The rising demand of local, healthy foods is fueling the rise of new agribusiness development across the country.
Today’s agriculture offers over 200 rewarding and challenging careers, employing approximately 22 million people. A degree in agriculture can lead to a rewarding career in the public sector or with private industry.

- Agricultural Economist
- Agriculture Teacher
- Agronomist
- Animal Geneticist
- Animal Nutritionist
- Animal/Plant Physiologist
- Aquaculturist
- Biometrics Specialist
- Biotechnologist
- Ecologist
- Entomologist
- Environmental Scientist
- Fisheries Scientist
- Forester
- Horticulturist
- Hydrologist
- Nutrient Management Specialist
- Plant Geneticist
- Plant Pathologist
- Remote Sensing Specialist
- Science Writer
- Soil Scientist
- Turf Manager
- Veterinarian
- Viticulturist
- Weed Scientist
- Wildlife Biologist

A degree in agriculture can lead to a rewarding career in the public sector or with private industry.
“As a land-grant university, VSU not only has academic faculty in agriculture, but also extension and research faculty. This offers our students a vast array of experiential learning opportunities related to their field of study.”

Christopher J. Catanzaro, Ph.D.
Assoc. Professor of Plant Science/Horticulture & Interim Chair, Dept. of Agriculture, VSU
Is a career in agriculture right for you?

Do you wonder about the interactions between us and the natural world around us?

Are you good at hands-on work such as general repairs, drawing, and/or the use of tools and equipment?

Are you academically strong in the sciences?

Do you enjoy outdoor activities?

Do your hobbies include raising animals or gardening?

If you answered yes to two or more questions, a career in agriculture might be the right choice for you!
Earn Your Degree in Agriculture at VSU

... it’s a smart choice!

- Small class sizes and access to state-of-the-art research facilities and a 417-acre working farm enhance the classroom experience.
- Each student receives individualized attention from faculty and researchers who are nationally and internationally known and respected as leaders in their fields.
- A strong emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship in each program area readies students to be competitive and successful regardless of their career path.
- Agriculture students have the opportunity to participate in a popular student-run farmer’s market each week during the growing season.

VSU AGRICULTURE MAJORS CAN CHOOSE AMONG THE FOLLOWING CONCENTRATIONS:

- Agricultural Business and Economics
- Agricultural Education
- Animal Science, Pre-Veterinary Medicine and Aquatic Science
- Plant, Soil and Environmental Science

According to a January 2015 article by USA Today, careers in agriculture and natural resources are among the top ten for wage earners.

- **2015 projected average starting salary:** $51,220
- **Average lifetime earnings:** $2.6 million

“These grads can earn much more than the average grad, raking in an average starting salary of over $51,000. Again, those who work their way up to management positions generally earn the highest earnings over a lifetime — around $800,000 more than the typical college grad.”
“As a leader in academic excellence, VSU's College of Agriculture challenges, encourages and empowers students to successfully achieve advanced degrees, launch careers in the private, non-profit and academic sectors, and serve as innovators and entrepreneurs in their fields. Our students may not have known what career path to follow when they joined the College of Agriculture, but when they graduate, they are highly prepared and focused young men and women who are ready to enter their chosen fields.”

Dr. Jewel Hairston
Dean, VSU College of Agriculture
“Studying Aquatic Sciences at VSU, I gained extensive field experience working at the aquaculture facilities.”

Terrone Jasper Phiri
Community Based Natural Resource Manager (CBNRM)
Peace Corps Malawi

Virginia’s #1 industry is agriculture and forestry, with a total economic impact of $70 billion. It provides more than 400,000 jobs in the Commonwealth. A major in agriculture prepares students to become part of this exciting and booming industry.
Alan Delbridge graduated from Virginia State University in 2013 with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture with a concentration in environmental science. “Environmental science has been a passion of mine since 7th grade,” Alan explained. “By choosing VSU I was able to pursue my original passion, and I quickly learned that agriculture is a great education to have and profession to pursue.”

Alan came to VSU as a second semester freshman transfer student. After his first full year at VSU, he received the highest cumulative GPA for the entire Agriculture Department.

During his undergraduate studies, he was awarded a research grant for his project, “The Effect of Induced Stress on Blackberry Flower Timing Under High Tunnel Conditions,” which he presented at the Minorities in Agriculture and Related Science (MANRRS) national conference in Atlanta, as well as the VSU undergraduate research symposium where he placed third in the oral presentation category.

