the steady rhythm of harvest and preparation. The season calls for both resilience and reflection, as long days in the field give way to planning for the months ahead. This month, we're sharing programs, workshops, and events designed to support you—whether you're looking to recharge, connect with others, or gain practical tools for your work. May these opportunities bring inspiration and strength as you carry the harvest forward and lay the groundwork for what's next.

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 was sponsored by the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) of the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Award #2023-49400-40885.

Partner Highlight

Join farmers and ranchers, rural and urban landowners, and ag professionals working in education, research, and government agencies at the **2025 Small Farm Conference** for an opportunity to hear about available resources, smart business strategies, and successful marketing practices—especially for producers who want to learn more about making their enterprises profitable and sustainable. The conference is free to registered attendees and includes a bus tour, educational and networking sessions, presentations and awards, as well as meals listed on our agenda. Attendees are responsible for their own overnight accommodations and any meals not included in the conference agenda.

The event will take place on October 16, 2025, from 11:30 AM to 8:00 PM at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott, 235 East Main Street, Norfolk, VA.

Register [here](#) now!

Note: Green underlined text is a link

Announcements

Small Farm Record Keeping Webinar Recording

Small farm record keeping can include everything from tax preparation and financial tracking to daily harvest logs and breeding schedules. A clean and organized paper trail is essential not only for your tax professional but also for managing the day-to-day flow of your farm operations. Revisit lessons from the [Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition](#) Small Farm Record Keeping recording to refresh your knowledge.

Recording of VCE Small-Scale Fruit Webinar: Apples is Available!

Apologies for the technical issues during the Apple webinar. Please view the recording here; it includes the last part that you may have missed due to some Zoom issues. [VCE Small-Scale Fruit Webinar: Apples](#). Additionally, the herbs webinar should be up shortly. You can look forward to a VCE Small-Scale Fruit Webinar on Grapes in October. Check the biweekly and the [Webinar Page](#) for more information on webinars.

Agroforestry Coalition's Technical Assistance and Training working group Peer Learning Network

Looking for ongoing peer learning opportunities and support beyond a single training, farm tour, or online course? We are excited to invite you to join the [Agroforestry Coalition](#)'s newest working group, which focuses on Agroforestry Technical Assistance and Training! The purpose of this group is to 1) develop national-level solutions for expanding agroforestry technical assistance to farmers, and 2) serve as a national peer support network for agroforestry technical assistance providers and trainers. Anyone working in agroforestry technical assistance or training (e.g., through non-profits, university extension, businesses, or state/ federal agencies) is encouraged to join. This group will meet quarterly, with the next peer learning session slated for this fall. Agendas will be shared in advance, and attendance is voluntary. If you see a topic that interests you, we'd love to see you. If not, we'll see you next time! To be added to this group and receive calendar invitations, please e-mail Tyra Payer at Tyra@savannainstitute.org with the following subject line: *Add me to the Technical Assistance and Training working group.*

Appalachian Sustainable Development is now hiring for two agroforestry-related positions.

Appalachian Sustainable Development is now hiring for two agroforestry-related positions:

- ***Nursery Developer & Greenhouse Assistant (Bristol, VA)***

Do you have a passion for agroforestry and nursery production? ASD's up-and-coming agriculture campus in Bristol, VA, is now hiring a Nursery Developer and Greenhouse Assistant to help our blossoming nursery sites take root, including an alley cropping demonstration, coppiced willow block, air pruned boxes, and greenhouse.

- ***Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub Associate (Duffield, VA)***

Do you want to be part of the expanding forest botanical and medicinal herb scene in Appalachia and beyond? Are you interested in collaborating with field/forest farmers to process and market medicinal herbs? Do you have a passion for supplying the herb industry with top-quality, sustainable botanicals? If so, we have a position opening just for you!

Register for the next VA Soil Health Coalition Quarterly Meeting.

Join virtually on Monday, October 6th, from 1 to 3 PM for our next Virginia Soil Health Coalition Quarterly Meeting. The meetings are open to all and provide an excellent opportunity to learn more about soil health in Virginia. Register below to receive a Zoom link.

American Farmland Trust Regenerate Virginia report

The link provides the 2022 report to support Virginia Farmers (created by the American Farmland Trust).

https://farmlandinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/12/AFT_regenerate-virginia-updated.pdf

Spirit Month at Denim and Pearls

Dates: November 1-30, 2025. Denim and Pearls is donating 10% of its sales to the Fauquier Education Farm during November. Stop by and enjoy a delicious meal that will support the mission of the Fauquier Education Farm!
Address: 29 Main St, Warrenton, VA 20186.

The Woods in Your Backyard Online Course

Based on the guide of the same name, this course from the University of Maryland Extension provides strategies for small landowners (1-10 acres) to improve the stewardship of their property for personal enjoyment and environmental quality.

- September 8 - November 17
- Online
- Register [online](#)

Save the Date: A Gathering of Watershed Leaders

It's never too early to start planning for an event that brings together passionate leaders from agriculture and conservation to explore innovative strategies for meeting water quality goals across the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The event will take place from December 8 to 10. This is your chance to be part of meaningful conversations and collaborative solutions that support both agriculture and clean water. [More info here!](#)

Join the Roanoke Region Food & Farm Trail

Interested in joining the Roanoke Foodshed Network's (RFN) Roanoke Regional Food & Farm Trail! As a Food & Farm Trail member, you will increase your exposure, broaden your network, connect directly with consumers, and be promoted every day of the year. About the trail: Founded by the Roanoke Foodshed Network, the Roanoke Regional Food & Farm Trail celebrates the vibrant farm and food culture of the region. The Roanoke Regional Food & Farm Trail serves as a comprehensive website and storytelling campaign connecting residents and visitors with farms, food businesses, and culinary experiences across the region. This campaign will unify and amplify the voices of our farm and food businesses, positioning them as key assets for economic growth, tourism, and community vitality. The [Roanoke Foodshed Network](#) cultivates community to address food systems change in the Roanoke region. The goals of this network have evolved from a decade of conversations with farmers, planners, and community members. Through region-wide collaborative efforts, we work to cultivate a more resilient and accessible food system that produces health and abundance in the Roanoke region.

Generation Next workshop Registration

Registration is now open for the final Generation NEXT workshop of 2025, a morning mini-workshop scheduled for November 8 at the Hampton Roads AREC in Virginia Beach. (Looks like Norfolk on the map, but has a VaB address). We appreciate your help in getting the word out to forest and farm owners who would benefit from information on legacy planning. I have attached the updated news release and the registration flier. For more information, visit the [Generation Next website](#) and [the Program Registration page](#).

Series

Fall 2025 Ask an Agroforester Webinar Schedule(Virtual)

Ask an Agroforester returns this Fall with six dynamic episodes full of expertise, niche wisdom from the field, and interactive Q&A. [Register here](#) for the Fall webinars

- Nov. 5: Rethinking Herbs for Farm and Forest - Robin Suggs of Appalachian Sustainable Development'
- Nov. 11: Alley Cropping at Any Scale - Kaitie Adams of the Savanna Institute
- Nov. 17: All About Bareroot Trees - A Conversation with Farmers - Jenn Ripp of the Savanna Institute
- Nov. 20: Hickories as Keystones in the New Tree Economy - Zach Elfers of Future Forest Farm
- Nov. 24: Willow for Every Farm - Howard Peller and Sarah Lasswell
- Dec. 3: Grassroot Tree search - For Farmers, By Farmers - Sam Bonney and Russell Wallack.

Out of the Woods: Growing Income from Your Forest

Red Maple, Real Results: Yields, Flavor & Smarter Tapping Red maple isn't just a pretty canopy—it's a serious production opportunity. In this Out of the Woods webinar, Dr. Abby van den Berg breaks down what current research shows about red maple yields, syrup flavor profiles, and tapping guidelines. We'll cover site factors, timing, and trade-offs that producers actually face, then translate the findings into practical steps for woodwork and sugarhouse decisions. Whether you're expanding beyond sugar maple or pressure-testing your red maple strategy, come for clear takeaways and research-backed answers.

Time shows in Eastern Time (US and Canada)

- Oct 16, 2025 07:00 PM
- Nov 20, 2025 07:00 PM
- Dec 18, 2025 07:00 PM
- Jan 15, 2026 07:00 PM
- Feb 19, 2026 07:00 PM

The Kohl Centre invites you to join the Fall 2025 Agribusiness Workshops.

Join us this fall for the 2025 Agribusiness Workshop Series, hosted by the [Kohl Centre](#) at Virginia Tech. These free workshops are designed for farmers, producers, and anyone interested in topics from beef and dairy to orchards, viticulture, and crop operations. View full details and RSVP here: <https://kohl.aaec.vt.edu/events/agribusiness-workshops.html>.

All workshops are free, but an RSVP is required. Flyer attached.

Workshop highlights:

- Adding Value in Beef & Dairy Operations
October 17, 2025
- Adding Value in Fruit & Orchard Enterprises
October 23, 2025
- Differentiation & Direct-to-Consumer Sales in Viticulture
October 23, 2025
- Business Strategies for Row Crop Operations
December 5, 2025

Fifteen Minutes in the Forest

The award-winning Fifteen Minutes in the Forest video series covers a wide range of topics and is broadcast on the 4th Friday of each month at 12:15 PM on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube Premier](#).

- October 24: Tree Growth
- November 28: After the Storm: Disaster Response
- December 26-January 6: The Twelve Shorts of Christmas

Watch 150+ Fifteen Minutes in the Forest videos on our [YouTube Channel](#).

Landowners' Legacy Planning Workshops

Generation NEXT, a Program of the Virginia Department of Forestry and Virginia Cooperative Extension, exists to help landowners and their families engage in legacy planning for their rural land. Now in its 16th year, the Program will offer three more learning opportunities in 2025.

- **Full Generation NEXT Workshop.** October 4, full day, in Farmville. This comprehensive workshop offers presentations and provides an opportunity to interact with legal, financial, and conservation experts, as well as experienced fellow landowners. Farmville, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. [Agenda](#) and register [by mail](#). Register [online](#)
- **Mini Generation NEXT Workshop.** November 8, half day, in southeast Virginia. This half-day workshop will feature shorter presentations and provide opportunities for interaction with experts in the fields of law, finance, and conservation. Norfolk or Hampton Roads.

