



Sept 1, 2022

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A Message from VBFRC

Hello everyone,
We hope the beginning of September as the seasons begin to shift. We are excited to send along our monthly newsblast with a number of events coming up in the next few months along with a few announcements. We hope you enjoy!

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

Partner Highlight

The Virginia Soil Health Coalition Quarterly Meeting is happening on September 15 from 2-4 pm on Zoom.

Dr. Henry Janzen, soil biochemist and Honorary Research Associate with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, will be joining. He has studied the flows of carbon and nutrients through farmlands, looking for ways to sustain their many functions: furnishing food, providing livelihoods, maintaining biodiversity, and buffering climate, among others. He will be speaking on the topic of his recent publication: [“The soil health ‘metaphor’: Illuminating or illusory?”](#) The meeting will also offer the opportunity to provide input and feedback on the Coalition’s draft strategic roadmap for the coming years as well as various partner updates. [See the draft agenda on the Coalition site](#) and [register for the meeting here](#).

Note: Green underlined text is a link

Announcements

Letter from Dr. Broaddus on Avian Influenza

Dr. Broaddus, the state veterinarian, shares a letter updating about Avian Influenza including the second conformation of HPAI in a backyard flock in Virginia this year and precautions to take.

USDA announces details for the upcoming Census of Agriculture

America's farmers and ranchers will soon have the opportunity to be represented in the nation's only comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every state, county and territory. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will mail the 2022 Census of Agriculture to millions of agriculture producers across the 50 states and Puerto Rico this fall. The 2022 Census of Agriculture will be mailed in phases, starting with an invitation to respond online in November followed by paper questionnaires in December. Farm operations of all sizes, urban and rural, which produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2022 are included in the ag census.

New VCE Publication on Wheat Trials

The 2022 Virginia On-Farm Wheat Test Plots publication has been finalized, published, and is available on the [VCE website](#).

Fall 2022 Permaculture Design Course (PDC) (Mt. Sidney, VA)

This Permaculture Design Course (PDC) is geared towards serious homesteading and commercial Permaculture farming in the Mid-Atlantic, while leaving plenty of room for the hobbyist and the simply curious. This is an opportunity to learn Permaculture Design from professional farmers who are doing the work!

4 the Soil Highlights



September 8: Soil Your Undies Webinar

In this webinar of the 4 The Soil Awareness Initiative/Virginia Soil Health Coalition, learn about the 'Soil Your Undies' educational program and explore opportunities to use it in your own programming and outreach to educate audiences about the core soil health principles. Hear from Page County Extension about their experience using the program with their 4-H students.

September 15: The Virginia Soil Health Coalition Quarterly Meeting (Virtual)

Dr. Henry Janzen, soil biochemist and Honorary Research Associate with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, will be joining. He has studied the flows of carbon and nutrients through farmlands, looking for ways to sustain their many functions: furnishing food, providing livelihoods, maintaining biodiversity, and buffering climate, among others. He will be speaking on the topic of his recent publication: ["The soil health 'metaphor': Illuminating or illusory?"](#) The meeting will also offer the opportunity to provide input

and feedback on the Coalition's draft strategic roadmap for the coming years as well as various partner updates. [See the draft agenda on the Coalition site](#) and [register for the meeting here](#).

New video series: Purposeful Cover Crops

Sustainable Chesapeake and Virginia Soil Health Coalition Partners are pleased to announce the release of four videos focused on how cover crops can save farmers money by improving yields, reducing input costs, improving drought resilience, and preventing weeds. \

Episode 22 - 17: Soil Health as the Crux of Resilience and Justice with Duron Chavis of Happily Natural Day

There cannot be agriculture without culture. Duron Chavis executive director of Happily Natural Day shares his passion for soil health and cultural activism as a means to address systemic issues and transform the built environment. Duron is a thought leader, educator, activist, and changemaker in the Greater Richmond region. He integrates music, art, and cultural identity in his work in urban agriculture, gardening, farming, and orchards as a tool for social change, public health promotion, and community transformation. Duron emphasizes that healthy, fertile soil is an imperative and the crux of landscape resilience, food security, and environmental justice.

