



Technical Assistance & Resource Directory

The purpose of the Technical Assistance and Resource Directory is to help beginning farmers and ranchers in Virginia know what resources and resource professionals are available to them as they plan their new farm or ranch. The service and resource professionals featured throughout this directory are Coalition partners and are excellent points of contact for beginning farmers/ranchers and other service providers.

The Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program is a state-wide and coalition-based Extension program housed in Virginia Tech's Department of Agricultural and Extension Education.

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We have drawn from many resources and individuals to put this directory together. Recognition belongs to the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition partners. We are thankful for their time and contributions.

- AgrAbility Virginia
- Agricultural Development, Fauquier County
- Appalachian Sustainable Development
- Attimo Winery
- Bracketts Farm
- Farm Service Agency (USDA)
- Fauquier Education Farm
- Grayson LandCare
- Hethwood Market
- Laurel Farm
- Local Food Hub
- Mountain View Farm and Vineyard
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)
- Piedmont Environmental Council
- Rural Development (USDA)
- SustainFloyd
- Virginia Association for Biological Farming
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers
- Virginia Farm Credit
- Virginia Forage and Grasslands Council
- Virginia State University
- Virginia Team Ag Ed
- Virginia Tech
- VT Earthworks
- Young Farmers of Virginia

Steering Committee

The Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Steering Committee is a group of seven individuals from the Coalition who represent both farmer and service provider perspectives in Virginia. This elected committee is responsible for guiding program activity to best address the expressed needs of the Coalition.

- Alvin Blaha, Laurel Farm
- William Crutchfield, Virginia State University
- Kim Niewolny, Virginia Tech
- Jim Schroering, Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Megan Seibel, Mountain View Farm and Vineyard
- Scott Sink, Hethwood Market
- Donna Westfall-Rudd, Virginia Tech

Management Team

The Management Team of the VBFRCP is housed at Virginia Tech and is a program of Virginia Cooperative Extension. This team is responsible for the management and evaluation of programming activity.

- Matt Benson, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
- Debbie Carroll, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
- Jim Hilleary, Farm Mentor Coordinator
- Lisa Hightower, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
- Steve Hodges, Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences
- CJ Isbell, Farm Mentor Coordinator
- Sarah McKay, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics
- Kim Niewolny, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education (Program Director)
- Kelli Scott, Farm Mentor Coordinator
- Maurice Smith, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
- Rick Rudd, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
- Donna Westfall-Rudd, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
- Althea Whitter-Cummings, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education

The Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program is a state-wide and coalition-based Extension program represented by beginning farmer stakeholders across the commonwealth of Virginia. It is housed in Virginia Tech's Department of Agricultural and Extension Education. Funding is sponsored by the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) of the USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Award # 2010-49400. To find more resources and programs for beginning farmers and ranchers please visit www.Start2Farm.gov, a component of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. Contact Kim Niewolny, Program Director, at niewolny@vt.edu or 540-231-5784, for more information. www.vabeginningfarmer.org



Why this Resource Directory? The Beginning Farmer Situation

Emerging trends in U.S. agriculture suggest that in order to enhance our agricultural resource base we need to establish, sustain, and preserve our farms, farmers, and farmland. A growing number of nongovernmental groups, Cooperative Extension Services, and USDA agencies are working to improve the viability of new farms, and the economic, social, and environmental fabric in which they are entrenched (Niewolny & Lillard, 2010). These new initiatives are responding to an overwhelming concern of a steady decline in the number of individuals entering into agriculture coupled by an increase in the number of exiting farmers and ranchers (Ruhf, 2001).

The current population of beginning farmers and ranchers is diverse and varies by location across the nation (Ahearn & Newton, 2009). Beginning farmers on average operate smaller farms—in size and gross dollars—compared to established farmers (Ahearn, Yee, & Korb, 2005). While beginning farmers tend to be younger than established farmers, about a third of beginning farmers are at least 55 years or older (Ahearn & Newton, 2009). Beginning farmers, along with limited-resource and socially disadvantaged farmers, make up at least 40 percent of all U.S. farms (Nickerson & Hand, 2009).

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009) recently reported a large job decline for farmers and ranchers, and projects an 8 percent decrease in the number of farmers and ranchers between 2008 and 2018. The age distribution of today's farmers and ranchers is also a critical issue. According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, the average age of a principal farmer is 57 years old. More than 63 percent of all established farms in 2007 comprised a principal farmer of 55 years of age or older; only 5 percent of all principal farmers were under 35 years or younger (Ahearn & Newton, 2009). This aging population of U.S. farmers and ranchers is expected to increase by the next census while the number of young farmers is likely to decline. The 2007 Census for Virginia also illustrates a significant need to establish and retain beginning farmers and ranchers based on the economic structuring of the industry. According to the census, agriculture provides \$55 billion in income per year and about 357,000 jobs, making it an important industry for the commonwealth. Of the 47,383 total farms in Virginia, 92 percent reported less than \$100,000 in value of sales, while 8 percent of the total farms account for 85 percent of total farm sales. Virginia is also among the most costly states for farmland, making it difficult for aspiring agriculturists to purchase suitable acreage. The average farm comprises 171 acres, while 77 percent of the total farms in Virginia operate on less than 180 acres.

Looking at the 2007 Census for Virginia, little is known about 13,206 principal farmers in Virginia who have been on their current farms or ranches nine or fewer years. The majority of all farmers in Virginia are white males, though such minority farmers as women and African Americans are on the rise. Production crops and practices differ regionally and culturally, especially between rural and urban centers.

Background on the USDA Beginning Farmer Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)

Beginning farmer education for adult and young audiences in the United States can be generally traced back to the advent of the 1862 and the 1890 Morrill Land Grant Acts. But for the first time, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (The 2008 Farm Bill), appropriated \$75 million for Fiscal Year 2009 to Fiscal Year 2012 to develop and offer education, training, outreach and mentoring programs to enhance the sustainability of the next generation of farmers.

The reasons for the renewed interest in beginning farmer and rancher programs are: 1) the rising average age of U.S. farmers; 2) the 8% projected decrease in the number of farmers and ranchers between 2008 and 2018; and 3) a growing recognition that new programs are needed to address the needs of the next generation of beginning farmers and ranchers. According to the Farm Bill, a beginning farm is considered to be one that is operated by one or more operators who have 10 years or less of experience operating a farm or ranch. In 2007, approximately 21 percent of family farms met that definition.