Learn more, download fliers and other resources, or register on the [Generation NEXT website](#). Contact Karen Snape, Extension Associate, at 540-231-6494 or ksnape@vt.edu with any questions, including accessibility requests.

Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours

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. Past tours have visited seedling nurseries, timber harvesting operations, sawmills, pine plantations, cooperages, hardwood forests, arboretums, Christmas tree farms, elk habitat, fisheries, hunting plantations, and more.

- October 2, Henry County
- October 9, Wise County
- October 17, Frederick County
- October TBA, Virginia Beach

Agendas and registration will be available in August.

Generation NEXT Legacy Planning

Discussions about what happens to family forestland when mom and dad die are difficult. A well-thought-out plan can help things go smoothly. In this series, experts will provide practical techniques to help you plan for the future of your land.

- Legacy Planning Workshop
 - October 4
 - Farmville
 - [Register](#)
- Legacy Planning Workshop
 - November 8
 - Norfolk or Hampton Roads
 - Agenda and registration available in September.

4 the Soil Highlights



S5 - E20: Soil Health beyond the Economic Rationale with Kasper Krabbe of Aarhus University, Pt. 2

Is the economic rationale of soil health always the top priority for farmers? Or, do other soil values rise to the top of farmers' minds, for example, having a healthy habitat for soil fungi? Kasper Krabbe, a doctoral student at Aarhus University in Denmark and a visiting guest scholar at Virginia Tech, returns to talk with Mary, Jeff, and Eric about his research into understanding farmers' intrinsic and extrinsic values in caring for soil. Kasper states that a deeper understanding of farmers' values and motivations is necessary due to the degraded condition of agricultural soils worldwide. For instance, peer pressure to maintain and strive for tidy fields can inhibit experimentation with alternative minimum-till systems and diverse cropping mixtures due to neighboring farmers' perceptions of certain aesthetics.

S5 - E19: Agroecological Dynamics of Soil Health with Kasper Krabbe of Aarhus University, Pt. I

When you close your eyes, how do you envision your farm and soil ecosystem? What ideals, values, and priorities are part of your vision and farm business model? Kasper Krabbe, a doctoral student at Aarhus University in Denmark and a visiting guest scholar at Virginia Tech, talked with Mary, Jeff, and Eric about these questions and his research interest in farmers' perceptions and decision-making. Kasper is particularly intrigued by the human and cultural elements of farming and how context informs and shapes the agroecological system and soil health of individual farms and regional farming. Kasper's ongoing inquiry into the agroecological dynamics of farming, soil health, and specific values-based business models aligns with the objectives of the European Union's Soil Values project <https://soilvalues.eu/>. Additionally, Kasper has created videos based on his interviews and interactions with cooperating Danish farmers. This sample Soil Values video is with a Danish farmer who owns and operates a community-supported agriculture farm <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxwHRB9ybRM>.

4 the Soil Blog Check out the latest 4 the Soil blog!

October

October 1, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM: Urban Farming and Management Course (Richmond, VA)

This whole-day workshop will cover the many things to consider in your effort to maximize production from a small urban farm. We will discuss techniques for growing vegetables organically on an acre or less of land. The topics covered in this workshop will be relevant to both beginning and seasoned farmers. For more information, contact James Gibson at 804-720-6826 or jegibson@vsu.edu.

October 2, 6:00 - 8:00 PM: Shenandoah Valley Young Farmers Coalition (Keezletown, VA)

The Shenandoah Valley Young Farmers Coalition is headed to Silver Run Forest Farm for a fall tour and potluck. Join other young farmers from the region to connect and network while learning about Silver Run's regional agroforestry model and nut production. This event is open to all, but is geared towards farmers aged 20-40. For more information, contact Marian Dalke at 540-232-6010 or mdalke@vt.edu.

October 3, 2025 - October 5, 2025: Mountain Run Jam (Sedalia, VA)

Agriculture Will Be At This Year's Mountain Run Jam! Experience three days of hands-on learning, live music, local food, and genuine community connection on their beautiful family farm. A Celebration of Agriculture & The Arts.

October 4, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM: Garden Mastery Series: Soil Health (Monterey, VA)

Join The Village as they host Master Gardener Emeritus Pamm McDowell throughout 2025 for a series of educational workshops. October is an ideal time to enhance your soil health for next year's growth. In this workshop, Pamm will discuss soil testing, soil amendments, and protecting soil from winter wind and precipitation. She will also explain why understanding pH is crucial to your soil and garden. Please contact us if you require financial assistance to attend the event.

October 4, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: 19th Annual Mill Day at McCormick Farm (Raphine, VA)

This year will mark the 194th anniversary of the invention of the McCormick Reaper. The main attraction of Mill Day will be the operation of the McCormick grist mill. Additional activities and a hay ride will be provided for families to enjoy, and the Raphine Volunteer Fire Department will serve their legendary BBQ chicken. <https://www.ares.vaes.vt.edu/ares/shenandoah-valley.html>

October 4, 1:00 - 4:00 PM: Let's Get Ready To Plant (Foster, VA)

Let's plant fruit trees, berries, and garlic, among other things. Now is the time to start thinking about how to prepare for next year. This workshop will discuss how to prepare for the 2026 season. This is beneficial if you are already established or looking to establish a new site. For more information, contact Derrick Gooden at 804.586.5352 or dgooden@vsu.edu.

October 4, 1:00 - 4:00 PM: Create a Healthy Pollinator Homestead (Foster, VA)

One of the keys to a successful harvest is to ensure that your blooms are being pollinated. A great way to achieve this is to ensure you have a suitable habitat for the insects responsible for pollination. We will discuss the best pollinators and how to attract them. This will include the basics to get started with beekeeping. Honeybees are an excellent pollinator with the benefit of delicious honey on your table. For more information, contact Derrick Gooden at 804.586.5352 or dgooden@vsu.edu.

October 6, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Riparian Buffer Planting (Darlington, Pennsylvania)

Help us plant trees at [Tall Pines Farms](#) and learn how to implement agroforestry conservation practices on a real working farm! During this workshop, we'll help the Wagoner family enhance their grassfed beef and lamb operation by establishing a riparian buffer along the creek running through their property. You'll learn about integrating riparian buffers with rotational grazing systems, understand key design considerations for maintaining livestock access while protecting waterways, and discover aftercare practices that maximize survival and growth rates. You'll get hands-on experience with proper tree planting techniques and see how conservation practices strengthen grassfed operations. Whether you're managing your own grazing operation, working with livestock farmers on conservation projects, or simply wanting to support a farm family's commitment to sustainable agriculture, this event offers a valuable learning experience and the satisfaction of contributing to a lasting conservation project.

October 6, 12:00 - 3:00 PM: Webinar: Connecting Local Producers to School Districts (Virtual)

The Urban School Food Alliance (USFA) is hosting webinars, alongside school districts and local producer organizations of all sizes, nationwide. These Webinars aim to share an overview of school food procurement and introduce producers to school districts as potential revenue streams for their operations. Future Harvest is pleased to host a USFA webinar on school procurement on October 6th at 12:00 pm. Explore farm-to-school procurement with us!

October 7, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM: Central Virginia Agriculture Tour (Dillwyn, VA)

Join us on a tour of the Central Va Produce Auction, featuring insights into harvesting and packaging techniques used by Central Virginia farmers. The event includes a live auction experience with networking strategies on preparation, buying, and selling farm-raised produce and value-added agriculture products. For more information, contact Tammy Holler at 804.895.9472 or Tholler@vsu.edu.

October 7, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM: Tomato Tasting

Tomatoes are at their freshest from May to October in most parts of Virginia and come in literally thousands of varieties, including different colors, sizes, and shapes. Celebrate National Tomato Month by tasting several different hybrid and heirloom tomato varieties such as 'Paul Robeson', 'Sun Gold', 'Roma', and many others. An enlightening discussion will take place about planting methods, indeterminate vs. determinate varieties, and adventitious vs. vegetative growth. Please bring your own foldable chair; cold water will be available. Philadelphia Tomato Pie will be served. This event will be held at a private home located near Sentara Obici Hospital (Route 10/32 & US-58); the address will be sent to registrants no earlier than 72 hours before the start time. For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Garry Banks at 804.760.3615 or gbanks@vsu.edu or Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

October 7, 1:30 - 3:30 PM: Edamame Harvest and Taste Event (Petersburg, VA)

Join the hands-on educational Edamame experience. Participants will enjoy a delightful time of Edamame (green soybeans) picking and tasting. Internationally renowned Edamame expert, Dr. Guo-Liang Jiang, will discuss promising VSU Agricultural Research Station Edamame cultivars of interest and how to grow them in Virginia. Farm marketing specialist Dr. Theresa Nartea will share exciting marketing ideas, including simple recipes for you to try. You will also learn how to properly harvest Edamame beans. Don't miss this special opportunity to learn about VSU Edamame! For more information, contact James Gibson at 804.720.6826 or jegibson@vsu.edu.

October 7, 2:00 - 4:00 PM: Soil Testing (Suffolk, VA)

Jake Browder, Conservation Specialist with the Peanut Soil & Water Conservation District, will discuss his experiences in soil conservation on this farm, as well as the role of his organization and several S&WCD programs. After learning about the soil food web, soil horizons, and soil characteristics & composition, a hands-on sampling exercise will take place in a predetermined area to demonstrate the step-by-step process of obtaining soil for

testing. This will be done in preparation for supporting a vineyard, chestnut, and pecan grove. For more information, contact Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu or Garry Banks at 804.760.3615 or gbanks@vsu.edu.