Episode 22- 18: Soil Health for Clean, Sustainable Water Resources with Dr. Ryan Stewart of Virginia Tech

How does soil health relate to clean, abundant water? Dr. Ryan Stewart is an Associate Professor in Virginia Tech's School of Plant and Environmental Sciences. Ryan's research focus is on the interactions between water, soil, and plant communities. His sustainable water resource management work spans soil science, ecology, engineering, agriculture, and urban systems. He shares the science of measuring and quantifying soil health and the effects of management principles and practices on how soil functions. Ryan and his research colleagues identified 42 different indicators, but in our conversation emphasized the importance of systematically building soil organic matter and enhancing biology for plant life and water cycling.

4 The Soil Blog: New posts every week!

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

September Events

September 1: VSU College of Agriculture Field Day (Petersburg, VA)

This free event will showcase the many ways VSU's agricultural researchers, Extension specialists and professors support Virginia's agriculture and forestry industries, the commonwealth's number one private economic driver, with an annual economic impact of more than \$91 billion. Hop on and off trollies as they circle throughout Randolph Farm's 416 acres and learn from the commonwealth's leading experts about the latest techniques, trends, research and success stories impacting small-scale, limited-resource farmers and ranchers. See first-hand how VSU's research, teaching and public programming is enhancing the resiliency of Virginia's food systems and addressing food safety and insecurity, especially among those who have limited social and economic resources.

September 6: Grants to Fund Trees & Orchards (Kinsale, VA)

Learn how the VSU Small Farm Outreach Program provided grant assistance for Sandra Brackett to realize her lifelong dream of having an English Walnut orchard. Sandra will take us on a tour of the

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

September 7: Trees for Shade, Fodder, and Carbon Revenue (Virtual)

Hear from Rancher Wyn Miller of Lick Skillet Farms, and WorkingTrees CEO John Foye along with Professor John Fike, Virginia Tech, as we discuss key questions about these systems and coming carbon markets.

September 7: Planting Garlic in the Fall (Unionville, VA)

Garlic 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 take proper care during the season.

September 7: National Conference on Next-Generation Sustainable Technologies for Small-Scale Producers (NC A&T)

The purpose of this conference is to create a road map for developing and delivering the next generation of soil, air and water technologies in support of sustainable production systems on small and limited resource farms; identify gaps, needs and recommendations for NIFA; and ensure access to technology with consideration for affordability and applicability.

September 7: Estate Planning Essentials: Steps to Protect You & Your Family (Prince Edward County, VA)

This free workshop will explain essential provisions you need to include in your documents to accomplish your objectives during your lifetime, when disabled, and upon your death.

September 7: Preparing for Generation NEXT: Legacy Planning Workshop (Virtual)

Join the Generation NEXT Team and experienced conservation, legal, and financial advisors, to learn how to pass your land and your legacy on to the next generation while keeping it intact, in forest, and in family. All registrants will receive a copy of the award-winning Legacy Planning: A Guide for Virginia Landowners publication.

September 7: 23rd Annual VT Sheep Center Production Sale (Blacksburg, VA)

Our 2022 Annual Sale will be held exclusively online at www.Livestockbuyer.com. Sheep available for viewing on campus- call us to arrange. Sheep can be picked up following the sale, and we will work with buyers on transportation. Sale closes at 7:00 PM EST on Wednesday, September 7, 2022 Selling Dorset & Suffolk ram lambs and select group of ewe lambs.

September 8: Writing a One-Page Business Plan (South Hill, VA)

Mark Estes, USDA/FSA Loan Advisor in Mecklenburg County, will present a workshop on the importance of having a business plan. He will cover the basics of the process and what you need to include. He will talk about the different loans available, how they can be used, and the benefits of obtaining a loan from the Farm Service Agency.

September 8: Small Ruminants: Using Fecal Egg Counts on Your Small Farm (Clintwood, VA)

What are Fecal Egg Counts and what do they tell us? You will not want to miss learning the answers to these common questions. Learn how to consider the true needs of your flocks/herds, and stop blindly

and routinely treating for parasite infection. Attendees will gain a hands-on opportunity to learn the McMaster Egg Counting procedure. Dr. Chris Fletcher from Washington County Veterinary will provide instruction and Mandy Fletcher from VSU Small Farm Outreach Program will assist small ruminant farmers with fecal analysis. All necessary workshop supplies will be provided but BYOF (bring your own fecals).