According to the USDA, since its inception, BFRDP has funded many projects to train, educate, and provide outreach and technical assistance to beginning farmers on one or more of the following topics:

- Production and management strategies to enhance land stewardship by beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Business management and decision support strategies that enhance the financial viability of beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Marketing strategies that enhance the competitiveness of beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Legal strategies that assist beginning farmers with farm or land acquisition and transfer.
- Other priority topics to enhance competitiveness and sustainability of beginning farmers and ranchers for the next generation.

Background on the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program

The Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program (VBFRCP) aims to improve opportunities for beginning farmers and ranchers to establish and sustain viable agricultural operations and communities in Virginia through the development and enhancement of whole farm planning programs, online resources, social networking, and farmer mentoring.

Beginning Farmer Audience

The VBFRCP addresses the needs of the spectrum of beginning farmers and ranchers in Virginia. We recognize a diversity of farming experiences, backgrounds, and aims held by Virginia beginning farmers and ranchers. Many groups find it useful to look at the stages of commitment, decision-making, and skills that farmers pass through as they begin a career in farming. Drawing upon the work of Sheils & Descartes (2004), the following categories are a helpful guide to understanding this pathway:

- **“Prospective” or Explorer farmers** = individuals interested in starting a farm or ranch. This includes next generation farm family members as well as those who do not come from a farming background.
- **Start-up farmers** = individuals who are in the early stages of their agricultural operation, often within one to three years of farming or ranching
- **Re-strategizing farmers** = farmers who are making changes to their operation after farming for approximately four to seven years. The individuals usually have increased decision-making responsibility and commitment to farming.
- **Establishing farmers** = those farmers that are expanding , diversifying, and stabilizing within years eight to ten of the beginning farmer period.
- **Transitioning farmers** = individuals who are family farm members who have decision making roles on the farm without having primary farm operator status.

These categories are a modification of those referred to by the New England Small Farm Institute. For full reference, see: Sheils & Descartes (2004). *What does the term “new farmer” mean? In Working with new farmers: Topics in professional development* (pp. 4-7). Growing New Farmers, a special project of The New England Small Farm Institute.

Preface written by Kim Niewolny and Matt Benson
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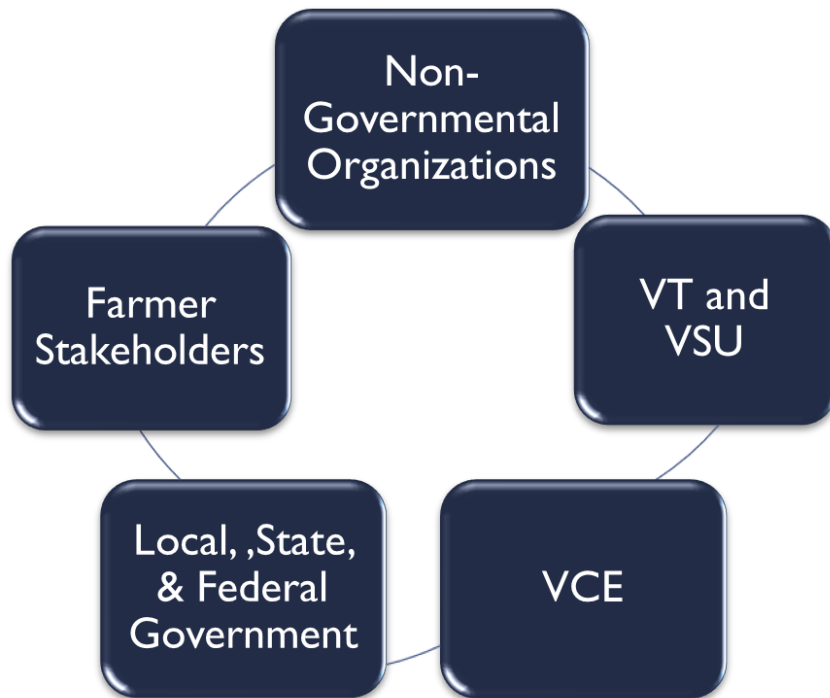
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Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Member Descriptions

The *Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition* formed to as a way to effectively address start-up needs of Virginia’s beginning farmers and rancher communities by offering high quality outreach, education, training and resource support. The Coalition acts as an umbrella network of organizations to assist in the development and enhancement of whole farming planning programs, online learning, social networking, and farmer-to-farmer mentoring. Coalition service providers have ample experience and real-world knowledge that beginning farmers and ranchers seek. Virginia Cooperative Extension serves as the backbone organization for the Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program, which facilitates program activity throughout the commonwealth.

While each member may provide specific knowledge about a particular topic or need, each Coalition member ultimately shares a commitment to addressing farm-start up needs from the perspective that the farm is a “whole” that makes up many, integrated parts. Therefore, the Coalition program uses a whole farm planning approach to provide resource and educational support to Virginia’s beginning farmers and ranchers. The Coalition is represented by stakeholder groups that together represent a vibrant resource and technical assistance network for beginning farmers and ranchers and other service providers.



VCE= Virginia Cooperative Extension
 VT= Virginia Tech
 VSU= Virginia State University

Appalachian Sustainable Development

ASD is a non-profit organization working in southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee since 1995. They connect farmers, forest landowners, and those who make food and forest products with markets and other resources in the region. They also seek to educate children, communities, farmers, forest landowners and others on nutrition, childhood obesity, low impact farming and forestry practices, local foods, and much more. ASD has provided workshops and coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum. <http://asdevelop.org/>

AgrAbility Virginia

AgrAbility Virginia helps individuals with disabilities overcome barriers to continue in their chosen profession in agriculture. The program collaborates with community professionals to modify farm and ranch operations, adapt equipment, increase farmstead accessibility, provide financial counseling, identify funding sources, and coordinate community services. <http://www.agrability.ext.vt.edu/>

Attimo Winery, LLC

Attimo Winery is a new wine business located in southwest Montgomery County, Virginia. They opened to the public in the spring of 2011 and offer special seated tastings. There are now over 11,000 vines on the property & many thousand raspberry and blackberry plants. Attimo has provided workshops and coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum. <http://www.attimowinery.com/>

Bracketts Farm; The Elisabeth Aiken Nolting Charitable Foundation

Bracketts farm serves as a focus for the Green Springs National Historic District which encompasses over 14,000 acres in the piedmont of central Virginia. Currently, they are developing a working model farm for training and outreach for new and beginning farmers. <http://bracketts.org/>

Farm Credit of the Virginias

Farm Credit is part of the nationwide Farm Credit System, a financial cooperative owned by its member-borrowers since 1917. Farm Credit's primary function is to provide loans for the farming and rural community. The team at Farm Credit is composed of financial professionals with the experience and knowledge to provide the help you need when you need it. <http://www.farmcreditnetwork.com/>

Fauquier County Agricultural Development

Fauquier County Agricultural Development serves to promote the agriculture industry within Fauquier County, to increase the economic viability of farming, and to advise the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors on matters affecting the agricultural economy and its development. As the lead organization of the Northern Piedmont Beginning Farmer Program, Fauquier County Ag Development has provided workshops and coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum.