October 7, 4:00 - 6:30 PM: Pasture Walk (Crozier, VA)

VFGC is pleased to invite you to a pasture walk on Tuesday, October 7th, from 4:00 to 6:30 pm. Registration is \$10/person and dinner is provided. Join us as we visit Ronnie Nuckols at Overhome Farm in Crozier, VA to discover how they have improved cattle performance with the use of novel tall fescue. Learn about the process for converting from toxic to novel tall fescue, as well as financial assistance opportunities for making this conversion. Register by contacting Matt Booher at 540-325-7503 or email mrbooher@vt.edu

October 7, 5:00 - 7:00 PM: Market Farm Garden Tour (King George, VA)

Guided farm tour and educational experience covering sustainable agriculture topics such as fruit tree planting, irrigation, pruning, and grafting. Visitors will also see beehives, poultry, lambs, hanging baskets, flowers, and a market garden with baked goods, local beef, beverages, and handcrafted items. Designed for gardeners of all levels and those curious about farm life. For more information, contact Michael Carter Sr. at 804.481.1163 or mcarter@vsu.edu.

October 7, 6:00 - 8:30 PM: Nutrient Management & Soil Health on Farms (Glade Spring, VA)

Join other farmers and hear from Ag experts on how to manage nutrients in the soil while optimizing pasture and crop production. Topics like soil testing, fertilizer application, manure management, and the 4Rs of nutrient stewardship (right source, correct rate, right time, and right place) will be discussed. Dinner is provided—registration is required by October 2. For more information, contact Amanda "Mandy" Fletcher at 804.892.0108 or afletcher@vsu.edu.

October 8, 9:00 - 11:30 AM: Nutrient Management for Farmers (Ettrick, VA)

In our Nutrient Management Workshop, Farmers and Growers will learn about nutrient loss mechanisms, Nitrogen and Phosphorus management techniques, and when losses are likely to occur. You will learn about fertilizer and manure application rates, timing, and placement to maximize plant growth, maintain healthy soil, and protect the environment while reducing runoff. For more information, contact Tim Sexton at 804.524.1028 or tsexton@vsu.edu.

October 8, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Managing an Urban Farming Business (Richmond, VA)

What do you need to start a successful farm business? What are some legal challenges you may face farming in an urban environment? What approach to financial record keeping should urban farmers use to help manage their farm business? This workshop explores urban farm measurement and management options to make good decisions about your business development. For more information, contact James Gibson at 804.720.6826 or jgibson@vsu.edu.

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What do you need to start a successful farm business? What are some legal challenges you may face farming in an urban environment? What approach to financial record keeping should urban farmers use to help manage their farm business? This workshop explores urban farm measurement and management options to make good decisions about your business development. For more information, contact James Gibson at 804.720.6826 or jgibson@vsu.edu.

October 8, 6:30 - 7:30 PM: Fundraising Strategies for Your Care Farm (Virtual).

Care Farming Network is excited to host the 2025 Beginning Care Farming Series, a three-part online program for aspiring care farmers. Each session offers practical guidance, real-world examples, and helpful resources to support your journey from vision to reality. Funding is one of the biggest hurdles for aspiring care farmers. In this session, we'll explore practical fundraising strategies — from grants and individual donors to partnerships and earned income — while highlighting real-world examples of how care farms across the country are sustaining and growing their work.

October 9, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM: Farm-to-Institution Symposium (Charlottesville, VA)

Join us for a one-day immersive symposium convening institutional leaders and food systems innovators to explore farm-to-institution models as powerful levers for change. From universities and healthcare systems to food hubs and farmers, we're bringing together the people rethinking how land, procurement, and public health intersect. If you are an institutional leader, food procurement team, sustainability professional, farmer, researcher, or advocate, this event is for you!

October 9, 1:00 - 3:00 PM: Understanding Your Conservation Plan For EQIP, CSP, And Cost-Share Participants (Petersburg, VA)

If you've been awarded a contract through EQIP or CSP, your conservation plan is more than just paperwork — it's your roadmap to compliance, success, and long-term stewardship. However, many participants struggle to fully interpret or implement it. That's where education and this hands-on workshop come in. For more information, contact Tabitha Bugg at 804.892.2997 or tbugg@vsu.edu.

October 9, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM: Fundamentals of Planting and Growing Garlic (Woodford, VA)

Garlic is an incredible crop. It's easy to grow with almost no pest problems. It can be grown either in the ground or in a raised bed. October is the most popular month to plant garlic, but depending on where you live, you could plant sooner or later. Late September and October are the best times to plant garlic in the northern Piedmont. It should be done at least two weeks before the first frost and must be done before the ground freezes. This workshop will teach you the proper way to plant garlic, how to prepare the ground, and how to care for it during the growing season properly. For more information, contact Michael Carter at (804) 481.1163 or mcarter@vsu.edu.

October 9th, 6:00 PM: Investing in Regenerative Organic Agriculture (Charlottesville, VA)

Join Rodale Institute for a thoughtfully curated farm-to-table dinner at Thistlerock Mead Co. & Farm, a regenerative apiary and the nation's first net-zero meadery. Set against the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, this evening will bring together a dynamic group of leaders and changemakers to explore the future of regenerative organic agriculture — and its profound implications for human and planetary health. While enjoying a seasonal meal crafted from local, regenerative farms and Thistlerock's own meadery, guests will participate in a robust conversation at the intersection of agriculture, land stewardship, and systems transformation.

October 9, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM: Nutrient Management & Soil Health on Farms (Glade Spring, VA)

Join other farmers and hear from Ag experts on how to manage nutrients in the soil while optimizing pasture and crop production. Topics like soil testing, fertilizer application, manure management, and the 4Rs of nutrient stewardship (right source, correct rate, right time, and right place) will be discussed. Dinner provided. Registration required by 10/2. For more information, contact Amanda "Mandy" Fletcher at 804.892.0108 or afletcher@vsu.edu.

October 9, 6:00 - 7:00 PM: Permaculture Meeting and potluck

Join the Permaculture group for their monthly meeting and potluck on Thursday, October 9, at 6pm. Contact Cynthia at cynthia@graysonlandcare.org for more information. Permaculture meetings are generally the 2nd Thursday of the month and include a potluck meal. Members take turns hosting.

October 10, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM: Gather & Grow: Cultivating Organic Connections (Charlottesville, VA)

Join for an inspiring day of education and connection at [Thistlerock Mead Co.](#) and [Wayflowering](#)—a regenerative flower farm, apiary, and meadery nestled in the heart of Virginia's foodshed. This two-part event, supported by the USDA's [Transition to Organic Partnership Program \(TOPP\)](#), is designed to empower current and transitioning organic farmers, buyers, institutional procurement leaders, gardeners, food systems enthusiasts, and those who are curious about organic production methods.

October 11, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM: Permaculture Workday October 11 (Galax, VA)

Join the Permaculture group for their monthly workday on March 15 from 9:30 to noon. All workdays are in the Permaculture garden at the Church of the Good Shepherd, located at 9441 Grayson Pkwy, Galax, VA. Permaculture workdays are generally held on the 2nd Saturday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to noon. The best way to learn anything is by doing. Lend a hand and learn about permaculture. Contact Cynthia Taylor for more information. Cynthia@graysonlandcare.org.

October 10, 2:00 - 4:00 PM: Redfern's Regenerative Hemp Agriculture - Birds, Bees, Bulls & Biomass (Ruther Glen, VA)

Join Redfern Hemp Co. at their 42-acre historic farm in Caroline County for Hemp Field Day, an immersive afternoon exploring regenerative hemp agriculture. Guided by founder Graham Redfern's "Birds, Bees, Bulls & Biomass" model, attendees will gain hands-on insights into sustainable farming practices that integrate hemp with biodiversity, soil health, and livestock. Experts from VSU's Small Farm Outreach Program, including Derrick Gooden, along with representatives from Virginia's Hemp Enforcement Program, will cover best practices in hemp cultivation and compliance. The day also features a live Hempcrete building demonstration, showcasing the power of hemp in sustainable construction, and a deep dive into Virginia's colonial hemp history led by in-house historian and author Joe Domino. Enjoy refreshments, local hemp snacks, and community connection from 2–4 PM, then cap off the day with a celebratory Happy Hour at Center of the Universe Brewing outside Ashland, VA. Grow with us! For more information, contact Derrick Gooden at 804.586.5352 or dgooden@vsu.edu.

October 10, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM: Tree Planting at Chancellors Rock Farm (Flint Hill, VA)

Join The Piedmont Environmental Council for a [Plantings for the Piedmont](#) volunteer tree planting on Friday, October 10th, at [Chancellors Rock Farm](#) in Flint Hill, VA. Volunteers are needed for two shifts, morning and afternoon. Together, we will plant approximately 275 native trees in support of this working farm's commitment to enhance the riparian buffers growing between pastureland and tributaries to the Rappahannock River.

October 11, 9:00 - 11:00 AM: Nutrient Management Workshop (Warfield, VA)

If you are thinking about starting a homestead, farm or want to sharpen your farming skills, this workshop is for you. Learn how to collect your own soil samples and interpret the soil test results. Additionally, learn about various sources of nutrients. Please dress appropriately for the weather; this is an outdoor event. For more information, contact Tammy Holler at 804.895.9472 or tholler@vsu.edu.

October 12, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Marketing for Urban Farms (Richmond, VA)

This workshop will explore how successful market farmers have achieved financial success. Discover whether being certified organic or opting for an alternative to organic certification is the best choice for you to enhance your bottom line. Learn the various marketing channels used by small urban farms and how to evaluate the effectiveness of a marketing channel. What are some "guerrilla marketing" techniques that can help you achieve success on your farm? For more information, contact James Gibson at 804.720.6826 or jegibson@vsu.edu.

October 12, 4:00 – 7:00 PM: "Barn to Run" 4-Miler for Agriculture (Abingdon, VA)

Join ASD to celebrate 30 years of growing a stronger Appalachia through agriculture! This family-friendly event will be held at The Meadows Sports Complex, 78 Cook Street, Abingdon, VA. Wear your best fruit or veggie costume or dress like your favorite farmer. The first 100 registrants are guaranteed an *utterly ravishing* event t-shirt! Wear your favorite fruit/veggie gear or farming coveralls! All proceeds support ASD programming for agriculture education, workforce development, resource management, and food access.

October 14th, 9:00-10:15 AM: Living Carpets: Native Groundcovers for Sun and Shade with Elaine Mills

Learn from an expert! Everything you need to know about groundcovers from an experienced EMG and presenter in the Arlington/Alexandria EMG Unit. Elaine will spend our October webinar talking about success with native groundcovers.

