Welcome to our inaugural issue of Extension Connection, a quarterly newsletter published by Virginia State University’s College of Agriculture for all Virginians interested in learning about our Virginia Cooperative Extension, agricultural research and dynamic, career-driven academic programs.

As one of Virginia’s two land grant institutions, VSU is charged with providing research-based solutions, information and technology to meet the needs and expectations of our students, as well as individuals, families and communities across Virginia … in other words, you.

Inside each issue, you’ll find a variety of stories about our people and programs—if it’s related to food, fuel, fiber, feed or farming, you can be sure we’ll be covering it.

Our goal is to provide useful information that keeps you up to speed on new innovations, learning opportunities and success stories at the College of Agriculture. We also have provided on page 14 a complete contact list of our Extension Specialists who can connect you to the wide variety of programs, workshops and activities from Virginia Cooperative Extension.

As always, your comments and critiques are welcome to ensure this newsletter provides the information that’s important and of interest to you. Also, we encourage you to share this newsletter with friends, family and colleagues who may enjoy it as well.

We hope you like this first issue.

Sincerely,
Jewel E. Hairston, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Agriculture
1890 Land Grant Universities Celebrate 125 Years

YESTERDAY

In 1862, the First Morrill Act was passed, establishing at least one college in every state “accessible to all, but especially to the sons of toil.” This Act was introduced by Senator Justin Morrill, known as the Father of the Land-Grant Institutions. A magnanimous leader, Morrill’s vision was about education for all social classes and a shift from predominantly classical studies to applied studies—preparing students for the real world and advancing the nation by providing opportunity to educate all classes of its citizenry.

Not only was Morrill’s vision one of true democracy in higher education, he was also an abolitionist. In 1865, about four million hardworking, but primarily illiterate, blacks were free from slavery. According to Justin Morrill, “They are members of the American family, and their advancement concerns us all.” Thus, he introduced the Second Morrill Act of 1890, which included this class of laborers.

Congress passed the Second Morrill Act of 1890 that included the stipulation that African Americans were to be included in the U.S. Land-Grant University Higher Education System without discrimination. However, 17 southern and border states would not consent to this admission of blacks to their institutions. Therefore, in the legislation, it was allowable for these 17 states to found a second land grant institution, which became known as the Negro Land-Grant Institutions and today as the 1890 Land-Grant Universities and Tuskegee University (the 1890s).

TODAY

The 1890 Land-Grant Universities, including Virginia State University, are ladders to opportunity, especially for those students with limited access to education. Our aim is to foster student satisfaction and a sense of community, leverage diversity to enrich the learning environment and contribute to the strength of the nation’s workforce that recognizes diverse perspectives and the richness of varied talents and ideas.

Virginia State University and all of the 1890 universities:
• Share a common thread—the distinction of having teaching, research and extension programs of the highest quality in agricultural, food and related sciences.
• Integrate expert research with community-based Extension initiatives.
• Are proud USDA partners. As a part of our mandate as land-grant institutions, 1890 universities receive federal funding annually from USDA/NIFA to engage in programs that are stakeholder driven and respond to emerging issues related to food and agricultural sciences.

TOMORROW

Virginia State University, as well as the 18 other 1890s institutions, will continue to lead the collaborative vision of a better world, address the challenges of our time and focus our work on lifelong learning opportunities for all. We fervently commit to improve the socioeconomic status of the impoverished and help to transform lives at the local, regional, national and global levels.
USDA Awards Nearly $1 Million to Small Farm Outreach Program

As an 1890 land grant institution, VSU helps strengthen Virginia's agricultural industry, with an emphasis on small-acreage farmers. Our Cooperative Extension Small Farm Outreach Program (SFOP) helps meet the unique needs of these farmers. The SFOP, directed by William Crutchfield, was recently awarded the following USDA grants and cooperative agreement funding:

- 2501 Program - $197,876
- Rural Development Outreach Cooperative Agreement - $75,000
- FSA Title 1 Producer Education Cooperative Agreement - $21,753
- Beginning Farmer Program (in partnership with Virginia Tech) - $50,000
- NIFA Capacity Building Grant for Agribusiness & Financial Management (a three-year grant in partnership with VSU’s College of Business) - $581,013

