

Virginia's Strategic Plan *for* Virginia Cooperative Extension

Goals *and* Objectives

2011-2016

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Virginia's Land, People,
and Communities

Full version can be found at: www.ext.vt.edu/strategicplanning/index.html

Virginia Cooperative Extension



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Focus Area I: Enhancing the Value of Virginia's Agriculture

Goal 1: Increase the profitability and sustainability of Virginia's commercial food, fiber, animal recreation, and green industries.

- Objective 1.1:** Improve agricultural producer knowledge of how to add value to products they produce to increase profitability.
 - Objective 1.2:** Improve production efficiencies in farming operations by decreasing input costs and/or increasing production levels.
 - Objective 1.3:** Provide training on management strategies that will reduce risk factors caused by environmental and market fluctuations.
 - Objective 1.4:** Provide training to identify new markets and to market products through local, regional, and global venues.
 - Objective 1.5:** Increase profitability by encouraging diversity in the range of products marketed.
 - Objective 1.6:** Promote production methods that include, but are not limited to, lowering production costs and evaluating alternative production methods.
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Goal 2: Prepare the agricultural industry for future opportunities and challenges in urban and rural environments.

- Objective 2.1:** Provide professional development opportunities for agricultural personnel in Virginia.
- Objective 2.2:** Assist producers in recruiting and training the workforce requisite to efficient food, fiber, and green production.
- Objective 2.3:** Provide current farm operators with tools to make informed decisions and actions as their production units move to the next generation of producers.
- Objective 2.4:** Equip people entering the agricultural sector with the tools needed to succeed in their production enterprises.
- Objective 2.5:** Provide educational resources to farm owners and decision-makers to develop, maintain, and enhance agricultural operations in Virginia.
- Objective 2.6:** Provide programming that will allow producers to utilize research-based methods to minimize environmental impact in the production and harvesting of agricultural products.

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Goal 3: Research and disseminate methods and recommendations to ensure that consumers have access to safe, high-quality agricultural products.

- Objective 3.1:** Develop and deliver programs for Virginia's producers to provide consumers with safe, nutritious, and competitively priced foods.
 - Objective 3.2:** Provide best-management practices for home food production and preservation.
 - Objective 3.3:** Assist producers to actively market their products.
 - Objective 3.4:** Educate commercial horticulture industry professionals to produce high-quality products and provide high-quality services that are research-based and environmentally sound.
 - Objective 3.5:** Provide best-management practices that will result in the sustainable management of lawns, landscapes, and gardens while minimizing negative environmental impacts.
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Goal 4: Develop and deliver programs to enhance agricultural literacy.

- Objective 4.1:** Educate the public about recommended agricultural practices.
 - Objective 4.2:** Work with producers to increase awareness of locally produced agricultural products.
 - Objective 4.3:** Develop and deliver programs to educate youth on Virginia's agriculture industry and the diversity of its products.
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Goal 5: Interpret policy and legislation, identify opportunities, and provide training to comply with regulations that affect farm profitability and environmental quality.

- Objective 5.1:** Train producers in the safe and responsible use of pesticides.
- Objective 5.2:** Educate producers on their crucial role in environmental stewardship and regulatory compliance.
- Objective 5.3:** Provide resources and tools for key decision-makers.
- Objective 5.4:** Educate agricultural producers about the opportunities and regulations associated with agricultural waste products.
- Objective 5.5:** Create and maintain cooperative alliances with local, state, and federal agencies in assessing damage, securing funding, and promoting community welfare.
- Objective 5.6:** Educate producers about the responsible use and treatment of animals in agricultural operations.

Focus Area II: Sustaining Virginia's Natural Resources and the Environment

Goal 1: Support the management, use, and sustainability of Virginia's natural resource capital for the benefit of future generations.

