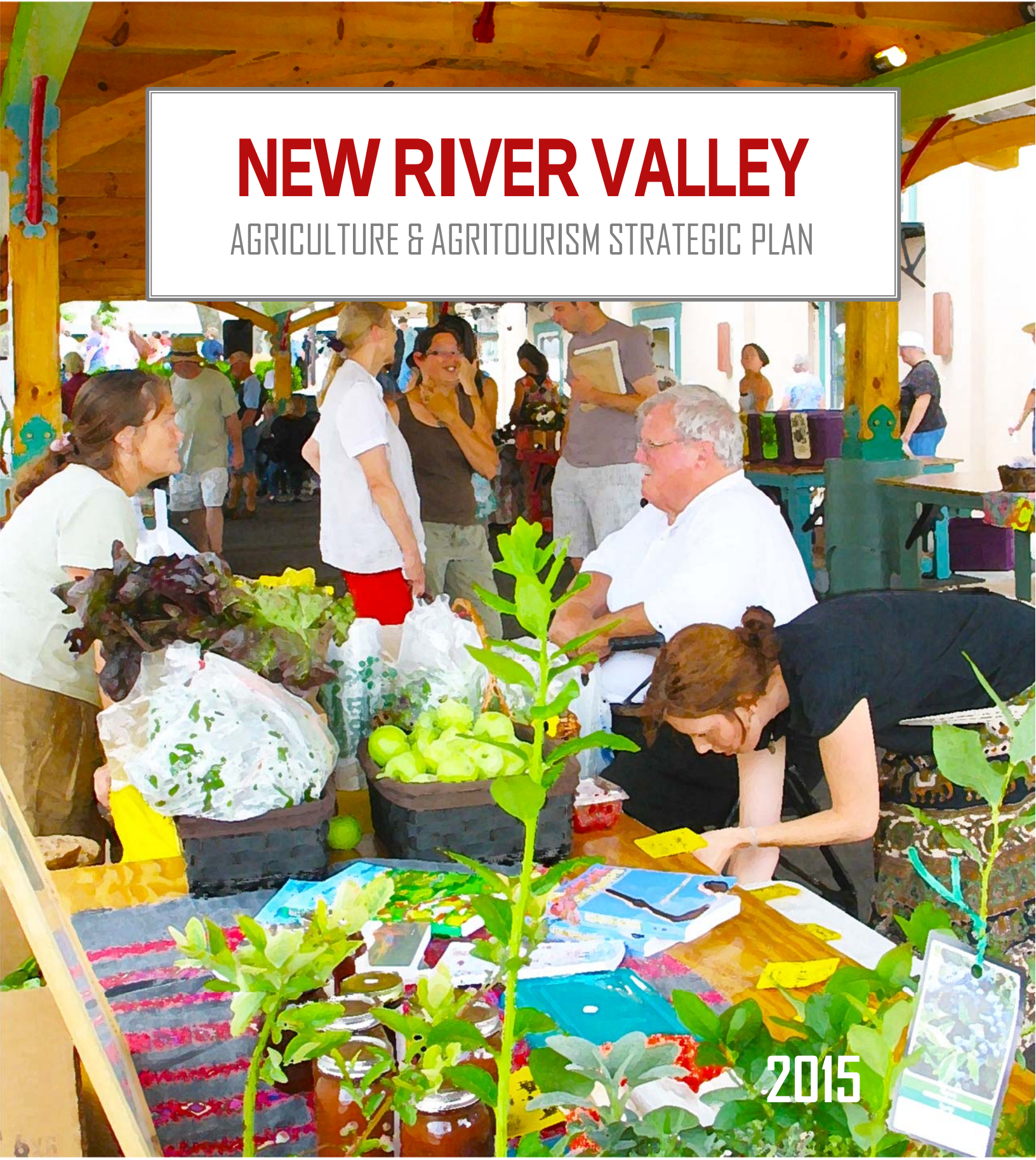
NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN



2015

VIRGINIA DHCD

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

GILES COUNTY VIRGINIA 1806

MONTGOMERY COUNTY 1776 1976 Virginia Freedom Increases Responsibility

County of Pulaski EXCELLENCE VISION PRIDE EST. 1839 Virginia

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STRATEGIC PLAN - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Floyd Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products, and diversifying the mix of products and services available to visitors. The purpose of the New River Valley Agriculture and Agritourism Strategic Plan is two-fold: 1) gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community; and 2) develop a plan of work that will support and enhance agriculture and agritourism in the region.

In order to identify current agriculture assets in the community, the Project Management Team recruited the expertise of Matson Consulting and the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension. Matson Consulting prepared a Regional Assessment that established the groundwork for the planning process. The Regional Assessment provided a comprehensive overview of agriculture characteristics, an evaluation of the current agriculture sector, case studies and statewide/national trends, and over 70 recommendation ideas. The Cooperative Extension facilitated local community meeting discussions, the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, and several educational programs. The Extension's work produced the Linking our Community's Hidden Gems document, which identifies strategies for agritourism. Both, Matson Consulting and the Cooperative Extension, were instrumental in starting our local agriculture and agritourism conversation.

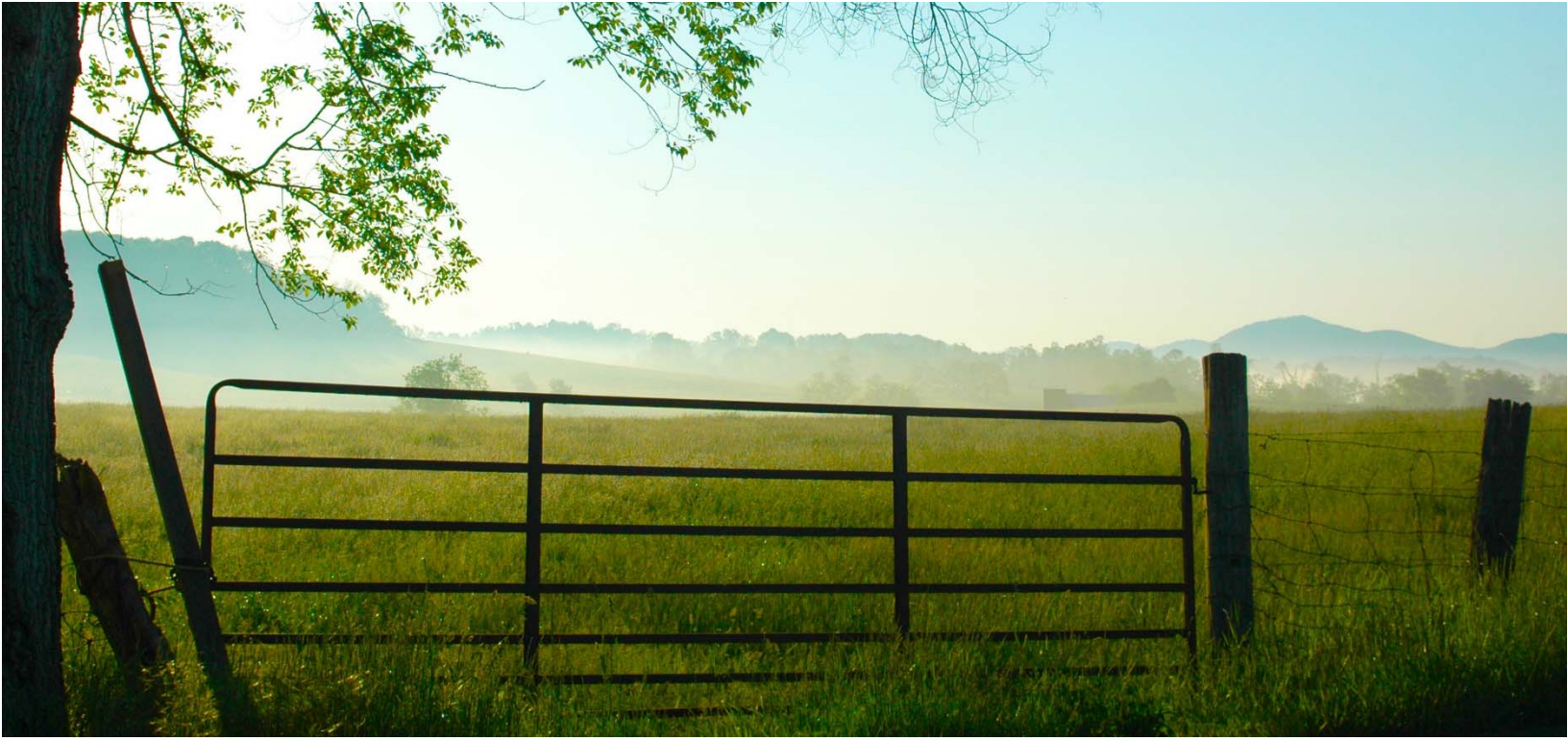
Developing the Strategic Plan was a collaborative effort, funded by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Giles County, Montgomery County, and Pulaski County. The local Agriculture and Agritourism community dedicated their time and expertise throughout the planning process. The Grant Management Team was supported by four subcommittees, including: Team Agritourism, Team Education and Outreach, Team Research and Evaluation, and Team Marketing. In addition, a Steering Committee consisting of local farmers, agribusiness owners, and agritourism operators prioritized the goals and recommendations, and guided the project deliverables into tangible work outcomes.

The final Strategic Plan document is comprised of two chapters. The first chapter focuses on agribusiness and the second chapter focuses on agritourism. While each chapter is interconnected, our team decided that both areas needed a separate plan of work.

Key Recommendations for Agribusiness included: 1) developing Agriculture Development Boards at each county; 2) exploring production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce; 3) establishing a small producer network to generally foster closer communication and collaboration; 4) identifying opportunities for beginning farmers; and 5) creating teams to assist with whole farm planning.

Key recommendations for Agritourism included: 1) developing and enhancing agritourism marketing strategies in the NRV; 2) increasing the number of festivals and events held on farms; 3) creating an interactive web-based tool that promotes and grows agritourism in the region; 4) providing educational opportunities for the agritourism community; and 5) increasing opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced food and value added products.

The Strategic Plan outlines a collaborative effort for our regional partners. Accomplishing the goals and strategies will preserve and promote the positive impacts that agriculture and agritourism offer our community.



CHAPTER 1 - AGRIBUSINESS

Agriculture is Virginia's largest and oldest industry, generating over $52 billion annually. The agriculture sector provides 357,000 jobs, consists of over 46,000 farms, and when combined with forestry, accounts for about 8.1% of the state's GDP. Almost 90% of Virginia's farms are family owned and operated.

In the New River Valley, beef and forestry/timber are the largest agriculture sectors, generating over $60 million annually. Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties have a total of 1,426 farms, nearly 270,000 acres of farmland. Regionally, the population is aging and the average aged farmer is 57. While the agriculture landscape is dominated by grass grazing animals and steep forests, acreage in forages and forestry continue to grow. Additionally, agriculture continues to have a significant economic impact across the region.

December 18, 2014, the NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Project Steering Committee reviewed the Regional Assessment, prepared by Matson Consulting, and collaboratively identified five priority recommendations:

1. Form an agriculture development board
2. Explore production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce
3. Establish a small producer network
4. Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers
5. Create teams to assist with whole farm planning

New River Valley Agribusiness Plan of Work

Overarching Goal: Support and enhance agribusiness in the New River Valley (Goal → Objectives → Strategies)

OBJECTIVE 1		Form an Agriculture Development Board.			
ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
1-1	Establish an Agriculture Development Board (ADB) at each county in the New River Valley.	Formalization of ADB, a subcommittee of the Board of Supervisors; 4-6 total voting members appointed from the following sectors: Farm Bureau, VCE, Finance, School Board, Farmer's Market, Meat & Wholefood, Dairy, Produce, Lad Conservation, Forestry/Timber, Agritourism, Wine/Beer/Cider, or Value Added; County Staff to coordinate and document meetings. Potential funding for staff.	NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Management Team, County Board of Supervisors, County Administrators, County Staff.	June 2016	Memo prepared for County Administrators and presentation recommending the establishment of an ADB is complete. ADB established in the Fall/Winter of 2015; Key Focus Areas: defining the purpose, establishing an agriculture network at the county level, preserving existing farmland, zoning, economic development opportunities, best management practices, current industry issues, and advocating for agriculture.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
OBJECTIVE 2		Explore production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce.			
2-1	Support the establishment of production infrastructure for meats and produce.	Conceptual facility plan, cost analysis, business plan, product development analysis, and community support. Sustain Floyd data/studies; Appalachian Sustainable Development data. Potential funding for a consultant.	VDACS, NRV Meat Coalition, NRVRC, local farmers/producers, New River Highlands RC&D.	June 2016	Location(s), building conceptual design or re-design, survey of interested producers, list equipment, cost analysis, and business plan.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
2-2	Increase the amount of locally grown and sold meats.	USDA certified abattoir located within a 60 minute drive or less of local meat producers. Ability to process half, quarter, meats by the cut, and value-added products. Attached or adjacent building that showcases and sells wholesale/retail to restaurants, caterers, local institutions, residents, and tourists. Potential seed funding (3-years) for facility staff and operations. Potential funding for engineering and construction services.	NRV Meat Coalition, VDACS, Agriculture Development Board(s).	June 2018	Facility operational to meet increasing consumer demands; increase the accessibility to locally grown products for existing and growing consumer base; increase local and state government tax revenue; create new employment opportunities. Retain up to 4% of weight that could be lost during longer trips due to excessive stress on animals; reduce travel/hauling costs for local producers and increase ability to process meats year-round; increase opportunities for producers to collaborate and diversify sales through specialty products; increase opportunities for the next generation of farmers. Ensure that the Agriculture sector continues to significantly impact the local, regional, and state economies.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
2-3	Increase opportunities for producers to collaborate and diversify sales through specialty products.	Commercial kitchen/packaging facility for local produce and meats. Appalachian Sustainable Development data. Potential seed funding (3-years) for facility staff and operations. Potential funding for engineering and construction services.	VDACS, NRV Meat Coalition, NRVRC, local farmers/producers, Sustain Floyd, New River Highlands RC&D.	June 2018	Facility operational. Increased sales of meats and produce. Value added product capability. Increased opportunity to sell locally grown and sold meats and produce.
OBJECTIVE 3		Establish a small producer network.			
3-1	Compile a regional list of small producers individually and by clusters.	Potential seed funding (3-years) for facility staff and operations. Potential funding for consultant services to develop a web application that links products to buyers.	VCE, VDACS, NRVRC, SO Fresh.	June 2015	Complete and distribute list to local stakeholders (VCE, SO Fresh, VDACS, etc).
3-2	Establish special events and activities that increase small producer's networking opportunities.	Locations for events, hosts, and organizers. Potential funding for event supplies, expenses, and staff.	ADB(s), VCE, VDACS, NRVRC, SO Fresh.	June 2016	Coordinate a minimum of one networking event.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
OBJECTIVE 4		Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers.			
4-1	Support and promote educational programs for farmers.	Knowledgeable speakers with expertise in the areas of scaled production infrastructure, year 'round production (grazing, produce), small producer networks, beginning farmers, whole farm planning, best management practices, production training resources, farm management plans, tax business resources, and specialty crops; meeting space for activities; and materials for packets. Potential funding for a staff position.	VCE, VA Beginning Farmer, VA Tourism, USDA, SO Fresh, VDACS, Sustain Floyd, Dept. of Forestry, NRCS, Local Soil & Water, NRV Grape Growers Group, Food Safety Team, New River-Highlands RC&D, DHCD, VDACS, local farming community.	June 2015	Educational Plan of Work for Agritourism in the NRV. Attendance at events. Building Collaborative Efforts with local and state wide groups and resources to enhance communication and outreach efforts. Identify types of equipment/structures that might be viable in the region (e.g. seed drill to be shared among grazers, high tunnels for produce).

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
4-2	Facilitate and enhance a network of producers/operators to dialog and learn from pragmatic experiences.	Production Association(s). Skilled farmers and Agribusiness operators to demonstrate or volunteer on-site learning experiences (mentoring). Funding for space and marketing materials for networking. Funding to support quarterly commodity focused breakfast workshops (speakers/panel, food, etc.)	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, Sustain Floyd, VDACS.	September 2015	Skilled farmers in meat/whole food and produce are identified. Initial demonstrations and/or on-site learning experiences are scheduled for Calendar Year 2016. Specific local needs by county are integrated into each educational program. Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held quarterly to share best management practices.
4-3	Host "Meet the Farmer" days for the local products buyer and sellers and also for direct consumers.	Database of local restaurants, schools, and hospitals that desire local produce, meat, dairy products. VDACS's Market Maker Team - Potential funding for a broker to promote Market Maker, provide a list of current events/meetings, and keep the database current.	Staff for each county, new VCE or SO Fresh, VA Food System Council, Sustain Floyd.	February 2016	Planning potential round 2 AFID/DHCD grant application, funding and staffing plan complete for database manager. Survey of a core group of restaurants, schools, and hospitals that desire local foods complete.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
4-4	Foster relationships that create access to land.	Land owners that are willing to lease under-utilized property. Existing real estate databases. VDACS's Farmlink program.	VDACS, Farm Bureau, VCE, Sustain Floyd, local financial institutions.	September 2015	Educational information for local farmers about potential revenue and property management Materials that identify properties that are available for new/beginning farmers to lease; Identify farms willing to lease agriculture property in the NRV; submit information to Farmlink.
OBJECTIVE 5		Create teams to assist with whole farm planning.			
5-1	Support the existing whole farm planning programs. Compile a list of local skilled farmers for each county.	Identify skilled farmers, individually and by cluster, who are willing to share their expertise and ideas for holistic farm management. Funding for farming expert support. Funding for a staff position at each county.	Local farmers/producers, VCE.	December 2015	Agriculture Development Board develop an annual list of skilled farmers and resources available online and in printed materials. Staff position at county would coordinate resources with local partners.

CHAPTER 2 - AGRITOURISM

State Code of Virginia defines agritourism as any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allow members of the general public for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes. In the New River Valley, agritourism is simply defined as creating on-farm experiences. A farm is more than open fields and wooded areas – a true farm should have produce growing or livestock roaming on a regular basis.