The majority of these funds are targeted toward the USDA Strike-Force designated counties in Virginia, counties identified as containing poverty-stricken rural areas in need of economic assistance. The new funding will allow the SFOP to increase priority for helping small farmers and ranchers who are U.S. veterans. Additionally, it will allow VSU’s colleges of business and agriculture to collaborate on the development of a five-day course in agribusiness and financial management to be offered several times a year for a period of three years to small-scale farmers and ranchers.

Meet Your Small Farm Agent: SUSAN CHEEK

Susan Cheek holds the distinction of currently being VSU’s only Small Farm Outreach Program’s female agent and is one of the newest agents to join the team of dedicated experienced farmers who provide educational programming and assistance in those approximately 25 Virginia counties that have the highest concentrations of limited-resource and socially-disadvantaged farmers. The Chester, Va. native grew up growing a large variety of vegetables, fruits and flowers on her family’s property. She holds an associate degree in Individualized Studies, specializing in horticulture business management, from VSU’s College of Agriculture and two associate degrees from J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, one in applied sciences in culinary arts and one in applied sciences in horticulture. Cheek owns a full-service florist business, With Love Flowers, since 1999 and has owned a restaurant featuring locally grown produce. She also has worked in the landscape department at the Federal Reserve Bank in Richmond.

Cheek is married and has four children and one grandchild. In her nearly two years as a SFOP agent, she says, “The best part about my job is being able to teach people how to grow it, eat it and share it.”

Contact Susan Cheek at (804) 720-5539 or scheek@vsu.edu.

GPS Technology Revolutionizes Farming

From horse-drawn plows to tractors that can mostly drive themselves, farming has come a long way in the past 100 years. That became evident at VSU’s Randolph Farm this fall, where staff trained in the art of “precision farming,” the science of using modern tractors with a GPS system.

These systems allow farmers to direct the tractor to drive itself into the field and control variable planting and fertilizing. The technology makes sure the right amount of seed and fertilizer/nitrogen is applied throughout the field based on the soil type, which is first configured through soil testing. It also helps prevent overlap. All of this results in faster and more efficient farming.

This technology will be used in demonstrations for small farmers around the Small Farm Outreach Program area.

VSU’s Small Farm Outreach Program, in conjunction with USDA, presents workshops around the state to train farmers in the basics of crop production and farm management. These workshops feature a combination of live and online presentations with training designed to match participants’ experience levels. See page 14 for a complete listing of upcoming events and workshops from SFOP or scan the code at the left to see the online events calendar.
When Pablo Ovando and his wife, Maggie, decided to grow their own tomatoes and peppers because they weren’t happy with the taste of the ones from the grocery store, they had no idea that decision would change the course of their lives.

In 2011 the Ovandos began testing and growing crops in their backyard, but it was the success of their peppers that encouraged them to expand. “I was new to agriculture, so I went to USDA and began asking questions about farming,” Ovando explained. “That led to my meeting a VSU Small Farm Outreach Program (SFOP) agent and one of the University’s agricultural specialists. They taught and trained me so that by 2012, I was ready to begin my farming business, Pueblo Farms.”

At first Ovando planned to target the nearby Hispanic community with his jalapeno, Serrano and Padron peppers. But the quality of his produce quickly led to an expanded and diverse customer base, including the “Farm to School” program. “Many of our customers say that our peppers are some of the most delicious grown in Virginia,” he said.

Eventually, Ovando included a type of Roma tomato into his offerings, as he discovered they withstand the heavy summer thunderstorms in the Tidewater area better than other tomato varieties. And when there’s not enough rain, Ovando relies on the irrigation system the SFOP agents helped him install that has significantly reduced the time and cost of watering.

He’s only been farming for four years, but Ovando’s successes with his niche pepper and tomato crops earned him the 2014 Andy Hankins Small Farmer of the Year award at the SFOP Family Conference in November.

