



THE FIRST
Annual
VABF|SFOP
Summit

January 19–21, 2024
Roanoke, Virginia

The VABF|SFOP Summit is hosted by the Virginia Association for Biological Farming and the Virginia State University Small Farm Outreach Program, in partnership with VSU College of Ag and the Virginia Cooperative Extension.



SUMMIT FEEDBACK: We need your feedback to improve the VABF/SFOP Summit! Please complete our survey so that we can continue to grow and improve the Conference. Find it online at VABF.org.

WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATIONS!

Based on feedback from last year's VABF Conference, we have worked with the Hotel Roanoke to ensure that there are water bottle filling stations available throughout the conference. Ask the Registration & Information desk to be pointed in the right direction!

INCLUDED WITH REGISTRATION: morning coffee and tea on Saturday and Sunday, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch, all in the Roanoke Ballroom.

ADDITIONAL FIRESIDE CHATS: time slots are open. Sign up on the schedule on the door of the Blue Ridge room.



Visit the
Silent Auction
in the Roanoke Ballroom

Saturday from 8 am to 6 pm
Sunday from 8 am to 2 pm

Pick-up begins at 3 pm on Sunday and will be available until 5 pm. Winning bidders are responsible for payment for item(s) at pick-up.
Cash, checks, & credit cards are accepted.

How to Place your Bids

Find your personal Bidder # on your conference badge. Use this number to place bids on the bid sheets that correspond with your items of choice.



Valid from
January
19th to
24th

*Exclusive Discounts for
VABF/SFOP Summit Attendees
from the Market Garden Institute*

TheMarketGardener.com



50%
Off



Receive a 50% discount
on "The Market Gardener
Masterclass" Course
Use promocode "mgm50"

Register via this link: bit.ly/VABFmgm50 or scan the QR Code above

Meet your teacher
Jean-Martin Fortier
Farmer, Educator, & Award-Winning Author



Since launching his book "The Market Gardener, A Successful Grower's Handbook for Small-Scale Organic Farming" in 2012, JM Fortier has been internationally recognized as a foremost expert in the field of biointensive farming.

JM is also the author of "The Winter Market Gardening", a book dedicated to winter crops. This publication has been adapted for three specific markets to reflect the different climatic realities of northern regions.

His current mission is to pass on this knowledge to thousands of farmers through his work at the Market Gardener Institute.



10%
Off

Receive a 10% discount
on the "Winter Farming
Strategies" Course

Use promocode "mgm10"



Register via this link: bit.ly/VABFmgm10 or scan the QR Code above

Welcome to the inaugural Virginia Association for Biological Farming | Small Farm Outreach Program Summit! This year marks the joining together of two of Virginia's best farming conferences—the 24th Annual Virginia Biological Farming Conference and the Small Farm Outreach Program Annual Conference—into one dynamic summit. This event is open to all farming communities, including small-scale, biological farmers, urban and rural producers, and other ag-related constituents.

Thank you for joining us for this weekend of inspiring educational workshops, panel discussions, networking opportunities, farm tours and more! You'll enjoy this dynamic, agriculturally-transformative experience.

Participants will learn new and innovative approaches to farming, climate smart practices and risk management with opportunities to share their opinions on the topics discussed. Learn how to elevate your farm operation to improve practices and profits!

We will celebrate the successes of the Small Farmer of the Year and the NRCS Farmer of the Year, and reveal the 2023 SFOP State Program Assistant of the Year.

We hope that your experience at this event will be an exceptional one.



Thank You...

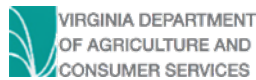
HARVESTER SPONSORS



Alcorn.

SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS
AND RANCHERS POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

SFOP SPONSORS



to all our 2024 Conference Sponsors!

SUSTAINER SPONSORS

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program



POLLINATOR SPONSORS



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES
ONLINE MASTER OF AGRICULTURAL
AND LIFE SCIENCES
VIRGINIA TECH.

CULTIVATOR SPONSORS



SEEDLING SPONSORS



PRE-SUMMIT AGENDA

FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, 2024

- 7 am–5 pm** **Registration & Info**, *North Entry Foyer*
- 8 am–5 pm** **Trade Show Set-up & Silent Auction Item Drop Off**
Roanoke Ballroom E-H
- 9 am–12 pm** **The Agronomics and Economics of Transitioning to Organic Production**, Gary Zimmer and Leilani Zimmer-Durand with **Midwestern BioAg and USDA NOP TOPP**, *Buck Mountain*
- 9 am–12 pm** **Year Round Hoophouse Vegetables**, Pam Dawling with **Twin Oaks Community**, *Shenandoah B*
- 9:30 am–4:30 pm** **Holistic Farming Methods: How Organic, Biodynamic, Permaculture, & Beyond Integrate for a Sustainable Future**, Stewart Lundy and Natalie McGill with **The Josephine Porter Institute and Perennial Roots Farm**, *Pocahontas (Includes lunch)*
- 9:30 am–12:30 pm** **Starting a Permaculture Farm from Scratch**, Patrick Johnson with **Nanah Farm and Garden**, *Appalachian*
- 12–2 pm** **Lunch**, served for 2 hours, buffet style. **Pre-Registered Tickets only**, *Crystal Ballroom*
- 1–5 pm** **Market Gardening 2.0: A Half-Day Seminar with Organic Grower JM Fortier, Market Gardener and Scott Wilson, Full Quiver Farm**, *Appalachian*
- 1–5 pm** **Living on the (Leading) Edge**, Julie Rawson and Jack Kittredge with **Many Hands Organic Farm**, *Shenandoah B*
- 2–5 pm** **Growing Tropical Perennials as Temperate Annuals**, Chris Smith with **Utopian Seed Project**, *Buck Mountain*
- 1–5 pm** **Lick Run Farm Tour**, Cameron Terry and Chloe Johnson with **Garden Variety Harvests**, *Transportation Provided. Vans leaving Hotel Roanoke at 12:45 pm. Lunch from 1–2 pm at the farm. Farm Tour and presentations 2–5 pm.*
- 6–7:45 pm** **Movie—Into the Weeds Documentary**, *Shenandoah B*

The film is *Into the Weeds: Dewayne "Lee" Johnson vs. Monsanto Company*, directed by internationally celebrated director Jennifer Baichwal. *Into the Weeds* follows groundskeeper Dewayne "Lee" Johnson and his fight for justice against Monsanto (now Bayer). Johnson's case was the first to go to trial in a series of lawsuits involving tens of thousands of plaintiffs claiming Monsanto's weed killer Roundup, or its industrial counterpart Ranger Pro, contributed to their cancer. The film follows this groundbreaking trial, while also stepping back to consider the systemic effects of the world's most widely used herbicide.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Jean-Martin (JM) Fortier, *Market Gardener Institute*

20 Years of Market Gardening: Cultivating Ecology, Community, and Growing Future Growers

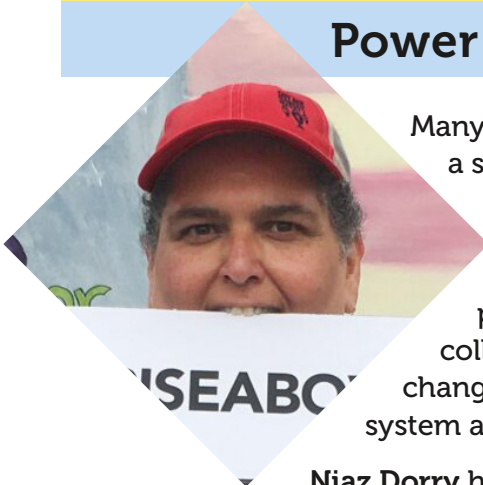
Join us for an enlightening and inspiring keynote presentation that delves into the incredible journey of organic grower **JM Fortier** and discover how his small-scale farming practices have not only transformed his local community but also ignited a global movement that's changing the face of agriculture worldwide. Be inspired by the incredible journey and learn how you can apply his lessons to your own farming practices.



Jean-Martin (JM) Fortier is a farmer, educator, entrepreneur, and best-selling author of *The Market Gardener*. With over 20 years of farming experience specializing in organic and biointensive vegetable production, JM Fortier has dedicated his career to developing, testing, and perfecting biointensive growing techniques on microfarms such as Les Jardins de la Grelinette, the Ferme des Quatre Temps, and the Old Mill. His new book, *The Winter Market Gardener*, is now published.

Niaz Dorry, *Executive Director of National Family Farm Coalition & Coordinating Director of North American Marine Alliance*

Power to the Farmers



Many farmers and food providers don't recognize their power. Join us for a session to get to know your power: the power in what you do, in the food you provide, in the economies you build, in the stewardship you bring to our collective environment, and in the love you bring to the land, water, and animals in your care. Once we know our power, we must work to build even more power through creative collaborations and market transformations that can lead to policy changes that reflect your collective values and vision for an equitable food system and a peaceful future.

Niaz Dorry has been a community organizer for over 30 years. Since 2008, she has served as the coordinating director of the North American Marine Alliance. One of the first things NAMA did after Niaz took the helm was to join the National Family Farm Coalition as its first non-farming member. The two organizations entered into an innovative shared-leadership model in 2018, putting Niaz in the new role of leading the work of both organizations and further securing the relationship between land and sea.