Today, Alan is an Environmental Project Manager with Dominion Due Diligence Group with a specialization in Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) and Hazardous Material Inspections including Lead-based Paint and Asbestos in Multi-family Housing. In addition, he is the co-founder of the social business InOurReach, which focuses on the needs of low-income communities through helping achieve higher education and living standards through technology, sustainability and agriculture; all of which he was initially exposed to at Virginia State University, he says.

Alan has recently developed a passion for urban agriculture and his dream, he explains, is to re-create intentional communities in low-income areas through urban planning and urban agriculture using knowledge he gained at VSU, augmented by online urban planning and sustainable design courses he’s currently taking.
The Agriculture Major at VSU

The Agriculture Department offers a Bachelor’s degree program with the following concentrations:

**Agriculture Business and Economics**
Choose this concentration if you are interested in the economic aspects of agriculture, including the production, distribution and marketing of agricultural goods and services. This curriculum prepares you for graduate study and for professional positions in the public or private sector in fields such as agricultural production, finance or marketing. A strong focus on entrepreneurship makes this an excellent choice for students interested in operating their own business.

**Agriculture Education**
Choose this program if you are interested in teaching agriculture at the middle school or high school level. The comprehensive, well-rounded curriculum includes courses in animal science, plant science, soil science and other fields. You will also take courses in teaching methods and graduate with an endorsement in agricultural education. A separate track in agricultural mechanization is designed for students interested in working with and teaching about combustion engines and agricultural power machinery.

**Animal Science, Pre-Veterinary Medicine and Aquatic Science**
These concentrations are designed for students interested in veterinary medicine, as well as careers in poultry and cattle production, meat or dairy inspection and animal training as well as professional employment in technical areas such as fisheries, aquaculture and hydrobiology (the science of water-based life processes). The science-based curriculum prepares you for admission to veterinary school, or for employment in a variety of fields related to animal science. Courses include cattle production, animal nutrition, veterinary anatomy and physiology and veterinary hygiene. You will study the history of aquaculture and methods of sustaining aquatic plants and animals, as well as fishpond management and water conservation. Students make extensive use of the aquatic science field station at Randolph Farm, two miles from campus. Seniors complete a three-credit research seminar.

**Plant, Soil and Environmental Science**
Choose this concentration if you are interested in the production of crops related to food, ornamental and forest products. Learn multidisciplinary approaches to solve problems and address challenges related to natural resources, environmental quality, and human impact on the environment. Students develop an understanding of ecological principles, biodiversity and sustainability, and the interaction of the physical, chemical and biological components of the environment. Additional topics include soil and pest management, renewable and nonrenewable resources, water and air pollution, environmental hazards and climate change. More basic topics covered include plant structure and function, plant genetics and growth and development, as well as production methods and uses of fruit and vegetable crops, nursery and floriculture crops, and ornamental plants in constructed landscapes.
Freshmen students are expected to complete a college-preparatory or an Advanced Studies Program in high school. The selected program must include:

- 3 units of mathematics that must include the full Algebra I curriculum and two additional courses at or above the level of Algebra I. It is strongly recommended that students complete Geometry, Algebra II, and a fourth higher level math course
- 4 units of English
- 2 units of Science (must include a laboratory science, i.e. Biology, Chemistry or Physics)
- 2 units of Social Studies (History, Government, Civics, Geography)
- 2 Units of Foreign Language recommended

First Time Freshmen applying for admission should have the following items in their application packet:

- An online application
- Official high school or GED transcript
- SAT or ACT scores
- Letter of recommendation
- Personal Statement
- $25 Application Fee or approved fee waiver

VSU is one of the region’s most affordable universities, even for out-of-state students. Moreover, the University is committed to helping students obtain the best possible financial aid package available. The majority of VSU students receive some form of financial assistance, including both need-based (loans and work study) and merit-based (scholarships and grants) aid. Each year, VSU awards a variety of generous scholarships based on academic achievement, demonstrated talent in the performing arts and athletics, and participation in ROTC.

The Office of Student Financial Aid will work with you and your family to craft a plan that will support your financial needs while enrolled. To learn more about scholarship and financial aid programs, contact the Office of Financial Aid at (804) 524-5990 or toll-free at (800) 823-7214. Or, visit the Virginia State website at www.vsu.edu and click on Financial Aid.