- Objective 1.1:** Improve the management, conservation, and preservation of Virginia's urban and rural forest-based and associated natural resources (forest, water, air, wildlife).
 - Objective 1.2:** Engage citizens and resource professionals in the stewardship of urban forests to promote sustainable communities.
 - Objective 1.3:** Equip decision-makers with science-based information and tools to guide local, state, and federal policy related to natural resources and the environment.
 - Objective 1.4:** Increase the profitability of Virginia's forest-based industries.
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Goal 2: Provide natural resource and environmental education.

- Objective 2.1:** Foster opportunities for youth to gain the health, social, and educational benefits of spending time outdoors in nature.
 - Objective 2.2:** Increase environmental awareness and stewardship knowledge of Virginia's decision-makers.
 - Objective 2.3:** Increase environmental awareness and stewardship knowledge and behaviors in youth.
 - Objective 2.4:** Increase environmental awareness and stewardship knowledge and behaviors in adults.
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Goal 3: Provide educational resources to address urban/rural interface issues.

- Objective 3.1:** Educate Virginians on the benefits and options for preserving working farms, forests, wetlands and fallow lands, and wildlife habitat.
- Objective 3.2:** Encourage land-use planning and management measures to address issues related to population growth, such as urban encroachment/suburban sprawl.
- Objective 3.3:** Develop and deliver programming to address invasive species, plant and animal pests, wildlife damage, and nuisance issues.
- Objective 3.4:** Assist small-acreage and new landowners with management goals including the production of traditional and alternative products.

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Goal 4: Provide education to conserve and protect Virginia's surface and groundwater resources, including the Chesapeake Bay.

- Objective 4.1:** Develop and deliver programs that educate Virginia residents on nutrient, sediment, and toxin contaminants and their impact on the Chesapeake Bay.
- Objective 4.2:** Develop and deliver educational programs that inform and influence producer practices that impact water quality and conservation.
- Objective 4.3:** Develop and deliver programs that inform and influence landowner and homeowner behaviors that impact water quality and conservation.
- Objective 4.4:** Develop and deliver programs that increase awareness of water quality and conservation issues to influence future youth behaviors to conserve and protect Virginia's water resources.

Goal 5: Develop and deliver programs in green energy/bioenergy.

- Objective 5.1:** Support research for the sustainable development and management of local agriculture, forest crops, and their residues for the development of bioenergy products.
- Objective 5.2:** Increase awareness and use of alternative forms of energy by citizens of the commonwealth.
- Objective 5.3:** Develop and expand on outreach programs in energy conservation, recycling, alternative forms of energy, and wise use of our energy resources.
- Objective 5.4:** Promote energy savings and improved profitability through appropriate green building techniques.

Focus Area III: Creating a Positive Future Through 4-H Youth Development

Goal 1: Improve competencies of Virginia youth in the following life skills: knowledge, reasoning, creativity, personal, social, vocational, citizenship, health, and physical.

Objective 1.1: Increase knowledge, skills, competencies, and adoption of healthy behaviors among youth and their families.

Objective 1.2: Increase engagement of all youth within the community, utilizing decision-making and problem-solving skills.

Objective 1.3: Engage youth in 4-H science, engineering, and technology programming.

Goal 2: Develop supporting environments for 4-H youth development.

Objective 2.1: Expand delivery options for 4-H programming to impact youth throughout the state with diverse interests.

Objective 2.2: Use research-based methods to promote developmental growth of youth; long-term and sustained involvement; and a progression of learning experiences.

Goal 3: Design volunteer development systems that attract, retain, train, and energize youth and adult volunteers who are progressive and have an enduring commitment to youth.

Objective 3.1: Design a volunteer development system for Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Objective 3.2: Increase the engagement of teen and adult volunteers in leading local, district, and state 4-H experiences, including camping programs.

Objective 3.3: Conduct relevant volunteer development research.

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Focus Area IV: Strengthening Virginia Families and Communities

Goal 1: Improve the health of Virginians through access to adequate, safe, and nutritious food.