SUMMIT AGENDA

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 2024

- 7 am–6 pm** **Registration & Info**, *North Entry Foyer*
- 7 am–8 am** **Yoga for Farmers**, *Wilson*
- 8 am–6 pm** **Tradeshow, Silent Auction & Fireside Chats**
Roanoke Ballroom & Blue Ridge
- 8:30 am–5:30 pm** **Youth & Teen Program**, *Brush Mt., Tinker Mt. & Bent Mt. Rooms*
- 8:30–10 am** **Session A** (*Book signings to follow*)
- Break** **Tradeshow, Silent Auction & Fireside Chats**
Roanoke Ballroom & Blue Ridge
- 10:30 am–12 pm** **Session B** (*Book signings to follow*)
- 12:15–1:45 pm** **LUNCH—Opening Remarks by Dr. Janine Parker Woods & KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Jean-Martin Fortier**, *Roanoke Ballroom*
- 2–9 pm** **Taste of Virginia Market & Expo**, *Crystal Ballroom*
- 2–3:30 pm** **Session C** (*Book signings to follow*)
- 3:30–5:30 pm** **SPECIAL SESSION: Small Farmer Legislative Town Hall**, *Washington*
- Break** **Tradeshow, Silent Auction & Fireside Chats**, *Roanoke Ballroom & Blue Ridge*
- 4–5:30 pm** **Session D** (*Book signings to follow*)
- Break** **Tradeshow, Silent Auction & Fireside Chats**
Roanoke Ballroom & Blue Ridge
- 5:45 pm** **DINNER—AWARDS CEREMONY**
The Virginia Natural Resources Conservation Service Farmer of the Year
The Small Farmer of the Year
The VSU State Program Assistant of the Year
- KEYNOTE ADDRESS Chapter 1 by Niaz Dorry**, *Roanoke Ballroom*
- 7:30–9:30 pm** **Taste of Virginia Social with DJ**, *Crystal Ballroom*
- 8–9:30 pm** **Saturday Night Comedy Show with Sam Hedges**
'Farming is Funny: Hilarious Stories from the field,' *Buck Mountain*



SUMMIT AGENDA

SATURDAY FIRESIDE CHATS

- 8–9 am Hannah Varnell—Raising Healthy Livestock
- 10–10:30 am Liza Dobson—Flower Farmer Networking
- 10:30–11:30 am Jack Kittredge—Carbon sequestration follow up and book signing
- 1:30–2:30 pm Renee Foster—FSA Urban Agriculture Initiative
- 2:30–3 pm Renee Foster—Virginia Urban Ag Initiative
- 3–3:30 pm Nicole Gwishiri—Women for the Land: Farm Resilience for Black, Brown and Indigenous Women Farmers
- 3:30–4:30 pm Callie Walker—Land Equity with Central Va Agrarian Commons
- 5:30–6 pm Zackary Jones—Beneficial Micro Presentation follow up



**Liquid
mineral
plant
nutrition
products**

**Biological
treatments
to produce
healthy
plants & soils**



**Advancing Eco
Agriculture**

AdvancingEcoAg.Com

(800) 495-6603

SATURDAY SESSIONS

7–8 am—Yoga for Farmers, *Mary Cush, Wilson*

During the growing season we can be pressed for time and sometimes our own well-being gets pushed to triage. In this non-traditional yoga session you will come away with some yoga “snacks” to use throughout your busy day. Do a little often. Integrate daily love for your body by simply incorporating proper alignment and intermittent stretching into your work and end the day with gratitude for the miracle of the human anatomy and physiology.

Session A: 8:30–10 am

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Partnering with Perennial Cover Crops to Fight Agricultural Nuisances—*Cerruti RR Hooks, University of Maryland*—TRACK: Crop Specific & Plant Health, *Monroe*

During the past few decades, growers have increasingly adopted cover crops into their farming operations. Many farmers sow annual cover crops in the fall after harvesting their cash crops to protect their lands during the winter, and improve soil quality and health. Thus, annual cover crops are primarily grown during the winter months and terminated prior to cash crop planting in the spring. However, if a perennial cover crop is planted, it can remain between the rows of the cash crop the entire growing season. There, it can be used to manipulate pests (insects, weeds and nematodes) and beneficials (natural enemies and pollinators) throughout the crop's life cycle. Notwithstanding, there are some rewards and drawbacks of using perennial cover crops to manipulate pests and beneficials. As such, strategies that can be used to successfully deploy perennial cover crops as well as the highs and lows of using them as part of a cash crop system to manage multiple pest complexes will be presented.

Exploring Agritourism—*Seidah Armstrong, Sweet Vine Farm Winery*—TRACK: Farming for Profit, Location: *Washington*

Want to bring more money to your farming operation? Looking to diversify your farm revenue? Join Mrs. Seidah Armstrong of Sweet Vine Farm Winery to explore various agritourism potential on your farm. Learn how to maximize your farm's land, production and history beyond traditional crops and livestock.

Seed Saving and Seed Production as a Farm Enterprise—*Ira Wallace, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange*—TRACK: Seed Saving, *Buck Mountain*

Preservation of seeds is one of the foundations of sustainable food production. Learn about seed saving and seed production for your own farm viability and for possible sales to independent seed companies who contract directly with farmers—for both certified organic and ecologically grown seeds.

Adding Cut Flowers to a Vegetable Program for Farmers Market or CSA—*Ashleigh L Hobson, Hazel Witch Farm*—TRACK: Flower Production, *Mill Mountain*

Basic cut flower production to add alongside vegetable production, focusing on variety selection for farmers markets or as a CSA add on. Covering spacing, propagation, resources for sourcing, trellising, stage of harvest, post-harvest handling, crop planning for continuous harvest, and basic design techniques. Including tips for marketing and display.

Carbon Sequestration and Organic No-Till—*Julie Rawson and Jack Kittredge, Many Hands Organic Farm*—TRACK: Soil Health & Carbon Sequestration, *Appalachian*

Almost a decade ago we recognized the importance of building soil carbon for both crop health and climate moderation. We researched and publicized good carbon-conscious farming methods in the white paper: “Soil Carbon Restoration: Can Biology Do the Job?” (Google that title if interested.) The importance of photosynthesis in plant carbohydrate production and the resultant nourishment via exudate of soil organisms, which then return the symbiotic cycle by enhancing the health and vitality of those crop plants, is fundamental to farming and needs more thorough understanding.

On our own farm we work with ways to restore carbon, control weeds, and prepare beds that are organic, effective and viable given our labor and budget. We will discuss tillage, mulching with leaves, hay, straw and wood chips, soil covering with cardboard or silage tarps, robust fertility management with foliar feeding, and equipment to manage any of these methods. Though we sold our tillage machines and attachments years ago, we have found alternative ways to do the same job and will talk about the problems and opportunities we encountered following that path.

Raising Broiler Chickens Panel—*Erin Worrall, Robert White, Logan and Emilie Tweardy, Certified Naturally Grown*—TRACK: Regenerative Grazing/Livestock, *Shenandoah B*

This session begins with a 10-minute film featuring Robert White of Crickhollow Farm in Palmyra, VA, as he shares all you need to know about beginning a pastured chicken operation. Following the film, Erin Worrall will host a panel discussion featuring Robert alongside Logan and Emily Tweardy of Shirefolk Farm in Palmyra, VA. Covering bird care and health, infrastructure, and honest cost breakdowns, we'll discuss how you can make your market stand a one-stop shop with delicious proteins to supplement your vegetable production or begin raising pastured poultry for a homestead enterprise.

SATURDAY SESSIONS

Otter Creek Organic Farms Year-Long Outline with Economics Included—Gary Zimmer, Otter Creek Organic Farms—TRACK: Organic, Pocahontas

My son, with some part time help, farms 1500 acres organic scattered out in a 45 mile circle in SW Wisconsin. Once the soils are regenerated the only soil additions are compost with sulfur and boron added. The farming system is one year rye underseeded with a clover blend and one year corn this is an extreme soil building program that produces high yields and is profitable.

Pawpaws to the People: Preservation and Development of North America's Largest Superfruit—Ben Casteel, Virginia Highlands Community College; Highlands Pawpaw Growers Association—TRACK: Agroforestry, Shenandoah A

Asimina triloba, the Pawpaw, has become one of the most popular wild fruits. As demand increases, it becomes ever-so important to trial and conserve the work of pawpaw breeders that have selected and developed improved cultivated varieties. There must also be attention paid to the agroecological value of pawpaws as a potential agroforestry / silvopasture crop. Finally, moving forward to develop a supply chain of pawpaw products is critical to the development of this fascinating fruit from lore to store. Discussion will include work completed and in progress by the Highlands Pawpaw Growers Association as well as demonstration of grafting techniques for germplasm preservation.

Session B: 10:30 am–12 pm

Community of Practice: Multi-strata Agroforestry—Steven Wilder, Meadow Path Eco Farm—TRACK: Agroforestry, Shenandoah A

Do you operate, or are you planning to operate, a multi-strata agroforestry system including food forests, forest farming, forest gardens, syntropic agroforestry, perennial cropping system, natural farm, eco-farm, or other forest mimicry system? Here is a chance for you to network with and learn from others who share your passion. A "community of practice" connects farmers who share common concerns, problems, experiences, and interests in a type of agriculture. This cooperative learning session is an active, participatory, highly organized networking experience. Small groups share ideas and experiences in response to prompts from the session facilitator. Session attendees will leave with multiple new connections, solutions, and ideas. From getting started, to deer protection, to saving money, to crop selection, to maximizing production, you'll learn from each other and become a better multi-strata farmer.

Community and Urban Agriculture—Renee Foster, Hampton Roads Urban Agriculture—TRACK: Urban Agriculture/Homesteading, Buck Mountain

The intent of this session is to bring awareness to urban agriculture from a social and economic aspect. Tell the story of how Hampton Roads Urban Agriculture was started and how we have built a community around the organization.

Rethinking Farmland and Housing Ownership Through an Equity and Justice Lens—Callie Walker, Duron Chavis, Renard Turner, Tyrone Cherry III, Michael Carter Jr., Nikki D'adamo Damery, Elizabeth Spellman—TRACK: Equity & Diversity in Farming, Washington

There has been much discussion of and consternation at the loss of farmland by Black farmers. In 1910, Black farmers owned approximately 16 million acres of farmland in the US, but as of the 2017 Census of Agriculture, farmers who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color owned less than 3 million acres. This is the result of devastating and systemic racial discrimination, including Jim Crow laws and lynchings forcing migration, lack of access to capital and credit due to USDA discrimination, the theft of land held as heirs' property, and corruption by the legal system.

