Virginia Agriculture

Highlights of the 2012 Census of Agriculture

- 22% of all farmers were beginning farmers in 2012. That means 1 out of every 5 farmers operated a farm for less than 10 years.

- Young, beginning principal operators who reported their primary occupation as farming increased about 12% between 2007 and 2012.

- 969,672 farm operators were female ~ 30% of all farm operators in the U.S.

- Total organic product sales by farms have increased by 82% since 2007. Organic products were a $35 billion industry in the United States in 2013.

Agritourism: It’s a Growing Thing

From 2007 to 2012, the number of U.S. farms engaging in some form of agritourism went up 42 percent, bringing in more than $700 million, according to the latest Census of Agriculture.

Since 2007, the amount of money brought in by agritourism rose by 24 percent.

The number of farms operated by Latino farmers increased 21% from 2007 to 2012 and reflects the changing face of America as a whole.

Nearly 150,000 farmers and ranchers nationwide are selling their products directly to consumers, and 50,000 are selling to local retailers. Industry estimates valued local food sales at $7 billion in 2011, reflecting the growing new market.

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The 2012 Census trends for Virginia

In 2012, the number of farms in Virginia totaled 46,036, down 3 percent (1,347 farms) from 47,383 farms in 2007.

Land in farms, 8.3 million acres, was up 3 percent from 8.1 acres in 2007.

The average size of farm in Virginia was 181 acres, compared to 171 acres in 2007.

Market value of production sold was $3.8 billion, up 29 percent from $2.9 billion in 2007.

The average value of products sold per farm was $81,540 compared to $61,334 in 2007.
Division of Marketing

- International Marketing
  - Export marketing, export assistance, trade missions

- Domestic Sales and Market Development
  - Locates, develops, maintains and expands local, regional and national markets for Virginia food, agricultural and livestock markets.
  - Provides a complete and integrated marketing program for the Livestock Industry.

- Commodity Services
  - Provides a grading system for fruits and vegetables, grain, poultry, and processed foods to identify product quality and condition, which is essential for effective marketing.

- Livestock Marketing
  - Services the first point of contact for agriculture businesses considering relocation to Virginia or expansion within the state. Provides services to assist the businesses with relocation and expansion efforts. Includes the Office of Farmland Preservation.

- Commodity Services
  - Specialty foods, organics, direct marketing, agritourism, specialty agriculture

Agricultural Marketing

Regional marketing development managers are located in six designated regions of the state to provide assistance in marketing commodities and enhancing agricultural economic development within those regions.

Provide assistance, advice and counsel to agricultural producers, industry representatives, and organizations through individual consultations, public presentations, newsletters, and the media in order to enhance and influence marketing efforts.
Tourism contributes the second highest amount of revenue generating $21.2 billion dollars annually and provides 210,000 jobs, according to the Virginia Tourism Board. Virginia’s location, within a day’s drive or less of 60 percent of the U.S. population, makes it easy to get to and adds to the quality time families spend together on vacation.

Agritourism, an Important Economic Boost for Many Farmers.

California is among the leaders in agritourism with nearly 700 farms averaging more than $50,000 in agritourism income. Source: USDA Census of Ag

Agritourism has tended to develop on smaller farms near urban centers. More recent trends show that thriving agritourism sectors have been flourishing in remote areas away from cities.

Agritourism Defined
(Code of Virginia § 3.2-6400)

Any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity.

With the increasing urbanization of the U.S. combined with social movements celebrating local and natural experiences, the future of the Agritourism industry looks good. Agricultural activity is a recreation and education activity.
Agritourism Diversifies Farm Offerings and Supplements Agricultural Income, it is a Viable Option for the Long-Term Sustainability of the Farm.

Benefits beyond extra income include:
- Increased in farm value
- Increased family interaction
- Public education
- Connection between rural and urban communities

When considering agritourism consider:
- Social skills and interacting with the public
- Maintaining privacy
- Animal welfare
- Labor and financial management
- Local planning and zoning requirements
- Assessing the market
- Location
- Customers
- Marketing, social media

Agritourism can boost farmers’ revenue, Virginia Tech study finds

Defines Agritourism as a value-added activity that generates additional net farm income and creates a loyal consumer base for branded farm products.