<http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments/agdev/>

Fauquier Educational Farm

The Fauquier Educational Farm promotes agriculture and agricultural education, and demonstrates social responsibility relating to fresh, local food. As part of the Northern Piedmont Beginning Farmer Program, Fauquier Ed Farm has provided workshops and coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum.

<http://fauquiereducationfarm.org/>

Grayson LandCare

Grayson LandCare is a locally organized group of farmers, landowners, and residents concerned about economic and environmental problems in Grayson County and southwest Virginia. Grayson LandCare has provided training using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum.

<http://www.graysonlandcare.org/>

Hethwood Market

Hethwood Market is a locally owned market located in Blacksburg with a family atmosphere that provides quality customer service, hospitality, and convenience. Scott and Mendy Sink, owners of Hethwood Market, were the 2010 recipients of the American Farm Bureau Young Farmer of the year award. Scott has been a member of the VBFRCP steering committee.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Hethwood-Market/162169960817>

Laurel Farms, Inc.

Laurel Farm is owned and operated by the Alvin and Nina Blaha family in southeastern, VA. They are a well-respected and long-standing family farm in the region. They produce soybeans, cotton, and peanuts. This this successful farm family is a model for beginning farmers interested in Virginia agriculture commodities. Alvin has been a member of the VBFRCP steering committee.

Mountain View Farm & Vineyard

Mountain View Farm & Vineyard is a family owned and operated beef and wine grape operation located in Botetourt County. Megan and Andy Seibel are respected members of the agricultural community that illustrate the experiences of an intergenerational family farm in south central Virginia. Megan Seibel has been a member of the VBFRCP steering committee.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency that works with landowners to conserve natural resources on private lands. NRCS is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They were formerly called the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). The agency provides technical and financial assistance to conserve natural resources. While much of the technical assistance helps farmers and ranchers develop conservation systems uniquely suited to their land, the agency also provides assistance to other private landowners and communities to reduce erosion, conserve and protect water, and address other resource concerns

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/va/home/>

The Piedmont Environmental Council

The Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC) was founded in 1972 to promote and protect the Virginia Piedmont's rural economy, natural resources, history and beauty. Headquartered in Warrenton, Virginia, they have offices throughout a nine county Piedmont region that includes Albemarle, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Loudoun, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock counties. The PEC offers the "Exploring the Small Farm Dream" course, which is an ideal experience for prospective and explorer farmers in the region. The PEC also coordinates the Buy Fresh Buy Local chapters and a Pasture Enterprise network in its region.

<http://www.pecva.org/>

Rural Development (USDA)

Rural Development (RD) is a USDA agency that promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks, credit unions, and community-managed lending pools. They offer technical assistance and information to help agricultural producers and cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their operations.

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/VAHome.html>

SustainFloyd

Located in southwestern Virginia, this non-profit organization aims to create a vibrant, regionally unique market and gathering place where the public connects with local farmers, artisans and other producers thereby fostering community support of sustainable agriculture and the local rural economy. SustainFloyd has provided coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum.

<http://sustainfloyd.org/>

Team Ag Ed, Virginia

Team Ag Ed Virginia develops and disseminates curricula to 308 agricultural educators and 32,800 secondary agricultural education students. Formal and non-formal instruction includes continuing education course work, an annual teacher's conference, and regional professional development opportunities. Department members coordinate statewide youth career and leadership development activities.

<http://www.vaffa.org/vateamaged/index.html>

Virginia Association for Biological Farming

Virginia Association for Biological Farming (VABF) supports beginning and established farmers within the region and nationally through ongoing advocacy and educational activities that are farmer-driven and organized. VABF provides a yearly farm conference, regional farm tours and trainings, and has offered coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum.

<http://vabf.org/>

Virginia Cooperative Extension Local County Offices

Virginia Cooperative Extension's (VCE) mission is to help people put scientific knowledge to work through learning experiences that improve economic, environmental, and social well-being. VCE is an educational network of 106 unit offices spread across the commonwealth. Virginia Tech and Virginia State University are sister land grant institutions that comprise VCE efforts. VCE offices are staffed by roughly 200 local agents and supported by nearly 90 specialists that are together creating programs and building networks needed to support new agriculturalists in Virginia. Many local county VCE agents have provided instruction and trainings as part of the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum offerings. Local offices: <http://www.ext.vt.edu/offices/index.html>
Jim Schroering, VCE agent in Hanover County, has participated as a member of the VBFRCP steering committee.

Virginia Cooperative Extension Specialists (Virginia Tech and Virginia State University)

Virginia Cooperative Extension's (VCE) mission is to help people put scientific knowledge to work through learning experiences that improve economic, environmental, and social well-being. VCE is an educational network of 106 unit offices spread across the commonwealth. Virginia Tech and Virginia State University are sister land grant institutions that comprise VCE efforts. VCE offices are staffed by roughly 200 local agents and supported by nearly 90 specialists that are together creating programs and building networks needed to support new agriculturalists in Virginia. Several VCE specialists have provided instruction as part of the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum offerings. University specialists: <http://www.ext.vt.edu/news/experts.html>

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) is the state agency that promotes the economic growth and development of Virginia agriculture, encourage environmental stewardship and provide consumer protection. VDACS offers several special programs for beginning and established farmers: Virginia Farmlink, Virginia Grown, Agriculture and Forest Development, and much more. The VDACS Farmlink Program is a partner of the Certified Farm Seekers (CFS) Program. The CFS Program has provided coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum. <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/programs.shtml>

Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers Program

Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers Program provides local and statewide events, activities, and networking opportunities to new and beginning farmers. The program serves 2,000 young farmers across Virginia, ranging in ages of 18 to 35 years-old. As the lead organization of the Certified Farm Seekers (CFS) Program, they have provided coursework using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum. <http://vafbyoungfarmers.ning.com/>

Virginia Forage & Grassland Council

The Virginia Forage & Grassland Council (VFGC) acts as a voice for forage-based agriculture. The organization strives for more efficient use of land resources in ways that protect natural resources and the environment. In these achievements, the quality of life for all Virginia is improved.