Agritourism creates opportunities for the region's farmers to diversify their income. The additional earnings help to offset losses experienced during difficult growing seasons and/or reductions in meat pricing. The Virginia Tech Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics recently explored consumer interests in agritourism venues. The main objective of the analysis was to assess consumers' interest and potential expenditure levels for varying types of agritourism operations in the region. The study found that 47% of agritourism venue users are willing to travel 30-60 minutes. In addition, 65% of travelers spend $11-$30 on average at agritourism venues.[1]

April 14, 2015, the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension completed a plan of work with Team Agritourism. The following priority objectives are established for the region:

1. Develop and enhance agritourism marketing strategies for the NRV
2. Increase the number of festivals and events held on farms
3. Create an interactive web-based tool to promote and grow agritourism in the NRV
4. Provide educational opportunities for the NRV agritourism community
5. Increase opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced and value added products

[1] Virginia Tech Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics, 2015. *Exploring Consumer Interest in Agritourism Venues Located in the New River Valley.* Retrieved from: http://news.cals.vt.edu/fbm-update/2015/04/08/exploring-consumer-interest-in-agritourism-venues-located-in-the-new-river-valley/

New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work

Overarching Goal: Support and enhance agritourism in the New River Valley (Goal → Objectives → Strategies)

OBJECTIVE 1		Develop and enhance agritourism marketing strategies for the NRV			
ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
1-1	Establish regional position to serve as the coordinator for regional agritourism activities.	Find partners and funding to support position, office space. Focus early on sustainable funding (not just start-up funds)	Team Agritourism, DHCD, NRVRC, New River Highlands RC&D.	June 2016	Funding secured, position hired.
1-2	Develop a regional brand for trails, farms, and festivals specific to each season. Name & logo for the region.	Funding: VTC Marketing Leverage Program, AFID & DHCD Grants marketing/branding firm	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, VDACS, Team Agritourism, Team Marketing.	January 2016	Economic impact through travelers spending, lodging, number of visits to trip planner, survey travelers, website visitation, social media metrics.
1-3	Partner with other local and regional tourism initiatives, rest stops, hotels, sporting events, gas stations, universities, and other public spaces to market agritourism.	Funding for consultant/graphic services, and printed materials such as, rack cards, coupons, brochures List of partners	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, Team Marketing.	March 2016	Print Materials (3 types), placement of print material throughout 5 tourism businesses, placement Virginia Welcome Center, establish hub space with partners.
1-4	Develop a digital marketing campaign.	Marketing firm, marketing funding, review by VA Tourism Corp (VTC) staff	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, Marketing Consultant.	June 2016	Active marketing campaign, working website.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
1-5	Provide technical assistance to farms to develop farm brands.	Seasoned Agritourism businesses, funding for a marketing consultant and/or staff. Secure funding partners	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, VCE, Marketing Consultant, Team Marketing, staff.	March 2016	Develop assistance program, create printed materials for assistance, branding toolkit/resources to share, workshop created, marketing tools including website, brochures, logo, and other materials.
1-6	Deliver production information & workshops related to agritourism topics, including grapes, hops, and apples production for sale to wineries/breweries/cideries and Food Safety Regulations for local product producers and farmers mkt. managers.	Initial survey. Meet the farmer position could link wineries, breweries, and cideries to local producers. Potential funding for staff, enhance the safety of locally grown produce, GAP Training & Certification.	County or regional staff, VCE, Farm Safety Team, VT Food Innovations, VDACS, DHCD.	Survey: June 2016 Position: June 2017	Local wineries, breweries, and cideries have a single point of contact that can link them to a series of local agribusiness owners (that specifically meet their needs).
OBJECTIVE 2		Increase the number of festivals and events held on farms.			
2-1	Inventory the festivals currently held on the New River Valley.	Funding with grant money for part-time coordinator (first year). "Next Three Days" is a possible coordinator, information sharing from: extension databases, and tourism directors.	Agricultural Development Board (ADB), Team Marketing, County Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), VCE, staff, DHCD.	March 2016	Revenue generated, number of festivals increased, coordinator reports to ADB(s).

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
2-2	Explore creative alternative ideas for on farm events & festivals.	Potential funding for a part-time coordinator or consultant, local agritourism operators.	VCE, SO Fresh, NRVRC, DHCD.	September 2015	Press releases submitted by coordinator and Extension agents as they work with individual producers or host workshops. So Fresh/NRVRC website listing of farms. Extension data-base list of producers. Increase in number of producers beginning their own events.
2-3	Create a support team working with the local landowner to tailor resources needed for planning and executing an event or festival.	Tools for evaluating economic feasibility, a marketing strategy, one-on-one or workshops on: food safety, liability insurance, zoning ordinances, VDOT (site distance requirements, etc.); another producer and/or an extension agent with expertise in showcasing produce as an event; volunteers to assist in preparation and on day of event.	Sub-Committee of county Agricultural Development Board, DHCD.	July 2016	A list of contact information for persons and organizations willing to volunteer their time and/or resources. At least 1 new successful farm event held. Initiated in Montgomery County.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
2-4	Assess county based policies affecting agritourism festivals and events.	Links to or hard copies of local ordinances and regulations	Team Research and Evaluation, Agriculture Development Board, DHCD.	June 2016	Memo for each county.
OBJECTIVE 3		Create an interactive web-based tool to promote and grow agritourism in the NRV.			
3-1	Compile a list of local agritourism options individually and by clusters.	NRVRC information, list from previous Agritourism event, volunteer team, detailed maps of the area counties, SO Fresh website.	NRVRC, SO Fresh, DHCD.	June 2015	Completed list.
3-2	Create a detailed calendar of local agritourism events.	Chamber of Commerce information, So Fresh calendars, volunteer team, Next Three Days, Explore NRV website, VDACS Marketing Tool.	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Marketing, DHCD.	September 2015	Completed calendar.
3-3	Draft a layout for an online interactive Trip Planner.	Samples from other similar sites, compiled list of agritourism options, calendar of events, volunteer team, interactive application consultant.	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVRC, DHCD.	June 2015	Outline and supporting materials submitted to Team Agritourism.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
3-4	Create interactive web-based product site.	List of local agritourism venues individually and by clusters, draft calendar, draft trip planner, Volunteer team Paid or volunteer website consultant. Seek funding (application for regional branding)	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVRC, DHCD.	September 2016	Interactive site linking travelers to venues is up and running. Evaluate the feasibility an online farmer support services tool.
3-5	Build partnerships between "cluster" event sites for marketing and trip planning purposes.	Staff to facilitate cluster community work, website consultant, funds for print marketing for clusters CO-OP Marketing (VA Tourism)	Staff, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Community Partners, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), NRVRC, DHCD.	December 2015	List of at least 3 cluster communities.

OBJECTIVE 4		Provide educational opportunities for the NRV agritourism community.			
ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
4-1	Support and promote educational programs for farmers.	Knowledgeable speakers/farmers with expertise in the areas of scaled production infrastructure, year around production (grazing, produce), small producer networks, beginning farmers, whole farm planning, agritourism trails, marketing events, branding, festivals/event preparation, best management practices, production training resources, farm management plans, farm tax business resources, and specialty crops; meeting space for activities; and materials for packets. Potential funding for a staff position. Grants for equipment/structures (e.g. seed drill to be shared among grazers, high tunnels for produce).	VCE, VA Tourism Corp, USDA, SO Fresh, VDACS, Dept. of Forestry, NRCS, Local Soil & Water, NRV Grape Growers Group, Food Safety Team, New River-Highlands RC&D, DHCD, local farming community.	June 2015	Educational Plan of Work for Agritourism in the NRV. Attendance at events. Building Collaborative Efforts with local and state wide groups and resources to enhance communication and outreach efforts. Build on current programs, VCE offering local opportunities; VDACS and VA Tourism offering statewide resources (farm to school, VA Agritourism Conference).

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
4-2	Foster relationships among agritourism operations. Facilitate and Enhance an Agritourism Network of producers/operators to dialog and learn from pragmatic experiences. (Operators learning from Operators – "Mentoring").	Production Association(s). Skilled farmers and Agribusiness operators to demonstrate or volunteer on-site learning experiences (mentoring). Provide space/time for networking Potential integration into farmer panels and farm tours. Create hands-on experiences for beginning farmers and farmers interested in diversifying business.	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, Team Education and Outreach, DHCD.	September 2015	Skilled farmers in meat/whole food and produce are identified. Initial demonstrations and/or on-site learning experiences are scheduled for Calendar Year 2016. Specific local needs by county are integrated into each educational opportunity. Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices.
4-3	Provide Farm Tours for Agritourism Operators to see what is possible. Highlight season extension (winter grazing and growing cold-season produce).	Farmers willing to share their experiences, consultants to organize and hold workshops, High Tunnel Programs, Forage & Grassland Council – Grazing programs.	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, New River-Highlands RC&D, DHCD, NRCS, VA Forage & Grassland Council, Appalachian Sustainable Development, other regional consultants.	September 2015	Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices. Support farmers with annual production and season extension practices.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
4-4	Host "Meet the Farmer" days for the Local Products Buyer and Sellers and also for direct consumers.	Survey of existing local restaurants, schools, and hospitals focusing on local produce, meat, dairy products desired, database manager to link farmers and product seekers, educational materials and local events for the consumer and farmer, potential funding for a staff position.	Staff for each county, new VCE or SO Fresh, DHCD, VA Food System Council.	September 2015	Planning potential round 2 AFID/DHCD grant application, funding and staffing plan complete for database manager.
4-5	Provide educational resources regarding regulations and best management practices on farm stays and "staycations".	Research current rules and regulations. Explore where there are barriers to offering staycations. Labor laws – Liability	VCE, NRVRC, DHCD, Local Planning Departments.	September 2015	Memo prepared and submitted to County Administrators and local farmers.
OBJECTIVE 5		Increase opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced food and value added products.			
5-1	Support on-farm Farm to Fork Events.	Producers, local products, licensed caterer & staff.	VCE, DHCD, and local partners	September 2016	Hold a minimum of 1 event.
5-2	Support the establishment of a commercial kitchen.	Feasibility study, cost analysis, business plan, and community support.	Team Agritourism, local farmers/producers, Sustain Floyd, Appalachian Sustainable Development, Pulaski Grow, SO Fresh, VDACS, DHCD.	July 2016	Location(s), building conceptual design or re-design, survey of interested producers, list equipment, cost analysis, and business plan.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
5-3	Showcase producers' value-added products and providing brochures with directions to each producer's farm for future sales and their own special events.	Advertising such as press releases, brochures at Virginia Tourism Centers, etc., and coordinators to plan and execute events, products. Potential venue, such as a community kitchen or agriculture fair Farms willing to showcase	DMOs, DHCD, local farming community, Team Agritourism.	August 2016	Event well publicized and well attended.

APPENDIX

Linking Our Community's Hidden Gems: Virginia Cooperative Extension, 2014 — Appendix A

NRV Agriculture Industry SWOT Analysis: Department of Housing & Community Development, 2014 — Appendix B

Tri-County Agriculture Assessment: Matson Consulting, 2014 — Appendix C

Project Reporting — Appendix D

- Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, AFID Planning Grant
- Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development, Regional Project Planning Grant

Branding — Appendix E

Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia — Appendix F

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

RESULTS FROM MARCH 20, 2014

AGRITOURISM: *Linking our Community's Hidden Gems*

The Definition

Virginia law defined agritourism as *any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity* (Code of Virginia, § 3.2-6400 effective October 1, 2008 - http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+3.2-6400).

For most people, agricultural tourism refers to a visit to a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agribusiness operation in order to enjoy, be educated, or become actively involved in the activities of the farm or operation – getting a ***true farm experience***.

What agritourism operations are missing from the Regional Agritourism Asset Map?

Contact all of these farms before putting them on the map.

Add Forestry/Natural Resource opportunities	Ellen Stewart from the Blacksburg Farmers Market can provide a list of vendors with address to fill in the asset map.
Horseback riding venues (packages) [know where you are sending your customers to, who are you partnering with?]	Add "The Roost" Blacksburg Farmers Market Store to the Asset Map
New Southwest Highlands Wine Trail	Opening Soon: The Black Hen Farm to Table Restaurant on Jackson St. in Bburg
<u>Missing from Asset Map:</u> Beliveau Estate Winery Attimo Winery West Wind Winery (Wythe Co) Buffalo & More (Riner) Cut your own Christmas Tree farms Mountain Lake Resort & Restaurant (Giles) Newport Convenience Store (Giles) Thornspring Farm (Pulaski) Draper Merc. Blue Door Café (Pulaski) Farriss' Vineyard Floyd Eco Village Floyd Farmers Market Floyd Country Store Spikenard Farm & Bee Sanctuary (Floyd) Steele's Blueberry (Newport) Doe Creek Giles County Farm Bureau Coop Grant's Grocery (Narrows) <u>Missing from the Asset Map (cont):</u> Foggy Bottom Vineyard Gary Midkiff (berries & fruit-Rich Creek) Spruce Run Tree Farm (Newport) Palisades Restaurant Ganoe's Organics (Narrows) Sugar by Suzanne Jean Lucas – Goat Farm	"Share the Spare" Partnership with NRV Master Gardener Program & Blacksburg Farmers Market for the collection & distribution of surplus fresh vegetables to local food security organizations.

Lynn Cosell (Wool Fantasy Farm) Back County Alpacas Harmony Hills (Horse Riding/therapy) Forest Farms Selah Springs (Riner) Nolley Wood Farm (Riner) Winter Frost Farms	

How can the agritourism entities in the region be linked or networked?

Packages (B&B, Wineries, Livestock, Horses, Natural Resources, Local Food, On farm Experiences, The New River)	Blue Ridge Farmers Market Coalition, contact bbfarmersmarket@gmail.com for more info.
Crooked Road- add Agriculture to the Heritage of Music trail	Chambers of Commerce
This group need to incorporate all types of operations to realize the value of regional assets	So Fresh (website for advertisements/collaboration)
Local Government – need to establish and build a good relationship with local branches of Govt.	Need Regional Website w/ Active Calendar
Farm to Fork networks, canning & cooking classes-	Appalachian Virginia Food System Coucil
Master Food Volunteers / Master Gardener Volunteers	Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program
Caterers, Cake Makers, Local Food Service Providers	

What is absent from our agritourism offerings and how do we fill those gaps?

Branding/Label for region – aggregation/infrastructure	Forest/Natural Resource Opportunities
Promotion of NRV, not just VT	Horseback Riding
On Website - Page for Children's Programs: Market Kids, 4-H, JR Master Gardener, Seeds, etc.	Farm to Table Restaurants
Hunting/Fishing	CSA (community supported agriculture)/ farm share opportunities
Tree Farming	Farm Stays
Cooking & Serving Food (like B&Bs) work on an exemption. VDACS should do this not the Health Dept.	Commercial Kitchens to prepare value added farm products, host cooking/preservation classes.

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New River Valley Agritourism Project

DHCD Management Team Workshop July 30, 2014

Members Present: Chris McKlarney, Jenny McCoy, Lisa Bleakley, Peggy White, Michael Solomon, Kevin Byrd, Ramona Chapman, Douglas Jackson, and Elijah Sharp.

Introductions: Jackson started the meeting at 9:10 am. Each meeting participant introduced themselves and shared Agriculture/Agritourism things they noticed on their drive to the meeting.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis: Jackson led the group through a two-part exercise. First, meeting participants were asked to conduct a SWOT analysis on the Agriculture Industry. Second, meeting participants were asked to conduct a SWOT analysis on the Management Team. Here are some of the results:

1. SWOT analysis on the Agriculture Industry in the NRV:
    a. Strengths:
        i. Transportation Routes
        ii. Natural Beauty – open land
        iii. Awareness
        iv. Community Support
        v. Strong Agriculture Heritage
        vi. Oldest Agriculture Fair in Virginia
        vii. Traditional infrastructure (farmers have equipment, land, etc.)
        viii. Farm to table
    b. Weaknesses:
        i. Funding
        ii. Extension – lack of local awareness of services
        iii. Lack of day-trips to prolong visitor's stay
        iv. Marketing of Agriculture
        v. Increased costs combined with increased regulations
        vi. Potential liability of farmers
        vii. Next generation of farmers
        viii. Local food – incentives for restaurants to use
        ix. Niche – specialist misunderstanding
        x. Lack of market access
    c. Opportunities:
        i. School/Agriculture programs
        ii. Legislation opportunity to source food locally
        iii. Community events educational opportunities
        iv. Institutions desire to have local food
        v. More involvement
        vi. Food security need
        vii. International visitors
        viii. National movements (buy/eat local, training, 100-mile dinners, etc.)
        ix. Local movements (So Fresh, local food, etc.)

d. Threats:
    i. Next generation farmers
    ii. Surrounding regional exports
    iii. Local politics
    iv. Time
    v. Legislation
    vi. Development – retaining farm land
    vii. High beef prices
    viii. Fear of change
    ix. Widespread illness
    x. Need more small growers to support local food programs

2. SWOT analysis on the Management Team:
    a. Strengths:
        i. PDC leadership
        ii. Local knowledge – access to information and resources
        iii. Well represented by local government DMOs
        iv. Inclusive
        v. Mutual benefit
        vi. Local government partnership
        vii. Understood importance
        viii. Creative
        ix. Doesn't set boundaries
        x. Service to farmers
    b. Weaknesses:
        i. Political bosses
        ii. Need a farmer champion – mainstream, respected
        iii. Role definition
        iv. Need process understanding
        v. Need specific goals
        vi. Need team vs. individual strategies
        vii. Time constraints
        viii. Nice (too?)
        ix. Floyd County not at the table
    c. Opportunities:
        i. Engage private sector – potential transition post project completion
        ii. More outreach
        iii. University outreach/connection
        iv. Use strengths in strategies
        v. Engage farmers/producers
        vi. Implement new programs – farmers, schools, etc.
        vii. Current political will
        viii. Individual enthusiasm
        ix. To build on strengthening relationships
        x. Marketing
    d. Threats:
        i. Resistance of farmers
        ii. Competing with existing businesses
        iii. Communication overload – engaging team
        iv. Internal focus leads to external confusion
        v. Losing energy/interest
        vi. C.A.V.E. people (citizens against virtually everything)
        vii. Threat of scale/attention
        viii. Changing methods

Progress Report: Sharp provided a brief overview of how the PDC aligned deliverables between DHCD, AFID, and the Steering Committee by developing a revised project budget and timeline. Major points included:

- Project deliverables now align with project budget
- A 1-page report card was provided to each meeting participant
- The budget concept, included in the AFID Interim Report, was reviewed
- To date, Giles County has paid all eligible expenses for the previous year worth of work
- No reimbursement requests have been submitted to either grantor
- Invoices have been sent to each participating local government for the cash match commitment on the project

In addition to discussing the work complete thus far, Sharp asked for the meeting participants to offer initial thoughts on the Strategic Plan Table of Contents. Meeting participants contributed the following suggestions:

- Providing specific goals for agriculture and agritourism that are identified by the management team needs to be complete
- Identifying specific strategies for Agriculture and Agritourism separately would be valuable
- Remove traditional ag and new ag from the chapter titles
- Create a consistent overview, examples, analysis, strategies, and estimates framework for beef, forestry, value-added food, agritourism, grapes and wines, and education chapters

Positioning Questions: Jackson led the group through the following questions:

1. Who are we?
    - Response: Three local governments exploring partnership opportunities that could grow the agriculture economy.
2. Who do we serve?
    - Response: 1) Agriculture producers, 2) agritourism operators, 3) tourists
3. What is our service?
    - Response: 1) aggregation, 2) awareness (opportunities and culture), 3) creating an agriculture voice in local government, 4) advocacy, 5) education, 6) regional structure/backbone
4. What do we want to achieve?
    - Response: 1) help sustain and grow the agriculture economy (farming) through awareness, marketing, web presence, central info resource, and sharing a common identity
5. What's in it for the region and/or our targets?
    - Response: 1) preservation and support of the industry, 2) encouraging growth, 3) increase productivity, 4) new partnerships, 5) access to information, 6) industry/business creation
6. Who do they contact?
    - Response: TBD

Next Steps:

- Management Team Meeting – focus on Strategic Plan completion

Meeting Adjournment: 11:55 am

Planning for an Agricultural Future in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

An
Agricultural
Regional Assessment

For

The New River Valley
Agriculture & Agritourism Project
Management Team

October 2014

This document was written and prepared by Matson Consulting, LLC:

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Matson Consulting has excelled in its mission of offering business expertise that enables rural business to succeed. Principle and Partner James Matson and staff have worked within multiple industries and with hundreds of entities to provide valuable analysis in the creation studies, plans, and reports. Over the years, the firm's main focus has been the creation of feasibility studies and business plans for agricultural value added and local food ventures. As the business has grown, they have extended their reach to include other rural businesses and significant work with development centers and local governments.