“My family and I are very pleased that our hard work has paid off,” said Ovando. “The help that the Small Farm Outreach agents gave us allowed us to grow much faster than I thought possible.”

Kale & Fruit Salad

**Ingredients:**
- 5–6 cups of fresh kale leaves (torn, washed)
- 1/4 cup sliced red onion
- 1/2 cup shredded carrots
- 1 apple, julienne
- 1 pear, julienne
- 1/2 cup cranberries
- 1/2 cup almonds or walnuts (optional)
- 1/2 cup feta cheese crumbles

**Preparation:** De-stem kale and tear into small pieces. Place the kale, onion, carrots, apples and pears in a large bowl. Whisk or blend well olive oil, apple cider vinegar, lemon juice, honey, garlic and red pepper flakes. Pour dressing over the kale and other ingredients in the bowl. Mix and serve, add feta cheese crumbles to garnish.*

*pictured at right with seasonal pomegranates added

**Dressing:**
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 3 tbsp. honey
- 1/2 lemon (juice)
- 1-3 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

Above, William Crutchfield addresses the crowd at the Small Farm Outreach Conference in November.

At left, a delicious kale salad was prepared by Wanda Johnson, VSU Cooperative Extension Program Administrator, for tasting during breaks at the conference. We are happy to provide the much-requested recipe that served as her inspiration!
Green Energy for the Greenhouse

Virginia growers who use greenhouses to produce crops year round or extend their growing season know that maintaining temperature is vital, but the cost for electricity or propane can be high. In an effort to reduce these costs, VSU Extension Specialists Chris Mullins, Dr. Brian Nerrie and Jimmy Mullins are working to implement and test solar-heated water panels in the greenhouses at Randolph Farm for temperature control to improve growing and irrigation and for use in fish tanks.

The solar (thermal) energy grant project provides funding to construct panels that use sunlight to warm water circulating within the panels to create heat. Extension Specialists are working in cooperation with Virginia Tech as well as private companies as part of this project. Sustainable Technology Institute of Richmond, Va. and Sunquest, Inc. of Newtown, N.C. will provide expertise for installation and manufacture of the panels and have discounted or supplied at no cost some of the materials that are being used for construction.

Research is being conducted on the feasibility and economics of the project, and demonstrations will be offered to growers interested in implementing or constructing this system that may also include a DIY model. Finally, students in VSU's College of Agriculture will learn the principles of heat exchange and proper growing climates, and how to calculate the financial impacts of the model for farmers.

Is Aquaculture for the Birds?

Techniques to control predatory birds at outdoor ponds were studied and demonstrated at VSU's Randolph Farm by graduate student John Alosius.

Birds are a major problem for fish farmers. In Virginia, cormorants and great blue herons, among other birds of prey, view aquaculture ponds—outdoor ponds where freshwater fish or shrimp are commercially grown—as a liquid dinner table, set just for them.

A primary concern is the fish-eating cormorant. Catfish and trout producers claim these long-necked birds are their most destructive predator, as they are able to dive for fish under water and often take up residence at prime feeding locations like an aquaculture pond stocked with thousands of catfish fingerlings. In addition, ducks, which thrive on floating fish feed pellets, like to stick around for the free meal. This problem, coupled with the parasites the birds can leave behind, means major economic loss to the farmer.

John Alosius, a graduate student from South Sudan, is working with Extension Specialist Dr. Brian Nerrie to study control methods for predatory birds. He will not only share his findings through Virginia's Cooperative Extension program, but also will take home what he learns to help his fellow South Sudanese citizens start their own successful aquaculture programs. After achieving his master's degree, John will return to his job as lecturer at Juba National University.
Volunteers Help Families Strengthen Their Financial Management Skills

The past few years have brought financial challenges to many people throughout the Commonwealth. Today, one in every nine Virginians lives at or below the poverty level, and the current economic climate has only emphasized the need for additional financial education. To help fill this need, Virginia Cooperative Extension has developed its Master Financial Education Volunteer program.