<http://vaforages.org/>

Virginia State University, School of Agriculture

Virginia State University's (VSU) School of is the land-grant division of the University. It is guided by the University's tripartite mission of teaching, research and public service. The School provides research- based solutions, information, and technology for students, individuals, families, and communities to enrich their lives.

<http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/>

Virginia State University's (VSU) Small Farm Outreach Program

The Small Farm Outreach Program provides a wide range of outreach and assistance activities in production management, financial management, marketing, available USDA farm programs, and other areas to increase farm profitability and promote sustainability. Their goal is to encourage and assist limited-resource and socially-disadvantaged producers and ranchers to own, maintain and operate farms and ranches independently, to participate in agricultural programs and improve their overall farm management skills. William Crutchfield has participated as a member of the VBFRCP steering committee.

<http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/special-programs/cooperative-extension/small-farm-outreach.php>.

Agents and their corresponding counties and resource areas:

- Alvin Adkins: Amherst, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward
- Derrick Cladd: Brunswick, Greensville, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Suffolk, Surry, Sussex
- Jim Hankins: Culpepper, Fauquier, Loudoun, Madison, Prince William, Rappahannock, Stafford
- Vernon Heath: Amelia, Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, Powhatan
- James Sheppard: Financial Mgmt Agent - At Large
- Clifton Slade: Vegetable Specialist - At Large
- Clifford Somerville: Bedford, Campbell, Franklin, Halifax, Henry, Patrick, Pittsylvania
- Susan Strickland: Latino Outreach & Cut Flowers, At Large
- Roland Terrell: Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Nelson, Orange, Spotsylvania

Virginia Tech, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Through its land-grant mission of research, teaching, and extension, Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) has been instrumental in helping agriculture and other life science industries make significant strides in improving people's lives. Today's College is adapting to society's expectations and needs by focusing its resources and efforts on improving human health and nutrition, sustaining agriculture and the environment, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels, and developing cures for devastating and debilitating diseases.

<http://www.cals.vt.edu/>

VT Earthworks (Catawba Sustainability Center)

VT EarthWorks is a business-acceleration program for land-based businesses (e.g., producers of local food, biomass for energy, and sustainable wood products) that aim to serve local and regional markets. VT Earthworks, as part of the Catawba Sustainability Center, started the Growers' Academy, an 8-week learning series offered in Roanoke for new and aspiring small farmers. The Growers' Academy has used portions of the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum.

<http://www.catawbalandcare.org/going-on/csc-earthworks/>

Young Farmers of Virginia

Young Farmers of Virginia (YFV) is a non-governmental organization affiliated with the agricultural programs in middle and high schools associated with the National Young Farmer Educational Association (NYFEA). YFV reaches out to agriculturalists of all ages and agricultural affiliations with over 350 members. The YFV offer an annual State Young Farmer Tour, which is hosted by various Young Farmers chapters.

<http://www.vayoungfarmer.org/>

Select Categories of Resource Needs

Access to Land

Land is a crucial aspect of agricultural production and farm development. There are many reasons why you need to develop a plan to gain access to suitable farmland. It is also important to plan for land tenure options so you can effectively and affordably acquire and keep land in production. Are your current farmland resources adequate for your planned farm enterprise(s)? And as you develop a vision for your farm's future, it is never too early to think about how you might transfer the farm to the next generation. Or perhaps you are currently planning to take over the previous generation's operation? Either way, the process involves planning for a strategy to transition farm assets and farm business management control from a farm owner to others in a way that seeks to minimize conflict, uncertainty, and negative financial implications. These and other resource providers can help you with important farmland needs and issues in a variety of technical and programmatic ways. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.



Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)

Office of Farmland Preservation
102 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219
<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/preservation/index.shtml>
VBFRCP Contact: Kevin Schmidt
Coordinator, Office of Farmland Preservation
Phone: (804) 786-1346
E-mail: Kevin.Schmidt@vdacs.virginia.gov

Farm Credit of the Virginias (part of the nationwide Farm Credit System)

Farm Credit has many offices and services statewide. Visit their website to locate an office and financial professional near you: <http://www.farmcreditofvirginias.com/>
VBFRCP Contact: John Day
Director of Lending Initiatives for Farm Credit
Phone: (540) 347-3344
Email: JDay@FCVirginias.com

VBFRCP Contact: Bette Brand
Chief Sales Officer/External Affairs | Farm Credit of the Virginias
Phone: 540.309.1187
Email: BBrand@FCVirginias.com

Colonial Farm Credit (part of the nationwide Farm Credit System)

Colonial Farm Credit has many offices and services statewide. Visit their website to locate an office and financial professional near you: <http://www.colonialfarmcredit.com/locations.html>

Farm Service Agency (USDA)

You are encouraged to directly contact your local FSA office for a loan officer or resource specialist to support your farmland purchase needs:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=va&agency=fsa>

FSA Virginia overview:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/stateoffapp?mystate=va&area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>

VBFRCP Contact: Linda Cronin
Public Relations and Outreach Specialist for FSA Virginia
Phone: (804) 287-1537
Email: linda.cronin@va.usda.gov

VBFRCP Contact: Pete Adamson
Farm Loan Chief for Virginia
Phone: (804) 287-1527
Email: pete.adamson@va.usda.gov

Fauquier County Agricultural Development

35 Culpeper Street, Warrenton, VA 20186
<http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments/agdev/>
VBFRCP Contact: Ray Pickering
Agriculture Development Officer
Phone: (540) 422-8280
Email: ray.pickering@fauquiercounty.gov

Piedmont Environmental Council

PEC has offices and staff throughout their nine county region in Virginia
<http://www.pecva.org/>
VBFRCP Contact: Sue Ellen Johnson
Director of Agriculture & Rural Economy Programs
Phone: (540) 347-2334
Email: sjohnson@pecva.org

Rural Development (USDA)

Rural Development resource support and applications are handled at the local level. For help with an application, locate your Rural Development State Office or Rural Development staff at your nearest location: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/VAHome.html>