Objective 1.1: Educate youth and families on the causes and effects of chronic diseases, including obesity and sedentary lifestyles.

Objective 1.2: Educate families to define dietary quality and select nutritious foods.

Objective 1.3: Train youth and families to develop food resource management skills related to food security and food safety practices.

Goal 2: Develop and deliver educational programs to increase the understanding and development of the social, cognitive, and physical capacities of Virginians.

Objective 2.1: Educate individuals and communities on the best practices for child development.

Objective 2.2: Deliver educational programs that address parenting and dependent care issues.

Goal 3: Increase economic stability and decrease reliance on public services by improving youth and family financial literacy and security.

Objective 3.1: Strengthen financial literacy and security of adults, youth, and families through science-based educational programs.

Objective 3.2: Strengthen the capacity of families and communities through science-based educational programs that build and sustain businesses and small farm enterprises.

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Focus Area V: Cultivating Community Resiliency and Capacity

Goal 1: Assist communities in developing and strengthening local economies through entrepreneurship and small business development.

Objective 1.1: Educate Virginia entrepreneurs and community planners on local/community food systems and the connections between agriculture, nutrition, tourism, culture, and the impact on local economic development and quality of life.

Objective 1.2: Increase the capacity of entrepreneurs to identify, develop, and sustain business enterprises.

Goal 2: Develop and deliver educational programming to improve capacity among community members to engage in community planning, decision-making, and community leadership.

Objective 2.1: Develop individual leadership, facilitation, and conflict resolution skills to anticipate and respond to emerging community resource development issues.

Objective 2.2: Equip appointed and elected boards to define and respond to community resource development issues.

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Focus Area VI: Organizational Effectiveness

Goal 1: Implement the programming, local structure, and organizational structure from the 2010 Restructuring Plan.

- Objective 1.1:** Establish issue-based program teams to design educational programs delivered in the state through a network of locally based field faculty.
 - Objective 1.2:** Restructure administrative functions and field staffing structure used for delivery of field based programs to increase effectiveness of programs.
 - Objective 1.3:** Utilize multiple delivery modes, including technology, to deliver science-based educational programming to Virginians.
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Goal 2: Invest in the recruitment and development of a diverse group of VCE educators, specialists, and staff to ensure exceptional programming, services, and leadership that address Virginia's needs.

- Objective 2.1:** Recruit a diverse group of Extension educators, staff, and specialists.
 - Objective 2.2:** Develop and implement a comprehensive training system to promote excellence in scholarly, teaching, and programmatic efforts of Extension educators and specialists.
 - Objective 2.3:** Review the performance evaluation system to ensure that exceptional performance is rewarded and ineffective performers are removed.
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Goal 3: Develop an effective internal and external communication system to inform and engage citizens, stakeholders, and partners.

- Objective 3.1:** Strengthen internal communication between Extension educators and specialists at Virginia Tech, Agricultural Research and Extension Centers, and Virginia State University.
- Objective 3.2:** Implement external marketing strategies to increase brand recognition of high-impact programs and services within the commonwealth.
- Objective 3.3:** Establish partnerships and collaborate with organizations and individuals who have common goals in serving the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Objective 3.4: Design an effective volunteer development system that attracts, retains, and energizes a diverse group of youth and adult volunteers, including Extension Leadership Councils and program-focused volunteers.

Goal 4: Identify and secure public and private resources that support quality programming in the focus areas.

Objective 4-1: Focus on NIFA funding priorities and college-based science activity to increase public service research awards by 30 percent.

Objective 4-2: Develop and implement a VCE strategy to increase private giving from both individual and corporate donors.

Objective 4-3: Develop fee-based models that support the delivery of programs where applicable and appropriate.

Objective 4-4: Develop a financial structure which is flexible and seeks to reinvest new and existing state and federal resources based on the identified strategic plan and anticipated return on investment.

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