Master Financial Education Volunteers (MFEVs) receive a minimum of 20 hours of classroom training on topics such as developing a spending and savings plan, managing credit, risk management, predatory lending and more. Once trained, these volunteers contribute at least 40 hours of service to the community during the year through classroom sessions, individual mentoring and other Virginia Cooperative Extension programs. Training takes place periodically each year in locations around the state.

If you are interested in becoming a Master Financial Education Volunteer, contact your local Extension agent at www.ext.vt.edu/offices/index.html to find out about upcoming training sessions or call Dr. Larry Connatser, (804) 524-5253 for more information.
Virginia farmers are turning to hops—an important ingredient in brewing beer—as a potential cash crop for the state. Virginia was the hops capital of the colonies in the mid-1700s. Today, the Pacific Northwest states lead the way, with the Old Dominion growing only about 25 acres of this labor-intensive crop. But demand for hops is increasing due to the popularity of craft beers brewed from locally sourced ingredients.

VSU’s Agricultural Research Station has committed to initiating a research project aimed at helping Virginia growers put the Commonwealth back on the hops-growing map. In October the College of Agriculture conducted a workshop to better understand research and extension needs and gather input from key stakeholders. As a result of the meeting, university researchers are now well placed to address key agronomic and postharvest issues facing hops growers in Virginia.

Small-scale producers of greenhouse tomatoes struggle against two whitefly species that damage their crops. The common greenhouse whitefly had been successfully controlled for years without pesticides by a small parasitoid wasp, but this wasp was unable to reproduce in the slightly smaller sweet potato whitefly host that has recently appeared on the scene. Growers struggled with loss of crops and rising costs, some resorting to pesticides to combat the whiteflies.

After a broad search, entomologists at Virginia State University found a strain of the original parasitoid wasp (Encarsia Formosa), originating from the Nile River Valley in Egypt, that was able to use both whitefly species as a host for reproduction. This wasp is effective in pest control and is also available commercially.

Growers can learn more about biological control in tomato greenhouses online at www.agriculture.vsu.edu/resources/tomato-greenhouse/index.php

VSU’s College of Agriculture is planning to expand its research, Cooperative Extension and academic programming space through construction of an annex to the M.T. Carter Agricultural Research Station.

This new facility will provide additional research laboratories, office and seminar space for faculty, staff and students to enhance their educational, research and outreach experiences at the university. The building will be located to the southeast rear of the existing M.T. Carter building and is funded by the 1890 Federal Facilities Grant Program.
A Win-Win for Chesapeake Bay Fisherman and Virginia Farmers

VSU’s Agricultural Research Station is exploring a sustainable way for farmers and municipalities who manage wastewaters to reduce their environmental and economic impacts, especially to the Chesapeake Bay fishing industry. Thanks to a three-year grant in the amount of $298,849 from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) 1890 Capacity Building Grant Program, Principal Investigator Dr. Asmare Atalay along with Dr. Reza Rafie and Dr. Brian Nerrie will work to develop a method of simultaneously removing nitrogen and phosphorus from animal and municipal wastewaters.

The team will design, construct and implement a pilot-scale module for removing these nutrients from wastewaters in a mineral form known as dittmarite. The wastewater for the pilot will be provided by the South Central Wastewater Authority in Petersburg and Chesterfield County and the Virginia Department of Public Utilities.

Dittmarite is considered to be a slow-release fertilizer that supplies nitrogen, phosphorus and other nutrients important for plant growth. Nitrogen and phosphorus are essential to all living things, including plants and animals. However, the soluble forms of these elements accumulate at high concentrations in rivers, lakes and bays and cause prolific growth of algae. This is usually visible as green vegetative covers over water bodies, but when this vegetative growth dies, its decomposition by bacteria causes oxygen depletion in the water thereby negatively impacting the healthy growth of fish, crabs and other aquatic organisms.