VBFRCP Contact: Vernon Orrell

Assistant to the State Director

Phone: (804) 287-1575

Email: vern.orrell@va.usda.gov

Virginia Cooperative Extension

VCE provides access to publications, local Extension offices, and educational resources. The *Virginia Whole Farm Planning* curriculum is one example of these resources. Visit the VCE website to locate your nearest Extension agent or specialist for more information about programming and technical assistance. Local offices and research centers can also be located by visiting local websites. <http://www.ext.vt.edu/>. The following are regional or state-wide VBFRCP contacts that may provide specific farmland resources and/or technical assistance:

Gordon Groover

Associate Professor/Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech

Farm Business Management

Phone: (540) 231-5850

Email: xgrover@vt.edu

Peter Callan

Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent

Farm Business Management, Culpeper County

Phone: (540) 727-3435 ext. 342

Email: peterc@vt.edu

Tom Stanley

Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent

Farm Business Management, Rockbridge County

Phone: (540) 463-4734

Email: stanleyt@vt.edu

Matthew Miller

Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent

Farm Business Management, Wythe County

Phone: (276) 223-6040

Email: mamille6@vt.edu

Michael Lachance
Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent
Agriculture and Natural Resources, Horticulture, Nelson County
Phone: (434) 263-4035
Email: lachance@vt.edu

Kim Niewolny
Assistant Professor/Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech
Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
Phone: (540) 231-5784
Email: niewolny@vt.edu

Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)

The NRCS has offices and centers statewide. Visit your local area resource specialist to learn more about the services and programs they offer:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/va/home/>

VBFRCP Contact: Diane Dunaway

Easement Specialist for Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

Phone: (804) 287-1634

Email: Diane.Dunaway@va.usda.gov



Stefanie Kitchen of Farm Bureau and Kevin Schmidt of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at the 2013 International Farmland Transitions Training Workshop held in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Business Planning, Management, & Financial Planning

In order to develop a business that is viable, you should do research and find enterprises that meet the following basic criteria: the enterprises generate sufficient revenue to pay farm expenses and have funds left over that can be used to service debt, replace capital items (e.g., equipment, buildings) and pay all or part of the family living expenses. It is also essential that the enterprise must have a viable, potential market. Business planning and management plays a big role in the future and viability of one's enterprise. Plans for expansion and financing are important to develop and act out to ensure the success of the enterprise.

It is also important to stay on top of your business finances and plan ahead for longevity, expansion, and even the unexpected. From insurance and liability coverage to record-keeping and savings, there are several aspects of financial planning that beginning farmers and ranchers must consider. Taxes and tax structures can also be challenging but are essential component of how you set up your farm business.

These and other resource providers can help you with important agricultural business and financial planning needs in a variety of technical and programmatic ways. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

VCE provides access to publications, local Extension offices, and educational resources. The *Virginia Whole Farm Planning* curriculum is one example of these resources. Visit the VCE website to locate your nearest Extension agent or specialist for more information about programming and technical assistance. Local offices and research centers can also be located by visiting local websites. <http://www.ext.vt.edu/>. The following are regional or state-wide VBFRCP contacts that may provide agricultural business resource and technical assistance:

Theresa Nartea
Agriculture and Natural Resources, Marketing & Agribusiness Specialist
Assistant Professor, Virginia State University
Phone: 804-524-5491
Email: tnartea@vsu.edu

Gordon Groover
Associate Professor/Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech
Phone: (540) 231-5850
Email: xgrover@vt.edu

Peter Callan
Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent
Farm Business Management, Culpeper County
Phone: (540) 727-3435 ext. 342
Email: peterc@vt.edu

Tom Stanley
Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent
Farm Business Management, Rockbridge County
Phone: (540) 463-4734
Email: stanleyt@vt.edu

Matthew Miller
Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent
Farm Business Management, Wythe County
Phone: (276) 223-6040
Email: mamille6@vt.edu

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Agriculture and Forestry Development Services
102 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219
<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/>
VBFRCP Contact: Stephen Versen
Agriculture and Forestry Development Services
Project Manager
Phone: (804) 786-6911
Email: Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov

Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural Sustainability (VA FAIRS)

Richmond, Virginia
<http://www.vafairs.com/>
Contact: Chris Cook
Director
Phone: (804) 290-1158
Email: vafairs@vafb.com

Farm Service Agency (USDA)

You are encouraged to directly contact your local FSA office for a loan officer or resource specialist to support your business planning needs:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=va&agency=fsa>

FSA Virginia overview:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/stateoffapp?mystate=va&area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>

VBFRCP Contact: Linda Cronin

Public Relations and Outreach Specialist for FSA Virginia

Phone: (804) 287-1537

Email: linda.cronin@va.usda.gov

VBFRCP Contact: Pete Adamson

Farm Loan Chief for Virginia

Phone: (804) 287-1527

Email: pete.adamson@va.usda.gov

Virginia State University's (VSU) Small Farm Outreach Program

VSU's SMOP has agents in several counties. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to find a service professional near you:

<http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/special-programs/cooperative-extension/small-farm-outreach.php>

VBFRCP Contact: William Crutchfield

P. O. BOX 9081

Petersburg, VA

Phone: (804) 524-5662

Email: wcrutchfield@vsu.edu



Service professionals taking a break at a VBFRCP meeting in Harrisonburg, Virginia (meeting space courtesy of Farm Credit)

Credit and Financing

Whether it is purchasing equipment, infrastructure, animals, supplies, or land to begin or expand your operation, there are many ways in which farmer or rancher will need to assess their credit and financing options. There are many resources available to help the beginning farmer make the credit and financing decisions right for them. These and other resource providers can help you with important agricultural business needs and issues in a variety of technical and programmatic ways. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.