At the same time, American Farmland Trust tells us that there are 370 million acres of land changing hands in the next two decades. While much of that land will be passed on via inheritance, speculation by developers, private investors and corporate agribusiness is driving up land prices and creating more barriers to land access for new and beginning farmers and farmers of color.

A group of farmer activists decided to act at this critical juncture by blending the traditions from conservation land trust and community land trust worlds to create the Central Virginia Agrarian Commons. This organization's mission is to promote food sovereignty, preserve ecologically stewarded farmland in perpetuity, and provide affordable, long-term land tenure to BIPOC farmers. So far, we have acquired 5 acres of land in Petersburg and 73 acres in Amelia County. We fundraise for infrastructure and future housing so farmers can live on the land and farm businesses can thrive. Panel participants will hear inspiring stories of this hybrid land trust organization's journey, and what we're doing and learning in Petersburg and Amelia County as part of Central Virginia Agrarian Commons.



SATURDAY SESSIONS

Keys to Profitability in the Market Garden—*Jean-Martin Fortier and Scott Wilson, Market Gardener and Full Quiver Farm*—**TRACK: Farming for Profit, Shenandoah B**

Can small farms really be profitable? It's a question that many people ask themselves before getting started, or in the early stages of their farm if they are struggling to make ends meet. The answer is YES and to help improve your bottom line, this session will teach:

- How to set goals to grow your bottom line
- Which clients to focus on in order to increase sales
- How to set prices to grow your profits
- Which investments to make for long-term growth

The Perks and Problems of Flower Subscriptions—*Gwynn Hamilton, Stonecrop Farm*—**TRACK: Flower Production, Mill Mountain**

CSAs offer a valuable outlet for your flowers, but there are lots of logistics to tackle and so many hands to hold. After more than ten years of using this method of sales, Gwynn helps you think through this marketing strategy.

Securing Organic Vegetable Production in Virginia through Increased Disease Management Knowledge—*Steve Rideout, Virginia Tech*—**TRACK: Organic, Pocahontas**

This presentation will focus on multiple years of research examining both host resistance and OMRI-approved fungicides for control of diseases. The title of this presentation comes from a VDACS-funded grant that has allowed us to investigate organic disease control in vegetables.

Backyard Rabbits and Poultry—*Natalie Green, Handmade on the Homestead*—**TRACK: Regenerative Grazing/Livestock, Monroe**

Keeping backyard rabbits or poultry doesn't need to be complicated. This workshop will cover the basics of choosing the breed that best suits your needs, the benefits of both purchasing young animals versus breeding your own, creating a space for them, and tips on how to keep your animals healthy. Animals discussed in this workshop will include rabbits, chickens, turkeys, ducks, and quail.



Biodynamic Basics: Towards a Self-sufficient Farm Organism—*Stewart Lundy and Natalie McGill, Josephine Porter Institute and Perennial Roots Farm*—**TRACK: Soil Health & Carbon Sequestration, Appalachian**

Enhance the economic self-sufficiency and ecological sustainability of your farm or garden. Using fewer inputs, buying less feed, and producing more of the fertility needs of the farm, approach the ideal of the thriving farm organism integrated into your local ecosystem. We will cover the basics of biodynamics, including the so-called preparations and their use, but these are approaches that can integrate into any sustainable operation.

Session C: 2–3:30 pm

Agroforestry Integration for the Small Farm—*Stesha Warren, Appalachian Sustainable Development*—**TRACK: Agroforestry, Shenandoah B**

Agroforestry is not a set of new practices, it has been around for centuries in various forms and cultures. In today's society we are seeing these practices reemerge in the forms of alley cropping, forest farming, silvopasture, riparian buffers and windbreaks. These approaches are gaining in popularity across small and large scale producers. The purpose of this class is to introduce agroforestry concepts that can be incorporated into the everyday homestead or small scale farm for crop and wildlife diversity, multi-revenues of income, soil and water protection, and a host of other benefits. Participants will gain a high level understanding of how to take these concepts and apply them to their land through presentation, conversations and situational case study for hands-on application.

Meeting the Climate Challenge: Sharing Stories, Co-creating Solutions—*Mark Schonbeck, Organic Farming Research Foundation*—**TRACK: Soil Health & Carbon Sequestration, Appalachian**

Come join in a collaborative effort to develop effective strategies to protect your farm operation against the impacts of climate disruption. We will begin with a summary of the science and practice of climate resilience through soil health and agroecological systems with examples from organic farms in Virginia. The second half of the workshop will be devoted to open discussion and problem solving. This is your opportunity to share your observations, successes, and challenges in dealing with climate change impacts on your farm, learn from the experiences of other farmers, and educate your presenter on what climate change looks and feels like from the tractor seat. Let's work together to develop new and improved strategies for meeting this unprecedented challenge.

SATURDAY SESSIONS

Farm Bill Update: Where We Are At, What's At Stake, and How to Engage—Jesse Womack, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition—TRACK: Policy & Advocacy, Wilson

The Farm Bill is the largest piece of Federal legislation impacting our food and farming system. Over the last year, Congress has been preparing to reauthorize this important legislation, which provides sustainable farmers and advocates across the country the chance to ask for improvements to the Bill. Come learn the up-to-date status of the Farm Bill reauthorization process, the changes to Farm Bill programs that are likely to pass in the final Bill (and those that aren't), and how you can plug-in and help ensure we get the best Farm Bill possible for farmers and the environment.

How to Save Seeds and Be A Farmer—Chris Smith, The Utopian Seed Project—TRACK: Seed Saving, Buck Mountain

On farm seed saving is somewhat of a lost art, but has many benefits to the farmer (and some challenges). This workshop aims to give you the information to decide if on-farm seed saving is a right fit for your farm, and a realistic look at generating income through seed grow-outs for seed companies.

- Opportunities and challenges of seed saving
- Examples of farmers being successful
- Dual cropping potential of seed saving (have your cake and eat it)
- Working with seed companies as a contract grower

Community of Practice: Small Farm Startup—Steven Wilder, Meadow Path Eco Farm—TRACK: Urban Agriculture/Homesteading, Shenandoah A

Do you operate a small farm? Have you recently started, or do you plan to start a small farm? Here is a chance for you to network with and learn from others who share your passion. A "community of practice" connects farmers who share common concerns, problems, experiences, and interests in a type of agriculture. "Small farm" for this session is defined as five acres of production area or less. This cooperative learning session is an active, participatory, highly organized networking experience. Small groups share ideas and experiences in response to prompts from the session facilitator. Discussion topics range from planning and design, to getting started, to cost and funding, to crop selection, to maximizing production and profit, to attendee-selected topics. Session attendees will leave with multiple new connections, solutions, and ideas. Sharing makes great learning!

The Homestead Apple Orchard—Joseph Martinez, Rockbridge Cider Vinegar—TRACK: Organic, Pocahontas

This would be a comprehensive workshop that would include planning a suitable site for a modest apple orchard, choosing varieties, Summer and Winter pruning, and methods for holistic orchard management. My orchards are "Certified Naturally Grown." I do not use any synthetic herbicides, pesticides, or fungicides. Instead, my small-scale methods are best described as holistic. This entails promoting the abundance of natural pollinators and insect predators, feeding the trees and orchard soils with on-farm inputs, managing orchard ground covers, etc. I will also present options for the sale of fruit and value-added products from the Homestead Orchard.

Reducing Inputs on your Livestock Farm—Lee Rinehart, NCAT & ATTRA—TRACK: Regenerative Grazing/Livestock, Monroe

The session includes case studies and ideas for reducing fertilizer, herbicide, and supplemental feeds on livestock farms through adaptive grazing techniques and grazing of cover crops. The session will draw on the experience of the presenter and audience knowledge to engage in an in-depth discussion.

Fruit of the Rot: Diversifying Your Farm with Mushrooms—Mark Jones, Sharondale Mushroom Farm—TRACK: Crop Specific & Plant Health, Mill Mountain

This session includes a general discussion about fungi in agriculture and how to develop and modify farm infrastructure to grow mushrooms and work with other fungi.

Financial Welfare & Capital Acquisition for your Agricultural Operation—John Armstrong—TRACK: Farming for Profit, Washington

Are you in need of capital for your farming enterprise? Have you been curious about how to leverage your assets and land holdings to strengthen your financial position? Mr. John Armstrong, Purple Heart Military veteran, and accountant for over 40 years will guide you how to make your operation more attractive to lenders.



SATURDAY SESSIONS

Special Session—3:30–5:30 pm

Small Farmer Legislative Town Hall—*Michael Carter Jr., Carter Farms and Africulture*—**TRACK: Equity & Diversity in Farming, Washington**

The need to support localized, biological farms and food systems is increasing in urgency, given pandemic supply chain breaks and agriculture's environmental impact on soil, water, and climate. High-value, organic and climate-smart commodities keep farmland in production, allow small farmers to make a living from agriculture, and facilitate agriculture's contribution as a climate change solution by sequestering carbon in soil and plant material, while benefiting local economies.

In the 1880s, Virginia's small farmers collaborated together in the Fusion populist movement to gain better pricing, fairness, and policy consideration. Taking inspiration from this movement, this forum provides opportunities for small, biological farmers and other constituents to share needs, issues, respectful criticism or praise, including challenges faced by farmers of color, with the legislators who create policies and programs that affect us. A partnership of VABF, VSU's Small Farm Outreach Program, and Carter Farms and Africulture.