October 14, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM: Essentials of Livestock Carcass Composting (Petersburg, VA)

This hands-on workshop is designed for farmers seeking natural and respectful ways to manage livestock losses. Hosted on Randolph Farm, this workshop will walk participants through the composting process using real-life examples, including actual livestock mortalities. Participants will learn the science, the steps, and the tools to do it safely, legally, and sustainably. The registration fee for this class is \$25.00. For more information, contact Dahlia OBrien at 804.524.6963 or dobrien@vsu.edu.

October 15, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: ASD Veteran Coalition Meeting (Bristol, VA)

Are you a military veteran? If so, we'd love to have you attend our ASD Veteran Coalition meeting tonight at 6 pm. These recur every 3rd Wednesday – why not be a regular? These meetings are generously hosted free of charge by [Michael Waltrip Brewing, located at](#) 221 Moore St, Bristol, VA 24201. Meetings are held in the room upstairs. The Goal is to strengthen the veteran farming community by fostering meaningful connections, sharing practical knowledge and resources, and identifying collaborative opportunities that support the success and sustainability of veteran-led agricultural operations.

October 15, 7:00 - 8:00 PM: Small Farm Producers Summit 2025 (Location to be announced)

The objective of this event is to educate and empower small, beginning farmers and ranchers to own, operate, and sustain their farms and ranches independently through agricultural training programs that enhance farm management skills and improve the quality of life. The summit will provide the opportunity to meet VSU Staff members, Networking (Producers/Vendors), Square One: Farming Operations, Writing a Business Plan, Crop Insurance, and Heirs Property. For more information, contact Yowei Peralta at 804-892-0282 or yperalta@vsu.edu.

October 16, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM: Register for Food Safety School (Harrisonburg, VA)

Becky Gartner is graciously hosting us for a Food Safety School training on October 16th in Harrisonburg. This course is designed for anyone who is a beginning, small, and/or growing value-added food producer seeking to understand the basics of food safety and the associated VA food regulations. If that sounds like someone you know, please encourage them to sign up [here](#). Since a federal award funds this course, the cost of the workshop is only \$25. We also do not currently have another training scheduled, so this will likely be everyone's last opportunity to take the course this year. There is a private course available with free registration for agents interested in learning more about food safety in manufactured/processed/value-added foods. If you are interested in being contacted about this opportunity, please complete the form below.

October 16, 11:30 AM - 8:00 PM: SFOP Small Farm Conference (Norfolk, VA)

Join farmers and ranchers, rural and urban landowners, and ag professionals working in education, research, and government agencies at the 2025 Small Farm Conference for an opportunity to hear about available resources, smart business strategies, and successful marketing practices—especially for producers who want to learn more about making their enterprises profitable and sustainable. The conference is free for registered attendees and includes a bus tour, educational and networking sessions, presentations, awards, and meals listed on our agenda. Attendees are responsible for their own overnight accommodations and any meals not included in the conference agenda.

October 16, 5:30 - 7:30 PM: SWCD in Session: October Board Meeting Tour - Stop 3 is Calling Prince George's County Producers! (Prince George, VA)

Learn, Connect, Get Involved. Calling all Prince George's County producers and those served by the James River SWCD! For more information, contact Tabitha Bugg at 804.892.2997 or tbugg@vsu.edu.

October 16, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM: Essentials of Livestock Carcass Composting (Petersburg, VA)

This hands-on workshop is designed for farmers seeking natural and respectful ways to manage livestock losses. Hosted on Randolph Farm, this workshop will walk participants through the composting process using real-life examples, including actual livestock mortalities. Participants will learn the science, the steps, and the tools to do it safely, legally, and sustainably. For more information, contact Dahlia O'Brien at 804.524.6963 or dobrien@vsu.edu.

October 17, 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM: SFOP Small Farm Conference (Norfolk, VA)

Join farmers and ranchers, rural and urban landowners, and ag professionals working in education, research, and government agencies at the 2025 Small Farm Conference for an opportunity to hear about available resources, smart business strategies, and successful marketing practices—especially for producers who want to learn more about making their enterprises profitable and sustainable. The conference is free for registered attendees and includes a bus tour, educational and networking sessions, presentations, awards, and meals listed on our agenda. Attendees are responsible for their own overnight accommodations and any meals not included as part of the conference agenda.

October 18 -19, 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM: Fall Foliage Festival at Sky Meadows State Park (Paris, VA)

Enjoy the beauty of fall in Virginia at the Fall Foliage Festival at Sky Meadows State Park, taking place on October 18 and 19, 2025, in Paris, VA. Take in the vibrant colors of the changing leaves and enjoy activities such as hiking and wagon rides, along with live music, fall treats, and more. The festival will run from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on both days, so mark your calendars and plan to join in the festivities. PEC is a partner in this event and will have a table at the festival both days. Please stop by and see us! The event itself is free and no registration is required; however, please note that standard parking or admission fees to enter Sky Meadows State Park still apply.

October 18, 5:30 - 8:30 PM: Harvest Moon Social, Auction, and Annual Meeting (Troutdale, VA)

You are cordially invited to join Grayson LandCare on Saturday, October 18, from 5:30 to 8:00 pm at the Goodwill Grange #959, 840 Grange Hall Road, Troutdale, VA 24378. Doors open at 5:30 pm. Please bring your friends and an appetite! Learn more about LandCare, enjoy delicious food and beverages, have fun, and support our community initiatives. For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Michelle Pridgen at 276-768-0597 or email her at director@graysonlandcare.org

October 20, 5:00 - 6:00 PM: Middlesex County Garden Series (Deltaville, Virginia)

Join Frank Long, VCE Agriculture Extension Agent, for our Public Library Garden Series. October's topic is Let's Plant Something Wild- Specialty Crops. Free and Open to the Public. Location: Middlesex County Public Library- Deltaville Branch 35 Lovers Lane Deltaville, Virginia.

October 21, 9:00 - 11:00 AM: Small Farm Orientation (Afton, VA)

This two-hour Zoom course is for new farmers with zero to five years of experience operating a farm. Ben Dukes and Derrick Gooden, regional program assistants for the VSU Small Farm Outreach Program, and Dr. Nartea, extension specialist for the VSU Integrated Marketing Program, will guide attendees through the process of developing a productive and profitable farm. Participants will receive a Small Farm Orientation manual. For more information, contact Ben Dukes at 804-731-7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu, or Derrick Gooden at 804-586-5352 or dgooden@vsu.edu.

October 21, 1:00 - 3:00 PM: Farm and Rural Business Planning (Afton, VA)

A business plan is essential to the success of any business, including farming. Farm lending institutions require a basic farm business plan. An introductory example of how to set up a business plan, along with some helpful guidelines and tips, will be presented to the first 20 participants who sign up for this program. For more information, contact Forrest HOBBS at 804.892.5910 or fhobbs@vsu.edu.

October 22, 7:30 AM - 6:30 PM: North Carolina State Fair Bus Tour (Raleigh, NC)

The North Carolina State Fair Ag Bus Tour, from Virginia State University (VSU), is a bus tour that explores food, farming, and fair festivities. The bus picks up and drops off passengers at the following locations and times: VSU Randolph Farm Pavilion, with a 6:00 AM departure. Walmart's parking lot: 7:30 AM departure. North Carolina State Fair: 9:30 AM arrival. The 2025 North Carolina State Fair will be held at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds in Raleigh from October 16-26. For more information, contact Derrick Cladd at 804-892-4489 or dcladd@vsu.edu.

October 22, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM: Ginger Workshop and Field Day (Petersburg, VA)

This event provides an overview of basic information and research updates on ginger. Topics include sustainable field and high-tunnel ginger production, ginger seed production, integrated pest management, marketing, post-harvest handling, and the health benefits of ginger. A field tour to the field, high tunnel, and greenhouse, ginger research and demonstration on Randolph Farm will be provided. The target participants of this event are interested growers and extension educators. For more information, contact Tabitha Bugg at 804.892.2997 or tbugg@vsu.edu.

October 22, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM: Precision Agriculture For Small Farmers (Ettrick, VA)

In this workshop, Farmers and Growers will learn about precision Agricultural Practices that are economically feasible for their farming operation not matter what size. Growers will learn how to make good real-time decisions during the growing season, and the technologies that can be used to increase yields, improve Soil Health, have healthier plants, and decrease variability in the field. **For more information, contact Tim Sexton at 804.524.1028 or tsexton@vsu.edu.**

October 22, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Agritourism 101 (Jackson, VA)

Are you considering adding an agritourism venture to your farm? Learn key tips from the experts! Hosted at the lovely Cave Ridge Vineyard in Mt. Jackson, this event will feature information on marketing & promotion, managing liability, and everything in between! Featured organizations include the Virginia Tourism Corporation and Shenandoah County's Tourism and Economic Development Office. For more information, contact Marian Dalke at 540.232.6010 or mdalke@vt.edu.

October 22, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Marketing for Urban Farms (Richmond, VA)

This workshop will explore how successful market farmers have achieved financial success. Determine whether being certified organic is the best option, or if one of the alternatives to organic certification is a better choice. Learn the various marketing channels used by small urban farms and how to evaluate the effectiveness of a marketing channel. Learn what some "guerrilla marketing" techniques are that can help you achieve success on your farm. For more information, contact James Gibson at 804.720.6826 or jegibson@vsu.edu.

October 22, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: VSU SFOP and USDA Information Update (Lexington, VA)

The VSU Small Farm Outreach Program events and services will be highlighted at a booth as part of the Lexington Farmers Market. The marketing rules will be available to individuals considering being vendors at this market. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about various marketing practices and have their questions answered. For more information, contact Forrest Hobbs at 804.892.5310 or fhobbs@vsu.edu.

October 22, 4:30 - 6:30 PM: SWCD in Session: October Board Meeting Tour - Stop 2 is Calling Dinwiddie County Producers! (Dinwiddie, VA)

Learn, Connect, Get Involved. Calling all Dinwiddie County producers and those served by Appomattox River SWCD! Tour Hosted By: VSU Small Farm Outreach Program in partnership with Appomattox River SWCD & Virginia DCR. For more information, contact Tabitha Bugg at 804-892-2997 or tbugg@vsu.edu.