The investigative team is exploring how to remove the nitrogen and phosphorus as dittmarite from wastewater treatment plants, dairy and cattle wastewater detention ponds, septic tanks and aquaculture ponds. While these elements are detrimental to the health of the Chesapeake Bay, they could be a boon to farmers. As part of the research project, the team will provide an economic assessment of dittmarite as a value-added fertilizer that may help farmers and municipalities turn what was once an environmentally harmful waste product into a source of revenue. They will apply the technology to VSU’s own aquaculture ponds at Randolph Farm and utilize the resulting dittmarite as a fertilizer additive to horticultural crops.

Once the construction of the pilot plant has been completed, the investigative team plans to take the project to various locations in Virginia to demonstrate its capability to stakeholders.

Three New Edamame Varieties

After years of systematic crossings and extensive evaluation at multiple sites by the late Dr. Tadesse Mebrahtu, VSU has released three edamame (vegetable soybean) varieties: Asmara, Owens and Randolph. The three varieties have been registered by the U.S. Plant Protection Office and are now being introduced to the U.S. market through an agreement with a private seed company. Seed for the three varieties are currently available to small farmers in southwest Virginia who are being supported to grow edamame as a cash crop through an agribusiness grant from the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community and Revitalization Commission.

Edamame holds promise as a high value specialty crop for small Virginia farmers transitioning away from tobacco, and the three VSU varieties adapted to local conditions will play a key role in the establishment of edamame as a commercial crop that may also offset the amount of edamame now imported to the U.S.
Arrieyana Cartier, a sophomore at VSU’s College of Agriculture, was awarded a $500 research grant in October for her research proposal, “Changes in Physicochemical, Nutritional, Anti-nutritional and Antioxidant Properties during Vegetable Soybean Development Stages.”

Cartier is one of six undergraduate college students from across the state to be awarded similar research grants by the Virginia Academy of Science (VAS) at their annual Fall Undergraduate Research Meeting held this year at Virginia State University. Four of the 27 research proposals were from VSU students.

Cartier and the other undergraduate participants gave a brief oral summary of their proposed research, answered questions and presented posters that were evaluated by a team of judges.

Cartier was also awarded a student membership in the VAS for 2015 and is expected to present the results of her research at the 2015 VAS Annual Meeting to be held at James Madison University in May.

Cartier, a student research assistant, is being mentored by Dr. Yixiang Xu, Assistant Professor of Food Processing and Engineering. Originally from Fairfield, California, Cartier is majoring in biology and family and consumer sciences, with a concentration in dietetics. Family and Consumer Sciences is a major in the College of Agriculture that provides students with a broad background in human ecology subject areas such as foods and nutrition, textiles and fashion/clothing, human development, housing and management of resources. After graduation, she will attend graduate school to complete a doctorate program with the goal of becoming a nutritional researcher.

“Participating in the Virginia Academy of Sciences Fall Undergraduate Research Meeting was not only fun,” said Cartier, “but the experience I gained is excellent preparation for my future career in research.”

David Crosby, Ph.D., President, Virginia Academy of Science and Fish Health Specialist in VSU’s College of Agriculture, added, “The Virginia Academy of Science Fall Undergraduate Research Meeting provides a significant opportunity for students to gain experience on how scientists obtain research grants. We are proud that one of our students was awarded a grant.”

The Virginia Academy of Science is the fifth largest state academy of science in the U.S. Founded in 1923, VAS promotes the civic, academic, agricultural, industrial and commercial welfare of the people of Virginia.

With majors in biology and family and consumer sciences, Cartier plans to pursue her Ph.D. with the goal of becoming a nutritional researcher.

HEAA Offers Opportunities to Engage and Support Students

The Human Ecology Alumni Association (HEAA) of Virginia State University welcomes your interest in supporting the Family and Consumer Sciences’ (formerly known as Home Economics) program at Virginia State University. The group participated in two activities last year—a spring luncheon and a meet and greet at Homecoming.

To become a member, contact LaRhonda Mason at vsuhumanecologyalumni@gmail.com.
An important part of a VSU education is ensuring students don’t just learn to talk the talk, but are equally capable to walk the walk. That’s why experiential learning opportunities are woven into most of our academic areas.