Session D: 4–5:30 pm

Agroforestry Regional Knowledge (ARK) Exchange Network—*Agroforester Panel Discussion—Katie Trozzo, Cornelius Deppe, Ryan Huish, Dana Lydon, Ian Nichols*—**TRACK: Agroforestry, Shenandoah B**

Join us to learn about the Agroforestry Regional Knowledge (ARK) Exchange Network and hear directly from three agroforester panelists from Virginia who are involved in the network. They will share details about the design, implementation, and maintenance of recent agroforestry demonstrations they established on their farms through the Catalyzing Agroforestry Grant Program (CAGP), including successes and lessons learned. The audience will have the opportunity to pose questions to the panelists. As part of the session, participants will also learn more about CAGP and ways to become involved in the ARK Exchange Network more broadly.



Microbial Ecology and Beneficial Organisms of Vermicompost and Teas—*Zackary Jones PHD, Aggrego Data*—**TRACK: Soil Health & Carbon Sequestration, Appalachian**

Dr. Jones will be discussing his research on vermicompost and vermiteas with results from the Vermi-Microbiome Project. This project was funded by WSARE in 2020 and included over 25 commercial vermicompost producers who provided samples for DNA sequencing microbiome analysis. The goal of the project was primarily to see if this technology could lend value to the vermicomposting community as it had largely been overlooked.

This presentation will look at the biological diversity of samples, the presence of specific plant growth promoting organisms, and similarities and differences between different vermicompost producers. Vermiteas and extract microbial community data from Master Brewer Troy Hinke will also be discussed.

Storage Vegetables for Off-Season Sales—*Pam Dawling, Twin Oaks Community*—**TRACK: Farming for Profit, Buck Mountain**

Grow crops you can sell during the winter, while allowing yourself some down-time and reprieve from outdoor work. Choose suitable crops, schedules and storage conditions. Understand your weather and basic crop protection. This workshop will provide tables of cold-hardiness and details of four ranges of cold-hardy crops (warm and cool weather crops to harvest and store before very cold weather; crops to keep alive in the ground further into winter, then store; hardy crops to store in the ground and harvest during the winter, and overwinter crops for early spring harvests before the main season). It includes tables of storage conditions needed for different vegetables and suggestions of suitable storage methods, with and without electricity.

Designing the intersection of curriculum delivery and food production in a school farm. Lessons from the Waynesboro Education Farm project—*Ryan Blosser*—**TRACK: Urban Agriculture/ Homesteading, Monroe**

In this session I will introduce the Waynesboro Education Farm and tell the story of the history, its goals, and how it's changed over the years. I will get into detail about design elements that have allowed us to continue to produce food for distribution in the community while creating more spaces in the farm for curriculum delivery. I will detail how this curriculum gets delivered, who we deliver it to, and what we hope to achieve by doing so.

SATURDAY SESSIONS

Appalachian Heirlooms for a Changing Climate—*Ben Casteel, Virginia Highlands Community College; Highlands Pawpaw Growers Association—TRACK: Crop Specific & Plant Health, Pocahontas*

As Climate Change becomes more of a hot topic amongst the Ag world, it becomes more critical to preserve heirloom varieties that were selected for their ability to perform in less-than-ideal situations. There just so happens to be a treasure trove of agrobiodiversity hidden in the hills and hollars of Appalachia. Join in this conversation about conservation of Appalachian Heirlooms

Enhancing the Understanding and Use of RMA Federal Crop Insurance by Producers—*SeRena Hill, Navigator Project Director, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture—TRACK: Equity & Diversity in Farming, Shenandoah A*

Build awareness and/or understanding of the network of AIPs. Enhance the level of crop insurance to historically underserved farmers & ranchers. Create relationships and outreach on crop insurance products and services. The RMA Navigator project will provide a better understanding of federal crop insurance products and the performance of those risk management tools.

Overwintered Dahlias in the Southeast—*Ashleigh L Hobson, Hazel Witch Farm—TRACK: Flower Production, Mill Mountain*

An overview of growing dahlias in the Southeast. Variety selection for event florists, propagating by cuttings and tuber division, and how-tos for bed prep to overwinter in the ground as well as pruning mid season for multiple flushes.

Saturday night 8–9:30 pm

**Farming is Funny:
Hilarious Stories from the Field**

Join VABF for an evening of farm-inspired comedy! The show will open with hilarious stories told by VA farmers, which Roanoke's own Big Lick Conspiracy will use as inspiration for some improv (tastefully adult content). We invite everyone to enjoy some therapeutic laughter at the crazy things that happen in the field. This free show will take place after Saturday night's dinner from 8–9:30 pm at the Roanoke Hotel. This session is sponsored by the Roanoke Foodshed Network as part of RFN's Arts Connect the Food System series.



thecarterfarms.com
learnafriculture.org
thecarterbrothers.net

Growing Farmers since 1910 ∞



VABF | SFOP Conference
Attendees Receive a
5% Discount on Orders

Use Code
24-1308

Starts: 1/1/2024
Ends: 12/31/2024

www.johnnyseeds.com

Offer cannot be applied toward the purchase of gift certificates. Offer does not apply to shipping charges and cannot be combined with any other offer.

When you want the best outside
make sure it's SumaGrow® inside



Naturally Redeeming Nature

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT

WWW.SUMAGROW.COM

ambioglobal@gmail.com
(949) 891-5053



EAT.
DRINK.
READ.

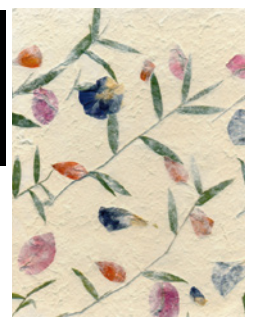


EXPLORE.

edibleblueridge.com
[@edibleblueridge](https://twitter.com/edibleblueridge)



**Crystal Ballroom
THE HOTEL ROANOKE**



TASTE OF VIRGINIA
EXPO & MARKET

at the 1st Annual VABF-SFOP Summit



Free event! Open to the Public!



Join us on Saturday in the Crystal Ballroom for a celebration of all things local and handmade with Virginia foods, libations, herbals, and handicrafts.



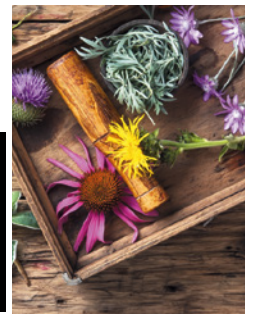
Samples and Sales!



SATURDAY, JANUARY 20TH



SAMPLES & SALES · 2 - 9 PM
EVENING SOCIAL & DJ · 7:30 - 9:30 PM



SUMMIT AGENDA

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2024

7 am–5 pm	Registration & Info, North Entry Foyer
7–8 am	Yoga for Farmers, Wilson
7:30–8:15 am	Regional Networking Sessions, (See map for room assignments)
8 am–5 pm	Tradeshow, Silent Auction & Fireside Chats <i>Roanoke Ballroom & Blue Ridge</i>
8:30 am–5 pm	Youth & Teen Program, Brush Mt., Tinker Mt. & Bent Mt. Rooms
8:30–10 am	Session E (Book signings to follow)
Break	Trade show, Silent Auction, Fireside Chats <i>Roanoke Ballroom & Blue Ridge</i>
10:30 am–12 pm	Session F (Book signings to follow)
12:15–1:15 pm	LUNCH—KEYNOTE ADDRESS Chapter 2, by Niaz Dorry, Roanoke Ballroom
1:30–3 pm	Session G (Book signings to follow)
2 pm	Silent Auction Bidding Ends
Break	Trade show, Fireside Chats, Roanoke Ballroom & Blue Ridge
3–5 pm	Silent Auction Pick-Up & Payment, Roanoke Ballroom
3:30–5 pm	Session H (Book signings to follow)

SUNDAY FIRESIDE CHATS

8–8:30 am	Mark Schonbeck—Climate change resilience strategies
8:30–9 am	Tom Brody—VABF Ambassador Meeting
10–10:30 am	Thelonius Cook—Farmers of Color
10:30–11:30 am	Katie Trozzo—SARE ARK Exchange 2.0
11:30–12 pm	Hannah Varnell—Raising healthy livestock
3–3:30 pm	Tom Brody—Beginning Farmers



SUNDAY SESSIONS

7–8 am—Yoga for Farmers, *Mary Cush, Wilson*

During the growing season we can be pressed for time and sometimes our own well-being gets pushed to triage. In this non-traditional yoga session you will come away with some yoga “snacks” to use throughout your busy day. Do a little often. Integrate daily love for your body by simply incorporating proper alignment and intermittent stretching into your work and end the day with gratitude for the miracle of the human anatomy and physiology.

Session E: 8:30–10 am

Alley Cropping: Design, Implementation, and Production at Virginia Tech’s Catawba Sustainability Center—*Adam Taylor & Stesha Warren, Virginia Tech Catawba Sustainability Center and Appalachian Sustainable Development—TRACK: Agroforestry, Pocahontas*

Learn about the fundamentals of introducing trees into various crop rotations through the practice of alley cropping. Hear from Adam Taylor and Stesha Warren as they walk you through the process of developing an alley cropping system from design, to species selection, to land prep, to installation, to growing the crops. Hear about their lessons learned from successes to challenges and everything in between.

Lettuce Year Round—*Pam Dawling, Twin Oaks Community—TRACK: Crop Specific & Plant Health, Mill Mountain*

This presentation includes techniques to extend the lettuce season using row cover, cold frames and hoop houses to provide lettuce harvests in every month of the year. The workshop will include a look at varieties for spring, summer, fall and winter. We will consider the pros and cons of head lettuce, leaf lettuce, baby lettuce mix and the newer multileaf types. Information will also be provided on scheduling and growing conditions, including how to persuade lettuce to germinate when it’s too hot, and the Asian greens used as lettuce in tropical climates.