Photo courtesy of Kelli Scott

Farm Credit of the Virginias (part of the nationwide Farm Credit System)

Farm Credit has many offices and services statewide. Visit their website to locate an office and financial professional near you: <http://www.farmcreditofvirginias.com/>

VBFRCP Contact: John Day

Director of Lending Initiatives for Farm Credit

Phone: (540) 347-3344

Email: JDay@FCVirginias.com

VBFRCP Contact: Bette Brand

Chief Sales Officer/External Affairs | Farm Credit of the Virginias

Phone: 540.309.1187

Email: BBrand@FCVirginias.com

Colonial Farm Credit (part of the nationwide Farm Credit System)

Colonial Farm Credit has many offices and services statewide. Visit their website to locate an office and financial professional near you: <http://www.colonialfarmcredit.com/locations.html>

Farm Service Agency (USDA)

You are encouraged to directly contact your local FSA office for a loan officer or resource specialist to support your financing and credit needs:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=va&agency=fsa>

FSA Virginia overview:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/stateoffapp?mystate=va&area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>

VBFRCP Contact: Linda Cronin
Public Relations and Outreach Specialist for FSA Virginia
Phone: (804) 287-1537
Email: linda.cronin@va.usda.gov

VBFRCP Contact: Pete Adamson
Farm Loan Chief for Virginia
Phone: (804) 287-1527
Email: pete.adamson@va.usda.gov

Regional Lending Institutions with Agricultural Services

For example, the First Bank & Trust Company is a commercial lender that operates out of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee. Since 1979, they have served the agricultural industry in this region through their First Bank AgCredit Services. These services include farm loans for a variety of agricultural enterprises. First Bank is an Other Financing Institution (OFI) through the Farm Credit System. First Bank & Trust: <https://www.firstbank.com/#/first-bank-agcredit>

Local Sources of Financing and Credit

There are local banks that make timber, farm real estate and operating loans that beginning farmers should look into. These might be considered “traditional” credit options that reside in rural, local communities. In plain terms, beginning farmers should not rule out these options as possibilities for financing and credit.



Coalition partners listening to beginning farmers share their start-up experiences at a VBFRCP meeting

Farm Health & Safety

It is important that your farm environment is safe and risk averse to ensure your protection and the protection of your employees, product, and any visitors you may have on your farm. Taking precautions now will help avoid hazards and liability issues later. These and other resource providers can help you with important farm health and safety needs in a variety of ways. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.

AgrAbility Virginia

201 East Main Street, Salem, VA 24153

<http://www.agrability.ext.vt.edu/>

VBFRCP Contact: Kirk Ballin

Phone: (540) 777-7325

Email: kirk.ballin@va.eastersealsucp.com

Virginia Cooperative Extension

VCE provides access to publications, local Extension offices, and educational resources. The *Virginia Whole Farm Planning Curriculum* is one example of these resources. Visit the VCE website to locate your nearest Extension agent or specialist for more information about programming and technical assistance. Local offices and research centers can also be located by visiting local websites. <http://www.ext.vt.edu/>. The VBFRCP contact that offers specific farm health and safety resources includes:

Bobby Grisso

Professor and Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech

Agricultural machinery management, Precision farming, & Farm safety (including youth safety)

Phone: (540) 231-1980

Email: bgrisso@vt.edu



Tim Mize, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Fauquier County, during a training with the Northern Piedmont Beginning Farmer Program

Food Safety

Farmers who market directly to consumers must be aware of the food safety concerns that can pose public health and liability issues. The most important resource will be your county's health department. However, you should educate yourself about the potential risks to insure against a devastating food safety mistake. These and other resource providers can help you with food safety needs in a variety of ways. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.



Photo courtesy of Kelli Scott

Appalachian Sustainable Development

121 Russell Rd., Abingdon, VA 24210

<http://asdevelop.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Tamara McNaughton

Agricultural Program Manager

Office Phone: (276) 623-1121

Email: tmcnaughton@asdevelop.org

Virginia Cooperative Extension

VCE provides access to publications, local Extension offices, and educational resources. The *Virginia Whole Farm Planning* curriculum is one example of these resources. Visit the VCE website to locate your nearest Extension agent or specialist for more information about programming and technical assistance. Local offices and research centers can also be located by visiting local websites. <http://www.ext.vt.edu/>. The following are regional or state-wide VBFRCP contacts that can offer specific food safety resource support:

Amber Vallotton

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Agent, Rockingham County

965 Pleasant Valley Road

Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Phone: 540-564-3080

Email: avallott@vt.edu

Cathryn Kloetzli

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Agent, Albemarle County

460 Stagecoach Road

Charlottesville, VA 22902

Phone: 434-872-4580

Email: cathrynk@vt.edu

Mark Sutphin
Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Agent, Frederick County
107 N. Kent Street, 2nd Floor
Winchester, VA 22601
Phone: (540) 665-5699
Email: mark.sutphin@vt.edu

Renee Boyer
Associate Professor and Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech
Department of Food Science and Technology
Phone: (540) 231-4330
Email: rroiden@vt.edu



Photo courtesy of Virginia Cooperative Extension

Marketing

Marketing is essential to the success of your farm or ranch. There are many marketing avenues one can take. It is also important to assess your potential market and what consumers you are targeting to ensure the longevity of your agricultural business. These and other resource providers can help you with your marketing needs and issues in a variety of ways and in specific locations. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.



Catawba Sustainability Center garden plots

Appalachian Sustainable Development

121 Russell Rd., Abingdon, VA 24210

<http://asdevelop.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Tamara McNaughton

Agricultural Program Manager

Phone: Office: (276) 623-1121

Email: tmcnaughton@asdevelop.org

Fauquier County Agricultural Development

35 Culpeper Street, Warrenton, VA 20186

<http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments/agdev/>

VBFRCP Contact: Ray Pickering

Director

Phone: (540) 422-8280

Email: ray.pickering@fauquiercounty.gov

Grayson LandCare

PO Box 373; Independence, VA 24348

www.graysonlandcare.org

VBFRCP Contact: Jerry Moles

Coordinator

Phone: (276) 238-7073

Email: jmoles@igc.org

VBFRCP Contact: Danny Boyer

President

Phone: (276) 238-7073

Email: dtdboyer@centurylink.net

Local Food Hub

P.O. Box 4647; Charlottesville, VA 22905

<http://localfoodhub.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Emily Manley

Director of Communications & Outreach

Phone: (434) 286-2176

Email: emily@localfoodhub.org

Piedmont Environmental Council

PEC has offices and staff throughout their nine county region in Virginia

<http://www.pecva.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Sue Ellen Johnson

Director of Agriculture & Rural Economy Programs

Phone: (540) 347-2334

Email: sjohnson@pecva.org

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

102 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219

<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/>

VBFRCP Contact: Leanne Dubois

Office of Promotions

Direct Marketing Services and Virginia Grown Program

Phone: (804) 225-3663

Email: leanne.dubois@vdacs.virginia.gov

VBFRCP Contact: Stephen Versen

Agriculture and Forestry Development Services; Project Manager

Phone: (804) 786-6911

Email: Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov

Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural Sustainability (VA FAIRS)