September 9-10: Woodland Owner Retreat (Providence Forge, VA)

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

September 10: New Christmas Tree Growers Meeting (Brightwood, VA)

Kyle Peer, Superintendent - Reynolds Homestead Forest Resources Research Center, and Tim Williams, owner of Spruce Rock Farm, will discuss getting started with Christmas tree production, including seedling selection, planting techniques, farm layout, and shearing. We will also discuss applying pesticides and herbicides safely. This is a hands-on workshop with indoor and outdoor sessions, wear appropriate footwear and bring work gloves. Please pre-register by September 6.

September 12: Black Farmer Livelihood Strategies to Mediate Financial and Emotional Stress (Virtual)

A tradition of rural sociological research highlights the assets and networks that support farmer strategies to address financial and emotional distress. Using data from open-ended interviews with a small set of black farmers in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia, we investigate some of the factors that contribute to their sustainable livelihoods. We find from preliminary results that farmer informants rely on community-based farmer networks to navigate fiscal and mental health crises. These networks support farmers in understanding the challenges they confront as having structural and institutional causes, as well as providing solidarity bonds, access to training, and cooperative economic strategies. Thus, there is a role for collective action between farmers in developing alternative resources to maintain the farm and contest discriminatory practices. The data show that the benefits extend beyond the economic into the psychological as evidenced by narratives of reduced stress from joining together around issues pertinent to Black Farmers. This finding merits further exploration and consideration when developing programs to support farmers as they work to overcome contemporary financial and emotional challenges to sustaining the farm.

September 12: Small Farm Orientation (Virtual)

This two-hour Zoom course is geared to new farmers with zero to five years of experience operating a farm. Vernon Heath, a VSU Small Farm Outreach Program Assistant with over 40 years of experience in the Virginia Agricultural industry, will teach the course. He will walk attendees through the process of how to develop a productive and profitable farm. Participants will receive a Small Farm Orientation manual.

September 13: Kentland Farm Field Day (Blacksburg, VA)

This event will highlight current research projects at Kentland Farm as well as focus on grazing tools, pasture management, and horticulture production.

September 14: On Level Ground: Progressive Models in Farmland Tenure & Working Waterway (Webinar Series)

This interactive webinar series invites Mary Belle Zook to speak about *Progressive Models in Farmland*

Tenure & Working Waterways for the second installation of On Level Ground. Each 60-minute episode illuminates the work of one organization in a conversation-style, virtual setting with the hosts.

September 14: Value Added Hemp Production on a Small Farm (West Point, VA)

Ben Clark is a successful beginning farmer and owner of Glow Holistic, an all-natural online retail store for CBD and value-added hemp products. He will provide a tour of his farm and discuss the regulations, marketing, financial risk management challenges and strategies for the production of hemp and value-added hemp products. He will also discuss how he markets his products online and at various farmer's markets, including the Virginia State Fair.

September 14: Farm Business Plan Development (Wytheville, VA)

When it comes to borrowing money, do you find the whole process confusing? Did you know that in order to get a loan you need a business plan? Jimmy Rigney, a farm loan officer with the USDA/FSA in Chatham, Virginia, will discuss the basics of the loan process. He will show you what you need to include in your farm business plan, and explain how the lender will use that plan to determine eligibility. This workshop will teach you how to create a balance sheet, a projected income statement, and other items required by most agricultural lenders.

September 15: Human Enteric Virus Contamination of Soft Fruits: Management of Risk in the Face of Uncertainty

This webinar will feature renowned food virologist, Dr. Lee-Ann Jaykus, who will discuss her engagement with the berry industry as it seeks to manage the potential for hepatitis A virus and human norovirus contamination of fresh and frozen product. The potential for foods to serve as a vehicle of infection with human enteric viruses is now well accepted. However, this group of non-cultivable human pathogens presents unique challenges as the industry struggles to understand how and where contamination occurs; how contamination might be prevented and/or controlled; the nuances associated with testing along the supply chain; and interpretation of results from the standpoint of public health risk. Dr. Jaykus will address these issues, and discuss steps that industry might undertake to minimize the chance of virus contamination in fresh and frozen berries, and manage safety in light of recent advances to detection methods. We are thrilled Dr. Jaykus will help us at CONTACT kick off our second season of the Produce Safety Webinar Series. As a reminder: Each webinar will consist of a one-hour presentation/panel followed by 30 min of interactive Q&A.