October 23, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM: Building a Walk-in Cooler (Alberta, VA)

Attendees will learn the steps to successfully building a walk-in cooler for the on-farm preservation of their farm products. James and Stacey West own and operate Golden View Guernsey Farm, offering fresh dairy products to their herd-share owners. Their growth has demanded a larger storage area for their products to maintain the highest quality for their customers. For more information, contact Marilyn Estes at 804.481.0486 or mestes@vsu.edu.

October 24, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM: Fall Gardening Workshop (Road Petersburg, VA)

Join the exciting Fall Gardening Workshop on Friday, October 24, 2025, at Randolph Farm Pavilion. Start the day with an informative morning lecture led by gardening experts, then roll up your sleeves in the afternoon for a hands-on exercise at the Urban Agriculture Demonstration Site. This workshop offers practical knowledge and real-world experience to help you prepare your garden for the fall season and beyond. Open to the public, the event welcomes gardeners of all levels—whether you're a beginner looking to learn the basics or an experienced grower seeking fresh ideas. Space is limited, so don't miss this opportunity to learn, grow, and connect with fellow garden enthusiasts. For more information, contact Leonard Githinji at (804) 524-5962 or lgithinji@vsu.edu.

October 24, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM: Introduction to Mushrooms (Part 1 of 3) (Courtland, VA)

This is Part 1 of a 3-part Beginners Learning Series, designed to provide a comprehensive overview of mushroom growing. Whether you're a novice or just curious about the fascinating world of fungi, this class will equip you with the knowledge and skills to begin your mushroom-growing journey. You will learn about basic fungal biology, explore various varieties like Blue Oyster and Lion's Mane, and understand the ideal growing conditions. We'll guide you through practical cultivation techniques, including setting up your grow space and inoculating substrates. As a bonus, each participant will receive a complimentary grow bag with instructions to carry home. For more information, contact Garry Banks at (804) 760-3615 or gbanks@vsu.edu.

Oct 24 – 25: 4 00 – 7 00 PM: 2025 Fall Festival

Join us for our annual festival celebrating local food & agriculture! This event is FREE to attend. Enjoy Farm-to-Table Plates by Chef Bud Porter, SFG Food Wine Tastings & Sales from Dogwood & Thistle Wine Co. Live Music TBD. Family Friendly Outdoor activities, Farm Animal on View, Tractor Sitting, Barrel Train Rides ASD Talks/Workshops; Live Music by Elderberry Jam.

October 24- 25, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM: UMES Extension's Small Farm Conference 2025 (MD)

Join UMES Extension's Small Farm Conference to learn how to make your small farm an even greater success. You'll be introduced to tools and strategies that can increase farm profitability and promote farm sustainability during the 22nd annual Small Farms Conference, produced by our Small Farm Program.

The event will take place Oct. 24-25, 2025, at the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center in Salisbury, MD.

The theme of this year's conference is: Rooted in Resilience — Growing Strong Farms in Challenging Times.

The overall conference will consist of three tracks (non-traditional agriculture, business and marketing, and ag research and trending topics). Demonstrations and tours will round out the conference.

October 25, 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM: Tree Planting at Courts of St. Francis (Purcellville, VA)

Join The Piedmont Environmental Council for a [Plantings for the Piedmont](#) volunteer tree planting on Saturday, October 25th, at the Courts of St. Francis neighborhood in Purcellville, VA. Volunteers are needed for one morning shift. Together, we will plant approximately 75 native trees and shrubs in support of this residential community's commitment to protect the Purcellville waterways that flow into the Potomac Watershed and ultimately to the Chesapeake Bay.

October 25, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM: Community Farm Heirloom Corn Grinding Demonstration (Millwood, VA)

Join PEC at the Burwell Morgan Mill in Clarke County as we grind our heirloom Hopi Blue Corn, grown at [PEC's Community Farm at Roundabout Meadows](#), into cornmeal and grits. PEC will have an information table at the mill during the grinding, allowing visitors to see this historic grist mill in action. Learn more about the Mill at <https://www.clarkehistory.org/mill.html>.

October 25, 4:00 - 6:00 PM: Virginia Farm-to-Table Harvest Celebration (Rockingham, VA)

The Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Virginia Soil Health Coalition, the Virginia Tech Center for Food System and Community Transformation, and community partners will host the first annual on-farm Virginia Farm-to-Table Harvest Celebration to celebrate soil, farming, food, and community. The harvest celebration gathering will uplift the people and partnerships, building a healthier food system from the soil up. This educational and celebratory evening will bring together farmers, food system leaders, educators, health professionals, and community members to enjoy a locally sourced farm-to-table dinner, share stories, highlight innovations in soil health, and cultivate joy and connection. The Virginia Farm-to-Table Harvest Celebration will be held on the historic Sunny Slope Farm. The evening will blend good food, music, farmer storytelling, and interactive displays to honor the collective work of Virginia's soil health and farm-to-table champions. This harvest celebration will also raise visibility for the Virginia Soil Health Coalition and the 4 The Soil initiative, helping attendees see how their values, work, and actions are all rooted in healthy soil. If you would be interested in financially supporting or having an exhibit at the Virginia Farm-to-Table Harvest Celebration, please reach out to co-chairs Eric Bendfeldt at ebendfel@vt.edu, 540.383.5393, or Mary Sketch Bryant at msketch2@vt.edu / 919.402.7240 for information on financial support packages and exhibit opportunities.

October 27, 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM: Well Water Testing (Northumberland, VA)

Virginia Cooperative Extension will offer household water testing for Northumberland residents in October 2025. Registration and Pre-payment are due by October 28, 2025. Northumberland residents can pick up prepaid water sample kits on Tuesday, October 28, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Northumberland County Extension Office. The water samples will be collected by the homeowner on Wednesday, October 29, and delivered to the Northumberland County Extension Office between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. on the same day. A limited number of testing kits are available - register early. Call 804-580-5694 for details. For information about the Virginia Household Water Quality Program: www.wellwater.bse.vt.edu.

October 27, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Grow Your Intermediate Class: Regenerative Agriculture (Virtual)

Learn about regenerative agriculture, a farming and gardening approach focused on rebuilding and improving the health and biodiversity of the soil, ecosystem, and overall environment. This class is conducted virtually via Zoom.

October 28, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Greenhouse-High Tunnel Tour (Coeburn, VA)

The Wise County Correctional Facility is hosting a tour of its agricultural operations for veterans, small and beginning farmers. This educational tour will focus on the operation and productivity of greenhouses and high tunnels at the facility. A limited number of individuals will be allowed to join the Virginia Cooperative Extension from Virginia State University and Virginia Tech to gain knowledge of a working greenhouse-high tunnel agricultural complex. (Due to the setting of this facility, a background check will be required for attendees). For more information, contact Walter (Wayne) Browning at 804.760.3932 or wbrowning@vsu.edu.

October 28, 10:50 AM - 12:10 PM: SWCD in Session: October Board Meeting Tour - Stop 5 is Calling Nottoway and Amelia Producers! (Farmville, VA)

Tour Hosted By: VSU Small Farm Outreach Program in partnership with Piedmont SWCD & Virginia DCR. What You'll Actively Learn: What SWCDs and DCR actually do, how conservation programs and cost-share funds are approved, who makes the decisions, and how you can get involved, opportunities for farmers, landowners, and residents, ways to protect soil, water, and natural resources in your community.

October 28, 12:00 PM 1:00 PM: Lunch and Learn: Risk Management for the Farm (Virtual)

Farming comes with inherent risks. Beginning and established farmers need to be aware of how to reduce these risks. Reducing those risks can save time, money, injuries, and possibly lives. Mr. Curt Porterfield, Assistant Director of College Facilities and Safety for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech will present ideas that all farmers, regardless of experience level, can use to help reduce accidents on the farm. For more information, contact Brent Noell at 804.892.0140 or bnoell@vsu.edu.

October 28, 3:00 - 5:00 PM: Invasive Species Walk (Waynesboro, VA)

Invasive plant species are spreading, overtaking habitats and altering the natural balance of native ecosystems in large areas of wilderness and backyard environments. Identification of the different flora and fauna is an essential step towards understanding the spread and the control of invasive species. Control and containment methods for various invasive plant species will be discussed and demonstrated. For more information, contact Forrest Hobbs at 804.892.5310 or fhobbs@vsu.edu.

October 28–29: Mid-Atlantic Ag & Resource Law Conference

Jennifer Friedel, associate professor of practice in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and director of the VA Land Use-Value Assessment Program, along with our other hosts and organizers, invites you to join us for two days of cutting-edge discussions on the legal issues shaping agriculture and land use in the Mid-Atlantic region. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with legal professionals, ag stakeholders, and educators working at the intersection of law, land, and agriculture.

October 28, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Grow Your Own Beginner Class: Herbs and Wild Edibles

This class offers a comprehensive list of medicinal, edible, and wild herbs. This is a virtual class and will be held through Zoom. You can register [here](#).

October 28, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM: SWCD in Session: October Board Meeting Tour - Stop 4 is Calling Surry County Producers! (Smithfield, VA)

Please note that your local DCR/SWCD is: Learn • Connect • Get Involved. Calling all Surry County producers and those served by Peanut SWCD! Location: Smithfield Station, 409 South Church Street, Smithfield, VA, 23430. Tour Hosted By: VSU Small Farm Outreach Program in partnership with Peanut SWCD & Virginia DCR. What You'll Actively Learn: What SWCDs and DCR actually do; How conservation programs and cost-share funds are approved; Who makes the decisions and how you can get involved; Opportunities for farmers, landowners, and residents; Ways to protect soil, water, and natural resources in your community.

October 28 – 29: 2025 Mid-Atlantic Ag & Resource Law Conference

Join this fall for the Mid-Atlantic Ag & Resource Law Conference, taking place October 28–29, 2025, at the beautiful National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. If you are interested in learning more about heirs' property, land use, solar development, and other similar topics, register today to receive the early bird rate. If you have any questions, please email Jennifer Friedel, Associate Professor of Practice and Director of the VA Land Use-Value Assessment Program, at jfriedel@vt.edu. Sponsorships are available! Details about the

sponsorship opportunities are provided below. To learn more about the levels, please contact Jesse Richardson at jesse.richardson@mail.wvu.edu.