Building a Brand: Marketing Skills for Farmers—*Erin Worrall, The Cedar Chest Farm—TRACK: Farming for Profit, Buck Mountain*

Most farmers want to be anywhere but sitting behind a computer but the fact is, building a successful farm brand does require some screen time! Farmer and professional marketing coordinator Erin Worrall shares practical ways to leverage social media, email communications, and a functional website to build a cohesive brand that increases customer loyalty, sales, and community connection.

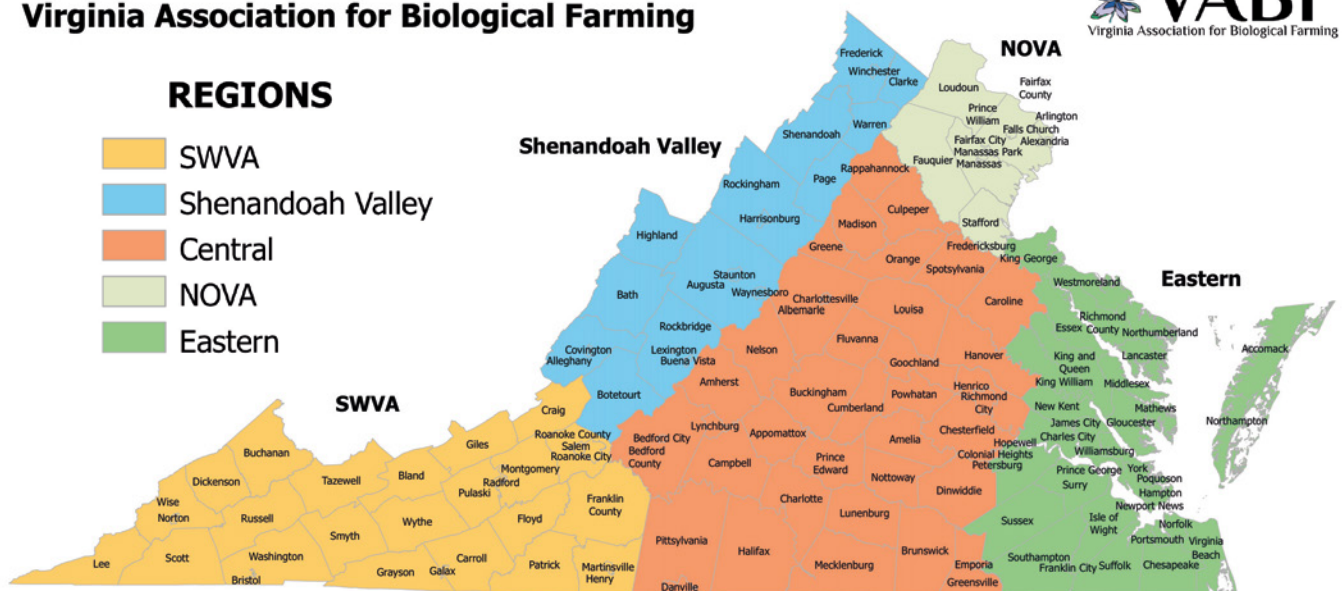
Regional Networking Sessions

Virginia Association for Biological Farming



REGIONS

- SWVA
- Shenandoah Valley
- Central
- NOVA
- Eastern



Central

Sunday 7:30 AM - 8:15 AM

SWVA Adam Taylor & Hannah Varnell <i>Loc: Shenandoah A</i>	Shenandoah Valley Brent Wills & Tom Brody <i>Location: Buck Mountain</i>	Central Seyra Whitney <i>Loc: Shenandoah B</i>	NOVA Francesca Costantino <i>Loc: Pocahontas</i>	Eastern Renee Foster <i>Loc: Appalachian</i>
--	--	--	--	--

SUNDAY SESSIONS

Examining Your Mental Well-Being—Kevin Carter— **TRACK: Equity & Diversity in Farming, Washington**

Discuss with Mr. Kevin Carter, MSW, tools, techniques and practices that can assist in ensuring our many challenges don't overwhelm us. Mental health and stability is at the core of our farming and family successes, and sharpening the tools needed to maintain our mental well-being is one of the keys to success.

Blooming Possibilities: A Flower Panel—Growing— **Liza Dobson, Gwynn Hamilton, Chelsea Belle Graves,** **& Ashleigh Hobson—TRACK: Flower Production,** **Shenandoah B**

Join us for a flower farming panel discussion! Panelists Gwynn Hamilton (Stonecrop Farm), Ash Hobson Carr (Hazel Witch Farm), and Chelsea Belle Graves (Bee's Wing Farm) are seasoned growers across a wide range of climates and topography in Virginia, including Northern Virginia, Central Virginia, and Southwest Virginia. This panel is for folks who have some experience with flowers and are looking to expand! We will discuss a range of topics including (1) How to extend the season for more spring, fall, and holiday blossoms, including specific crops and soil/disease management in tunnels. (2) How to select varieties and colors to grow for specific markets, including focals, fillers, and foliage. (3) Working with tools and equipment to scale up production and/or protect your body long term.

Beginning an On-farm Chicken Breeding Program— **Anna Wills, Bramble Hollow Farm—TRACK:** **Regenerative Grazing/Livestock, Monroe**

Breeding chickens on-farm is a great way to be one step closer to true sustainability in your pastured chicken operation. We're not just talking about breeding future egg layers and mutt yardbirds. With some dedication and creative thinking you can reproduce meat chickens on-farm as well. We'll explore the first steps in beginning a chicken breeding program and touch on some advanced steps for taking your breeding program forward. Topics covered will include defining your goals in breeding chickens, breeder selection, breeding flock housing, nutrition, management, and expectations of the workload that comes with chicken breeding.

Virginia Urban Agriculture Initiative—Renee Foster, **Hampton Roads Urban Agriculture—TRACK: Urban** **Agriculture/Homesteading, Appalachian**

Interested, growing, or supporting urban agriculture in Virginia? Come to our session to share your experiences with peers and learn about a current Virginia Urban Agriculture Initiative supported by USDA Farm Service Agency, Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, and urban farmers and organizers across Virginia.

Perennial Vegetables for your Farm or Garden—Dani **Baker, The Enchanted Edible Forest at Cross Island** **Farms—TRACK: Urban Agriculture/Homesteading,** **Shenandoah A**

Why plant, weed, cultivate and water annual vegetables year after year when you can grow perennials that mimic the annuals, plant them once, and harvest them year after year with minimal labor? This power point presentation will describe a number of highly nutritious perennial vegetables, herbs, flowers and leaves that are easy to grow and require minimal care. The growth habit, preferred habitat, nutritional value and uses of each plant will be described accompanied by photos taken in the presenter's edible forest garden. Attendees will be inspired to try their hand at growing these carefree food plants.

Session F: 10:30 am–12 pm

Integrating Nitrogen Fixers in Diverse Settings— **Dani Baker, The Enchanted Edible Forest at Cross** **Island Farms—TRACK: Agroforestry, Shenandoah A**

Instead of adding nitrogen fertilizer, pepper your planting with nitrogen-fixing plants. This PowerPoint presentation will illustrate over 20 nitrogen-fixing plants from groundcovers to tall trees that you can integrate into your fruit or nut orchard, silvopasture, berry bush plot, annual vegetable planting and more! For each plant the presenter will describe the growth habit, preferred habitat, food value, other uses and aesthetic appeal. Attendees will leave with many ideas of how to integrate nitrogen-fixing plants into their edible landscape.

How to Grow and use Garlic, Perennial Onions, **and Other Unusual Alliums—Ira Wallace, Southern** **Exposure Seed Exchange—TRACK: Crop Specific &** **Plant Health, Monroe**

Most kitchen gardens contain at least one row of onions, usually planted in the spring. Fall-planted onions are less well-known. Learn about what distinguishes the different alliums, both uncommon and everyday. Look at samples and learn how to add garlic, shallots and these other easily grown alliums to your garden and your everyday.

From Home to Market Gardening—Erin Worrall, **The Cedar Chest Farm—TRACK: Farming for Profit,** **Buck Mountain**

There is an increasing desire amongst home gardeners and homesteaders to turn their passion for growing food into a viable business. But the logistics of producing on scale, even small scale, can vary quite differently from the ways we manage our home gardens. In this presentation, Erin will elaborate on the 10 most practical lessons she learned from turning her 4-acre homestead into a profitable market farm.

SUNDAY SESSIONS

Policy and Regulatory Tools for Small Food Producers—Christine Dzujna, Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund—TRACK: Policy & Advocacy, Shenandoah B

Farmers, homesteaders, and cottage food makers have the right to produce the food they want, and consumers have the right to purchase what they want to feed their families. However, laws and regulatory overreach often restrict these choices.

While consumer demand for locally grown products is rising, increased regulation can drive out small farms and businesses. In this workshop, we will explore key federal, state and local regulations that impact small food producers, including those regarding meat and poultry production, the prohibitions on interstate sales of certain products, cottage food regulations, FSMA safety regulations, and local zoning and other regulations. We will also examine the legal solutions that can help them remain viable and grow. We will also explore legislative, policy, and advocacy tools that seek to expand food freedom choice for everyone.

Demystifying USDA Organic Certification—Meredith Morgan—TRACK: Organic, Pocahontas

A practical walk-through of how to apply to become USDA certified organic and how to maintain your certification in the years to come. Interactive elements of using the Organic Integrity Database, OMRI's website, and the eCFR for references will be incorporated. Ample time for Q & A will be included.

Ujamaa's Journey from Desire to Sustainability: Reclaiming Our Agricultural Heritage—Bonnetta Adeb—TRACK: Equity & Diversity in Farming, Washington

This presentation will follow the journey of a small youth led community-based organization in Southern Maryland and its development toward building a national network of BIPOC farmers. Ujamaa Cooperative Farming Alliance (UCFA) helps BIPOC families, faith & community-based organizations reconnect to their agricultural heritage by growing culturally meaningful varieties of crops. By listening to the elders and rediscovering the knowledge of our ancestors, actions can be taken to provide food sustainability and increased prosperity for farmers through seed farming.