September 15: Hydroponic Greenhouse Systems Workshop (Petersburg, VA)

At VSU's Randolph Farm

September 15: Agribusiness Production & Financial Management Program (Lawrenceville, VA)

Managing a farm is more than planting and harvesting crops or raising livestock. Farming is a business, and like any business, its success depends on proper planning and financial management. Darrell Tennie, of The Tennie Group, LLC, will conduct the program. The session will help new and established farmers and ranchers learn to develop business plans, keep efficient records and discover tips on mitigating business risks, as well as how to establish credit and borrow money. Participants will learn financial management strategies to help their businesses become more profitable and sustainable. They will also visit local farms through virtual tours and have an opportunity to talk with farmers about their business enterprises. Everyone will receive an Agribusiness Production and Financial Management Manual. At the end of the workshop, participants will know how to develop and maintain a business plan and set goals for their farm operations and enterprises. Lunch will be served.

September 15: How to Write a Business Plan for Lenders and Grants (Virtual)

If you own a farm, then you need a business plan. It is required by most lenders, as well as grant and cost-share applications. It is a part of your whole farm plan. Join us for a Zoom workshop with Clay

Roberts, Regional Manager for Lending at Colonial Farm Credit. Clay will guide you through the process of writing a business plan and share his experience with how a lender uses a farm business plan.

September 18: Chesapeake Foodshed Feast: Blue Ridge (Jeffersonton, VA)

Join us for night at Wollam Gardens you'll never forget! A celebration of local farmers, chefs, winemakers, and brewers showcasing our organization's commitment to sourcing ingredients from local farmers, ranchers and fishermen will reconnect diners to the land and the practices that promote healthy soil, bay and communities.

September 22: Farm Equipment Safety (Unionville, VA)

Each year more than 300 commercial tractor-related deaths occur in the United States. Many of these are caused by power take-offs. Other accidents are caused by vehicle collisions, hitting overhead objects such as tree limbs, rollovers, or burns during refueling. This workshop will review practices to help you remain safe on the farm, including how to use the tractor safely and properly, conducting pre-operational safety checks, and taking special precautions necessary for operating equipment on rough terrain and slopes. We will also review the use of personal protection equipment.

September 22: GAP for Beginners (Unionville, VA)

Join Michael Carter Jr of VSU Small Farm Outreach Center and Carter Farms, as we look at the foundation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). We will go over pre-harvest and post-harvest protocols, practices to implement, how to document your efforts and how to start the process if you are interested in moving forward with GAP. This hands-on interactive workshop will share what to do, and more importantly, what not to do.

September 23: 10th Annual Field Day & Ram Sale (Glade Spring, VA)

Currently there are 120 ram lambs on test, consigned by 31 producers from 10 states. Approx. 50 rams will be offered for sale. Rams are either registered or recorded, and a portion will be from NSIP flocks with EBVs.

September 24: Small Engine Maintenance and Repair (Middleburg, VA)

Save time and money with the best practices to maintain small engine farm equipment and keep it running year after year. This workshop will help you understand how a four-cycle engine works; common problems that occur; and how to fix them. Information on safety and risk management issues related to small engine repair will also be included in this hands-on workshop.

September 24-25: 2022 Sassafras Moon Herbal Festival (Erwin, TN)

Join for a Saturday in beautiful downtown Erwin Tennessee for a day of free herbal classes and herbal product vendors, followed by a day of hands-on intensive learning at the Forest Farming Conference on Sunday!

September 28: Contextualizing Food, Art, and Labor: The Aims and Crimes of Artisanal (Virtual)

Hear from Dr. Danille Christensen on what cultural work does the label artisanal do? What people, sites, and processes does it "elevate" or ignore, and with what consequences? Taking processed meats and home canning as examples, this presentation explores how the appellations craft and artisanal can bolster hierarchies framed in terms of gender, class, and race. Attending to a wider range of production contexts compels us to consider intersections of tacit knowledge, physical dexterity, social savvy, and sensory power that occur outside the abattoir or atelier.

September 30: Community Day of Agriculture (Fredericksburg, VA)

The Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank, in partnership with Tractor Supply Co., will be hosting a Community Day of Agriculture on Friday, September 30, 2022 from 10am - 2pm. The theme of this day is "Growing Food and Employability"; addressing food insecurity & unemployment in our community.