Matson Consulting provides a high level of professional expertise to support Rural Development Organizations in the delivery of their services for agricultural producers. Matson and staff have significant experience multiple areas of technical assistance, including

- Association Formation
- Management Consulting
- Strategic Planning
- Institutional Capacity Building
- Grant Management

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Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID) Grant

The AFID Grant was first introduced in 2012 during a General Assembly session. Small businesses or soon to be businesses that are interested in growing and adding value to the local agricultural and forestry industry are eligible for this grant. Grant funds can allow for the farmer or producer to obtain the financial support they need to make their business a success. The grant allowance depends on a couple of different factors: "AFID grants are made at the discretion of the Governor with the expectation that grants awarded to a political subdivision will result in a new or expanded processing/value-added facility for Virginia grown agricultural or forest[ry] products."[1] The amount of the Grant also depends on a crucial factor: "The amount of an AFID grant and the terms under which it is given are determined by the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry and approved by the Governor. An AFID grant is awarded…with the expectation that the grant will be critical to the success of the project."[2] The AFID grant award for this project was $35,000.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)[3]

The Virginia CDBG provides funding to eligible units of local government for planning and implementing projects that address critical community development needs, including housing, infrastructure and economic development. The goal of the CDBG is to improve the economic and physical environment in Virginia's communities through activities which primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons, prevent or eliminate slums and blighting conditions or meet urgent needs which threaten the welfare of citizens. Under this program, eligible localities may apply for Planning Grants for project development or Community Improvement Grants for project implementation. Units of local government in non-entitlement localities are the only eligible recipients of VCDBG funding. Localities may partner with planning district commissions, nonprofit organizations and other entities to undertake project activities. A grant of $30,000 was awarded for this project by the VA Department of Housing & Community Development.

[1] (2014). Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID). Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Website www.vdacs.virginia.gov/agribusiness/afid.shtml
[2] Staff/Contributed Reports. (November 2013). Development funds aid agriculture and forestry. Rappahannock News Website www.rappnews.com/2013/11/14/development-funds-aid-agriculture-and-forestry/125967/
[3] www.dhcd.virginia.gov "Community Development Block Grant" page. Accessed 5-20-14.

STRATEGIC PLANNING METHODOLOGY

To address the objectives listed above, the consortium has utilized the following methodology for the creation of this plan.

The objectives of this planning process which were identified to help the ***Agriculture and Tourism Consortium*** are:

- ✓ Evaluate the existing state of agricultural activities and determine their success and viability
- ✓ Identify alternative agricultural entities and market options available to the tri-county area that will enhance current agricultural industry operations and increase economic development.
- ✓ Provide examples and case studies of successful agriculture programs.
- ✓ Determine estimated prospective revenues for potential alternative agricultural operations.
- ✓ Identify regional partnership opportunities in agricultural development.
- ✓ Identify national, state, or local regulations and policies would inhibit agricultural development in the tri-county area.
- ✓ Develop an implementation strategy and projected personnel work load.

The following is a proposed mission statement for the project:

"A strategic plan that helps the tri-county area focus on agricultural development incorporating the needs of traditional commodity based farming (beef cattle and forestry) with emerging new agricultural opportunities (agritourism, grapes and wineries, and value added production and marketing). This plan will combine the skills and resources of the public sector with the realities and needs of the farming community to enhance profitability, sustainability, and quality of life for future generations."

Consultancy Timeline

The consultants were engaged with the creation of this plan between March and September 2014. To achieve the above stated objectives, the consultants conducted the following processes during this timeframe.

Plan Development Process

A local agricultural development plan was constructed, identifying threats and opportunities, organizing recommendations, and outlining action steps, priorities, and overall implementation. Determinations were made regarding infrastructure needs and marketing opportunities for increased profitability and long-term viability of the agricultural community. Feedback from partners, local leaders, and stakeholders was incorporated to revise and refine the plan. The following processes were used during the construction of this plan.

- **Research and Data Collection**
  Literature and database searches were completed, results reviewed, and conclusions drawn. Existing tri-county literature was considered to serve as a source for the historical and agricultural context of the plan. As part of this information, the consultants used recent, credible studies and high quality resources to serve as a starting point for this study. Data was gathered to support different claims, including government statistics and the knowledge of the consultants. Information utilized from these documents has been included and cited throughout the document.

- **Client and Third Party Meetings**
  The consultants conducted face-to-face meetings with the client. These visits included strategic information sessions, conference calls, and roundtable meetings with various key representatives to clarify information. Consultant staff attended and participated in numerous meetings with producers and county leadership in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties to capture anecdotal information unique to each county.

- **Field Investigation**
  Consultants also engaged directly with people in the field including meetings with the Virginia Farm Bureau and other local entities. Consultants also conducted phone interviews with producers, business owners, and other local figures. This field work with diverse groups and individuals within the agricultural development communities of the region help add perspective and nuance to the development plan.

Strategic Plan Document

The results of the above listed processes are presented in the completed strategic plan document. This document attempts to capture the overall vision of the development committee to consolidate their efforts into a unified strategic plan.

Document Organization

This document was organized in a logical and concise manner to facilitate ease of use. The beginning of the document presents general background information about each county involved to provide a framework for the strategic plan. The document is organized on a section by section basis based on the five areas established. Each section is divided into the following subsections.

- **Information Presentation:** The first part of each section will present the relevant information including data collected through research, meetings, and field investigations.

- **Analysis:** Each section will also contain the consultants' analysis of the information presented. This analysis has informed the recommendations found at the end of the document.

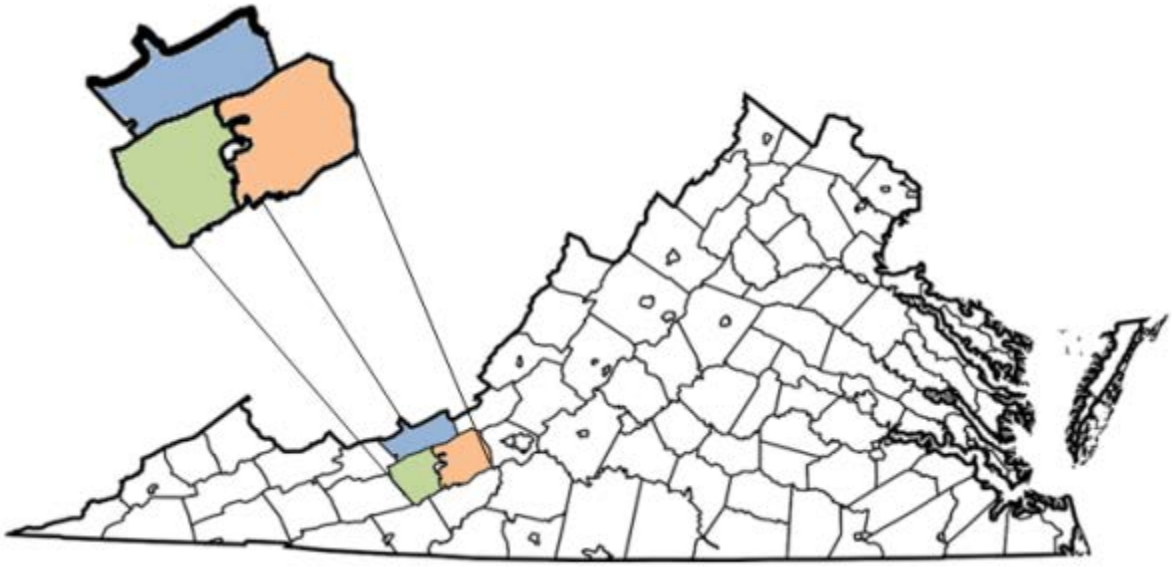
- **Examples:** Examples of relevant entities and businesses have been included to give tangible models for points made within the plan. These examples include those found both within and outside the region. These examples are indicated with the icon as shown on the right.

Recommendations

All of the above processes and information gathered has been combined into recommendations by the consultants based on the categories presented in the study. An action plan has been included to give a timeline and priority rankings for projects and activities based on recommendations as the development committee moves forward to enact the strategic plan.

Appendices

The document's appendices contain research and additional information to support the main sections of the document.

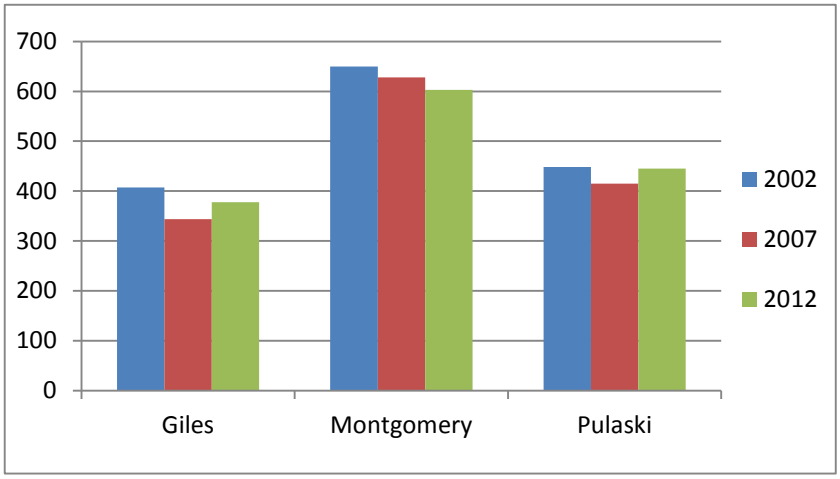


TRI-COUNTY BACKGROUND & CHARACTERISTICS

The three counties that are the focus of this plan are part of the New River Valley (NRV) region in Virginia and are comprised of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties. These counties are located between the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountain Ranges in Northwestern Virginia. The area is home to the City of Radford, as well as the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg. The region is serviced by two major interstate highways, I-81 connecting Knoxville, Tennessee and Roanoke, Virginia, as well as I-77 connecting Charleston, West Virginia and Charlotte, North Carolina.

The agricultural trends of each county are highlighted below. These trends include the number of farms, the market value of each product sold, and the average farm size for each county. This information is presented to help give relevant background information about the agricultural industry for Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties. This information was gathered from the National Agricultural Statistic Service's Census of Agriculture for 2002, 2007, and 2012.

Figure 1: Number of Farms by County



As shown on the figure to the left, the amount of farms in each county has fluctuated slightly without major decreases or increases between 2002 and 2012. Montgomery County continues to contain the most farms even after experiencing decreases over the ten-year period. Giles County contains the least amount of farms but is not far behind Pulaski County.

Figure 2: Market Value of Products Sold ($1,000)

Although Montgomery County has consistently contained the most farms, in recent years, Pulaski County has had the most market value for their products sold. All counties experience an increase in product value between 2007 and 2012 but the value of Pulaski County products significantly increased during this time period.

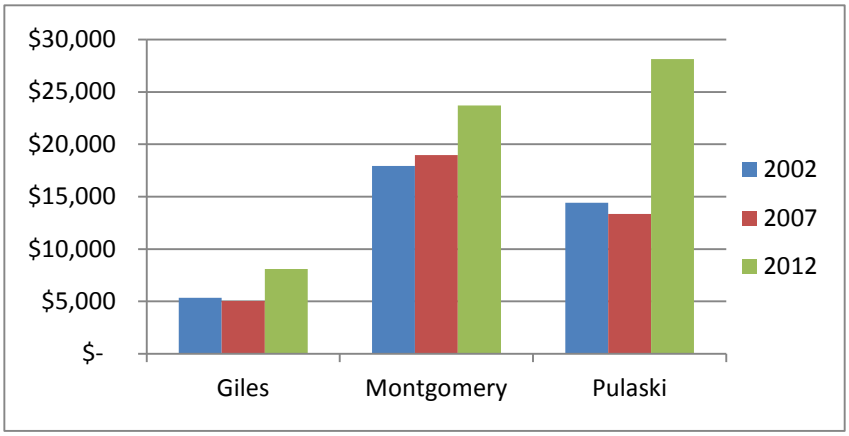
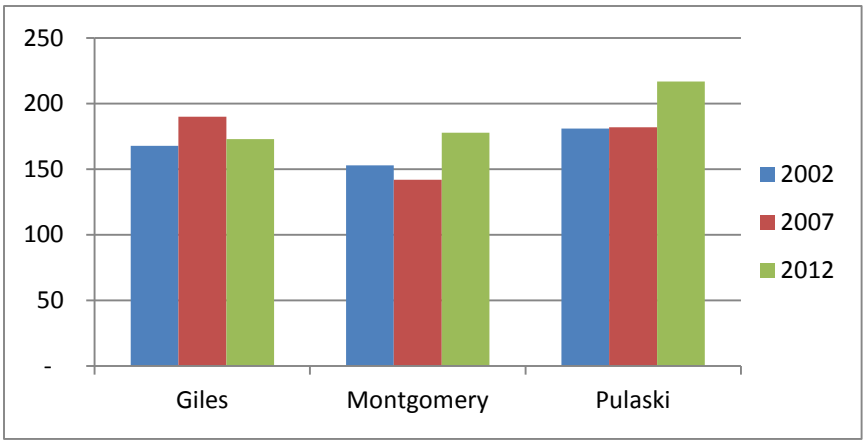


Figure 3: Average Farm Size (Acres)



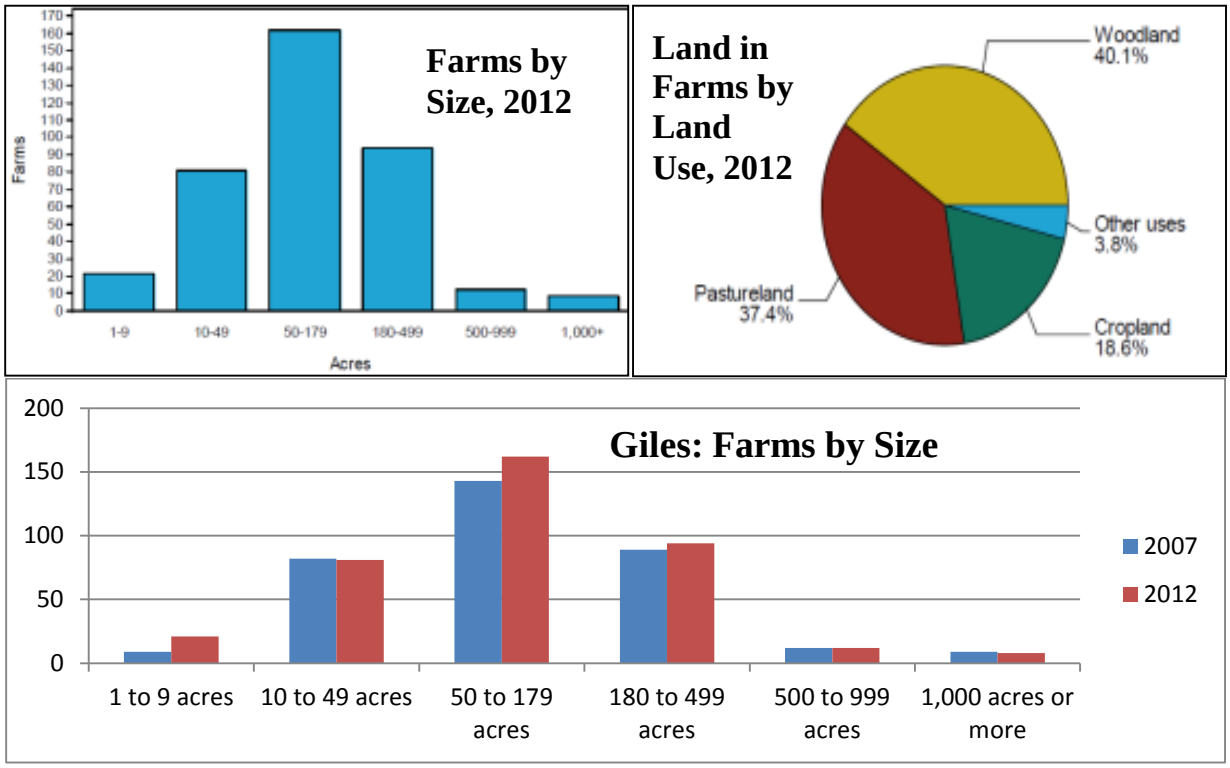
The size of the farms within each county has only slightly changed over the past ten years. Pulaski and Montgomery counties have experienced increase in farm size during recent years. Pulaski has consistently contained the largest farms while Montgomery County's farms have only recently caught up to the size of Giles County farms.