Adding Employees to your (Flower) Farm—Gwynn Hamilton, Stonecrop Farm—TRACK: Flower Production, Mill Mountain

Farming started as a dream job—growing and selling your crops—but now you need help. How do you find, select, and train your new staff, delegate tasks, and delight in the addition of assistance?

Regenerating land following Biological Farming practices—Gary Zimmer, Otter Creek Organic Farm—TRACK: Soil Health & Carbon Sequestration, Appalachian

Regenerating the land requires working on soil's chemical, physical and biological properties as it's a system that requires a complete plan. This is a practical hands-on session with many examples used.

Permaculture Plants: Building plant knowledge through story and community. A human sector approach to belonging to your ecosystem.—Ryan Blosser and Trevor Piersol, Shenandoah Permaculture Institute—TRACK: Urban Agriculture/Homesteading, Wilson

In this session, We will introduce the concept of permaculture plants and orient the audience to Shenandoah Permaculture Institute's approach to permaculture. Primarily our addition to human sector thinking as it applies to ecosystem stewardship. We will provide examples of developing plant knowledge through experience and storytelling providing a bridge for the audience to begin their plant journey.

Session G: 1:30–3 pm

Four Seasons on a Biodynamic Farm—Stewart Lundy and Natalie McGill, The Josephine Porter Institute, and Perennial Roots Farm—TRACK: Regenerative Grazing/Livestock, Appalachian

Explore the unfolding activities at Perennial Roots Farm as the farmers present reflections on what they do at different times of the year, and some of what distinguishes a biodynamic operation. Livestock, garden beds, vegetable production, composting, and special soil remedies. All welcome.

Native Perennial Food Plants for your Edible Landscape—Dani Baker, The Enchanted Edible Forest at Cross Island Farms—TRACK: Agroforestry, Shenandoah A

When placed in habitats that meet their needs, native plants tend to be well adapted to our climate and have few pest, disease or maintenance problems. This PowerPoint presentation will illustrate the growth habit, preferred habitat, care required, food value, other uses and landscape appeal of over 25 native perennial plants you can include in your edible landscape. The plants range from small and tall trees to bushes, groundcovers, and even vines. If you want to create an edible hedge, an edible bed, a foundation planting, a you-pick venue, or a forest garden, you will discover there are a variety of native food plants to choose from to fill your space.

SUNDAY SESSIONS

Creating a new Compost Company in Virginia Beach: Plans, Goals, Methods and Outcomes—John Wilson aka Farmer John, Capstone Creations, Drishti Compost—TRACK: Soil Health & Carbon Sequestration, Monroe

As a compost maker for several decades, I worked on my own land and produced high quality compost for my own farm and for others. I continued to produce on my own till 2021, when a group of like minded people decided to create a new non-profit linking with local restaurants, food trucks and stores to build a bigger plan to create new soil and reduce area food waste, preventing more from going to the local landfill. This is our story, along with all the challenges of dealing with local guidelines and the support from many of our citizens who believe this can be done now. In addition, I will highlight the benefits of using compost in small gardens, growing boxes and on farms.

Pumpkin Production and Disease Management in VA—Steve Rideout, Virginia Tech—TRACK: Crop Specific & Plant Health, Mill Mountain

This presentation will focus on multiple years of research examining both host resistance and OMRI-approved fungicides for control of diseases in pumpkins. Focus will be on performance of different cultivars in different parts of Virginia

Blooming Possibilities: A Flower Panel—Market Outlets & Business Structure—Liza Dobson, Gwynn Hamilton, Chelsea Belle Graves, Ashleigh Hobson—TRACK: Flower Production, Shenandoah B

Join us for a flower farming panel discussion! Panelists Gwynn Hamilton (Stonecrop Farm), Ash Hobson Carr (Hazel Witch Farm), and Chelsea Belle Graves (Bee's Wing Farm) are seasoned growers with a wide range of market outlets across Virginia, including CSAs, farmers markets, weddings, events, workshops, and farmer cooperatives. This panel is for folks who have some experience with flowers and are looking to expand! We will discuss a range of topics including (1) A deeper dive into each sales outlet and how they are structured. (2) Creating an eye-catching story and brand through online presence. (3) Pricing and client/customer management.

NRCS Conservation Programs for Historically Underserved, Veteran and Beginner Farmer—Michael Watson—TRACK: Equity & Diversity in Farming, Washington

Join Dr. Loutrina Staley of the National Association of Conservation Districts and Mr. Michael Watson of USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service to share about conservation programs for new, beginning, historically underserved and veteran farmers.

Eating or Marketing The Whole Plant—Chris Smith, Utopian Seed Project—TRACK: Farming for Profit, Buck Mountain

This session takes a deep dive into all the parts of common crops that can be eaten or used, but aren't. It takes a lot of effort to grow things and there are often many harvest opportunities that are skipped over. Many of our common vegetables have opportunities for dual cropping and sometimes triple or quadruple cropping! Whether you're a backyard gardener trying to maximize your harvest, or a farmer trying to maximize your profit, this class will get some creative juices flowing as we learn about all the food that is often left in the field!

Is Organic Certification Right for Me—Patrick Johnson, Nanih Farm and Garden, with Charlie Maloney, Dayspring Farm, and Mark Schonbeck, Organic Farming Research Foundation—TRACK: Organic, Pocahontas

This session will explore the three main scopes of organic certification: crops, livestock, and processing to help attendees assess if being certified organic is a viable option for them. The presenter will give an overview of organic agriculture and each scope listed. This session will also discuss how to become certified.

Session H: 3:30–5 pm

Silvopasture: Thinking Through the Design Process—Emilie Twardy, Appalachian Sustainable Development—TRACK: Agroforestry, Buck Mountain

As funding for silvopasture projects starts to pour in, many of you may be wondering, "where do I start?" Emilie will use the lens of Permaculture Design to help simplify the process, providing a springboard for design that anyone can use. We'll work through a design exercise at the end of the session so folks can get some hands-on experience in putting pen to paper. Join us for an interactive session and gain some real skills to take home.

Garden Variety Harvests: The Story of an Urban Farm Start-Up—Cam Terry—TRACK: Urban Agriculture/Homesteading, Washington

This workshop will tell the story of what drove Cam to start farming at age 30. Growing food in backyards and community gardens presents both challenges and advantages you may not have considered. You'll learn about the tools, systems, and crop selections that have made the farm successful. We'll also address the land access issues that necessitated starting this farm in urban backyards, and ideas for how we can solve them.

SUNDAY SESSIONS

How Nutrition Impacts Plant Immunity—Kish Johnson, Advancing Eco Agriculture—TRACK: Crop Specific & Plant Health, Mill Mountain

Plant nutrition and microbiome management are the foundational drivers of plant immunity and crop yields. Over the past 15 years, the Advancing Eco Agriculture (AEA) team has collected tens of thousands of sap samples from dozens of crop species. Almost universally, their team has found that crops with significant nutritional imbalances are more prone to insect and disease pressure. Once these imbalances are corrected, photosynthetic activity increases along with insect resistance and yields.

Join Kish Johnson, Director of Sales at AEA, for a presentation and Q&A that will cover: The driving factors of plant immunity, The role of biology in plant health, How to manage crop nutrition, The Plant Health Pyramid, Regenerative principles for plant nutrition

Seed Breeding with The Cotton Project—Cindy Conner, Homeplace Earth—TRACK: Seed Saving, Shenandoah A

In her effort to bring back the original colors of green and brown cotton that had crossed in her garden, Cindy Conner formed The Cotton Project, enlisting the help of a few family and friends to each grow out a different subset of seeds each year. What originally crossed was the F1 generation which produces a predictable result but is loaded with untapped genetics. They were growing out beyond that to tap into those genetics. In the process they bred a new variety that was entirely different than what they started out with. This new variety, Spinners' Ivory, is available through Southern Exposure Seed Exchange in 2024. The seed breeding process involved is the same that you would undertake with any plant you are working with. You can become a seed breeder on your farm.

How to be an Effective Agent for Change—Lia Biondo, Western Skies Strategies—TRACK: Policy & Advocacy, Shenandoah B

Learn how to take your causes from the field to the front steps of Capitol Hill! Local, state, and federal rules and regulations can fundamentally shift the way we produce food. Are you equipped to be involved in those conversations? Join a Washington, D.C. lobbyist to better understand the policymaking process, gain critical advocacy skills, and become confident in using the latest tools and technology to promote your cause. Following a 20-minute presentation, attendees will participate in a hands-on demonstration and mock meeting with an "elected official."

Profitable, No-Till, Certified Organic Vegetables on 2/3 of an Acre—Tim Showalter Ehst, Second Mountain Farm—TRACK: Organic, Pocahontas

We'll explore how we organized our farm for profit and developed a no-till system that works for us. We'll talk about how we continue to tweak our processes to maximize what our experienced crew is paid (Spoiler alert: it's \$20/hr this year) and maximize the amount of time we spend not farming. We'll weave a common thread of work-life balance and how we try to make both the work itself and the amount of work sustainable for ourselves and our employees.

Using Native Plants as Cover Crops—Patrick Johnson, Nanih Farm and Garden—TRACK: Soil Health & Carbon Sequestration, Appalachian

When you think of cover crops, a handful of familiar ones likely come to mind. Is the partridge pea one of them? Native to the eastern United States, the partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*) is an herbaceous annual legume whose large yellow flowers attract pollinators and whose long seed pods interest birds while fixing nitrogen and improving soil health. Patrick and his collaborators will report on a two-year SARE-funded research project studying the use of partridge peas as a cover crop and discuss the potential of other plants for similar benefits.