For the last three years, students who want to pursue careers in farming after graduation have had the opportunity to participate in VSU’s innovative Farm Stars Entrepreneurial Program, an experiential on-campus learning and earning opportunity. Under the training and supervision of Cooperative Extension Specialists, Dr. Reza Rafie, Dr. Theresa Nartea and Chris Mullins, students harvest, package, market and sell produce they have grown in high tunnels at VSU’s Randolph Farm.

Students sell their produce at a weekly farmers market and through a new “Buy a Bag” program, aimed at raising awareness of the “Farm to Table” concept among university employees and students.

Money raised by students goes back into the program to help offset the costs of seeds, packaging, and other overhead costs that real-life farmers incur.

Last summer the students could be found each Wednesday at Randolph Farm behind tables overflowing with tomatoes, several kinds of peppers, various types of berries, eggplants, radishes, greens and more. Students determine pricing which is competitive with local markets. This summer they introduced a popular frequent buyer’s card that provided regular customers added value to their purchases.

The Farm Stars Entrepreneurial Program is one of several examples of the integrated research, teaching and extension that VSU’s College of Agriculture strives to offer its students.
USDA/1890 Scholarships Available, Apply by February 1

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is currently accepting applications for 2015 scholarship awards that provide full tuition as well as room and board for the term of the scholarship. Current high school seniors, and rising college sophomores and juniors are eligible to apply for these scholarships to be used at one of the eighteen 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities. The deadline for application is February 1.

To be eligible for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program scholarship a student must:

• Be a U.S. citizen.
• Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale).
• Have been accepted for admission or currently attending one of the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities.
• Intend to study agriculture, food, natural resource sciences or other related academic disciplines.
• Demonstrate leadership and community service.
• Submit an official transcript with the school seal and an authorized official’s signature.
• Submit a signed application (original signature only).

For more information and to download the fillable PDF applications, please visit http://www.outreach.usda.gov/education/1890/index.htm.

IT’S A HOTEL. IT’S A B&B. No, It’s a Classroom!

Virginia State University is securing its place as one of the state’s premier institutions for graduating leaders in the hospitality management industry with recent renovations to its unique Lodging Operations Lab, otherwise known at the Trojan Suites.

The lab is a training and teaching facility that, when coupled with the department’s other unique hands-on teaching opportunities, is not rivaled by many. The lab contains two fully appointed suites, a 24-seat restaurant space, and a lobby and front office area-multi-use space on the ground floor designed to represent any number of renowned hotel brands.

Dr. Deanne Williams, Hospitality Management Department Chair, and her team are working to secure sponsorship from industry partners to create a state-of-the art facility on the campus of VSU. Hank Thomas, CEO of Victoria Hospitality Properties and current Chair of the Hospitality Management Advisory Council, has committed $15,000 toward furnishing one of the rooms.

The renovated facility joins the department’s existing M&M Restaurant teaching lab, a full service commercial kitchen and restaurant located on the third floor of one of the university’s 1950s academic buildings.

Students are responsible for food, service and management of the M&M Restaurant. They gain valuable experience, skills and confidence managing both the front-of-the-house and back-of-the-house. Their customers are mostly university faculty, staff and students from other departments, though the restaurant is open to the public, as well.
AgDiscovery Summer Program

High school students who are seeking an exciting learning opportunity during the summer may want to consider the 2015 AgDiscovery Program at VSU that will take place the week of June 14–27.

AgDiscovery participants will gain experience in the disciplines of veterinary science and food safety through hands-on work with small ruminants, farmed fish, on-farm processing and research in the field and in the lab. Field trips and guest speakers will provide exposure to agricultural production and research, as well as a variety of related professions.

The program is facilitated by the VSU College of Agriculture and the Agricultural Research Station with collaboration from USDA partners and industry representatives. The program is free, but participants are expected to cover their transportation expenses to and from VSU on arrival and departure days. Students will live in a university dormitory for the two-week program.

Visit USDA’s AgDiscovery website (www.aphis.usda.gov/agdiscovery) for application information. Deadline for applications is March 6, 2015.