Giles County

Giles County is located in the southwestern portion of Virginia and shares its northwestern border with West Virginia. It is bordered by four other Virginia counties: Bland, Pulaski, Montgomery, and Craig counties. The county contains a land area of almost 356 square miles. The estimated 2013 population for Giles County is 16,925 people, which is about .2 percent of Virginia's total population. The most recent population estimates do show a decrease from the county's 2010 population of 17,286. This represents a decrease of about two percent in population.[4]

In 2012, Giles County had 7,126 households with a median household income of $44,365. During the time period between 2008 and 2012, the county had a 14 percent poverty level, which is three percent higher than the poverty level for Virginia. Manufacturing was the most employed industry in 2012 for the county.[5]

Figure 4: Giles County Farm Statistics; 2012 Census of Ag



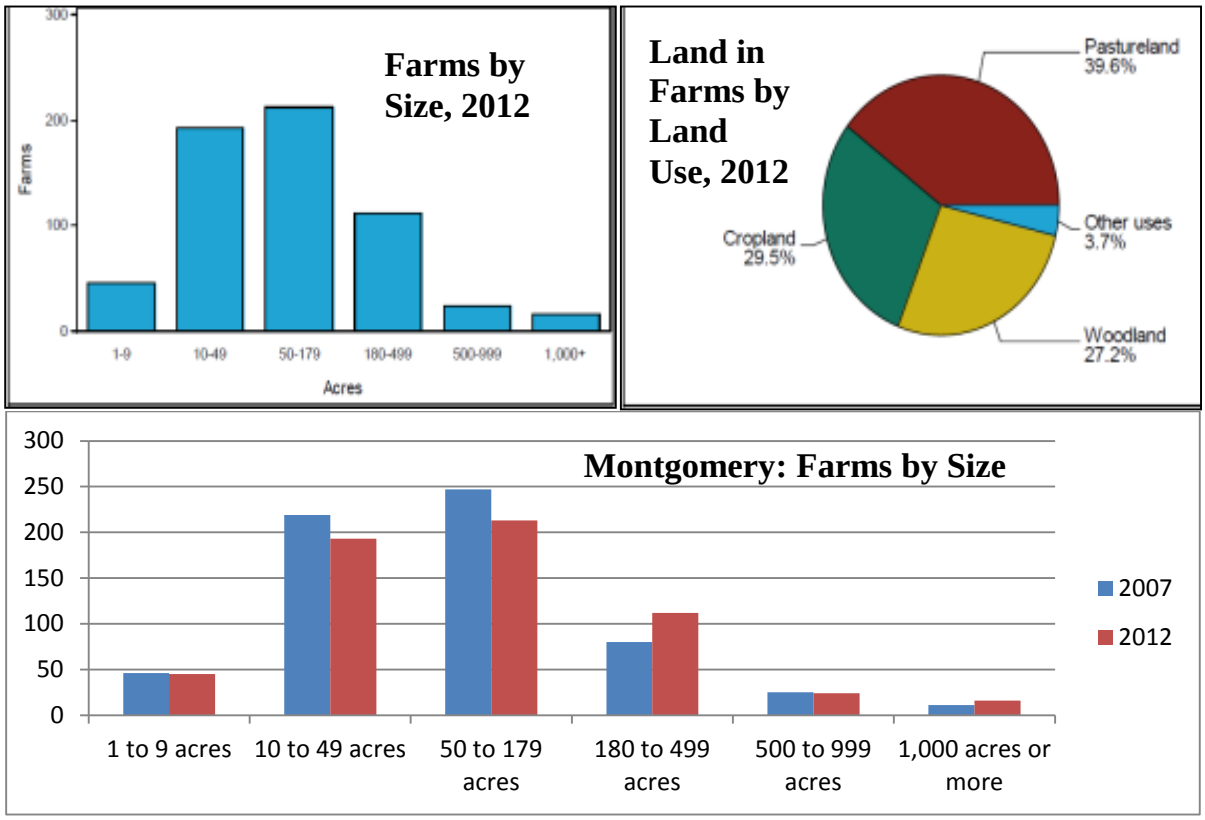
According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, the county had 378 farms with a total of 65,571 acres of land. The average farm size is 173 acres and about 43 percent of the farms are between 50 and 179 acres. The market value of agricultural products sold from Giles County farms was over $8 million and the average amount sold per farm was over $21,000.[6]

[4] U.S. Census Bureau (2014). "Giles County, Virginia." *State & County QuickFacts.*
[5] STATS Indiana (2014). "Overview of Giles County, VA." *USA Counties IN Profile.*
[6] USDA NASS (2014). "County Summary Highlights: 2012." *2012 Census of Agriculture*

Montgomery County

Montgomery County is bordered by Pulaski, Roanoke, Craig, Giles, and Floyd counties. The estimated population in 2013 was 96,207 people, which accounted for a little over one percent of Virginia's population. Since 2010, the population has increased by almost two percent. Montgomery has a land area of about 387 square miles with about 244 people per square mile.[7] In 2012, the county had 34,739 households with a median household income of $42,307. Montgomery County contains Blacksburg and Christiansburg, two large population centers in the state located along the interstate 81 corridor. The county is also home to Virginia Tech and the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center.[8]

Figure 5: Montgomery County Farm Statistics; 2012 Census of Ag



The 2012 Census of Agriculture indicates that Montgomery County had 603 farms with a combined 107,260 acres, making this county the largest in terms of farms out of the tri-county area. The average farm size was 178 acres and about 34 percent of the farms in the county were between 50 and 179 acres. For 2012, Montgomery County farms had a total market value of agricultural products sold of $23.7 million and the average value per farm was just over $39,000.[9]

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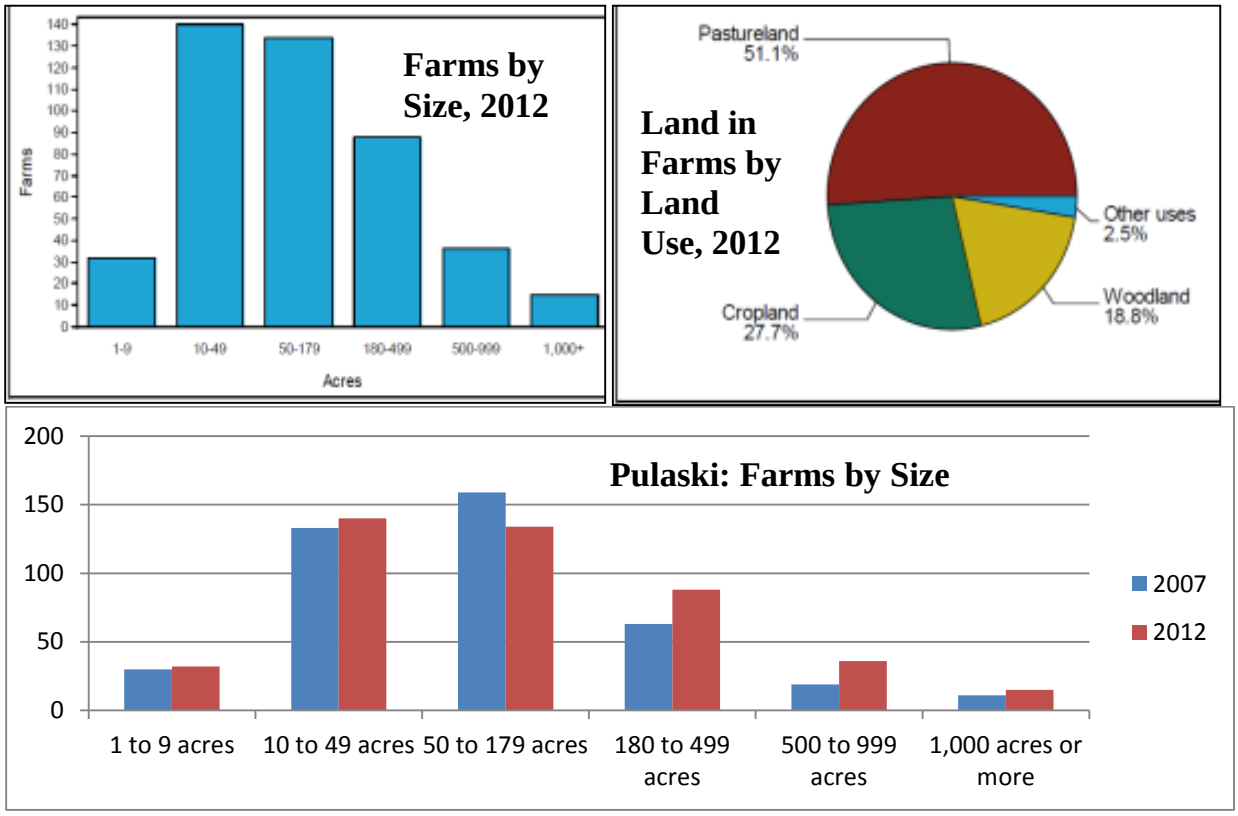
[7] U.S. Census Bureau (2014). "Montgomery County, Virginia." *State & County QuickFacts.*
[8] (2014). "About Montgomery County, VA." *The Official Site of Montgomery County Government.* www.montgomerycountyva.gov/content/1142/96/default.aspx
[9] USDA NASS (2014). "County Summary Highlights: 2012." *2012 Census of Agriculture*

Pulaski County

Pulaski County is located to the southwest of Montgomery County and south of Giles County. It is also bordered by Bland, Wythe, Carroll, and Floyd counties. The estimated 2013 population for Pulaski County is 34,507, which is about .4 percent of Virginia's population. The county's population did experience a one percent decline since 2010. With a land area of about 320 square miles, Pulaski County has 109 people per square mile. In 2012, there were 14,874 households with a median household income of $42,502. The county's poverty rate was about 16 percent, or five percent above Virginia's poverty rate.

Pulaski County is home of Claytor Lake which is part of New River. It was created from a hydroelectric project by the Appalachian Power Company. Claytor Lake hosts swimming, camping, hiking, and picnicking but it is best known for sport fishing and boating.[10]

Figure 6: Pulaski County Farm Statistics; 2012 Census of Ag



In 2012, the county had 445 farms with a combined 96,611 acres of farmland. The average farms size is 217 acres but about 31 percent of Pulaski County farms have between 10 and 49 acres. The total market value of agricultural products sold in 2012 for all farms was over $28 million; the average value per farm was about $63,000.[11]

[10] Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (2014). "Claytor State Park." *Virginia.Gov*. www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/claytor-lake.shtml
[11] USDA NASS (2014). "County Summary Highlights: 2012." 2012 Census of Agriculture

EVALUATION OF CURRENT AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Virginia Agriculture

Agriculture is Virginia's largest and oldest industry; it has been the backbone of the state economy for almost four centuries. It generates approximately $52 billion annually, provides 311,000 jobs, consists of over 46,000 farms, utilizes about 33 percent of the land in the state, and, when combined with forestry, accounts for about 8.1 percent of the state's GDP. Almost 90 percent of Virginia's farms are family owned and operated, and it is estimated that every job in agriculture and forestry in the state supports 1.6 jobs in Virginia's economy.[12]

The Land Base

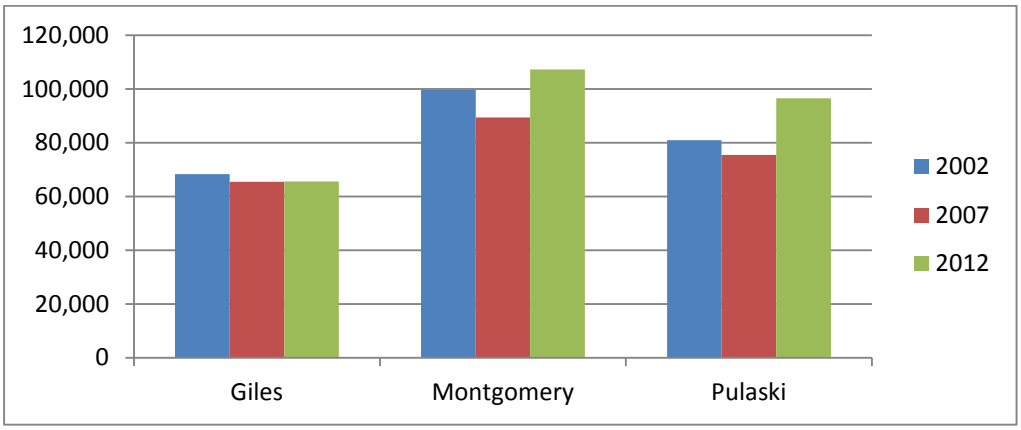
From 1982 to 2007, Virginia saw 462,300 acres of productive farmland converted to developed uses, ranking the state 21st in the country (and 14th in the percentage of agricultural land converted). The conversion of farms to other uses puts pressure on remaining farms and the entire agricultural sector. Often, the highest quality farmlands are the most likely to be lost to development, as the land that grows the best crops also builds the best houses – flat, well-drained, and easily accessible by road. This is particularly alarming in Virginia, which ranked ninth in the country in the percentage of prime agricultural land converted to development most recently (from 2002-2007), when 1.29 percent of the best lands for crops and livestock were lost.

[12] "Virginia Agriculture: Facts and Figures." Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Accessed 7-3-14. www.vdacs.virginia.gov/agfacts/index.shtml.

In turn, farmers are pressured to match yields on less productive and often environmentally fragile lands, and there is increased competition for remaining farmlands, spurring a bidding war for leased lands, as many farmers need to maintain acreage and gross income to generate cash flow to cover debt. As farms sell out and disappear, neighbors may stop reinvesting in their operation and facilities. In turn, service providers suffer because there are fewer farms and acreage, and larger farms may seek volume discounts outside of the county, rather than working with local dealers.

Interestingly, figures from the 2012 Census of Agriculture for Virginia reveal a 2.4 percent increase in the Land in Farms from 2007-2012, ranking 5th of all states in percentage growth.[13] Census figures showed even larger increases in land in farms in the NRV region: 28 percent in Pulaski, 20 percent in Montgomery, and zero percent in Giles. Local farmers were surprised to hear these figures; anecdotally, they have observed good farmland abandoned by aging farmers or being used for housing development. The vast majority of this growth in land in farms was in forage crops: alfalfa, grazing, and pasture. By census classification, Montgomery gained 10,977 acres in these three categories, while Pulaski grew 17,284 acres in this short five year time frame.[14] This stresses how important grazing animals are to the agricultural sector, and several farmers emphasized the fact that **growing forages is what they do best** in the tri-county area.

Figure 7: Land in Farms: Giles, Pulaski, Montgomery Counties, VA



Census data is based on self- reports by farm operators. Another possible explanation for these apparent increases in land in farms is that more large forest landowners may be participating in the Census or are considering this land part of their farming operations. This may be driven by more landowners seeking out enrollment in the Property Tax Use Value Assessment program.

Benefits of Farms

Agriculture in the New River Valley today provides much more than food to their communities. Well-managed farms bring a range of benefits that all citizens can enjoy at no cost:

[13] "2012 Census of Agriculture." Farmland Information Center. www.farmlandinfo.org.

[14] "Use Value Assessment Estimates and the 2012 Agricultural Census: Jurisdictional changes in Harvested and Composite Farm Acreage from the 2007 and 2012 Census." (June, 2014). Virginia Tech Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics.

- **Economic:** Agriculture contributes to the local economy directly through sales, job creation, support services and businesses, and also by providing entrepreneurial opportunities in secondary markets such as food processing and catering. Farming and forestry are significant economic activities in the New River Valley. Direct cash receipts on farms in the three-county region totaled $60 million in 2007. The forestry sector adds an additional $3.8 million in sales annually. [15]

- **Environmental:** Working farms and forests supply important environmental amenities, protecting wetlands and watersheds, providing food and cover for wildlife, helping to control flooding, and maintaining air quality. The region's farmers manage 270,000 acres of land, about 40 percent of the total land base in the New River Valley. All citizens depend on the owners of farm and forest lands to be responsible stewards of our natural resources.

- **Rural Heritage:** Agriculture is a major part of our cultural heritage, with farm families anchoring rural communities and providing an important piece of the region's unique historical character. Old farmhouses and barns provide a link to the past, many of which are repurposed for continuing farm use in the present. Today, farm families are cornerstones to rural churches, fire departments, schools, and other community institutions.

- **Open Space:** Farms and forests provide wildlife habitat, green space and beautiful views, important for scenic beauty for everyone and attracting new residents, business relocations, and tourist dollars from across the country and world. Privately owned and managed farms are an important and cost-effective element of the County's open space strategy.

- **Tax Savings:** Privately owned working lands provide fiscal benefits, helping keep property taxes low due to their minimal need of public services. **Cost of Community Services (COCS)** studies in six Virginia counties have shown that farm, forest and open lands receive an average of $0.35 in services for every dollar of revenue they provide, while residential land uses require $1.18 in services for each dollar paid in property taxes.[16] Thus, residential properties actually cost counties more in needed services than they provide in revenue, while farm and forestland owners pay more than their fair share of taxes. There is a simple explanation for this surprising result: *cows don't dial 911*. Farms don't require much from their counties, while new housing developments spread out across the countryside require a great deal of public funds for new infrastructure and services.

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[15] Virginia Department of Forestry. "2010 Locality Value and Volume." www.dof.virginia.gov/econ/stats/2010_Value-Volume_County.htm
[16] http://www.farmlandinfo.org/sites/default/files/COCS_08-2010_1.pdf

Findings of COCS studies have important implications for policymakers charting a future course for their communities. They suggest not that communities should pursue a single type of land use for fiscal health, but that they should consider balancing various community goals that include a range of housing and employment options, as well as open space and working lands. With good planning, these goals can be balanced for the benefit of all citizens.

- **Local Food:** The region's farms are increasingly valued as a source of fresh, safe and healthy food. The growth of farmers' markets, community supported agriculture, and direct marketing to restaurants and universities points to strong consumer demand for locally grown fruits, vegetables, wines, meats, and dairy products. With increasingly volatile fuel markets and global instability, New River Valley farms provide important food security to local residents.

Farmland Preservation

Fortunately, the state of Virginia has a strong program of state support to help counties and landowners. The Office of Farmland Preservation, located within the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services,[17] was established in 2001, and uses a 5-pronged approach to stem losses of farmland in the state:

- To work with other governmental and private organizations to help establish local purchase of development rights (PDR) programs by creating model policies and practices, establishing criteria to certify programs as eligible to receive funds from public sources, and determining methods and sources of funding for localities to purchase agricultural conservation easements.
- To create programs to educate the public about the importance of farmland preservation.
- To help farmers with farmland preservation efforts.
- To assist local governments in developing additional farmland preservation policies and programs.
- To administer the Virginia Farm Link program.
- Purchase of Development Rights Programs (PDR's) pay landowners to place permanent restrictions on future development of their farm's land, assuring that this land availability for agriculture. These programs rely on a combination of local, state, and federal government funding and tax advantages, along with private financial and technical support, to compensate landowners for the reduction of equity value of their properties.

Purchase of Development Rights

PDR programs can help land remain affordable for farming by removing the development value from the cost of purchase. They also allow landowners to recover cash liquidity to help with settling estate planning issues for non-farming heirs, or to invest in new value-added enterprises

[17] "Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP)." www.vdacs.virginia.gov/preservation/index.shtml

or updating aging facilities. Most importantly, these programs create stable parcels of land, which can become the cornerstone of future farming communities.

None of the three counties in the New River Consortium have established a local PDR program, which has been done by 21 counties and one municipality in Virginia as of 2014. Establishing a PDR program, based on the model developed by VDACS, would make a county eligible for state and federal funds for purchasing development rights. The creation of a local program would also establish a clearinghouse for issues related to the loss of farmland, and tie local personnel into the statewide network of PDR program managers. With the influx of outsiders into the New River Valley, loss of productive farmland is becoming an increasingly important issue, and counties will need to work strategically with their farming communities to heighten awareness and seek creative solutions.

Fauquier County
Agricultural Development Board

Fauquier County has combined the goals of farmland preservation and agricultural economic development under the auspices of their Agricultural Development Board. This board, assisted by three staff members, operates a Purchase of Development Rights program, promotes local products, shares information on grant opportunities and research findings, and provides a range of economic development services to local farmers. The PDR program has protected 9027 acres on 42 farms since 2003, and some of these farms have used the proceeds from the sale of development rights to begin new value-added enterprises on the farm.