Homestead Goat and Pig Production—Natalie Green, Handmade on the Homestead—TRACK: Regenerative Grazing/Livestock, Monroe

We've all seen those cute little kids hopping around and thought, I totally need baby goats! Well, what happens when baby goats turn into big goats? How can they be useful on the homestead and what do you need in order to be successful? From meat to small scale dairy, this workshop will cover the basics to help get you started. Then we will cover how pigs can be an amazing way to maintain land or fill your freezer. This workshop will teach you how to select the pigs that are right for your needs while creating a safe and comfortable environment for you and for them. This workshop will give you confidence to move forward as you begin to add goats and or pigs to your homestead or small farm.





VABF-SFOP Summit YOUTH & TEEN PROGRAMS



YOUTH PROGRAM: AGES 5-12

TEEN PROGRAM: AGES 12-18

12 year olds are welcome to join either program based on self-determined maturity level & interest.



The programs will be led by experienced educators from Youth Outdoor Workshops.



Speakers from the conference will join us to share their knowledge with presentations & demonstrations!



Schedule:

Saturday, January 20th, 2024 · 8:30 am - 5:30 pm

Sunday, January 21st, 2024 · 8:30 am - 5:00 pm



YOUTH PROGRAM

Our Youth Program is designed to engage and inspire kids to connect with nature and farming. Conference speakers and educators will actively engage with our young participants with a wide variety of hands-on activities and demonstrations. Kids will learn about pollinators, plants, seed saving, and more. Prepare for indoor and outdoor learning and play!



TEEN PROGRAM

Our Teen Program is designed with a clear focus on sustainable farming education and advocacy. Speakers will join us for tailored mini-sessions and hands-on activities. Teens will also attend portions of conference sessions, followed up with group discussions, allowing them to explore the world of sustainable agriculture.



YOUTH & TEEN PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY



Youth & Teen Program registration fee is \$60.

Includes lunch and dinner on Saturday & lunch on Saturday.

Snacks will be available in the classrooms, provided by Friendly City Food Co-Op.



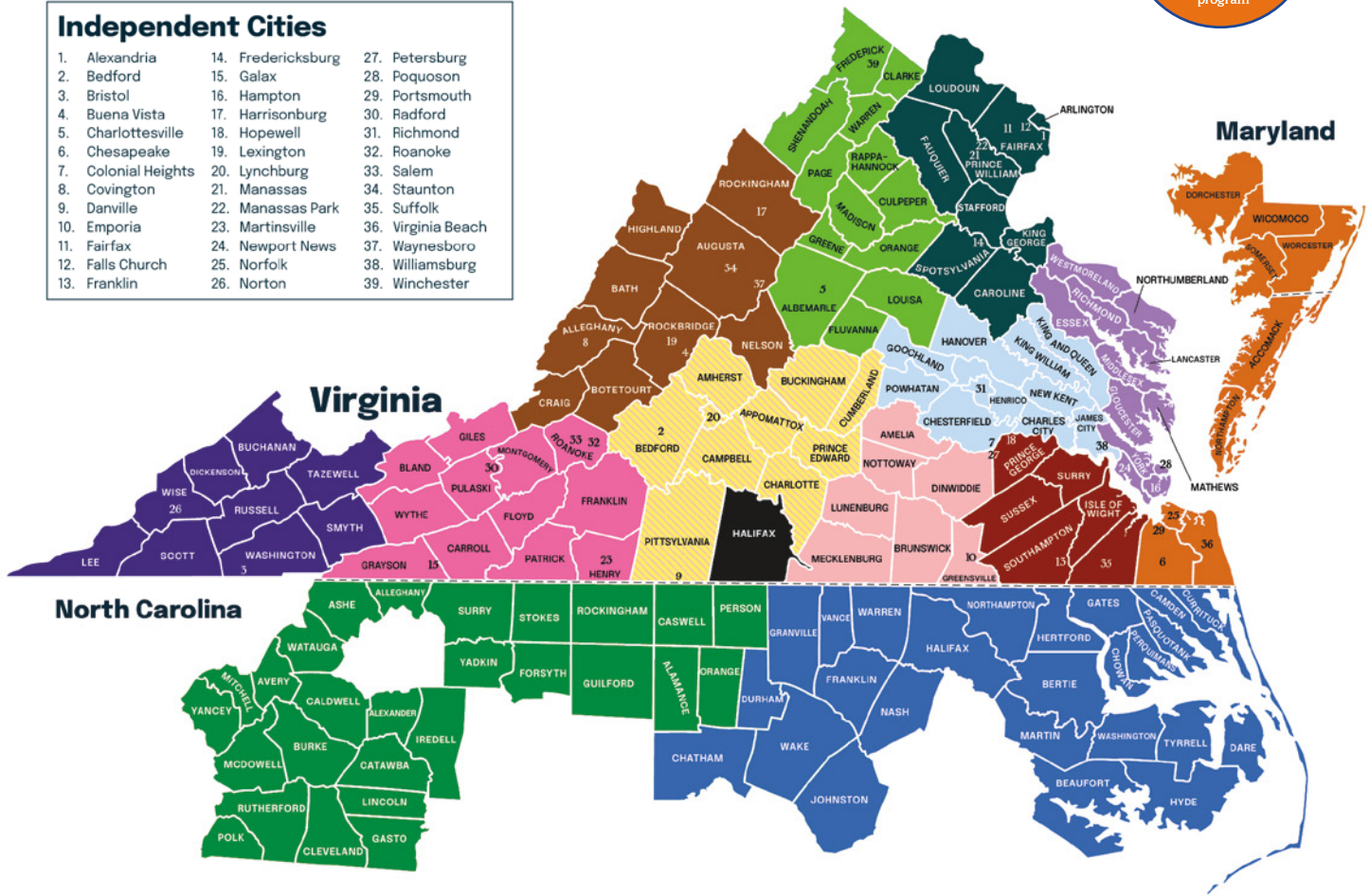
VSU Small Farm Outreach Program

Contact Our Program Assistants



Independent Cities

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Alexandria | 14. Fredericksburg | 27. Petersburg |
| 2. Bedford | 15. Galax | 28. Poquoson |
| 3. Bristol | 16. Hampton | 29. Portsmouth |
| 4. Buena Vista | 17. Harrisonburg | 30. Radford |
| 5. Charlottesville | 18. Hopewell | 31. Richmond |
| 6. Chesapeake | 19. Lexington | 32. Roanoke |
| 7. Colonial Heights | 20. Lynchburg | 33. Salem |
| 8. Covington | 21. Manassas | 34. Staunton |
| 9. Danville | 22. Manassas Park | 35. Suffolk |
| 10. Emporia | 23. Martinsville | 36. Virginia Beach |
| 11. Fairfax | 24. Newport News | 37. Waynesboro |
| 12. Falls Church | 25. Norfolk | 38. Williamsburg |
| 13. Franklin | 26. Norton | 39. Winchester |



Regional Program Assistants*

Michael Carter Sr 804-481-1163 mcarter@vsu.edu	James Gibson 804-720-6826 jegibson@vsu.edu
Ben Dukes 804-731-7916 bdukes@vsu.edu	Vacant 804-524-3292
Leonard Elam 804-894-3095 lelam@vsu.edu	Forrest Hobbs 804-892-5910 fhobbs@vsu.edu
Marilyn Estes 804-481-0485 mestes@vsu.edu	Brent Noell 804-892-0140 bnoell@vsu.edu
Mandy Fletcher 804-892-0108 afletcher@vsu.edu	Cliff Somerville 804-892-4581 csomerville@vsu.edu
Derrick Gooden 804-586-5352 dgooden@vsu.edu	Roland Terrell 804-892-4612 rterrell@vsu.edu

State Program Assistants

Frederick Custis | 804-894-0218 | fcustis@vsu.edu
Agriculture Management Coordinator

Derrick Cladd | 804-892-4489 | dcladd@vsu.edu
Beginning Farmers

James Edwards | 804-720-2588 | jtedwards@vsu.edu
Military Veteran, AgrAbility

Barry Harris | 804-720-6367 | bdharris@vsu.edu
Conservation Practices

Tammy Holler | 804-229-2730 | tholler@vsu.edu
Nutrient Management

Wanda Johnson | 434-632-9701 | wjohnson@vsu.edu
Community Gardens, Food Services

Grace Summers | 804-712-0093 | gsummers@vsu.edu
NRCS, SFOP High Tech Tunnel

Small Farm Outreach Program Office hours: Monday–Thursday, 8 am–5 pm, Friday, 8 am–noon. 95% of SFOP is out in the field.

*If you have any difficulty figuring out which region is yours, please call 804-524-3292 for clarification.



VIRGINIA TECH ROANOKE CENTER

A Lifetime of Learning

The Virginia Tech Roanoke Center is your gateway to the university, connecting the vast resources of Virginia Tech to the Roanoke community and beyond. We cultivate community relationships, engage in regional collaborative efforts, and provide exceptional learning experiences to professionals in the Roanoke region. Located downtown at the Roanoke Higher Education Center, our classrooms provide a state-of-the-art, professional environment.

Meanwhile, our partnership with the historic Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center allows for outstanding hospitality and premier accommodations for gatherings of all sizes. Let's work together to make a positive change.

FEATURED PROGRAMS

- Leadership Academy
- School Leaders Institute
- Master's in Counselor Education
- Emerging Leaders Academy
- Women Impact Virginia
- Lean Process Improvement
- Virginia Women's Municipal Leadership Institute

Virginia Tech Roanoke Center
108 N. Jefferson St., Suite 701,
Roanoke, VA 24012

(540) 767-6100
vtroanoke@vt.edu
www.vtrc.vt.edu



OUTREACH & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
**CENTER FOR ORGANIZATIONAL AND
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT**
VIRGINIA TECH

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Noncredit courses, conferences, and seminars offer working adults opportunities to advance, upskill, or refocus their career.