October

October 4: Farming with Disabilities (Warfield, VA)

Tens of thousands of agricultural workers become disabled in off-the-farm accidents or through illnesses or health conditions. More than 13 million individuals in rural America are affected by disabilities. Paul Wilson is raising rabbits, chickens, quail and a vegetable garden with a disability sustained as a child. He has no limit to what he can and will do to be successful in his projects. Come and visit with Paul and learn about overcoming obstacles with determination. Garland Mason, AgrAbility Coordinator for Virginia, will also be there to answer questions about her program. Everyone is invited—especially those with disabilities.

October 4: Learn the Basics of Seed Saving (Mineral, VA)

Join world-renowned farmer Ira Wallace, of Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, and Anita Roberson of Botanical Bites & Provisions for a workshop that will show you how to save seeds, to increase your self-sufficiency and grow healthy, productive plants, year after year. They will share valuable tips and resources to teach growers seed-saving methods to ensure seeds are healthy and viable.

October 4-5: Produce Safety Alliance Virtual Grower Training (Virtual)

This course helps produce growers learn about the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and help them fulfill the educational requirement associated with the Produce Safety Rule. All non-exempt farms are required to have at least one person on the farm who has attended an approved FSMA PSR training, like this one. Even if you are exempt, you are required to keep specific records, which we will cover in the workshop. There will be time for discussion, so participants should come prepared to share their experiences and questions. From beginners to experienced growers, everyone can benefit from taking the time to think about food safety on their farm!

October 5: Setting Up a Limited Liability Company (Prince Edward County, VA)

Learn the critical importance of having a Limited Liability Company (LLC) if you own a farm, multi-family owned business, rental properties, land, or other small businesses.

October 5: The 3 Baby Steps to Building Risk-Ready Markets (Virtual)

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

October 5: Success with Sheep in the Southside (Green Bay, VA)

Join us for a tour of Abdus-Sabur Farms to learn how a family started a successful hair sheep operation in Prince Edward County. Learn how they use a combination of custom-made feed and hay, and find out how they utilize estrous synchronization in their breeding program. Learn innovative management techniques and find out how they market their sheep to a seasonal and ethnic clientele.

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

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

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

Rotational grazing is a system designed to maximize grazing efficiency, and protect and improve soil and forage health. The factors to consider when developing a rotational grazing program are the intensity

and duration of grazing, recovery period, and the size and number of paddocks. VSU Small Farms Outreach Program Nutrient Management Specialist Tammy Holler will discuss the steps to take and ways that you can work to improve soil and crop production.

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

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

October 12: Mapping and Crop Spraying with Drones (Yanceyville, NC)

Drones designed for agricultural applications for small-scale farmers can help you improve yields and lower operational costs. To ensure you understand the benefits and usage of drones for precision agriculture, VSU SFOP is offering a basic introduction. Leonel Castillo, UAS-FAA Pilot, will discuss how you can use aerial photography with software that interprets RGB images to determine elevation differences, acreage, crop health, soil moisture and waterlogging. SFOP has purchased a spray drone, and we will discuss how it can be used for plotting aerial spraying applications.

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

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

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

Beginning and experienced sheep/goat producers will learn about best management practices before and after lambing/kidding. This workshop includes a hands-on demonstration with a birthing model. Additional topics include preventing lamb/kid loss, the importance of colostrum, strategies for troubleshooting when birthing complications occur, and diagnosing and treating newborn lamb/kid problems. Mandy Fletcher, experienced sheep producer and Virginia director for the American Sheep Industry, will provide instruction and demonstration.

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

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

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

The Value Added Producer Grant program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to processing or marketing. Generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income are the goals of this program. Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures are eligible to apply for this program. Beginning, Veteran and Socially Disadvantaged

Farmers or Ranchers, Small-or Medium-sized Farms structured as a Family Farm and Farmer or Rancher Cooperatives may be eligible to receive priority consideration.

October 22: Farmers Fireside Gathering (Abingdon, VA)

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

October 26: Small Ruminants: Preparing for Winter (Virtual)

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

October 26: Hispanic Hoop House Fall Tour (Lawrenceville, VA)

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

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

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

Fall and Winter Events

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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