October 29, 10:00 - 11:00 AM: How to create a Business Plan for Your Urban Farm (Richmond, VA)

So, you have an idea of how to start the perfect urban farm, what's next? You need to make a business plan. Having a plan on how you will operate your urban farming business will help you focus your mind on how to make money from your urban farm. We will explore how to develop a business plan for your urban farm. For more information, contact James Gibson at 804.720.6826 or jegibson@vsu.edu.

October 29, 3:00 - 5:00 PM: VSU SFOP and USDA Information Update (Lovingston, VA)

The VSU Small Farm Outreach Program events and services will be highlighted at a booth as part of the Nelson Farmers Market in Lovingston. The marketing rules will be available to individuals considering being vendors at this market. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about various marketing practices and have their questions answered. For more information, contact Forrest Hobbs at 804.892.5310 or fhobbs@vsu.edu.

October 30, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM: VSU Agritourism Fall Fest (Petersburg, VA)

Join an exciting day of learning, fun, and fall festivities at the VSU College of Agriculture's Agritourism Fall Fest! Hosted at VSU Randolph Farm, this event is designed for both producers and the general public, offering a unique opportunity to explore the growing world of agritourism.

October 30, 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM: VSU Trojan Farmers Market hosted by Cooperative Extension (Petersburg, VA)

Come for Farms, Friends, and Fun!!! Free Surprise Gift to the first 100 customers. Raffle Drawings every half hour. Educational Agriculture-Related Demonstrations. Open to the Public. Please note: the October VSU Trojan Farmers Market will be featured at the 2025 Agritourism Fall Fest. For more information, contact Dr. Theresa Nartea at tnartea@vsu.edu.

October 30th, 2:00- 3:15 PM: VCE Small-Scale Fruit Series: Grapes with Dr Drew Harner

This session is your A–Z on backyard grape production. Please watch the Fruit Science webinar and/or read Chapter 11 of the VCE Gardener Manual so you're caught up for this webinar. Featuring Dr. Drew Harner, viticulture specialist with Virginia Cooperative Extension, this session will be a deep dive into growing grapes at home. With a focus on muscadines, hybrids, and table grapes, Dr. Harner will discuss which varieties are best suited for different regions of Virginia—from the humid Tidewater to the cooler mountain valleys. While pest management will not be the primary focus, the session will include a brief overview of common challenges in the home vineyard. Expect practical guidance on site selection, trellising systems, pruning, and cultivar selection to help you grow grapes successfully in your backyard or small-scale setting.

November

November 1, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Fall Cover Crop Pasture Walk (Warfield, VA)

If you are thinking about starting a homestead, farm, or want to sharpen your farming skills, this workshop is for you. Join us for a late fall pasture walk and discover some of the ways the grazing season can be expanded in central Virginia. You will learn fall nutrient management skills and best management practices of fall cover crops planted for late fall/winter grazing. Please dress appropriately for the weather; this is an outdoor event. For more information, contact Tammy Holler at 804.895.9472 or tholler@vsu.edu.

November 3 – 4: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM: 2nd World Congress on Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine 2025

Inovine Meetings LLC is delighted to invite you to the 2nd World Congress on Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine, taking place on November 3-4, 2025, at the Grand Mercure Bangkok Atrium, Thailand. This year's theme, "Emerging Trends in Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science for Future Resilience," highlights the latest advancements shaping the field. Join this global platform to explore diverse topics, including Veterinary Medicine and Research, Animal Reproduction and Genetics, Nutrition and Feeding, Parasitology, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Dairy Science, Aquatic Animal Health, Veterinary Forensics, Poultry Science, Livestock Management, Farm Animal Feeding, Animal Welfare, and Animal-Human Relationships. This conference provides a unique opportunity to connect with experts, share insights, and collaborate on solutions to pressing challenges in Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine.

November 4, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM: Raising Chickens on your Farm (Petersburg, VA)

This Presentation will cover successfully raising chickens for profit on your farm. It will take farmers through a step-by-step process to the end product of meat or egg production. This class will cover the different breeds of chickens as well as which breeds are best for obtaining the value-added results you want for your individual markets. For more information, contact Grace Summers at 804.712.0093 or gsummers@vsu.edu.

November 4, 5:00 - 6:00 PM: Vertical Farming in Hawai'i: Design Considerations for a Unique Environment (Virtual)

Dr. Kerry Kakazu, President of MetroGrow Hawai'i, will present an informative talk about vertical farming in the heart of Honolulu, Hawai'i. Within the past year, MetroGrow Hawai'i has expanded to include a Sky Greens tower pilot greenhouse, where lettuce has been growing since March 2025. There have been some challenges, such as irrigation, fertilization, and temperature management; yet, we have been harvesting approximately 120 heads of lettuce per week (continuously) in a 60-square-foot growing space. All of this has been achieved without any water or fertilizer runoff, no chemical pesticides, and is completely off-grid for electricity. The local College of Tropical Agriculture at the University of Hawai'i plans to build a larger greenhouse using this technology next year. If you are interested in Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) or want to explore innovative methods for growing food indoors, this workshop is for you. For more information, contact Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

November 5-7, 6:30 AM - 6:30 PM: Beginning Farmer Bus Tour (Petersburg, VA)-

The Virginia State University Small Farm Outreach Program is pleased to announce an exciting and educational fall bus tour to sites in Washington, DC, Lancaster, PA, and Dover, DE. This tour is exclusively open to beginning farmers with less than 10 years of farming experience. An itinerary will be sent to registrants approximately 2 weeks before departure. It will include visits to an urban farm and a USDA site in Washington, DC, a working dairy farm and farmer's market near Lancaster, PA, and a student-led research farm at Delaware State University. The bus will depart from VSU Randolph Farm on November 5, 2025, at 6:30 a.m. sharp and return to the exact location on November 7, 2025, by 6:30 p.m. at the latest. The cost of the tour is \$100.00 per person (under 18 must be accompanied by an adult) and will include two separate nights at 3-star accommodations (breakfast is included), and two meals (lunch on September 23; dinner on September 24). Payment is due by September 8, 2025. This immersive program is designed to equip you with the tools and knowledge necessary to enhance your experience as a beginning farmer. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with peers and deepen your understanding of several aspects of farming. For more information, contact Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu or Derrick Cladd at 804-892-4489 or dcladd@vsu.edu.

November 5: 9:00 AM 12:00 PM: Irrigation and Soil Moisture Management for Small Farmers (Ettrick, VA)

This is the perfect time for farmers and growers to learn about Irrigation Systems Technology and how to manage Soil Moisture for optimal plant growth, and improve plant and Soil Health. You will learn about the different types of Irrigation available, how they function, and the efficiency of irrigation systems. This will allow you to make decisions for next year's growing season. For more information, contact Timothy Sexton at 804.524.1028 or tsexton@vsu.edu.

November 5, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM: Preparing Your High Tunnel for Production (Dundas, VA)

Do you have a new high tunnel or are you preparing to start production in one? Join Walter and Bruce Thompson at Willowland Farm to learn the steps to preparing your high tunnel for the upcoming growing season. They will discuss the steps to setting up all the necessary accessories and proper soil preparations to ensure a successful growing season. For more information, contact Marilyn Estes at 804.481.0485 or mestes@vsu.edu.

November 5, 10:00 - 11:00 AM: The Science of Food Preservation (Virtual)

Discover the science and technology behind safe home food preservation. This presentation will cover boiling water bath canning, pressure canning, and dehydration methods. Learn how each method works to prevent spoilage and protect your health, while gaining practical skills to preserve your garden bounty or local harvest with confidence. For more information, please get in touch with Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu, or Garry Banks at 804-760-3615 or gbanks@vsu.edu.

November 5, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: The Agribusiness Way (Petersburg, VA)

The Tennie Agriculture Group specializes in tax and accounting for farmers, ranchers, and urban farmers. We understand the challenges of the agriculture industry and provide financial solutions to help producers achieve sustainability and profitability. Explore key topics, including: Understanding Tax Compliance for Agribusiness Operations, Schedule F, Choosing the Right Entity for Your Agribusiness, and Financial Literacy for Farmers, Ranchers, and Veterans. For more information, contact James Gibson at 804.720.6826 or jegibson@vsu.edu.

November 5, 2:00 - 3:00 PM: When It Rains It Pours: Knowledge Is Power (Grundy, VA)

This workshop presentation is designed to help improve management skills and well-being in the face of the devastating impacts associated with flash floods and river floods. It will review recent flood events in Buchanan County, VA, and surrounding locations, and examine climate trends observed across the Mountain Empire of the southern Appalachians. Flooding effects can vary from minor inconveniences to destructive property damage and loss of life. Anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can linger long after recovery is completed for small farmers, growers, residents, and their children (and also for livestock and pets). A flood can leave you feeling devastated and hopeless. For more information, contact Wayne Browning at 804.760.3932 or wbrowning@vsu.edu.

November 5, 4:30 - 6:30 PM: Shenandoah Valley Small Farm Resource Fair (Mount Jackson, VA)

The Small Farm Resource Fair will feature representatives from local contractors, financial institutions, food rescue organizations, and conservation groups, with the goal of networking with local farmers and educating them about key resources for their businesses. Attendees will also hear from local farmers about their operations and how they have worked with conservation partners to advance their farming goals. Staff from the CREW Center will provide a tour of their newly opened Commercial Kitchen, a vital resource for small producers in the area. Attendees will also network with one another to further deepen relationships of support among farmers in the region. For more information, contact Marian Dalke at 540.232.6010 or mdalke@vt.edu.

November 6, 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM: Understanding Conservation Plans Part 2: Federal vs. State Programs – NRCS, SWCD & What Works Best for Your Farm (Petersburg, VA)

Confused About the Differences Between EQIP, CSP, and State Cost-Share Programs? This workshop breaks it down! Learn how federal and state conservation programs compare — and how to choose or combine them based on your farm's needs. You'll Learn: NRCS vs. SWCD: Roles, responsibilities, and focus areas EQIP, CSP — what do they mean? Which program is best for: Cover Cropping; Water Quality Buffers; Riparian/Wetland Restoration; Nutrient Management; How to avoid duplication or non-compliance; What's stackable — and what's not Application timelines and funding differences; Documentation and inspection expectations; And How to Understand my Program Award (Conservation Plan, et al) Ideal for: New and beginning farmers; Landowners with conservation contracts; Anyone seeking clarity on state vs. federal offerings. For more information, contact Tabitha Bugg at 804.892.2997 or tbugg@vsu.edu.