CUSTOM WORKFORCE TRAINING

We'll work with you to identify your company's training needs and customize workshops, seminars, or conferences to ensure your goals and objectives are met.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS & CERTIFICATES

We provide easy access for adult learners juggling demanding home life and a busy work schedule.

STEM/STEAM EDUCATION

Our engaging and creative programs offer hands-on learning for students and professional development for their teachers.

CONFERENCES

From helping clients plan their own events to hosting signature conferences, we connect like-minded individuals to engage in economic and professional growth.

Scan to visit our
website & learn more!



OUTREACH & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
ROANOKE CENTER
VIRGINIA TECH

TheFirst125.com

FOREVER STARTS WITH THE FIRST 125 YEARS.

What does it take for a bank to stand the test of time? Strength, stability and a lasting commitment to helping customers. This year, we celebrate our 125th anniversary of supporting the countless families, businesses and communities we serve, but we'd like to think it's just the beginning. If our past is any guide, tomorrow we will offer our customers the same long-term thinking, service excellence and powerful results we deliver today. **First Citizens Bank. Forever First.®**

PERSONAL | BUSINESS | COMMERCIAL | WEALTH



First
Citizens
Bank
forever first®

125
YEARS

www.SouthernExposure.com

Mason Marvel PhD Tomato

White Mountain Cabbage Collards

Cucumber Leaf Sunflower

Southern Exposure Seed Exchange

Carolina Wonder Bell Pepper

Cherokee White Eagle Dent Corn

Green Finger Cucumber

Tohono O'odham Cowpea

Red Beauty Zinnia

Amish Moon & Stars Watermelon

SAVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE
HEIRLOOM ORGANIC NON-GMO

Maxibel French Filet Bean

Xochiteco Hot Pepper

Virginia Sweets Tomato

SHENANDOAH PERMACULTURE INSTITUTE
Courses. Consultation. Design.

REAL-WORLD HANDS-ON PRACTICAL PERMACULTURE SINCE 2013

REGISTRATIONS and SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS
Now Open!! FOR OUR SPRING '24 PDC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND




NORTHEAST/ MID-ATLANTIC TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM for Transitioning and Certified Organic Producers



Certified organic producers can serve as paid mentors and will be paired with a transitioning producer, providing support through the certification process. Transitioning producers receive mentorship at no cost.



TOPP will provide training, guidance, and support during the year-long mentorship. Matched mentors and mentees will set goals and build a communication system tailored to their individual preferences.

Apply at www.organictransition.org

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program



The Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) is a new USDA initiative that will invest up to \$100 million over five years to provide education, technical assistance, and support for producers transitioning to organic. **This is a certifier-neutral program.**

You may be working with any certifier to participate.



Advancing the Success OF SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS

National Center

Authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill to be a voice for SDFR and to ensure that data driven information is available for agriculture policy recommendations to advance the success of minority farmers across the United States.

Mission

To conduct research, analyze policy and make recommendations seeking to achieve equitable and economic integration of USDA programs and policies for socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, communities, and rural landowners.

Vision

To be the premiere authority for information on the history, current conditions, trends and future projections of socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers (SDFR) and communities.



Alcorn.

SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS
AND RANCHERS POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

1000 ASU Drive #449 | Lorman, MS 39096-7500
Phone: 601.877.6601 | www.alcorn.edu/policycenter





We All Need Mentors

Here's a free conservation mentorship opportunity for historically underserved farmers and ranchers



Land Ethic Mentorship

For Historically Underserved Farmers & Ranchers



Visit sandcountyfoundation.org/mentorship



Biological Crop Solutions
Organic Fertilizer
Pest Management
Growing Mixes
Cover Crop Seed

(800) 540 - 9181
www.sevenspringsfarmsupply.com

Use code VABF2024 and save 7% off your order!
1 time use - exclusions may apply

MarketLink assists direct marketing farmers and farmers markets to accept electronic payments for SNAP, Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs, and incentive programs.

marketlink.org
 (833) 372-9489
 info@marketlink.org

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

To learn more about SARE, its grant programs, educational resources, and farmer-driven innovations, please visit <https://www.sare.org/>

For information about Virginia SARE, contact Eric Bendfeldt at ebendfel@vt.edu or Sanjun Gu at sgu@vsu.edu

OMRI-LISTED PRODUCTS



ORO-RZ

SOIL ADJUVANT IMPROVES H₂O
PENETRATION & OXYGEN TRANSFER

OROBOOST

CERTIFIED ORGANIC
FOLIAR ADJUVANT

 **Thymic**

PREVENTIVE & CURATIVE
BACTERICIDE, INSECTICIDE & FUNGICIDE

 **Cinnaction**

KNOCKDOWN & RESIDUAL CONTROL
OF MITES & POWDERY MILDEW

 **Garland**

CONTACT INSECTICIDE & REPELLENT

MILAGRUM PLUS[®]

BACILLUS SUBTILIS WITH
3 MODES OF ACTION

ATTITUDE

ACIDIFYING ADJUVANT

 **Rovensa
Next**



rovensanext-na.com


**OMRI
LISTED**
For Organic Use

BE SURE TO VISIT OUR CONFERENCE VENDORS & EXHIBITORS

A&M BioGlobal	HERD Ventures	USDA Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS)
Advancing Eco Agriculture	Hiwassee Products	USDA Rural Development
Aggrego Data	Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT, PBC	Virginia Agribusiness Council
AgrAbility Virginia	Johnny's Selected Seeds	Virginia Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
American Farmland Trust	Kenkashi Microbes	Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
Appalachian Sustainable Development	National Center for Appropriate Technology—ATTRA	Virginia Farmers Market Association (VAFMA)
BCS America	Reynolds Community College	Virginia Soil Health Coalition
Bedford Outdoor Adventure—Bedford County Parks and Recreation	Rimol Greenhouse Systems	Virginia State University College of Agriculture
BioSystems	Sand County Foundation	Virginia Tech Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation
Certified Naturally Grown	Seven Springs Farm Supply	Virginia Tech Roanoke Center / COTA
Colonial Soil and Water Conservation District	Shenandoah Permaculture Institute	Virginia Tech—OMALS Program
Common Wealth Seed Growers	Southern Exposure Seed Exchange	Virginia Tech—Virginia Cooperative Extension
Diversity Permaculture	Southern Risk Management Education Center (SRMEC)	VSU Small Farm Outreach Program
Edible Blue Ridge	Stone Soup Books	Weston A. Price Foundation
Farm Credit	Tennie Agriculture Group	
Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund	TOPP Northeast/Mid-Atlantic	
First Citizens Bank	UCFA and UJAMAA SEEDS	
	USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)	

Start your master's with a flexible online degree

Earn an online master's degree at your own pace and learn from accomplished faculty in 8 concentrations!

Applied Nutrition and Physical Activity

Applied Animal Behavior and Welfare

Plant Science and Pest Management

Food Safety and Biosecurity

Environmental Science

Leadership Studies

Agribusiness

Education



MASTER OF AGRICULTURAL AND LIFE SCIENCES



CALS.VT.EDU/ONLINE



Greater Happens Here
College of Agriculture

Greater Grows Here



EXTENSION



TEACHING



RESEARCH

THE VSU COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE IS COMMITTED TO **GROWING GREATER**



Food Security



Innovations



Leaders



Solutions



Communities



Partnerships

through

Agricultural Innovation, Integration, & Sustainability

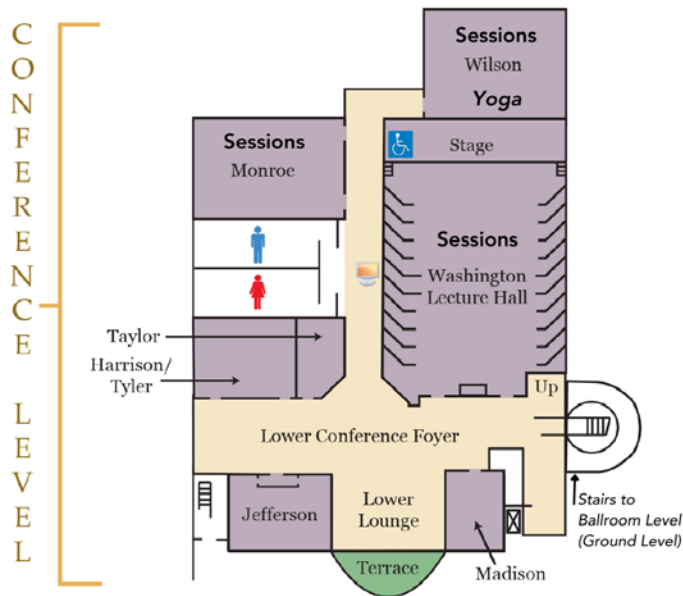
Student Success, Experiential Learning & Workforce Development

Integrated Well-Being of the Family and Community

WWW.VSU.EDU/AGRICULTURE • WWW.EXT.VSU.EDU • WWW.ARS.VSU.EDU



Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech. • Virginia State University



THE FIRST Annual VABF|SOP Summit
January 19-21, 2024
Roanoke, Virginia

★ **Registration & Information**
North Entry Foyer

Keynotes & Lunch/Dinner
Roanoke Ballroom A, B, C & D

Tradeshow & Silent Auction
Foyer & Roanoke Ballroom E, F, G & H

Taste of Virginia Expo & Market (Saturday)
Crystal Ballroom

small farm logo, VABF logo, VSU College of Agriculture logo, Virginia Cooperative Extension logo

VSU COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION FOR BIOLOGICAL FARMING
EXT.VSU.EDU | @VSU_AG @VABFARMING | VABF.ORG

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please call 804-524-3292 / TDD 800-828-1120 during business hours of 8 am and 5 pm to discuss accommodations at least five days prior to the event.

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law. 570 01/2024