For more information, visit
www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments/agdev/ and
www.fauquiercounty.gov/documents/departments/agdev/pdf/PDR_progress_report03-13.pdf

Agricultural & Forestal Districts

Counties are permitted to adopt districts designed to protect working farm and forest land. "These *Agricultural and Forestal Districts* are voluntary agreements between landowners and the locality, and offer benefits to landowners that agree to keep their land in its current use for a period of 4 to 10 years."[18]

Agricultural and Forestal Districts offer a number of benefits to landowners and counties that can promote and preserve agricultural land uses:

[18] "Agricultural and Forestal Districts." Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) www.vdacs.virginia.gov/preservation/tools.shtml

1. Belonging to an AFD guarantees you will have land use value taxation, provided you meet the land use eligibility requirements, even if the County rescinds its land use program.
2. The district safeguards the rural character of the community by preserving agricultural and forestal land. It helps to continue rural uses of the land by strengthening the community with common goals and concerns.
3. AFDs offer some protection from eminent domain. Acquisition of land for power lines, roadways, and other infrastructure within a District is subject to a special public review process. Also the expenditure of public funds for non-farm related purposes in an AFD is subject to special review process.
4. Local governments may not enact laws within a district that would unreasonably restrict farm structures, farming or forestry practices unless the restrictions are directly related to health, safety and welfare.[19]

The Valley Conservation Council completed a comprehensive study of Virginia AFDs in 2009.[20] Participating counties reported the greatest benefit of AFDs is their conservation value while the greatest drawback is the lack of incentives for landowners. A follow-up conference held after the study's release generated a list of ideas from participating localities. The key recommendations were to expand the program to add additional incentives for landowners (which would likely require amendments to state legislation) and develop a network amongst the AFD programs across the state to share information. The American Farmland Trust's Farmland Information Center contains a wealth of information about similar Agricultural District programs around the country, which might offer some ideas for expansions of Virginia's program.[21]

According to the latest data from VDACS, Montgomery County has 12 districts totaling 41,087 acres, while Giles and Pulaski Counties do not have Agricultural and Forestal Districts programs.[22] With farmers expressing concerns about the loss of productive lands and the importance of increasing public awareness about the presence of farms, this program could be used more extensively at minimal cost. Mapping could be used to raise public awareness, and Giles and Pulaski should consider establishing local district programs.

Farm Link

The Virginia Farm Link program also provides a valuable set of services, which can assist landowners in the transition of their land to the next generation.[23] The program conducts workshops and has compiled a set of educational resources to help landowners understand key issues and options. In conjunction with the Virginia Farm Bureau, the Farm Link program has established a Farm Seeker Certification program centered on a curriculum for farming newcomers to assure that they have adequate on-farm experience and a viable business plan to launch a profitable agricultural enterprise.

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[19] "Loudoun County Agricultural and Forestal District Program FAQ's." (2013). Loudoun County, VA. www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5534

[20](Nov 2009). "Agricultural and Forestal Districts." Conservation Council. http://valleyconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/AFD-Rpt-FIN-SH-corr.pdf.

[21] www.farmlandinfo.org/

[22] http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/preservation/pdf/ag_forestal_summary.pdf

[23] "Virginia Farm Link Program." Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) www.vdacs.virginia.gov/preservation/program.shtml

These Certified Farm Seekers can then tap into the Virginia Farm Link database to find landowners with either available farms for lease or purchase, or even existing farm operations seeking someone to take over and carry them on. The Office of Farmland Preservation helps connect both sides of this transaction and provides services and professional referrals that can help negotiate this complex landscape. With so many prospective farmers in current times emerging from non-farm backgrounds, these new connections could offer important promise for creating a new generation to tend the land.

Environment and Conservation

The farming community is very concerned about increasing environmental regulations related to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The State of Virginia has created a strong program to offer farmers alternatives to minimize the impact of these regulations. Currently, the Skyline Soil and Water Conservation District offers 100 percent cost-share for livestock exclusion applications submitted by June 2015. Afterwards, livestock exclusion might become mandatory, with no cost-share available. This is a great opportunity to improve grazing infrastructure on the farm at no cost to the farmer.

Additionally, the state has established a pilot program that allows landowners to develop Resource Management Plans with the assistance of private contractors. Farmers who complete plans which are approved by local technical committees are exempt from any new regulations for the next 9 years. With concerns about increasing pressures on land management practices associated with the Chesapeake Bay rules, the Resource Management Plan is a risk management tool to establish a long-term strategy and avoid the constraints of future regulations.

Cooperative Extension System

The USDA Cooperative Extension System is nationwide and includes a state office at a land-grant university and a network of local or regional officers in each U.S. state and territory. The intent of these offices is to provide useful, practical, and research-based information to agricultural producers, small business owners, youth, consumers, and others in rural areas and communities of all sizes.[24]

Virginia Cooperative Extension within the three-county area connects county producers and the community to Virginia Tech and Virginia State Universities "through educational programs based on research and developed with input from local stakeholders." Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties each house a separate Extension office, with personnel active in programs related to Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H Youth Development, and Community Viability and offering both state level program specialist and county level expertise.[25]

[24] National Institute of Food and Agriculture (2013). "Cooperative Extension System Offices." USDA www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/
[25] Virginia Cooperative Extension Website. www.ext.vt.edu.

Analysis

The agricultural landscape in the tri-county area is dominated by grass, grazing animals, and steep forests. Acreage in forages and forestry continues to grow. While these traditional land uses continue to dominate total acreage and numbers of farmers, the area is seeing significant growth more value-added enterprises targeting local consumers and visitors: direct market produce, grass-fed meat, wineries, and agritourism.

Actively promoting farming and agriculture in the tri-county area should be a focus of the regions leadership. Farm tours modeled after the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association's annual spring tours[26], maps of local pick-your-own and agritourism operations, and joint promotional efforts with local tourism will all raise public awareness of the diversity of local farms and create new loyal customers. A farm appreciation day featuring such a tour could conclude with a meal and musical event to highlight issues of concern to local farms and raise awareness of the importance of buying local foods.

An oft overlooked area of need is in sourcing quality farm supplies and equipment. Encouraging farmers to seek equipment locally can contribute to the economy within a region, and increasing the communication and flow of needs and information can help suppliers better tailor their inventory to meet local needs. Ideas include the possibility of a buy-local campaign, or presenting figures based on multipliers that show the dollars lost by spending outside the county.

There is significant concern about a shortage of young farmers to keep the industry thriving into the next generation. A farmer recruiting program could focus on attracting experienced farmers to relocate to the county. Activities may include creating a recruiting packet and program for farmers considering relocating to the tri-county area, or creating an agricultural "welcome wagon" packet highlighting the benefits of agriculture in the area. These activities could be coordinated through traditional economic development agencies that already work to attract other types of businesses to the area.

There is an influx of new landowners who are looking more for a bucolic place to retire than intensive residential development. These new landowners need assistance with forest management and conservation planning. Much of this land remains leased to long-time cattle farmers; however, these newcomers need to understand the importance of long-term leases and infrastructure investment to the stability of local farming enterprises. Without an assurance that they will be able to farm the land in five or ten years, the leasing farmer will not be able to justify improvements in fencing, fertility, or facilities. These new landowners are an important part of the puzzle; counties must continue to find creative ways to educate them on the realities of land ownership and the farm economy.

Ensuring that professionals have proper knowledge of agricultural issues, particularly the needs and opportunities associated with the ownership of rural land, offers the best hope that families utilize all available incentives to keep their land in farm use and can help provide important guidance to families making difficult long-term decisions. The Virginia Farm Bureau is another organization that may help with continuing education courses, and the VA Department of Forestry provides a good example by providing realtor education short courses.

[26] Carolina Farm Stewardship Association. "Farm Tours." www.carolinafarmstewards.org/farmtours/

Cooperative Extension currently serves as a source of production and best practice information for the region's producers; however, budget constraints and changes in the structure of extension has led to offices functioning with smaller staffing levels. Extension personnel are stretched thin with basic programming and networking with the public, producers, and university personnel.

In general, the region was praised for having an agriculture friendly regulatory framework. Agriculture is exempted from most restrictions. Montgomery County has a particularly strong Land Use Plan for preserving agricultural uses, limiting up zoning in rural areas.

The changing landscape of agriculture requires a similar institution to provide economic development support and services. A number of Virginia counties have established Agriculture Development Boards (ADB) to focus specifically on economic development related to the agriculture industries present in their respective counties. These ADBs have traditionally worked on preserving farmland, addressing agriculture related regulatory issues, and working with existing economic development agencies to promote economic growth related to agricultural development. The ADB in Bedford County, VA determined that while other agencies can certainly continue to play their role, these efforts often need to be consolidated and led by a single entity[27]. ADBs can play a unique role while coordinating with and enhancing existing resources such as Farm Bureau and Extension services.

Furthermore, the three-county regions goal of regional development means there is a need for ensuring that information which may be provided at the individual county level is also available amongst the other counties in the group. While ADBs in Virginia have traditionally been single county bodies, a multi-county or regional ADB could help Extension address entrepreneurial and economic development issues in the NRV region.

Franklin County
Agricultural Development Board

In Franklin County, VA, the ADB works on all aspects of improving agriculture, including advising local government on policies and regulatory issues, presenting an agriculture viewpoint on policy concerns, seeking to promote the long-term sustainability of agriculture enterprise, and strengthening the industry through coordination and promoting diversification. They used their recently completed Agricultural Strategic Plan to develop a work plan for the ADB with specific deliverable projects targeted at increasing income and adding value to the farm sector, such as taking a community cannery to commercial standards.

For more information, visit www.franklincountyva.gov/development-board

[27] Bedford County, VA. Office of Economic Development History. www.bedfordeconomicdevelopment.com/agriculture-in-bedford-county-virginia/ag-board/history/

BEEF CATTLE

Virginia Livestock

The livestock industry in the Commonwealth of Virginia has a long tradition and is an important source of revenue for producers. The following Virginia market information was taken in large part from reports on the USDA's National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) website. The USDA publishes only one census of agriculture every five years; however, they also have yearly estimates. The most recent census available is from 2012. The most recent estimates at the state level are from January 1, 2014. These are given after the census numbers for comparison.

The 2012 USDA census reports 1,631,882 cattle and calves in Virginia; with 657,320 of these being beef cattle. This represents an increase over 4 percent from 2007 reported inventory figures for the Commonwealth. The 84,983 sheep and lambs in 2012, was an even larger 9.5 percent increase from those in Virginia in 2007. On the other hand were 50,831 goats in Virginia, a significant 19 percent decrease from 2007.

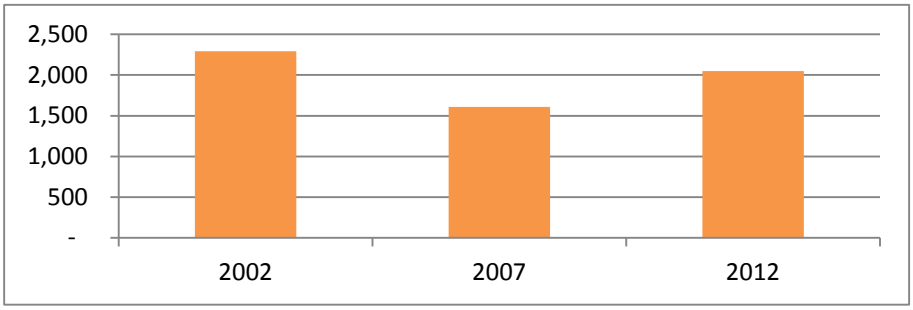
The following table shows Virginia's red meat production from 2008 to 2012 in millions of pounds. Despite a sharp decline from 2008 to 2009, meat production in Virginia overall is trending upward. There seems to be a positive outlook for the industry in the next few years if this trend continues, though decreases are possible.

Table 1: 2008-2012 Virginia Commercial Red Meat Production

Giles County Over the period of the three most recent Censuses of Agriculture (2002, 2007, 2012) Giles County has maintained a fairly steady ratio of beef cattle and milk cows to total cattle and calves in the county, with beef cattle ranging from 42 percent to 56 percent, and milk cows holding steady at just over 1 percent. The total number of cattle and calves in the county has varied from census to census, but remained fairly steady within the range of 10-13,000 head mark. The Census of Agriculture for 2012 reports 13,632 total cattle and calves, an increase of 36 percent from the 2007 Census figures.

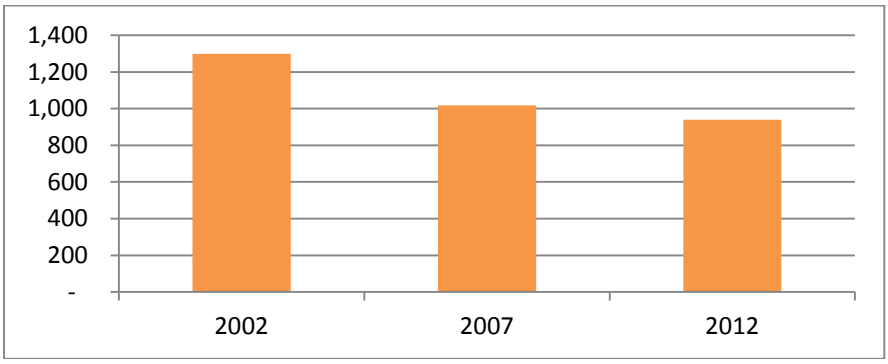
Montgomery County Over the three Census periods Montgomery County exhibited an overall increase in the number of total cattle and calves in the county, with the 2012 Census reporting 26,270 total cattle and calves. The number of beef cattle has ranged from 41 percent to 43 percent of total cattle and calves in the county, while milk cows have represented a greater portion of the total cattle inventory than Giles, ranging from eight percent ten percent, and represent the largest number of milk cows of the three counties compared.

Figure 8: Montgomery County Milk Cow Statistics



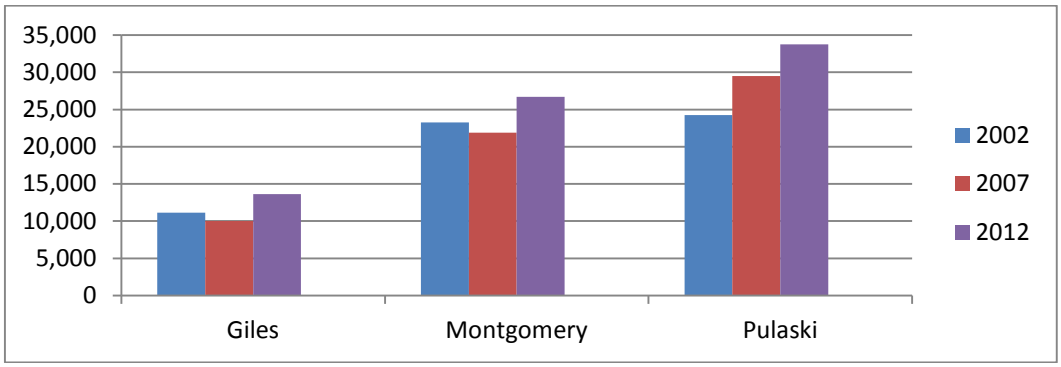
Pulaski County Of the three counties, Pulaski has maintained the greatest total number of cattle and calves, with 2012 Census of Agriculture inventory figure reporting 33,759 total head. The number of beef cattle for the county is 44 percent of the total inventory on average, and has consistently increased over the three census periods. The number of milk cows in the county has ranged from three to five percent of the total inventory, but have shown declines over the same time period.

Figure 9: Pulaski County Milk Cow Inventory



Continued growth in the number of cattle reflects strong price appreciation through the past decade. Estimated decreases within the past year may be an indication of increased sales for profit-taking, as both beef and milk are seeing record high prices in 2014.

Figure 10: Total Cattle for Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski County VA



A main driver of agriculture in the tri-county area is beef and cattle production. Beef and beef cattle sales comprise 56 percent of the total market value of $59.9 million of agricultural sales in the region in 2012,[28] and also make up the predominance of farmers and agricultural land use in the area, between grazing and hay production. Because of the size of this sector, a sustainable plan for the promotion and long-term health of agriculture in the tri-county area must include ways to address the success of these types of operations.

Cattlemen are the most plentiful producers in the region, and forage production uses the most agricultural land. It is the region's comparative advantage. Education efforts should challenge farmers to learn and implement improvements that can make their operations more profitable and efficient: soils, feed production, grazing practices, facilities, health care, and marketing.

Because of the significance of this component of the area's agriculture industry, a deeper analysis has been conducted to further explore opportunities that may address the concerns of traditional beef producers as well as highlight the possibility of accessing new markets in the future through direct marketing activities.

[28] United States Department of Agriculture, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Beef Production Overview

The beef production process begins with selection for breeding. Selection is typically made based on the environment in which the cattle are intended to be raised and the type of end product that is desired, with certain breed characteristics desirable based on these factors.

In general, beef grown for slaughter and consumption utilize three distinct farming operations: cow-calf farms, backgrounding farms, and feedlots. Cow-calf farms oversee the breeding and birth of calves, backgrounding farms handle cattle after weaning, and feedlots oversee the cattle's final growth until slaughter.

Figure 11: Beef Life Cycle

Source: www.explorebeef.org

BEEF LIFECYCLE

1. Cow-calf farms and ranches breed and produce calves.
2. Calves drink their mother's milk and graze while growing.
3. At approximately 8 months old and 500 pounds, calves are weaned.
4. Calves are sold at auction markets to stockers and backgrounders.
5. Stockers and backgrounders graze cattle on pastures across the United States.
6. The cattle are then sold or moved to feed yards.
7. Beef cattle are harvested in modern processing facilities.
8. Beef from the packing plant is sold in supermarkets and restaurants worldwide.
9. Approximately 90 percent of the beef raised in the United States (by weight) is consumed in the United States. The remaining 10 percent of beef is exported.

Cow-Calf Farms
Cow-Calf Farms and ranches breed cows to produce beef calves. The process is generally mediated through the use of artificial insemination, both to ensure good stock by selecting the sire, as well as to control the birth cycle.

After calving, the cows are allowed to remain on the farm with their mothers until they are ready for weaning and the next stage of beef production. Calves are typically kept with their mothers until the age of approximately 6-8 months and about 450 pounds. The next stage is for the calf to be weaned, and then proceed to a backgrounding farm.

Backgrounding
Typically after weaning, ownership is transferred when the animal is brought to a livestock auction. Backgrounding and stockers purchase the immature cattle after weaning, but before they have achieved sufficient weight and age to be sent to feedlots for finishing. The primary goal of backgrounding is to add weight.

The backgrounding process also readies the cattle for the feedlot by conditioning them to be enclosed and take feed and water from a trough or other collective feeding apparatus, as well as allowing them to grow accustomed to the types of feed they will begin consuming after arriving at the feedlot. Cattle are raised in the backgrounding environment until reaching a weight of around 600 to 700 pounds.