November 6, 1:00 -3:00 PM: Identifying Weeds on Your Farm (Unionville, VA)

Weeds are simply plants growing where you don't want them to grow, but many of them are also edible for humans and livestock alike. This workshop will include a presentation of 20 common weeds via a slideshow presentation about weeds in Virginia landscapes, and you will learn how to specifically identify some them during a field walk. Some information will also be discussed regarding control and eradication. Attendees must wear close-toed shoes and long pants to participate in the field walk portion as we will be walking in possible wet or muddy, and tall vegetative growth areas. This workshop will take place rain or shine. For more information, contact Roland Terrell at 804.892.4612 or rterrell@vsu.edu.

November 6, 3:00 - 5:00 PM: Information and Techniques to help Small Farmers In their Farming Operations (Petersburg, VA)

This workshop will cover information about organizations and groups that offer resources to help farmers make their farms more sustainable. Presenters will cover programs available to help farmers with farm operation structure, financial opportunities, grant resources, and the people available to guide them through this process. For more information, contact Grace Summers at 804.712.0093 or gsummers@vsu.edu.

November 6, 6:30 - 8:30 PM: Profitable roots - Accounting for success (Virtual).

Good accounting is critical for the success of any operation. Join Michael Carter Jr. of Carter Farms and his guests to share about the basics of accounting for your business, answer any of your questions, and help you to avoid any pitfalls. The workshop will be engaging, using real-world and practical examples that you may have experienced or could face in the future. Let's grow while we talk numbers, while keeping our pencils sharp. For more information, contact Roland Terrell at 804.892.4612 or rterrell@vsu.edu.

November 7- 8, Cattle & Equipment WISE (Women Increasing Skills & Education) (Abingdon, VA)

The WISE Planning Committee is excited to be holding Cattle & Equipment WISE (Women Increasing Skills & Education) in Abingdon, VA on Friday, November 7th, and Saturday, November 8th! Registration opens on Monday, September 22nd, at noon! Please share with all those you think may be interested! We do have scholarship funds this year.

November 7- 9, Chesapeake Watershed Forum (Day 1/3) (Shepherdstown, WV)

We are excited to announce the 20th Annual Chesapeake Watershed Forum scheduled for November 7-9, 2025.

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's 20th Annual is a watershed-wide event reaching over 400 practitioners to inspire local action toward clean water. The forum shares successful tools and techniques, offers lessons and learnings from on-the-ground work, builds capacities of local organizations, fosters partnerships, educates on new initiatives, and much more. Find out more and register: <https://www.allianceforthebay.org/event/chesapeake-watershed-forum/>

November 7, 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM: Timber Cruising for Woodland Owners

Hiring a professional forester is the best way to ensure an accurate accounting of your timber volume and value. And you need to understand where these numbers come from. This hands-on class will teach you how a timber cruise is conducted.

- November 7
- 10:30 – 4:00
- [Reynolds Homestead](#), Critz
- Agenda and registration available in September

Visit the [Blue Ridge PRISM](#) website for programs on nonnative invasives

November 8, 1:00 - 4:00 PM: Let's Get Ready to Plant (Foster, VA)

Let's plant fruit trees, berries, and garlic, among other things. Now is the time to start thinking about how to prepare for next year. This workshop will discuss how to prepare for the 2026 season. This is beneficial if you are already established or looking to establish a new site. For more information, contact Derrick Gooden at 804.586.5352 or dgooden@vsu.edu.

November 11–12, 1:00 – 5:00 PM: Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training (Virtual)

The Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training will be held remotely on November 11–12, 2025, from 1–5 pm EST each day. The training covers the FSMA Produce Safety Rule for growers, packers, and handlers of fresh produce. Participants must attend both sessions to receive a certificate.

November 12, 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM: Winterizing Beehives (Petersburg, VA)

The workshop will also cover 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. All participants should bring a bee suit to wear during the hive inspection part of this workshop. Wear light-colored clothing and avoid wearing open-toe shoes, as well as using perfume or cologne. Coffee and donuts will be provided. For more information, contact Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

November 12, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Web Soil Survey Basics (South Hill, VA)

Come learn the benefits of using the USDA online program, Web Soil Survey. WSS provides soil data and information produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey. The soil survey is a detailed report on the soils of more than 95 percent of the nation's counties. It has maps with soil boundaries, photos, descriptions, and tables of soil properties and features. This will be a hands-on computer workshop. Using the Web Soil Survey program, we will look at each farmer's farm soil data. For more information, contact Tammy Holler at 804.895.9472 or tholler@vsu.edu.

November 13, 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM: Whole Farm Planning (Petersburg, VA)

Whole Farm Planning helps beginning farmers maintain or improve profitability while enhancing their sustainability. With Whole Farm Planning, beginning farmers define long-term and short-term goals to achieve a better quality of life at home and in the community. Learn from VSU Small Farm Outreach Agents as they review the Whole Farm Planning manual; Farm Credit representatives with instruction on how to develop a simple, one-page business plan. For more information, contact Derrick Cladd at 804.892.4489 or dcladd@vsu.edu.

November 13, 1:00 - 2:00 PM: Risk Management for the Farm – Agrotourism (Virtual)

Farming comes with many risks. Safety is paramount on all farms. Adding agrotourism to your operation can lead to increased revenue. With that income comes additional risks. Mr. Curt Porterfield, Assistant Director of College Facilities and Safety for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech, will present ideas and suggestions on how to mitigate those additional risks. For more information, contact Brent Noell at 804.892.0140 or bnoell@vsu.edu.

November 14, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM: Introduction to Mushrooms (Part 2 of 3) (Courtland, VA)

This is Part 2 of a 3-part series on mushroom cultivation, where we delve into the intricacies of grain spawn and substrate preparation. This course offers participants the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning of essential techniques crucial for successful mushroom cultivation. You'll delve into different grain spawn options, such as rye, millet, wheat, and oats, each offering unique benefits for mycelium growth. Participants will gain practical experience in preparing and inoculating gain bags, which involves sterilization and monitoring mycelium colonization. Furthermore, you'll learn the "Bucket Tek" method, a technique that is particularly beneficial for oyster mushrooms. By the end of the course, you will have created your personal grow bucket, equipping you with the skills and confidence to continue your mushroom cultivation journey at home. For more information, contact Garry Banks at (804) 760-3615 or gbanks@vsu.edu.

November 17–18, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Artificial Insemination Course (Jonesville, VA)

The Bovine Artificial Insemination Course will be held on November 17–18, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM in the Ewing/Harrogate area. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/ailee2025>. For details, please don't hesitate to contact the Lee County Extension at (276) 546-2057 or the Claiborne County Extension at (423) 626-3742.

November 18, 9:00 - 11:00 AM: Small Farm Orientation (Virtual)

This two-hour Zoom course is for new farmers with zero to five years of experience operating a farm. Ben Dukes and Derrick Gooden, regional program assistants for the VSU Small Farm Outreach Program, and Dr. Nartea, extension specialist for the VSU Integrated Marketing Program, will guide attendees through the process of developing a productive and profitable farm. Participants will receive a Small Farm Orientation manual. For more information, contact Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

November 18, 6:00 - 8:00 PM: Climatology of Virginia Farms and Landscapes (Jonesville, VA)

Virginia is a state with diverse landscapes and distinctive climatic zones, which present unique challenges to its residents. This workshop will help increase understanding of the intricate relationships between weather, climate, and the natural history of Virginia. Farmers, growers, and lovers of the natural world will gain a deeper appreciation of Virginia's rich environment, helping them make informed decisions for a sustainable future for themselves, their families, friends, and communities. An open question-and-answer session will be provided. Thanks and appreciation to Laura Young, DCR Southwest Land Steward, for hosting this event. For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Wayne Browning at (804) 760-3932 or wbrowning@vsu.edu.

November 19, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Basic Soil Science for Small Farmers (Ettrick, VA)

This is an excellent time to learn about soils and all of the things they do to support us in our daily lives. Learn why soils are different, the layers in the soil, and how they formed. You will learn about how soil breaks down and the importance of different-sized particles. Why do some soils contain a high amount of organic matter, while others do not? And things we can do to improve soil health and therefore Plant health. For more information, please don't hesitate to contact Tim Sexton at (804) 524-1028 or tsexton@vsu.edu.

November 19, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: ASD Veteran Coalition Meeting (Bristol, VA)

Are you a military veteran? If so, we'd love to have you attend our ASD Veteran Coalition meeting tonight at 6 pm. These recur every 3rd Wednesday – why not be a regular? These meetings are generously hosted free of charge by [Michael Waltrip Brewing](#), 221 Moore St, Bristol, VA 24201. Meetings are held in the room upstairs. The goal is to strengthen the veteran farming community by fostering meaningful connections, sharing practical knowledge and resources, and identifying collaborative opportunities that support the success and sustainability of veteran-led agricultural operations.

November 20, 6:30 - 8:00 PM: Profitable Roots- Trust in Wills, and Wills in Trust (Virtual)

Let's talk about what happens next to your farming operation, as you join Michael Carter Jr of Carter Farms and Africulture and guest speakers to discuss the ins and outs of heir property, trust formation, and wills to ensure your operation and land are preserved. Wills are complex to discuss, and they become even harder to talk about when we're not here, so let's start the conversation and planning process to be prepared for the inevitable. Profits aren't always centered on what you are growing, but rather on how you plan for and protect your assets for the future. Let's grow together and will ourselves to more profitable roots. For more information, please don't hesitate to contact Roland Terrell at (804) 892-4612 or rterrell@vsu.edu.

November 22, 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM: Small Ruminants: Late Gestation Lambing/Kidding (Abingdon, VA)

Calling all beginning and experienced sheep/goat producers...Join this interactive session to gain valuable knowledge of best management practices for 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. Dinner will be provided; registration is required by November 19, 2025. For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Amanda "Mandy" Fletcher at (804) 892-0108 or afletcher@vsu.edu.