Richmond, Virginia

<http://www.vafairs.com/>

Contact: Chris Cook

Director

Phone: (804) 290-1158

Email: vafairs@vafb.com

Virginia State University

<http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/index>

VBFRCP Contact: Theresa Nartea

Agriculture and Natural Resources, Marketing & Agribusiness Specialist

Assistant Professor, Virginia State University

Phone: 804-524-5491

Email: tnartea@vsu.edu

Virginia State University's (VSU) Small Farm Outreach Program

<http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/special-programs/cooperative-extension/small-farm-outreach.php>

VBFRCP Contact: William Crutchfield

P. O. BOX 9081

Petersburg, VA

Phone: (804) 524-5662

Email: wcrutchfield@vsu.edu

VT Earthworks (Catawba Sustainability Center)

<http://www.catawbalandcare.org/going-on/csc-earthworks/>

VBFRCP: Josh Nease

Manager

Catawba, Virginia

Phone: 540-553-2311

Email: jnease@vt.edu

SustainFloyd

203 S. Locust Street; Suite H; Floyd, VA 24091

<http://sustainfloyd.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Michael Burton

Director

Phone: (540) 250-0111

Email: info@sustainfloyd.org



Farm tour in Floyd County, Virginia

Social Networking (Farmer and Youth Organizations)

Each Coalition member provides some level of networking and community-level support. This support may be promoted directly through their activities or indirectly through partnerships with other groups. Listed below are several Coalition member organizations that provide networking, farmer-driven, and grassroots support for their young and beginning farmer membership. Also included in this list are networking resources provided by agricultural and extension educators who work with youth. Together, their membership and networking services support opportunities for many young, beginning, and establishing farmers in Virginia. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.

Team Ag Ed, Virginia

<http://www.vaffa.org/vateamaged/index.html>

VBFRCP Contact: Andy Seibel

State FFA specialist and advisor to the Virginia Future Farmers of America organization

Phone: (540)231-3823

Email: gseibel@vt.edu

VBFRCP Contact: Dana Fischer

Agriculture Teacher, Central High School

Member of the Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators (VAAE)

Phone: (540) 459-3806

Email: dafischer@shenandoah.k12.va.us.k.12

VBFRCP Contact: Sarah Scyphers

Agriculture Teacher, Holston High School

President of the Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators (VAAE)

Phone: (276) 739-4019

Email: sscyphers@wcs.k12.va.us

Virginia Association for Biological Farming

www.vabf.org

VBFRCP Contact: Janet Aardema

Executive Director

janet@vabf.org

Virginia Cooperative Extension, 4-H Youth Development

4-H is the youth development education program of Virginia Cooperative Extension. 4-H participants are youth, ages 5 to 19, taking part in programs provided as the result of actions planned and initiated by Extension personnel in cooperation with volunteers. To learn more about 4-H programming opportunities in your community, please contact the state 4-H website or your local Extension office: <http://www.4-h.ext.vt.edu/>

Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers Program

<http://www.vafarmbureau.org/MemberPrograms/YoungFarmers.aspx>

VBFRCP Contact: Ron Saacke

Director

Phone: (804) 514-4202

Email: ron.saacke@vafb.com

Virginia Forage & Grassland Council

<http://vaforages.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Danny Boyer

Phone: (276) 238-7073

Email: dtdboyer@centurylink.net

Young Farmers of Virginia

<http://www.vayoungfarmer.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Ron Byrd

Executive Coordinator

Phone: (276) 768-8590

E-mail: rpbyrd@vt.edu



Sustainable Farming Practices

Many beginning farmers and ranchers focus first on the production aspects of farming or ranching. This is to be expected since this might be the primary reason you are interested in becoming a farmer or rancher in the first place. However, good planning does not necessarily begin with the production process itself.



Regardless of what product(s) you plan to grow or raise, a central question to consider is the type of production management system you will implement. It is important to assess if your production approach is a good fit with your farmland capabilities, your financial needs, market outlets, and personal level of knowledge and skill. There are many resources available to you within the Coalition to help make sure you have the right fit. Below are a handful of professional resource providers who can help address your questions regarding best management practices as it relates to a wide variety of horticultural and agronomic products, crops, small and large livestock, ornamental and landscaping products, and aquaculture systems. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.

Appalachian Sustainable Development

121 Russell Rd., Abingdon, VA 24210

<http://asdevelop.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Tamara McNaughton

Agricultural Program Manager

Phone: Office: (276) 623-1121

Email: tmcnaughton@asdevelop.org

Grayson LandCare

PO Box 373; Independence, VA 24348

Grayson County, Virginia

www.graysonlandcare.org

VBFRCP Contact: Jerry Moles

Coordinator

Phone: (276) 238-7073

Email: jmoles@igc.org

VBFRCP Contact: Danny Boyer

President

Phone: (276) 238-7073

Email: dtdboyer@centurylink.net

Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)

The NRCS has offices and centers statewide. Visit your local area resource specialist to learn more about the services and programs they offer:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/va/home/>

VBFRCP Contact: Karri Honaker

Soil Conservationist; Appomattox (Rustburg USDA Service Center)

Phone: (434) 352-5610

Email: karri.honaker@va.usda.gov

VBFRCP Contact: Gene Harris

Resource Conservationist; Christiansburg Area Office

Phone: (540) 381-4221

Email: Gene.Harris@va.usda.gov

Piedmont Environmental Council

PEC has offices and staff throughout their nine county region in Virginia

<http://www.pecva.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Sue Ellen Johnson

Director of Agriculture & Rural Economy Programs

Phone: (540) 347-2334

Email: sjohnson@pecva.org

Virginia Association for Biological Farming

www.vabf.org

VBFRCP Contact: Janet Aardema

Executive Director

janet@vabf.org

VBFRCP Contact: Mark Schonbeck

Editor, Virginia Biological Farmer

Liaison with National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition and
Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group

Phone: (540) 745-4130

Email: mark@abundantdawn.org

SustainFloyd

203 S. Locust Street; Suite H; Floyd, VA 24091

<http://sustainfloyd.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Michael Burton

Director

Phone: (540) 250-0111

Email: info@sustainfloyd.org

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Virginia Tech and Virginia State University)

VCE provides access to publications, local Extension offices, and educational resources. The Virginia Whole Farm Planning Curriculum is one example of these resources. Visit the VCE website to locate your nearest Extension agent or specialist for more information about programming and technical assistance for a wide variety of production practices and products. Local offices and research centers can also be located by visiting local websites.