Fifty-two percent of operators surveyed stated that agritourism contributed between 76 and 100 percent of their farm income.

Almost all of the operations surveyed claimed that the average agritourism visitor spent between $31 and $40 on property per visit.

Time to unlock a powerful business asset: YOU.

Many companies today offer similar products and use similar technology. Only your emotional connection to people, will differentiate your company and its product, lubricate your marketing channel, ignite the conversation engine in social medias, and call to your door ready-to-try-or-buy prospects.

PEOPLE DON’T CARE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW... UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU CARE

Memory Building Retailing in the Experience Economy

Stories Make Memories - Do Something Unexpected

The easiest way to be memorable is to do something in an expected way. Dare to be different

Definition of Customer experience

Customer experience is about orchestrating memorable experiences; and it’s the memory of these unique experiences that becomes the product or service you are selling.

Of critical importance is the takeaway feeling your customer has about you or your product.

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Agritourism ~ A Natural Fit.

A farmer or rancher entrepreneur who diversifies into value-added agriculture or agritourism has several market opportunities.

- Food ~ processing, packaging, branding, specialty farm markets
- Roots ~ heritage and culture
- Agri-education ~ schools, retreats, conferences
- Experiences ~ farm stays, ranch stays, B&Bs pick-your-own
- Agri-entertainment ~ petting farm, mazes, hayrides
- Nature-based adventure ~ horseback riding, rock climbing, hunting, fishing
The Definition of Fun, Educational and Trendy

Ecotourism: Responsible travel to pristine and protected areas to educate, provide funds for ecological conservation and foster respect for nature and different cultures.

Culinary tourism: Experiencing the food of the area; cuisine as an expression of culture. Wine and beer tourism. Culinary tourism and agritourism are inextricably linked, as the seeds of cuisine can be found in agriculture.

Art Tourism: Visiting a geographic region in order to visit, see and experience local art, art history, artists, craftspersons and culture.

Every year in the United States, there are approximately 2.5 million weddings. The wedding industry has grown to an empire of 40 billion dollars per year.

Trend Watching

Farm Camps

As interest in urban agriculture has taken off and the local-food movement has flourished, a growing number of camps have added farming components, according to the American Camp Association.

In five years, 94 percent of camps added gardening activities, and 12 percent added farm or ranch components.
Fresh Directions
Farm to Fork Dinners
Restaurants on the Farm

Farm Cooking Schools

Adams Farm 2014 Plein Air Paint Out
Saturday, September 6, 2014 Adams Farm, Walpole, Massachusetts.

“The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with nutrition.” ~ Thomas Edison

SEASONS ON THE FARM
Partner with Local Photographers, Videographers for Holidays & Family Milestones
The Business Of Birthday Parties ~
A Foundation to Build On

The children's birthday party business has exploded in recent years. Competition for this growing market is no longer just the Family or Children's Entertainment Center Industry, but any number of family oriented businesses aimed at capturing a piece of this lucrative, billion dollar industry.

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Glamping - Is Camping With Style

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It’s a Girl's (Vacation) Thing!

Prices for 2011-12

**Deer Hunting Trips**

- October bow hunts
  - 6 day hunt: $1500
  - 3 day hunt: $800
- November bow hunts
  - 6 day hunt: $1800
  - 3 day hunt: $950
- November gun hunts
  - 6 day hunt: $1950
  - 3 day hunt: $1000
- December gun hunts
  - 6 day hunt: $1600
  - 3 day hunt: $850

All prices include Lodging, Meals, and transportation to and from stands.

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Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.

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Farm-friendly speed dating? Try ‘weed dating’

An innovative form of speed dating for those looking for something different than the typical dating scene. It's called 'weed dating,' and participants meet each other while rolling weeds, enjoying their love of cannabis and tomatoes.

By Jessica L. Baron, Associated Press | July 14, 2013

The payoff for their toil? A chance at romance.
AgriTunity – Adding Value

“Besides the revenue it generated, it created interest and excitement.”