November 24, 4:00 - 5:00 PM: The History and Impact of Bananas (Virtual)

Bananas are thought to have originated in Southeast Asia, specifically Papua New Guinea, around 10,000 years ago. A staple fruit enjoyed worldwide, bananas boast a rich history and significant impact, spanning from their ancient origins to their modern-day role in global food security and cultural symbolism, playing a crucial role in the diets of many, particularly in developing nations. There's a lot more to this popular yellow fruit that adorns and dominates the grocery produce section than the Cavendish variety. Join this presentation as Gabe Sachter-Smith of Hawai'i Banana Source introduces you to his decades-long research and passion for over 150 varieties of this fantastic herb. For more information, contact Ben Dukes at 804.731.7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

November 30, 2:00 - 4:00 PM: Mushroom Cultivation 2 PM (Norfolk, VA)

Mushrooms are a small yet mighty culinary ingredient with numerous health benefits, ranging from cancer prevention to improved brain health. Jason Hess, owner/operator of The Tidewater Mushroom Company LLC, will introduce participants to common gourmet mushroom varieties and their uses. Participants will learn about the mushroom life cycle, nutrition facts, and statistics on superfoods, as well as the day-to-day operations of this unique indoor urban mushroom farm. Each participant will receive an inoculated grow bag to take home, following a tour of the farm that includes a Q&A session and an explanation of the lab, equipment, and growing mediums. For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Ben Dukes at (804) 731-7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

November 30, 5:00 - 7:00 PM: Mushroom Cultivation 5 PM (Norfolk, VA)

Mushrooms are a small yet mighty culinary ingredient with numerous health benefits, ranging from cancer prevention to improved brain health. Jason Hess, owner/operator of The Tidewater Mushroom Company LLC, will introduce participants to common gourmet mushroom varieties and their uses. Participants will learn about the mushroom life cycle, nutrition facts, superfood statistics, and the day-to-day operation of this unique indoor urban mushroom farm. Each participant will receive an inoculated grow bag to take home, following a tour of the farm that includes a Q&A session and an explanation of the lab, equipment, and growing mediums. For more information, please get in touch with Ben Dukes at (804) 731-7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

December

December 2, 5:30 - 7:30 PM: Start Smart: Building Your Agri-Business (Harrisonburg, VA)

Join the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center for an evening session to jump start your agri-business. This workshop is designed to help beginning farmers build and develop a business and marketing plan. Learn about the SBDC's advising resources and Financial Wellness Center. This workshop will be geared to agricultural producers to address the specific areas of concern and growth related to farm enterprises. For more information, please get in touch with Marian Dalke at (540) 232-6010 or mdalke@vt.edu.

December 2, 6:00 - 8:30 PM: Starting an LLC workshop: a Beginners Guide for Virginia Farmers (Abingdon, VA)

This workshop provides an overview of the process of forming and managing a Limited Liability Company (LLC) in Virginia. Designed for aspiring, beginning, or experienced farmers, this workshop will equip you with the essential knowledge and practical steps to navigate the legal and administrative requirements of establishing an LLC in the Commonwealth. Tax benefits and considerations will also be discussed. For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Amanda "Mandy" Fletcher at (804) 892-0108 or afletcher@vsu.edu.

December 3, 9:00 AM 12:00 PM: Basic Soil Science for Small Farmers (Ettrick, VA)

Now is the perfect time to prepare for next year's planting and crops! This Soil Fertility Workshop will cover all 18 essential nutrients for plant growth and their impact on plant health. You will learn about the reasons soils become acidic, the nutrients that remain, and those that leave the site. Please learn about the importance of liming, when to apply nutrients, and how to make the best use of them. For more information, please get in touch with Timothy Sexton at (804) 524-1028 or tsexton@vsu.edu.

December 4, 9:00 -11:30 AM: Aerial Imagery for Farmers (Rapidan, VA)

Learn how aerial imagery can revolutionize your farming practices! This workshop will cover practical techniques for using aerial imagery to detect diseases and pests early, make real-time decisions, and address skips and overlaps in planting, spraying, fertilizing, and liming. Discover how these methods can help you even out yields and tackle potential issues before they escalate, ensuring a more efficient and productive farming operation. For more information, please don't hesitate to contact Roland Terrell at (804) 892-4612 or rterrell@vsu.edu.

December 7, 2:00 - 4:00 PM: Mushroom Cultivation 2 pm (Norfolk, VA)

Mushrooms are a small yet mighty culinary ingredient with numerous health benefits, ranging from cancer prevention to improved brain health. Jason Hess, owner/operator of The Tidewater Mushroom Company LLC, will introduce participants to common gourmet mushroom varieties and their uses. Participants will learn about the mushroom life cycle, nutrition facts, and statistics on superfoods, as well as the day-to-day operations of this unique indoor urban mushroom farm. Each participant will receive an inoculated grow bag to take home, following a tour of the farm that includes a Q&A session and an explanation of the lab, equipment, and growing mediums. For more information, please contact Ben Dukes at (804) 731-7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

December 7, 5:00 - 7:00 PM: Mushroom Cultivation 5 pm (Norfolk, VA)

Mushrooms are a small yet mighty culinary ingredient with numerous health benefits, ranging from cancer prevention to improved brain health. Jason Hess, owner/operator of The Tidewater Mushroom Company LLC, will introduce participants to common gourmet mushroom varieties and their uses. Participants will learn about the mushroom life cycle, nutrition facts, and statistics on superfoods, as well as the day-to-day operations of this unique indoor urban mushroom farm. Each participant will receive an inoculated grow bag to take home, following a tour of the farm that includes a Q&A session and an explanation of the lab, equipment, and growing mediums. For more information, please contact Ben Dukes at (804) 731-7916 or bdukes@vsu.edu.

December 9, 6:00 - 8:00 PM: 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! For more information, please contact Michael Carter Sr. at (804) 481-1163 or mcarter@vsu.edu.

December 9, 6:30 - 8:00 PM: Planning for Opportunities & Grants in 2026 (Virtual)

Join us in looking for opportunities for your farming operation in 2026. Michael Carter Jr of Carter Farms and Africulture will share some different opportunities and options available for your farming operation in 2026. This is the time to start planning as spring will be here before we know it, so let's plan for our success for next season. For more information, please contact Michael Carter Sr. at (804) 814-2581 or mcarter@vsu.edu.

December 10, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Niche Crops for Small-Scale Farmers (Rapidan, VA)

Discover profitable niche crops perfect for small farms. Learn how to maximize returns through specialty markets and sustainable farming practices. Niche crops are non-traditional crops that are high demand due to their unique properties or characteristics. These crops are often grown on a small scale and can generate significant profits for farmers. This workshop will discuss niche crops for specific customers and dedicated buyers. For more information, please contact Roland Terrell at (804) 892-4612 or rterrell@vsu.edu.

December 11, 3:00 - 5:00 PM: VSU SFOP and USDA Information Update (Buena Vista, VA)

The VSU Small Farm Outreach Program events and services will be highlighted at a booth as part of the Buena Vista Farmers Market. The marketing rules will be available to individuals considering being vendors at this market. Participants will be able to get an idea of different marketing practices while having an opportunity to have questions answered. For more information, please contact Forrest Hobbs at (804) 892-5310 or fhobbs@vsfhobbs@vsu.edu.

December 12, 10:00 AM 3:00 PM: Introduction to Mushrooms (Part 3 of 3) (Courtland, VA)

This will be Part 3 of a 3-part series on mushroom cultivation. In this segment, we will learn how crucial conditions must be for Mushrooms fruiting. Proper Humidity, CO2 and Lighting are very crucial. Participants will learn to create mason jar grain spawn samples and receive guidance on transferring them to substrate. They will also build a small Mushroom Monotub fruiting chamber for cultivating at home.

For more information, contact Garry Banks at (804) 760-3615 or gbanks@vsu.edu.

December 13, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: The Weather and Climatology of Winter in Virginia (Clintwood, VA)

Winter is a challenging time for residents of Virginia. This can be especially true for farmers, growers, livestock owners, and pet owners who often must deal directly with the wild, short-term fluctuations that this season brings. Regardless of how bad conditions become, those whose livelihood depends on working outdoors or traveling from point A to B must deal with whatever Mother Nature conjures up. From the Atlantic Ocean to the Cumberland Mountains, Virginia is characterized by diverse landscapes that each possess distinctly different winter concerns. The workshop will provide you with a much better understanding of winter, covering both short-term (weather) and long-term (climate) conditions and trends to help you plan and prepare in advance for any potential developments. An open question-and-answer session will invite attendees to ask anything of interest to them. For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Wayne Browning at (804) 760-3932 or wbrowning@vsu.edu

December 17, 2:00 - 4:00 PM: Nutrient Management Workshop (Petersburg, VA)

Join us as we navigate the interpretation of soil test results and recommendations. Also, learn how to collect and prepare soil samples properly. Understanding the nutrients that are deficient and excessive in your soil will help you develop healthier soils and increase production. Please dress appropriately for the weather; we will be spending time outdoors. For more information, contact Tammy Holler at 804.895.9472 or tholler@vsu.edu.

December 20, 10:00 AM 12:00 PM: Poultry and litter Management (Warfield, VA)

If you are thinking about starting a homestead, farm, or want to sharpen your farming skills, this workshop is for you. Join us for a Poultry 101-type workshop. You will learn the basics of raising and marketing poultry as well as

incorporating the use of composted poultry litter into a nutrient management plan. Please dress appropriately for the weather; this is an outdoor event. For more information, contact Tammy Holler at 804.895.9472 or tholler@vsu.edu.

December 18, 6:30 -8:00 PM: Forest Farming: Maple Syrup (Virtual)

Discover the fundamentals of forest farming and explore the rewarding process of maple syrup production—from sap collection to syrup creation. Learn how non-timber forest products (NTFPs) like forest plants and fungi can provide food, medicine, and artistic materials for personal use or income. Whether you're curious about sustainable harvesting or looking to expand your knowledge of agroforestry, this session offers practical insights. All registrants will receive access to recordings, ensuring you can revisit the material whenever needed. This event is being provided at no charge to participants. Registration is required to obtain the link to access the webinar.

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