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/>

Virginia Forage & Grassland Council

<http://vaforages.org/>

VBFRCP Contact: Danny Boyer

Phone: (276) 238-7073

Email: dtdboyer@centurylink.net

Virginia State University's (VSU) Small Farm Outreach Program

<http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/special-programs/cooperative-extension/small-farm-outreach.php>

VBFRCP Contact: William Crutchfield

P. O. BOX 9081; Petersburg, Virginia

Phone: (804) 524-5662

Email: wcrutchfield@vsu.edu

VT Earthworks (Catawba Sustainability Center)

<http://www.catawbalandcare.org/going-on/csc-earthworks/>

VBFRCP: Josh Nease

Manager

Catawba, Virginia

Phone: 540-553-2311

Email: jnease@vt.edu

Whole Farm Planning for Beginners

Whole farm planning is the first step any potential beginning farmer and business owner should take. Developing a vision, plan, and assessing your resources are just a few ways in which you begin your enterprise. Whole farm planning is a continuous process and is never finished. Several VBFRCP members are familiar with the whole farm planning framework as a model for new farm start-up and development. Those listed below are just a handful of these resource professionals. Visit their descriptions in the first part of the resource directory, and the websites below, to learn more.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Virginia Tech and Virginia State University)

VCE provides access to publications, local Extension offices, and educational resources. The *Virginia Whole Farm Planning* curriculum is one example of these resources. Visit the VCE website to locate your nearest Extension agent or specialist for more information about programming and technical assistance for a wide variety of production practices and products. Local offices and research centers can also be located by visiting local websites. <http://www.ext.vt.edu/>. Regional or state-wide VBFRCP contacts that offer specific whole farm planning resource and technical assistance:

Amber Vallotton
Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Agent
VCE–Rockingham County
965 Pleasant Valley Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Phone: 540-564-3080
Email: avallott@vt.edu

Cathryn Kloetzli
Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Agent
VCE – Albemarle County
460 Stagecoach Road
Charlottesville, VA 22902
Phone: 434-872-4580
Email: cathrynk@vt.edu

Kim Niewolny
Assistant Professor/Extension Specialist
Department of Agricultural & Extension Education, Virginia Tech
Phone: 540-231-5784
Email: niewolny@vt.edu

Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)

The NRCS has offices and centers statewide. Visit your local area resource specialist to learn more about the services and programs they offer:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/va/home/>

VBFRCP Contact: Karri Honaker

Soil Conservationist; Appomattox (Rustburg USDA Service Center)

Phone: (434) 352-5610

Email: karri.honaker@va.usda.gov

VBFRCP Contact: Gene Harris

Resource Conservationist; Christiansburg Area Office

Phone: (540) 381-4221

Email: Gene.Harris@va.usda.gov

Organizations that have provided coursework and/or trainings using the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Program's *Whole Farm Planning* curriculum

- **Certified Farm Seeker Program**
Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services— Virginia-wide
- **Whole Farm Planning for New Wineries and Vineyards**
Attimo Winery — Montgomery County
- **Whole Farm Planning for Working Model Farm and Land-Based Learning Center in Floyd County**
SustainFloyd — Floyd County
- **The Northern Piedmont Beginning Farmer Program**
Fauquier County Ag. Development Office, Fauquier Education Farm, and Virginia Cooperative Extension — Fauquier County
- **Whole Farm Planning in Southwest Virginia**
Appalachian Sustainable Development and Virginia Cooperative Extension — Washington and Wise Counties
- **Beginning Farmer Support on the Blue Ridge Plateau**
Grayson LandCare — Grayson and neighboring counties
- **Whole Farm Planning Farm School**
Virginia Association for Biological Farming — Goochland County

For more information on *Whole Farm Planning* trainings and educational opportunities, please visit: www.vabeginningfarmer.aee.vt.edu/planning/index.html

Farmer Mentoring

The Virginia Farm Mentor Network facilitates the exchange of knowledge and skills of experienced farmers and ranchers with the beginning farmer and rancher community. It also provides an opportunity for long-term working relationships to develop for successful farming. Although some limitations may occur, the goal of the Virginia Farm Mentor Network is to assist all beginning farmers and ranchers.

All participants of Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program's Whole Farm Planning programs receive priority status if applying as mentees to the Virginia Farm Mentor Network. For more information and assistance to apply, contact our Farm Mentor Coordinators or visit our website at: <http://www.vabeginningfarmer.aee.vt.edu/mentoring/index.html>



C. J. Isbell
Central Virginia Farm Mentor Network
Email: cjisbell@vt.edu
Phone: (540) 553-2278



Jim Hilleary
Northern Piedmont Farm Mentor Network
Email: jim.hilleary@vt.edu
Phone: (540) 553-5631

Preface References

- Ahearn, M., & Newton, D. (2009). *Beginning farmers and ranchers*, EIB-53, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
- Ahearn, M., Yee, J., & Korb, P. (2005). Effects of differing farm policies on farm structure and dynamics. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 87(5), 1182-1189.
- Nickerson, C., & Hand, M. (2009). *Participation in conservation programs by targeted farmers: Beginning, limited-resource, and socially disadvantaged operators' enrollment trends*. EIB-62, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
- Niewolny, K., & Lillard, P. (2010). Expanding the boundaries of beginning farmer training and program development: A review of contemporary initiatives to cultivate a new generation of American farmers. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 1(1), 65-88.
- Ruhf, K. (2001). *Northeast new farmers: Opportunities for policy development*. New England Small Farm Institute. Belchertown, MA. Retrieved from http://www.smallfarm.org/uploads/uploads/Files/Policy_Background_Paper.pdf
- Sheils, C., & Descartes, M. (2004). What does the term "new farmer" mean? In *Working with new farmers: Topics in professional development* (pp. 4-7). Growing New Farmers, a special project of The New England Small Farm Institute. Retrieved from: [www.smallfarm.org/uploads/uploads/Files/WORKING WITH NEW FARMERS.pdf](http://www.smallfarm.org/uploads/uploads/Files/WORKING_WITH_NEW_FARMERS.pdf)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2009). *2007 census of agriculture, United States summary and state data*. Vol. 1, Geographic Area Series, Part 51, AC-07-A-51. Washington, DC: U.S. Retrieved December, 12, 2009, from http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/usv1.pdf
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2009). *2007 census of agriculture, Virginia state and county data*. Vol. 1, Geographic Area Series, Part 46, AC-07-A-46. Washington, DC: U.S. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/Virginia/vav1.pdf
- U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009). Employment projections. Washington, DC: U.S. Retrieved March 21, 2010, from http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_105.htm