LEARN ABOUT AND CAPITALIZE ON YOUR REGIONS ASSETS

Are you using your community’s best assets to drive your economic strategies? New thinking on economic drivers suggest that parks, festivals, sporting facilities and tourist spots can provide a significant economic engine for your community.
FIELDS OF GOLD (FoG)
A regional agritourism initiative that seeks to promote the abundance of agricultural resources in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

This region is characterized by an abundance of farms, wineries, orchards, farmer’s markets, roadside stands, agriculture venues and agritourism businesses.

The program will collectively market the region’s agritourism activities and sites to create a more coordinated tourism experience for the traveling public and to brand the region as an agritourism destination.

CONNECT WITH LOCAL ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMEN

WELLNESS TOURISM

Health tourism focuses on two areas:

- **Pampering and wellness** ~ Services such as massages, herbal wraps and exfoliating scrubs.
- **Wellness** ~ Involves helping healthy people prevent problems so they stay well, both physically and mentally.

Community Business Partners:
- Spas
- Hotels
- Yoga Studios
- Health Clubs
- Health Food Stores and Restaurants
- Outdoor Outfitters
- Athletic Stores
- Health and Wellness Festivals

Cycle to Farm® is a popular series of organized group rides that encourage and promote local food, local farms and agritourism by bicycle in the South.

Riders experience a beautiful (but challenging) metric century ride, enjoy tasty food samples at “Farm Stops” hosted by local farms, and purchase products at each Farm.

Cycle to Farm staff collect the purchases and transport them by vehicle back to the Start/Finish, where riders return for a farm-to-table meal with the community at the Fabulous After Party.
Our goal is to strengthen the veterans-in-agriculture network and increase their resources, so that they can create healthy new lives for themselves and delicious food security for us all.

A Battle Worth Fighting

"Veterans need real options when they are coming back, they don’t need programs or some pamphlets or a little bit of counseling. They need options that are going to allow them to take care of their families, pay their bills, and want a new life." – Pfc. Howard, US Marine Corp

Student Gleaning Projects

Team Building – GMU Students Retreat and Barn Painting
Community Retailing

Retailing is changing and community based retailing with the right vision is a growth area.

Being local in business means being part of, and engaged with, the community.

Does your local consumers know you are local and what is your strategy to develop local community engagement?

Community Marketing

- Volunteer space for a local community promotion
- Provide talks to the local chamber of commerce group
- Give talks to community groups
- Adopt a local project
- Allow the sales team to get involved in a project for a set number of hours as part of their job
- Gift a product that is not selling to local events as a marketing tool

Partnerships are about engaging with the local community, sponsorships are about donating to the community.

As a retailer you will get a better return on your investment by becoming a partner, plus, you will have lot more fun.

Get out There ~ Forging Strong Community Connections

Start an online discussion group with shared interests

Explore your local community like a tourist

Join or start a meetup group

Sell your product or be a featured program at a local farmers market

Join the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Garden Clubs, or other community groups

Join or start a small business alliance

Identify and get to know local ancillary businesses

Homeschooling has grown by almost 300,000 since 2007 a growth of 17% in five years

Approximately 1,770,000 students are homeschooled in the United States—3.4% of the school-age population

FIELD TRIPS

"Our young farmer and rancher members are committed to serving their communities by volunteering and making a difference," says Julie Roop, director of program development at the American Farm Bureau Federation. "That is why Farm Bureau and the BSA merit badge program is such a great fit."
Events to Educate and Showcase Agriculture on Main Street
Creating Healthy and Vibrant Communities

Creating Printed and On-Line Materials

BRANDING - create a unique logo to identify your farm or product

BROCHURE – farm history, products, farm philosophy, photos

COUPONS – discounts, punch cards

NEWSLETTER – updates on products, recipes, classes, events, food preservation

Farm Product Search Websites

- Virginia Grown
- Virginia Tourism
- Local Harvest
- Buy Fresh, Buy Local
- Rural Bounty
- Farm Stay U.S.
- Chefs Collaborative
- Wedding Wire.com
- Venue Safari

The Farm to Table Movement + Suburbia = Agriburbia

Forget The Golf Course, Subdivisions Build Around Farms

Agrihoods’ taking root across the U.S.

The ‘felfie’ is part of a new trend of “establishing niche micro-categories” for different kind of selfies, according to TIME. Specifically, the felfie is a selfie for farmers.
That's all Folks!