Feedlots
Anywhere from the age of 8 to 14 months, depending on the speed of their growth, the animals are placed in feedlots to finish their growth to market weight. The primary purpose then is the efficient fattening of the animal in order to maximize yield at slaughter. Market weight can range from 900 to 1,400 pounds at anywhere from 12 to 22 months of age. In general, the diet for the animals has a great influence on the time it takes to reach market weight; animals that are grass fed rather than raised on a commercial diet mix will take longer to reach slaughter weight.

Slaughter
Once ready for further processing, the animals are slaughtered at a plant and then packaged for sale and consumption. Packaging and further processing typically occur within the slaughter facility, as well as at butcher shops and other points of sale that possess the proper facilities and personnel. Meat processing, commonly referred to as fabrication, is the stage where the meat is packaged into individual cuts such as ground beef production, sausages, and other products.

Beyond Production
Moving beyond the components of production, there are additional market possibilities that provide opportunities for increasing profits to producers through direct marketing. Several beef value chain possibilities have been provided as examples to show the types of approaches that can be taken.

Figure 12: Examples of Beef Value Chains[29]

1. Farmer/Rancher → whole beef → "Market"
"Market" is any entity that can buy live animals off the farm/ranch.

2. Farmer/Rancher → whole beef → consumer
Farmer/Rancher direct sells whole animal to consumer.

3. Farmer/Rancher → "retail cuts"→ consumer
Farmer/Rancher direct sells retail cuts to consumers and receives gross income from sales.

4. Farmer/Rancher→ Processor/Distributor/Wholesaler → retail store→ consumer

The majority of area producers operate cow-calf ventures and sell feeder calves at weaning, a practice that does not maximize the value of sales. In this scenario, local farmers are price-takers, with no control over their market and no options to keep cattle longer during times of low prices.

As most local calves are sold immediately at auction after weaning, producers receive the lowest price possible. Farmers expressed concern that they are at the mercy of buyers at local feeder sales, and they need a *fair market.* Buyers prefer calves sold at least 45 days after weaning, when they are feed and water trough trained, vaccinated, and have regained weight lost at weaning.

This process is also called Preconditioning calves for stocker and finishing operations.

This process has received considerable attention in recent years with interest in value-added programs for cow-calf producers, beef quality assurance programs and strategic alliances in the beef industry. Preconditioning programs involve a series of management practices on the farm to

[29] Schahczenski, Jeff (2008). "Building a Montana Organic Livestock Industry." Montana Organic Producer's Cooperative. https://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/download.php?id=203

improve the health and nutrition of calves. There are various preconditioning programs with different names and management requirements, but most programs require a 45-day post-weaning phase with a sound nutritional program, specified animal health procedures, dehorning, castration of bull calves and bunk feeding.

Preconditioning programs reduce stress from shipping calves at weaning, improve the immune system, and boost performance in post-weaning production phases (i.e., stocker production and cattle feeding) and in carcass performance (i.e., higher grading carcasses with fewer defects).[30] Preconditioning adds value to calves for buyer, and when marketed in a system that recognizes the value that has been added, cow-calf producers benefit from the higher prices.

A New Slaughterhouse?

In areas where beef production is prevalent, producers often discuss the possibility of establishing local slaughter facilities as a means of beginning to capture more value from slaughter-ready stock. Interviews with producers and extension agents frequently revealed interest in a new local facility.

Detailed analysis of the possibility of establishing a slaughter facility has been included in the Appendices to provide a benchmark of supply that would be needed to support such a facility in the future. From this information, the amount of animals required to cover basic costs was determined, and can be compared to the existing supply of inputs from the three-county region.

To create a preliminary break even model that shows the number of inputs required to keep a small-scale facility in operation, information was gathered from other beef and multi-species processing plants studies. This data was used as a basis for establishing an average amount of revenue earned per animal; reasonable estimates of business expenses were also calculated.

The New River Valley would need to slaughter a minimum consistent weekly supply of 41 cattle per week. With so little finishing of cattle occurring locally, the region would be hard-pressed to reach this number. Local farmers looking to direct market their beef would be better served to work with existing area slaughterhouses on modernization and specification of new services.

Analysis

There is noted resistance to change amongst traditional beef producers. Education or outreach is needed to persuade producers that there are ways to participate in programs that can have a positive impact for the added risk or cost. To expand their options, beef producers have two possible strategies to receive a higher price: (1) develop the infrastructure to keep their calves longer and (2) work together to form trailer-load quantities of similar animals to create some marketing leverage. They have an additional option to improve production efficiencies through technical assistance and whole farm planning.

[30] "Profitable Cattle Marketing for the Cow-Calf Producer" (July 2012). University of Georgia Cooperative Extension. http://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.cfm?number=B1078

Strategy 1: Keeping calves longer. As outlined in the Beef Life Cycle explanation in this section, New River Valley farmers are at Level 1, Cow-Calf Farms. To gain more of the value of the final product, producers should attempt to become Backgrounders (Level 2), as well. Backgrounding involves regaining weight and body conditioning after weaning (Preconditioning) and then putting another 200-400 lbs on the calves before sending them to a feedlot for finishing (Stocking).

Southwest Virginia Beef Builder Initiative	**Kentucky Beef Network**
In Virginia, 12 counties have created the Southwest Virginia Beef Builder Initiative. Funded by the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Revitalization Commission and the Abingdon Feeder Cattle Association, Southwest VA Beef Producers can apply for a grant program offering a 50% cost share on purchases up to $6,000 on certain pieces of equipment, weaning pens, structures, and improved herd bulls. All applicants must meet program guidelines of the grant including holding a current Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certificate, being a resident or property owner in the participating county, possessing a minimum of 25 breeding age females or 25 stocker calves, having a vaccination and weaning program and defined calving season, and marketing at least 20% of the calf crop through a value-added program such as state graded sales or VQA sales.	The Kentucky Beef Network enhances producer profitability by helping producers improve animal health, genetics, forages, and marketing, and utilizes partnerships between KY Cattlemans' Association and Kentucky Cooperative Extension. The program includes a full range of services, such as conferences, access to field personnel, certifications on beef quality and cattle handling, value-added marketing programs (based on certifying cattle as pre-conditioned and weaned for 45 days), carcass ultrasound, grazing schools, a newsletter, Young Leadership Program, Professional and Master Cattleman Certification, and Master Marketer Program.
Program Guidelines: http://offices.ext.vt.edu/dickenson/WhatsNew/program-guidelines.pdf	More information can be found at www.kycattle.org

Strategy 2: Group Marketing. The second phase needed to retain more value for local beef cattle is to work together in marketing. As primarily small producers, New River Valley beef farmers need to collaborate on breeds, timing, quality standards, grading and sales to allow grouping for

tele-auctions and truckload sales. This can bring both additional leverage for buyers and a higher price with efficiencies and quality assurance for buyers.

Local extension agents have expressed a willingness to coordinate the grouping and grading of calves from multiple farms. They report the returns from group sales and tele-auctions to be as high as they have ever seen, but this requires farmers to be willing to work together cooperatively.

Shenandoah Valley Beef Co-operative

The farmers of the Shenandoah Valley Beef Co-operative, Inc. are a diverse group of farmers dedicated to a common goal: growing beef cattle in an economically and environmentally responsible way. SVBC is located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and consists of families that have been farming since the Revolutionary War as well beginning farmers. All of these small, family-owned farms "offer healthy and delicious meat that is raised with care," and sell their beef wholesale through restaurants and retailers. The SVBC preserves the Shenandoah Valley's natural beauty through farming and prevents farmland from being lost through development.

More information at *www.shenandoahvalleybeefcoop.com.*

Grayson Natural Farms

Grayson Natural Farms is a company formed by several independent farmers that focus on raising all-natural, grass-fed beef in and around Grayson County, VA. Through their collective marketing, they have been able to access small local customers as well as larger restaurants and institutions, and their products are available for purchase on their website.

More information can be found at *www.graysonnatural.com.*

Strategy 3: Maximizing existing resources and farm planning teams. The cheapest feed available is from one's own pastures, so NRV beef farmers should consider investing time and money in pasture improvements. This would include more soil testing and fertility management, introduction of additional pasture forage species, including the use of summer annuals such as sorghum-sudan and improved crabgrass varieties, and intensively managed rotational grazing using polywire and frequent moves of cattle to fresh ground to allow adequate time for plant re-growth and ensuring that animals are consuming plants at their most nutritious phase of growth.

One successful strategy for other regions is the creation of local technical advisory teams. These teams include individuals with expertise in agronomy, forages, business planning, economics and

marketing, conservation, and other disciplines. They make periodic visits to individual farms to provide analysis and suggestions for improvements, or to help address specific issues.

Small-scale slaughter facilities operating on a year round basis often find it difficult to source a steady supply of inputs. Frequently, producers raising beef and other animals for slaughter purposes are subject to seasonality based on the animal's lifecycle as well as marketing factors. Larger plants are usually able to offset this issue by maintaining a large enough customer base to provide a steady flow of processing work.

Pennsylvania Center for Dairy Excellence	**Dairy Profitability and Enhancement Teams**
One good example of the technical advisor group approach is the Pennsylvania Center for Dairy Excellence, which has established grants to fund the formation of Dairy Profit Teams. These teams conduct quarterly meetings of business planning, dairy science, and agronomic experts with individual farms to assess operations and provide recommendations.	Another example of a similar program is Minnesota's Dairy Profitability and Enhancement Teams. These teams consist of farm business management instructors, dairy extension specialists, and dairy industry partners who seek to provide information about technologies, sustainable agriculture methods, and help enhance the long-term sustainability of dairy farms.
For more information, visit http://centerfordairyexcellence.org/dairy-profit-team/	For more information, visit www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/grants/diagnostics.aspx

It is vital to the long-term viability of a slaughter and processing plant that it be able to source a consistent supply of animal inputs to maintain operations on a year round basis. This can be difficult, especially given the small-scale nature of many regional facilities and the seasonality associated with cattle production and meat slaughter and processing. Producers who intend to use the facility will have to demonstrate their ability to deliver animals according to consistent production and delivery protocols before a slaughter facility can be seriously considered.

TRADITIONAL AG: FORESTRY & TIMBER

The Virginia forestry industry has experienced a decline over the past few years. The amount of timber product output from roundwood[31] in the state of Virginia declined by 13 percent between 2007 and 2009. This decrease brought the total amount of production for 2009 to 402.5 million cubic feet. The most produced products for 2009 were saw logs and pulpwood, which had a combined output of 333.1 million cubic feet, or 83 percent of the state's total roundwood production. The state exported 86.6 million cubic feet of roundwood to other states and only imported 82.1 million cubic feet.[32]

The tri-county area contains mostly Appalachian hardwoods, including oak, hickory, poplar, birch, and basswood. There are concerns regarding invasive species, such as gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, and plants such as alanthus and bittersweet.

While the tri-county area seems to have adequate resources for logging, and enough sawmills and markets to serve moderate harvest and sale needs, forestry personnel see room for improvement in the management of individual timber stands.

[31] Roundwood is defined as, "Logs, bolts, or other round sections cut from trees for industrial manufacture or consumer uses."
[32] Cooper, J.; Johnson, T.; & Becker, C. (2011). "Virginia's Timber Industry-An Assessment of Timber Product Output and Use, 2009." USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station.

Few landowners have a long-term forest management plan, resulting in the growth of less desirable species and harvests that do not maximize the value of the forest. High-grading (the selective harvest of high-value trees only) is a practice that results in the overall degradation of timber land value over time, as less desirable species left behind will predominate.

Landowners should be encouraged to make use of the Department of Forestry's forest management plan services, which offer this type of expertise for modest fees. These plans are entirely voluntary, serving an advisory role to give the landowner a full range of options. Completing a forest management plan serves the purpose of educating landowners and strategically utilizing their resource to continue to provide for the future value of the land. Owners can also hire private forest consultants to complete these plans as well.

Educational outreach should seek to identify and target forest landowners without a plan to explain the value of carrying out long-term management and carefully timed harvests. Halifax County has been noted as a model in their forestry outreach programs for landowners. This is an area where regional collaboration can be an efficient way to deliver services. The Virginia Department of Forestry is expanding their efforts to reach these new landowners, such as the "Managing Your Land" workshop held June 23, 2014 in Christiansburg.[33]

One option to encourage landowners to take advantage of these services is to require a forest management plan in order to maintain eligibility for forestry land use taxation. For this reduced property tax rate, Virginia state law requires forest landowners either to sign a commitment to keep land in forest or have a management plan in place. Montgomery County currently requires an active forest management plan to receive land use taxation, but Giles and Pulaski do not. This requirement would be a win-win for the county and landowners in maximizing the financial, environmental, and scenic benefits of productive forest land. This requirement would be particularly timely with the large amount of land expected to change hands in the next twenty years, providing an added incentive for heirs and absentee owners to plan for the long-term productivity of their land.

Another method of improvement addresses the logger side of the industry. Virginia Tech offers a "SHARP Logger" Program (Sustainable Harvesting and Resource Professional), with the goal of ensuring that sustainable forestry principles are followed on the majority of timber harvest sites in Virginia[34]. The program consists of 18 hours of instruction and field training, with a continuing education requirement to maintain certification. Curriculum includes logging safety, sustainable forestry practices, and harvest planning best management practices training and instruction.

Other notable programs include woodland botanicals research projects ongoing at Virginia Tech, as well as equipment cost-share programs focused on tree planting and timber improvement.

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[33] "Managing Your Land." Workshop Announcement. http://forestupdate.frec.vt.edu/landownerprograms/events/2014andersonlomeeting.pdf

[34] The Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation. "SHARP Logger Program." Virginia Tech. http://sharplogger.vt.edu/

There is also room for improvement in the coordination of harvesting within a region. Working to coordinate the harvesting of multiple small plots within a region can help loggers or harvesters allocate their resources more efficiently.

Education is needed, particularly in regards to the practice of grazing cattle in the woods, which can result in compaction, erosion, and other issues. Coordinating education with the Virginia Tech Agroforestry research projects may also benefit landowners. To support the long-term stability of forestry in the region, counties should consider the adoption of local ordinances reinforcing the state law allowing regular forest management practices.

Bio-Fuels

The forest resources within the tri-county area facilitate a wood-based bio-fuel industry. Lumber processing facilities in Radford (Turman Lumber) and Covington (Mead Westvaco) offer opportunities for bio-fuel production, with Turman offering the ability to produce wood pellets and hardwood mulch products. Other opportunities include the possibility of a local biomass facility, which would provide a processing outlet for lower quality wood during the winter.

Within the state, Mead, Hurt, and Altavista also offer market outlets for wood chips, bark, and small diameter trees. New technology for specialized uses is also emerging, for example, the Swedwood facility in Danville is laminating a compressed sawdust product for IKEA furniture.

According to a bulletin[35] published by the University of Tennessee Extension, there are numerous forms and possibilities for the production of woody bio-fuels. The Virginia Department of Forestry outlines numerous benefits for both individuals and businesses from the expansion of the biomass fuel industry:

- Provides new markets for waste wood, manufacturing residues, and materials from forest management activities.
- Provides new markets for agricultural wastes and potential for developing energy crops.
- Reduces material going to landfills, being dumped or open burned, such as woody debris and other wood waste.
- Reduces site preparation costs for artificial regeneration.
- Reduces pollution compared to using fossil fuels.
- Provides additional jobs and revenues to local economies, especially in rural areas.
- Reduces dependency on foreign fuel sources.
- Energy deregulation can provide opportunities for “green energy providers.”
- Increased demand for “green energy.”
- Federal programs provide technical and financial support to expand renewable energy.
- New technologies provide biomass power plants available for individual operations to supply the energy needs of entire cities.
- Increased interest in better utilization of natural resources.[36]

[35] (2007). “SP702-A Woody Biofuels: Past, Present and Future.” The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service.
[36] Virginia Department of Forestry, “Bioenergy and Biofuel Resources.” Accessed 10-1-13. www.dof.virginia.gov/energy/bioenergy.htm

Ferrum College

One regional example of the bio-fuels industry and its effects can be seen in the recent completion of a green energy project on the campus of Ferrum College, located in Ferrum, VA. Ferrum College began operating two biomass boilers in the spring of 2013 that use waste products from the regional timber industry to supply the majority of the campus' energy needs.

For more information, visit http://www.ferrum.edu/

Analysis

Forestry is a key element of the agricultural landscape in the New River Valley. Although not an enormous annual income generator, woodlands are a big part of land use on farms, ranging from 19 percent in Pulaski to 27 percent in Montgomery to 40 percent in Giles County. Well-managed woodlands can also provide significant environmental benefits, such as water quality protection, wildlife habitat, and tourist draws in aesthetics, open space, and recreation opportunities.

Forest management involves thinking long-term, with management decisions oriented towards improving timber stands that will be available for harvest (and thus significant realization of income possibilities) only once a generation. Landowners (and those who advise them) should understand the long-term implications of proper forest stewardship decisions. Loggers are also important partners in helping landowners maximize the value of their timber resources.

The Virginia Department of Forestry offers a terrific slate of services to forest landowners. Individual forest management plans are amongst the most cost effective tools available, and an updated version should be fundamental to every owner of woodlands. Counties can use a combination of carrots and sticks to encourage their completion. With so many new and absentee owners of forestlands, it is essential to use all channels to reach out and encourage the use of available resources to maximize the value of these long-term assets. Full use of state and federal cost-share programs for tree planting and timber stand improvement are the best means to assure ongoing funding of these important management tools.

The tri-county area should also utilize the research capabilities at Virginia Tech to explore new opportunities in agroforestry, woodland botanicals, and biofuels, as new technologies present alternative options for the production of food and energy.

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE

Value Added[37]

Adding value to agricultural products can take place in many ways, such as "cleaning and cooling, packaging, processing, distributing, cooking, combining, churning, culturing, grinding, hulling, extracting, drying, smoking, handcrafting, spinning, weaving, labeling, or packaging… information, education, entertainment, image, and other intangible attributes."

In addition, it should be noted that there is a difference between "capturing" value and "creating" value. As outlined in the ATTRA document "Adding Value to Farm Products: An Overview" *capturing value* is largely tied to processing or marketing and the creation of commercially available products, while *creating value* is more closely linked to creating products or services different than the mainstream products currently available. Examples include organic certification or identity preservation.

[37] ATTRA "Adding Value to Farm Products: An Overview" 2006

One example of a value-added entity is a local cannery. Canneries often help local farmers add value to their fruits and vegetables that typically have short shelf lives. Most community canneries were started during World War II and have since strived to stay active entities within the farming community. Canneries help rural farmers ensure the quality of their food, while also helping to lower food costs. According to the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia contains 12 canneries, scattered across the state. Only two of these canneries are inspected and approved by the Virginia Department of Agriculture as open for production of commercial re-sale items.