For more information, contact: Antonio McLaren, (804) 524-5252, amclaren@vsu.edu, or Roz Stein, (804) 524-1533, rstein@vsu.edu.
## January

**22**  
Info Session on Value-Added Producer Grant and Rural Energy for America. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Manassas, Va.  
*Contact: Mark Klingman*

**27**  
Farm Tax Workshop. VSU Pavilion. *Contact: Vernon Heath*

**29**  
Beginning Farmer Class. Evington, Campbell County.  
*Contact: Jim Hankins*

**30–31**  
16th Annual Virginia Biological Farming Conference. Doubletree Hilton Hotel, 1021 Koger Center Blvd, Richmond, Va.  
*For more information or to register, visit www.VABF.org*

## February

**2–4**  
VSU Agribusiness Production and Financial Management classes. *Contact: Mark Klingman*

**3, 4 & 5**  
Tentative Tax Workshops (one day). Eastern Shore.  
*Contact: Vernon Heath*

**6**  
Blackberry Pruning and Trellises Workshop. Cole Berry Farm, 3067 Asbury Church Rd, Vernon Hill, Va. *Contact Mollie Klein*

**17–19**  
Halifax Agribusiness Classes. *Contact: Mark Klingman*

**19**  
Beginning Farmer Class. Charles City, Va.  
*Contact: Jim Hankins*

**24**  
Farm Transition Workshop. Prince Edward County, Va.  
*Contact: Alvin Adkins*

**26**  
Beginning Farmer Class. Charlotte County, Keysville, Va.  
*Contact: Jim Hankins*

## March

**3**  
SNAP Signup and RD Info Workshop. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Rappahannock Community College. *Contact: Susan Cheek*

**5**  
125th Anniversary of Second Morrill Act. VSU Campus-wide event.

**5-7**  
Greensville Agribusiness Classes. *Contact: Alvin Adkins*

**10**  
Agritourism in a Creative Economy.

**12**  
Beginning Farmers Class. Warsaw, Va. *Contact: Jim Hankins*

**13**  
Virginia Berry Production and Marketing Conference. L. Douglas Wilder Building Auditorium, VSU.  
*Contact Mollie Klein*

**19**  
Farm Transition Workshop (tentative). *Contact: Alvin Adkins*

**25**  
SNAP Signup. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Warrenton, Va.  
*Contact: Susan Cheek*

## April

**18**  
125th Anniversary of Second Morrill Act. Run/Walk, VSU.

**23**  
125th Anniversary of Second Morrill Act. Dinner Celebration, VSU.

**23**  
Demonstration of Precision Ag for Select Farmers.  
*Contact: Alvin Adkins*
YOUR GIFTS TO THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE MAKE A BIG IMPACT, providing today’s student’s access to the educational opportunities that have always distinguished the VSU experience.

YES! VSU College of Agriculture Can Count on Me!

Name(s) ____________________________________________

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Email ________________________________

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Please make checks payable to Virginia State University Foundation, and write either “Family and Consumer Sciences,” “Hospitality Management,” or “Agriculture Department” in the memo line.

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Mail to this form to: VSU Foundation, P.O. Box 9071, Virginia State University, VA 23806

VSU College of Agriculture’s continued leadership in the fields of agriculture, hospitality management, and family and consumer sciences depends on people like you—alumni, parents, and friends—to help meet its priority needs.

The funds—one for each of the three academic departments in the College of Agriculture—help enhance our students’ experience, from meeting their increased financial aid needs to professional development for faculty and investment in new academic programming.

Please consider giving a gift today.

CONSIDERING PLANNED GIVING?
Along with support of VSU’s College of Agriculture funds, alumni and friends can demonstrate their loyalty with a Planned Gift. These gifts may name the VSU College of Agriculture as beneficiary of a life insurance policy or in your will. We can also show you how to continue to earn money while your gift to VSU matures!

For more information about Planned Giving options, please call us at (804) 524-5003.

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VSU College of Agriculture
Extension Specialist Dr. Theresa Nartea promotes VSU specialty crops at Boulevard Flowers’ Winter Farmers Market.