As an example, the Montgomery County Community Cannery provided equipment and helpers to assist local residents in canning their own foods. While the Montgomery County Cannery was available for public use, it was only open to individuals canning for home use or for non-profit entities to use in fundraising activities, and did not possess commercial kitchen certifications; producers utilizing their services are not able to conduct retail sales with the resulting products.

Piedmont Food and Agricultural Processing Facility

The Piedmont Food and Agricultural Processing Facility was established in 2011 as a Non-Profit 501(c)(3) through a partnership between four counties in North Carolina with a goal to improve the local agricultural economy by helping farmers and other food entrepreneurs to start and grow agricultural products. The primary method of achieving this is by providing low cost access to a regulatory compliant food production facility. The current facility includes multiple fully-equipped kitchens, coolers, a freezer, storage areas, a dock, and office space. The Facility also offers a range of services such as advanced kitchen training, general consultation and training, and product development services. The center began with funding from numerous state and federal grants.

For more information, visit http://pfap.virb.com/

Direct Marketing

The most common method for farmers and producers to capture additional value from their production is through direct marketing. Direct to consumer marketing of products has emerged as a way for producers to capitalize on the increased interest in local foods found across the United States. Farm stands, CSAs, U-Picks, Farmers Markets, Roadside Stands, Food Hubs, have all emerged as viable methods of selling directly to the consumer[38].

These direct to consumer sales, often referred to under the umbrella of “local foods,” have an impact on the greater food economy in a region as well. A brief 2012 report[39] compiled by the

[38] “Local Foods and the Value of Direct Marketing in Virginia.” (January 2013). Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural sustainability.
[39] “Wisconsin Local Foods Economic Impacts (Direct Sales 2012)”. Wisconsin Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics; University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension.

University of Wisconsin Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and UW Cooperative Extension reports that for every dollar of new direct food sales for human consumption the total increase in food industry sales will be $1.62.

There are numerous examples of direct marketing channels offering local foods throughout the three-county area. Several promotional materials for the region provide listings of farms, farmers' markets, farm stands, u-picks, markets, and other entities where local food can be purchased.[40, 41]

The interest in locally sourced and finished foods has resulted in a new class of consumer in the U.S.: the "locavore." Small-scale producers have been able to access this new consumer class through direct marketing channels such as farmers' markets, farm stands, and on farm markets; however, mid-scale farmers have had a difficult time accessing these opportunities. A mid-scale farmer's relative size and crop specialization prevents them from moving significant enough volumes through direct marketing channels to support their size of operations, and yet their lack of commodity scale infrastructure and the corresponding economies of scale have resulted in relatively high costs of production compared to commodity producers.

Homestead Creamery

Homestead Creamery is a dairy and processing facility located in Burnt Chimney, Franklin County, Virginia near Smith Mountain Lake, and is one of the leading self-processing milk producers in the state. The creamery was founded by Donnie Montgomery and David Bower and has been in operations since 2001. Goldenview Farm, owned by David Bower, and Storybrook Farms, owned by Donnie Montgomery, produce all of the approximately 615,000 gallons of milk that is processed through the creamery each year. At the dairy's on-farm shop, products including milk, ice cream, and sandwiches are offered for sale. As described on their Whole Foods Market profile page "All the milk at Homestead Creamery comes from two local farms, both in their third and fourth generations of family ownership. The milk is free of all hormones and antibiotics, and because the milk is sold in recycled glass bottles, it tastes fresher longer and is more environmentally friendly."

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/pages/Homestead-Creamery-Inc/152846474769734

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

CSAs, also known as "subscription farming," originated during the 1960's in Japan and Switzerland as a method for consumers to ensure the health and sustainability of agricultural producers. The idea of communities' direct support of local producers has steadily gained

[40] "New River Valley Food Directory." Virginia Cooperative Extension.
[41] www.swvafresh.org/local-foods---producers.html

momentum since their introduction in the U.S. in the 1980's, and has seen a somewhat rapid rise in recent years corresponding with revived interest in local foods.

CSAs remain an important form of direct marketing for local farmers seeking a more direct connection with customers and an ability to charge retail pricing for their products. As stated in the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture and Rural Sustainability's "Local Foods and the Value of Direct Marketing in Virginia," "A CSA can be as varied as the community it is located in and the producers who participate. While it is typically based around fruit and vegetable production, CSAs often incorporate an array of farm based produce, from vegetables, fruits, eggs, and meat, to more processed items such as jellies and jams."

The actual structure of CSAs and how they choose to operate is also variable, with some representing multiple farms, while others represent just individual farms offering a program. "Although CSAs take many forms, all have at their center a shared commitment to building a more local and equitable agricultural system, one that allows growers to focus on land stewardship and still maintain productive and profitable small farms."[42]

Food Hubs

The USDA defines a regional food hub as "a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand." Food Hubs combine local foods production, direct marketing, and aggregated distribution to service a community at the wholesale level with locally produced food. Food hubs have provided a means to address the concerns of individual farmers and midscale producers.

Scale for Sustainability

The consultants have developed prototypical revenue and expense models based on typical cost and revenue structures to analyze the scale necessary to achieve breakeven and long-term viability. Results of the models below provide points of comparisons which highlight the various requirements of the business depending on the type of local food venture. The table below summaries the required sales levels to reach operational breakeven and long term viability.

Table 2: Food Hub Sales Levels

Model	Sales Required to Breakeven	Sales Required for Long Term Viability
Wholesale Food Hub	$1.2 Million	$2 Million
Retail Food Hub	$860,000	$1.7 Million
CSA	$260,000	$470,000

Of the three models, a wholesale food hub provides the most return to farmers, but in turn requires the highest sales levels to reach the points of breakeven or long term viability. In order to reach these sales levels, the food hub must have a significant supply source and will likely require investments in warehouse and delivery infrastructure.

[42] National Agriculture Library: 1993 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide. http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/at93-02.shtml

A retail food hub, which makes use of aggregation services as well as retail sales of local foods and products through a storefront, requires two distinct sections of the facility with adequate space and levels of staffing to operate simultaneously.
A CSA-based food hub requires the lowest annual sales level to attain long term viability. The use of volunteer labor is an important factor for success at this lower sales point. Without community support and proper management of volunteer labor, a CSA such as this would most likely be unable to remain in operation while maintaining such a lean business structure.

Urban Agriculture

For numerous reasons, communities that do not have the traditional land base necessary for food production are finding ways to participate in agricultural activities through urban agriculture. The University of Missouri Extension Service defines urban agriculture as "the growing, processing and distribution of food crops and animals products within an urban environment[43]."

City/suburban agriculture is often backyard, roof-top and balcony gardening, community gardening, roadside fringe agriculture and livestock grazing in open space.[44] While not huge in terms of retail sales, it can provide a host of benefits to urban communities – neighborhood building, redevelopment of neglected areas, fresh produce for the food insecure, and youth entrepreneurial opportunities. Many community gardens offer these benefits in Montgomery County, including the YMCA Garden, Micah's Garden, and WIC Community Garden.

Growing Power

Will Allen, former marketing executive at Proctor & Gamble, founded Growing Power in 1995 to teach inner city youth about growing food. Over the past 15 years, Allen has developed an integrated production system demonstrating local food compost and packaging wastes, using heat and fertility byproducts to grow greenhouse vegetables, fish tanks recirculating nutrients to plants, with worms breaking down the scraps and providing nutrients and bedding for the plants. Even more importantly, Allen has emphasized youth entrepreneurial development throughout this process, as food and worm castings are marketed to local restaurants and individuals without access to fresh, high-quality produce.

Now, Growing Power is a non-profit organization seeking to increase access to healthy affordable food in urban environments. Focusing on the development of Community Food Systems through agricultural activities the organization offers support for establishing farmers' markets, community gardens, and other agricultural outlets, as well as hands-on training and technical assistance with a focus on building sustainable food production in an urban setting, and has even created internships and training programs to teach others to create similar oases in their cities.

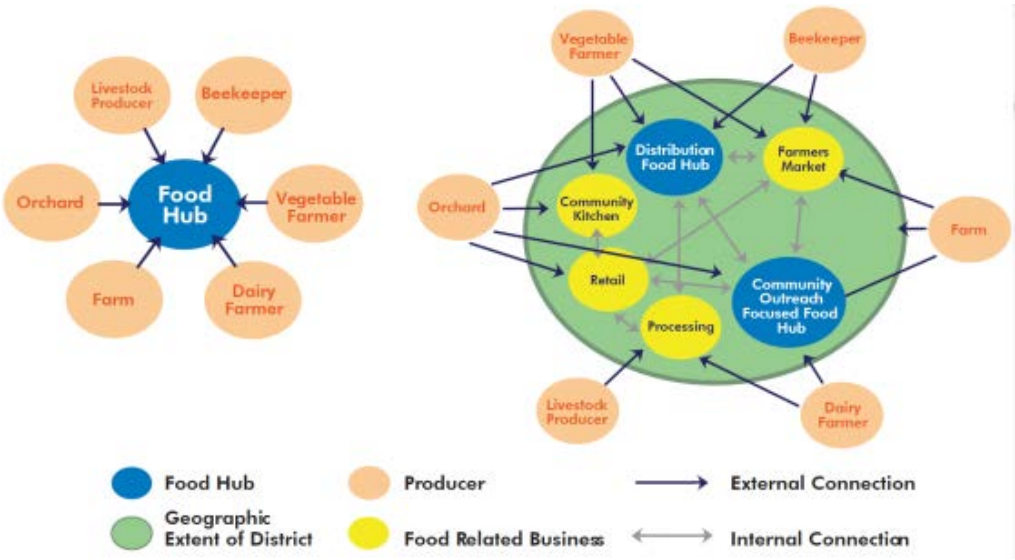
For more information, visit www.growingpower.org

[43] "Urban Agriculture." University of Missouri Extension. http://extension.missouri.edu/foodsystems/urbanagriculture.aspx. Accessed 6-25-14.
[44] "Urban Agriculture." United States Department of Agriculture National Agriculture Library.

Community Food Systems[45]

Community food systems are often viewed as a collection of independent entities that will at some point reach a critical mass and affect the region. However, a more proactive approach focuses on combining the efforts of elected and civic leaders, local and regional planning personnel, economic development, and community champions is the development of "food innovation districts", or business districts that support the co-location and collaboration of businesses, including food hubs, business incubators, farm to table programs, food festivals and events, nutrition assistance, community kitchens, and urban agriculture. The figure below shows how this approach differs from the establishment of a singular entity such as a food hub.

Figure 13: Food Hub vs. Food Innovation District



Food Innovation Districts often have distinguishing characteristics that are either producer, community, or place oriented, or some mixture of the three. Producer oriented activities include encouraging production, farmers market activities, washing, grading, sorting infrastructure, or value-added processing. Community oriented activities include community kitchens, food pantries, and education and nutrition outreach programs. Place oriented activities are focused on festivals, fairs, events, and local cultural activities.

"Food Hub Innovation Districts: An Economic Gardening Tool," a document published by the Michigan Council of Governments in 2013 presents the example of the Grand Traverse Commons in Traverse City, Michigan: "Champions there found an opportunity to add needed producer-oriented elements such as shared storage and value-added processing equipment to the ongoing mixed-use redevelopment of an historic hospital campus. In Lansing, MI, champions became involved in the city's master planning process, which ultimately included food innovation districts as a tool for growing jobs, building health, and creating a sense of place."

Opportunities similar to this exist within the tri-county area. Price's Fork Elementary School, a decommissioned elementary school, has recently been purchased by a local developer interested

[45] "Food Innovation Districts: An Economic Gardening Tool." (March 2013). Northwest Michigan Council of Governments.

in turning the space into a multifunction facility that may include converting classroom areas into senior housing, kindergarten space into a daycare facility, and the cafeteria/kitchen area into a commercial kitchen space. Combining such a facility with local champions willing to work to further these and other ideas could provide new opportunities for local foods in the area[46].

Produce Supply

The following table provides information from the 2012 Census of Agriculture published by the USDA in to show general trends in vegetables, fruits, and nuts.

Table 3: Vegetable Production by County

Geographic Area	2012		2007	
Vegetables	**Harvested**		**Harvested**	
	Farms	**Acres**	**Farms**	**Acres**
Virginia	1,656	21,072	1,616	26,265
Giles	21	18	7	10
Montgomery	20	77	11	36
Pulaski	1	-	3	-
Fruits and Nuts	**Total**		**Total**	
Virginia	1,333	18,643	1,204	19,054
Giles	4	-	11	-
Montgomery	8	66	6	7
Pulaski	9	27	7	6

While commercial production exists within the area, there is little volume to support any large-scale production based activities such as single county aggregation. However, a regional approach to aggregation and distribution may be able to source sufficient inputs to move the volumes necessary to sustain a food hub or similar entity. The past five years saw a significant growth in produce production, demonstrating producer response to the growing consumer interest in locally grown foods. There are strong opportunities for the market gardener looking to scale up to the mid-sized wholesale market, or the row crop farmer wanting to delve into produce, without the marketing time and energy needed for direct sales to consumers. Anecdotally, farmers and extension agents report a severe shortage of locally grown fruits, observing that these items always sell out quickly at farmers markets, and the few pick-your-own operations in the region tend to do very well.

The Friends of the Farmers Market, Inc. in Blacksburg is currently in the midst of executing the Montgomery County Farm to Community Planning Project, a survey of farmers, consumers, and venues in Montgomery County to determine where new opportunities may be for local foods. With funding from A Southern SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) Sustainable Community Innovation Grant and

[46] Telephone Interview with Kevin Byrd, NRVPDC, 5-9-2014.

a USDA Community Food Project Grant, these surveys are assessing opportunities for growers, as well as particular needs for fresh food availability for low-income residents of the region.

While the producers and venues portions have been completed, the survey of consumers is ongoing. This portion focuses on individuals receiving food assistance from local food pantries. This population is emphasizing their lack of access to fresh healthy foods. They would like to grow more of their own food, but are hindered by the lack of land access for community gardens.

Preliminary results from all three segments indicate a strong demand for locally grown food. Producers who were surveyed indicated that direct marketing was one of the main ways they would like to expand their production, and many of the venues that were surveyed, especially smaller independent grocery chains, were already selling local produce and expressed their willingness to work with producers on an individual level.

Larger retail establishments have indicated that they are interested in sourcing local foods, but do not feel there is enough local supply available. This was confirmed by the producer portion of the survey in which producers identified the inability to produce adequate quantities as one of the main challenges with expansion. Along with lack of supply, responses indicate that other major barriers and challenges center around land and labor access, as well as issues with processing both produce and meats. When asked what type of training would be helpful, responses included business planning, marketing and promotion and lending and grant assistance.

While it may be cost prohibitive to conduct a survey of all restaurants and grocery stores in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties to determine precise price and quantities for selling local food products, tourism and economic development personnel may also be able to provide a basic list of entities within their respective counties that make a practice of sourcing local foods. This would provide a springboard for farms interested in beginning local foods programs to have a target list of potential customers for their products within their county, particularly in regards to local independent grocers that seem willing to work with individual producers.

Future additional work to contact and verify the demand represented by the list of entities could also be conducted. This would further facilitate increased sales of local foods for producers interested in beginning such sales. Having at least potential demand already identified within the region would provide some confidence to producers who are interested in selling local foods to such entities, but are concerned about the risks of selling into an unknown or unidentified market, particularly since producers are reluctant to grow product without a ready market.

While independent grocers may be willing to work with individual farmers, larger chains focus on getting significant supply volume to meet their needs. These entities are likely to require information, such as financial position, marketing plans, and farm background, before agreeing to source products from a producer or aggregation entity. Larger volume entities, including local institutions, are also likely to require a steady and predictable supply, with many needing GAP certification indicating proper fresh produce handling procedures. With produce growers in the New River Valley generally small scale, there will need to be some coordination of production and consolidation of delivery necessary to meet those growing customer needs in the future.

Analysis

The Blacksburg Farmers Market continues to grow as an opportunity for area farmers and a focal point for local food production. However, the recent split around "growers only" questions, resulting in a resellers market springing up outside of town, has led to consumer confusion about local agriculture. The town of Blacksburg should strengthen its farmers market ordinance to support locally grown products, to be distinguished from outside products being resold under the guise of a "Farmers Market." Clarifying this local nature which is the comparative advantage for area growers is essential to grow the local producer sector.

While these direct marketing channels serve as outlets primarily for smaller-scale operations, there are additional opportunities for larger scale produce growers. However, further growth and market access for mid-scale producers require different methods to access larger volume markets.

Virginia Tech has expressed interest in increasing their use of local foods from 12 percent to 20 percent by 2020. The University has expressed an interest in buying more from local producers, but they require a critical mass of consistent product to meet their needs. Small farms could benefit from coordinated crop scheduling which allows them to harvest an amount sufficient to tap into this larger market opportunity. This could begin with a pilot project on a single item, and then broaden to additional items once the system is running smoothly.

The area lacks a food hub to consolidate the production of multiple farms, as well as a value-added processing center to spur the development of food-based entrepreneurs. Because of the low production of produce, leadership should explore the ability of a food hub to provide a larger-scale supply for entities that need more product than individual farms can supply.

A smaller scale alternative would be to encourage the establishment of local CSA's. These could be cooperative ventures utilizing the output of a wide range of farms: produce, meat, honey, fiber, baked goods, etc. Community centers, churches, and hospitals could serve as advertising locations and drop-off points for farms looking for a convenient and consistent customer base. Leadership should seek partnerships, such as school PTA's, to help with outreach and distribution. Such small scale activities will eventually provide a base of supply and demand that can facilitate the expansion of agriculture in the region well into the future.

Red Sun Farms is investing $30 million to build climate controlled greenhouses on 45 acres to produce hydroponic and organic vegetables at the New River Valley Commerce Park in Dublin. As the first tenant of the park, Red Sun Farm is expected to create 205 new jobs within 5 years. This has the potential to make the tri-county area the greenhouse vegetable capital of the east coast. The region should seek to attract other businesses supplying Red Sun and to establish a training program connecting local schools with the greenhouse vegetable industry's needs.

There are ongoing activities to promote access to local food resources in the region. The New River Valley Planning District Commission has begun work to tailor and update the New River Valley Local Food Directory with listings of producers and places where local foods can be purchased as well as other agriculture related resources. The Southwest Virginia Fresh and the 'Round the Mountain website provide listings of local foods outlets such as producers, farm stands, farmers markets, etc. In addition, there are other non-local based entities such LocalHarvest that provide such listings. Several pamphlets and local foods guides covering entities within the region have also been produced for distribution both in print and online form.

Tools such as these can be a means of providing visitors and residents with information regarding local foods and producers. According to USDA documents[47] the strengths of databases and information repositories like these include easy access to information, one-stop shopping, directly providing essential information, and being user-friendly. Leadership should review the efficacy of some of these sites according to these areas in order to determine the best route to provide information to potential users and customers and consider revisions to existing methods of communication. Currently, local foods information seems to be somewhat fragmented in its presentation across numerous different websites, and is not easily located with a simple web search.

In keeping with the goal of coordination, entities located in the tri-county area should seek a greater degree of streamlining of these resources, not only to provide some consistency in presentation, but also to provide assurance that the listings on the sites are complete and regularly updated to reflect new entities and those that may have ceased operations, as well as avoiding duplicative efforts among cooperating entities.

[47]USDA/CSREES/ECS "Small Farmer and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Coordinators Meeting: Enhancing Economic Opportunities for Small Farmers and Ranchers"

AGRITOURISM

While the focus on agritourism activities may have grown in the last few years, it has been a viable way to supplement farm revenue, diversifying income streams and contributing to the ability of farmers to remain in business. As stated in the Virginia Cooperative Extension's (VCE) "A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism in Virginia[48]," "Agritourism is a feasible business venture that may decrease financial risk by supplementing income as well as diversifying revenue streams." The report outlines how expansion into agritourism can help farmers diversify, cope with increased costs, and help provide supplementary income during bad production years.

Deciding on a definition of agritourism is central to outlining a strategy for increasing activities. Understanding and agreeing on what activities can be included under this designation will help focus any programs or policies and allow for easier measurement of success or failure.

The Code of Virginia, in § 3.2-6400 defines "agritourism activity" as "any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity."

[48] Lucha, C; Gustavo, F; Walker, M; & Gordon, G. (2014). "A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism in Virginia." Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension. http://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/AAEC/AAEC-62/AAEC-62-pdf.pdf

While the Code of Virginia defines agritourism by limiting it solely to producer activities centered on farms or ranches, the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center provides a broader definition: Agritourism "describes the act of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation to enjoy, be educated or be involved in activities."[49]

According to the Virginia Tourism Overview for 2012 as published by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, Virginia tourism generated $21.2 billion in domestic visitor spending and provided 1.36 billion in state and local tax revenue, and the largest single expenditure sector of tourism was food service at 28 percent of total expenditures.

Many activities already have a clear relation to agricultural entities such as farms, ranches, food production, and other natural resources. Other opportunities exist by targeting a consumer or individual mindset or group that may also be interested in agritourism given their propensity for other activities in the region. Any significant grouping of people can serve as a potential market if approached with creative marketing and "outside the box" methods.

While agritourism is often seen as a method of assisting smaller and medium scale farmers, larger producers can also participate in agritourism activities without having on–farm activities or visits by participating in tourism focused sales. These types of participants can dedicate smaller portions of their larger farms for growing crops that are more suitable for local sales.

An Economic Development Report produced by Colorado State University and Extension provides a framework for categorizing this type of traditional agritourism: On-Farm Activities, Food-Based Activities, and Heritage Activities. While this is a familiar concept, only the Heritage category begins to touch on an expanded definition of agritourism by including historical sites and associated events and activities.

Table 4: Sample List of Agritourism Activities/Ideas[50]

On-Farm
Examples: Hay rides, horseback riding, bird-watching/wildlife viewing, special events: weddings, retreats, family reunions, meetings, photography and painting, farm or ranch work experience (roundup, branding, haying, fencing, calving, etc.), u-pick operations for fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees, corn mazes, wagon rides, children's camps, seeing and feeding farm animals, hunting and fishing, (guided or unguided), snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, off-road motorcycling, mountain-biking, school and educational tours, tour of farm or ranch operation, on farm/ranch get-a-way, Stay at a dude ranch.
Establishments: Ag venues (Farm events and activities, weddings, hayrides, etc), experience the farm: tours, petting zoo, pick-your-own, on-farm lodging.
Food-Based
Examples: Harvest and food festivals, farmers' markets, winery tours and tastings, microbrewery visits, food processing site visits (cheese, jam, cider).
Establishments: Farm stand, farmers' market, local restaurants/grocery store, pick-your-own, winery/brewery/distillery.

[49] www.agmrc.org/commodities__products/agritourism/ Accessed 5-22-14
[50] Adapted from "The Economic Impact of Agritourism in Virginia's Fields of Gold Region." (July 2012). Chmura Economics & Analytics.

Heritage
Examples: County fairs, historical museums, agricultural history sites, pioneer settlements, rodeos, stock shows.
Establishments: Historic/scenic sites, Crooked Road, Appalachian Trail.

Limited Definition Agritourism

The tri-county area already exhibits examples of agriculture-focused tourism activities like the ones listed above; the following are selected examples for reference purposes.

Sinkland Farms

Sinkland Farms is located along the Blue Ridge Mountains, which creates beautiful scenery for the Farm. Sinkland Farms primarily focuses on aspects of agritourism, including educational tours, weddings, musical events, and the annual Sinkland Farms Pumpkin Festival. They have previously been recognized for their uniqueness and value. For example, in 2013 the readers of Blue Ridge County magazine voted Sinkland Farms Gold, Best Farms to Visit. The Farm has also been featured in magazines, such as *Blue Ridge Country* and *Bridebook*.

For more information, visit *www.sinklandfarms.com.*

Blacksburg Farmers Market

The Blacksburg Farmers Market is located in the heart of Montgomery County a few minutes away from the Virginia Tech campus. It is open year round and features many local vendors along with farmers from all over Virginia and West Virginia. The market's vendors sell an assortment of items including vegetables, fresh herbs, handcrafted goods, meats, flowers, and other value-added goods.

For more information, visit *www.blacksburgfarmersmarket.com*

Due South BBQ

Due South BBQ was started in 2007 in Christiansburg, VA after the owners moved their BBQ business from South Carolina. This local business offers smoked pulled pork BBQ made with local ingredients. Due South BBQ also uses 100% compostable packaging, which includes bowls, cups, lids, straws, and napkins. They are committed to using sustainable materials as well as composting and recycling their waste.

For more information, visit *www.duesouthbbq.com/#!home*

Expanded Definition Agritourism

The three-county region hosts numerous festivals and other event type activities. Because of the regional approach desired and the variety of agriculture related entities contained within the tri-county area, the internal definition of agritourism should be broadened to be as inclusive as possible and maximize the effects of agricultural activities in the region. Rather than a narrow focus on farmers and ranchers, the region should also attempt to tap into ordinary tourism by including an agritourism or local food component in already established and successful tourism activities or events, particularly given the steady growth tourism has experienced in the state. A Virginia Cooperative Extension report states "with the exception of years surrounding the recent economic recession, there has been a steady increase in revenue from the Virginia tourism industry over the last decade." [51]

One example of an activity that typically provides an influx of potential customers to an area includes visitors arriving or traveling through the region for the purpose of **viewing fall foliage**. Other states have established tourism activities that focus on this seasonal event, and include "Fall Color Reports" to highlight when fall colors are at their peak, "Fall Foliage Tours," or the organization and coordination of festivals to take advantage of the season's colors. Closely associated with harvest, the fall season offers an easy method of tying local foods with a reason visitors may already be coming to the area.

Appalachian Trail

As the longest continuously marked footpath, the Appalachian Trail stretches 2,184 miles along the Appalachian Mountains. The trail stretches across 14 states, starting in Georgia and ending in Maine. The trail was built by private citizens in 1921 and completed 16 years later. It is used by more than four million people each year and about 2,500 people have attempted to hike the entire stretch in one continuous journey. Giles County, Virginia contains about 50 miles of the Appalachian Trail as it runs between Dismal Falls through Mountain Lake. According to the *Roanoke Times*, "The town sees an influx of trailgoers every year…likened to a 'migration of birds.'"

For more information, visit *www.nps.gov/appa/index.htm*

[51] (2014) "A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism in Virginia." Communications and Marketing, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

The proximity of the area to Virginia Tech and it associated **sporting events** provides an opportunity to access another pool of potential customers. Offering local foods for sale near sporting venues, or "tail-gating boxes" filled with grill and cookout friendly local produce could provide a potential sales outlet.

Besides the direct agriculture examples listed in the preceding section, the following selected examples represent other heritage and tourism opportunities and activities that could serve as targets for an expanded agritourism effort.

The Crooked Road: Virginia's Music Heritage Trail

The Crooked Road was implemented in 2003 as way to help promote tourism and economic development in southwestern Virginia. The idea behind The Crooked Road focuses on the region's musical heritage, scenic terrain, and cultural activities. The road includes ten counties, three cities, and ten towns; it encompasses Franklin, Floyd, Patrick, Carroll, Grayson, Washington, Scott, Lee, and Wise counties, ending in Dickenson County.

The area is known for its connection to bluegrass music and often holds music festivals throughout the year. The close proximity of the Crooked Road opens up many opportunities for the three-county area. Although the trail is mainly centered on the area's passion for music, there may be possibilities of incorporating local foods and farmers to help further promote the county's agricultural industry.

While the Crooked Road does not pass through any of the tri-county areas, there are affiliated venues located in each of the three counties:

- Giles: Anna's Restaurant, Henry Reed Fiddler's Convention
- Montgomery: Blacksburg Market Square Jam, Blacksburg Square Dance
- Pulaski: Hillbilly Opry, New River Community College Fiddle, Banjo and Dance Club

For more information, visit *https://www.myswva.org/tcr*

Nutrition Education

Education outreaches also provide a way to increase awareness of local agritourism activities while simultaneously attempting to attract young and future farmers as well as create a feeling of community. Regardless of the intent of such programs, they can result in getting new people to be involved in agriculture activities and become more familiar with producers in their area. This

can serve to drive interest in official agritourism activities or even just create a greater awareness of producer activities.
A focus on education and nutrition also serves to link with the mission of Virginia Tech, and working with their existing programs to utilize resources can alleviate some of the burden from local producers in finding ways to be involved.

Concerns Regarding Agritourism
While tourism can have many positive aspects on a region's economy and job market, there are also concerns associated with the success of large-scale tourism initiatives. When tourism efforts are successful, they often result in an influx of non-residents and new residents to an area, a fact that can often change the culture and dynamic of a region. Because the regions culture is often the foundation of the successful tourism initiative to begin with, this change can result in negative perception, especially by permanent or long-term residents of an area who were initially attracted to the regions character and scenic nature to begin, a fact that has now changed due to the influx of new residents or non-resident tourists. The ramifications of new tourism initiatives should be considered, and policies enacted that protect the areas resources while still permitting access to as great a number of people as possible.

Consumer Segments and Strategies

Within each opportunity targeted in order to increase agri-tourism in the region, specific campaigns and materials should be constructed that address unique consumer segments with focuses strategies that relate to them. The following sections propose categories with descriptions[52] which may help organize and focus activities within the region to target specific types of tourists. Efforts to increase agri-tourism activities should identify and utilize efforts to target these audiences with specific approaches that may need to be unique to each category.

Out of State Activity Seekers:
Participants in this category are mostly out of state visitors who arrive by plane or car and explore the state or region for a longer trip (approximately six days on average). This segment is primarily composed of mid-to upper-middle class families traveling with children and staying in hotels or with friends/family. While their focus may not be agritourism, they often participate in unplanned agritourism activities during their visit, primarily culinary events, but also on-farm or heritage activities. Their travel is mostly planned using the internet, and they are likely to make significant use of State Tourism resources and Welcome Centers.

Because of the three-county area's proximity to the major thoroughfare of I-81, this particular segment represents a significant opportunity for the region. The "Geographic Analysis of Agritourism in VA" document produced by Virginia Cooperative Extension sites the following information sourced from the Virginia Tourism Corporation: "According to the electronic door count at welcome centers in Virginia, there has been a steady increase in visitors from just shy of 1.4 million in 2007 to more than 2.3 million in 2012."

[52] Adapted from EDR 07-24 Colorado State University Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics Economic Development Report. "The 2006 Economic Contribution of Agritourism to Colorado: Estimates from a Survey of Colorado Tourists."

Recommended Method of Engagement: Pamphlets (welcome centers, hotels, car-rental counters, etc), Well-designed and User-friendly websites, specifically linked to larger regional sites or state tourism sites. Co-promotion with culinary entities. Use of Travel Industry Partners or Destination Partners (visitor centers and welcome centers)

In-State Explorers:

This category is composed primarily of in-state residents who tour the state using their own vehicles for long weekends or short trips (approximately 4 days on average). They typically stay in hotels or with friends/family. They are typically equally likely to choose culinary and educational and nature-based on-farm experiences, but most of their agritourism activities remain unplanned. Rather than the internet, their trip planning is often based on past experience or recommendations from friends and family and they are also affected by seasonality.

Recommended Method of Engagement: Local Advertising, primarily including diverse activities/cross-promotion.

Loyal Enthusiasts:

These individuals are primarily in-state travelers and are parents or couples who return often based on past experiences. They are the primary participants of outdoor recreation on farms and ranches during the summer. This group is most likely to camp and shows significant interest in traveling throughout the state. They often participate in a diverse set of agritourism activities and most of their trip planning is based on past experiences and personal web searches to allow them to tailor their trips specifically to their interests. This group can be found participating in heritage type activities such as visiting the Appalachian Trail or New River Scenic Seven locations.

Recommended Method of Engagement: Offer cross-promotion or cluster activities. Needs include being able to get the information they seek to make their plans (tailored to their interests).

Accidental Tourists:

This group represents the least promising agritourism visitors from a marketing perspective. This segment visits mostly in summer and winter, either by car or air, and stays mostly in hotels or with friends and family. They travel primarily without children or by themselves, and may be coming for non-recreational business, educational, or convention activities. While this group is only in the state for a few days with small windows of time for leisure for which they may not have planned, they may look for activities to occupy their free time. In short, they are not seeking agritourism activities and a very low share of their total activities take place in the region.

This group could best be targeted by presenting easy to access information about activities in nearby locations that are not time-consuming to access or enjoy. Collecting such information in a "Looking for Something to Do?" type-binder for access in hotel lobbies or in individual rooms, or as an electronic document promoted on the home page of a hotel's internet access page could provide heightened awareness of local activities to these types of tourists. This segment may also be targeted by combining local foods with activities so that individuals can take care of a necessity such as eating while participating in local culture or activities.

Recommended Method of Engagement: Advertisements in Hotels, Airports, and Car-Rental Counters, showcase local and easily accessed activities because of their time constraints.

Family Ag Adventurers:

This segment travel's from nearby states in their own vehicles, mostly in the summer, with an average length of stay of approximately 5 days. Although most of their agritourism activities are unplanned, they participate significantly in local activities and often pre-plan their activities based on past experiences and recommendations from others as well as Web-based information searches. They are middle income and willing to visit local enterprises, and gravitate toward educational and nature-based on-farm experiences as well as active farm and ranch activities and culinary experiences. Because these trips are often considered big family vacations, this segment of travelers will often not return to an area on a regular basis.

Having a coordinated "one-stop-shop" resource for these types of individuals and families can provide ease of access and awareness during the trip planning process. While there are numerous individual sites such as county or chamber of commerce websites, Heartwood, 'Round the Mountain, and others, many of them could be better linked in an easy to follow format that provides a better showcase of the regions attractions and activities.

Recommended Method of Engagement: Provide easy planning access through web portals.

General Lessons:

- The Family Ag Adventurers' and the Loyal Enthusiasts' travels are most likely primarily driven by plans to participate in agritourism activities, one of the main reasons they are considered great opportunities for growing the industry.
- Past experiences and recommendations were among the most frequently mentioned, but personal experiences were particularly important for Loyal Enthusiasts and In-State Explorers, while family Adventurers also relied on recommendations from others.
- Web resources were also commonly used, especially among the out-of-state visitors such as Activity Seekers and Accidental Tourists. Tourism Office and Welcome Centers are

also important to these segments, because of their interest in agritourism: a strong signal that partnerships with the Tourism Office would be fruitful in growing this segment.

- Two of the target segments, Loyal Enthusiasts and Family Ag Adventurers, frequently use travel associations, park brochures and other print materials to plan their trips; however, since signage is a last-minute unplanned piece of information, it is logical that the in-state travelers use it most.
- Some activities cannot be performed on a "spur-of-the-moment" basis, as they require advanced planning (purchase of fishing license) or purchase/rental of specialized equipment. Entities providing such activities will need to target their marketing to capture potential customers during their planning process.
- In order to leverage scarce resources, entities should consider investing in a functional informative website and promotion through state welcome centers to target the broadest range of interested segments.
- In general, getting information to travelers prior to or during their planning process will provide the greatest opportunity to attract visitors.

Analysis

Agritourism vision sessions were conducted by county personnel with extension agents and producers in each of the three counties and the main points from these meetings are included in the Appendix. The "advantages to include in marketing" sections of these notes for each county provide numerous ideas related to the three categories outlined in this Agritourism section (on-farm, heritage, food-based), and should form the basis for any strategic implementation or marketing program.

Each of the advantages that were outlined by session attendees should be further categorized to determine what consumer segment would be most drawn to each activity or resource, and hence what marketing strategy should be focused on. For example, Out of State Activity Seekers and In-State Explorer consumer segments would very likely be interested in the New River shoreline and Appalachian Trail resources listed under Giles County. Marketing tailored to the demographics and needs of this consumer segment could form the basis of marketing materials and any outreach programs that are implemented.

Some of the activities that already exist in the region also suggest ideas for establishing an even stronger connection to the producer and farm entity. Farm tours could be set up through coordination and promotion with food-based events that already have been established. The Blacksburg Farmers Market could organize a "Meet the Farmer" day that includes a meeting at the Farmers Market and a subsequent tour of selected farms that supply the market. Restaurants that feature local foods could promote a similar farmer-organized event that would allow the restaurants customers to meet and then tour farms that supply items to the restaurant and then meet back at the restaurant for lunch or dinner.

One approach to promoting agritourism is to look for ways to expand the traditional definition of agritourism to include a broader more expansive view that focuses existing tourism activities on including an agriculture component. Examples may include:

- Local food at biker rallies.
- CSA's baskets to fans attending sporting events.
- Selling fire-wood bundles to sporting fans.
- Local food festivals as part of the leaf watching period in the fall.
- Hokie-oriented products. Grads and fans have an emotional connection to the University.

Seeking to tie agriculture-related activities that specifically target those coming for hiking or outdoor visits or cross-promotion with the heritage sites included in the New River Scenic Seven program may attract similarly-minded potential customers and give them a new reason to return to the area. Targeting these individuals through nearby Appalachian Trail stop-off towns or through cross-promotion with whitewater activities can provide opportunities to make connections between this segment of tourism and local farms. This group of individuals could provide a ready pool of potential customers or those already interested in outdoor activities that may be more inclined to participate in agritourism events. Materials and other forms of promotion could be combined to divert some flow of potential customers to agricultural-activities.

Highlighted festival events or locations could serve as focal points for agritourism promotion and supplementary activities. Further opportunities would need to be explored with the organizers or owners, but would provide at least an immediate plan of action for expanding agritourism related activity in the region.

Overall, the Agritourism sector appears entrepreneurial and diverse, offering a range of options for both locals and visitors. County, regional, and state resources are available, and a network of practitioners is developing. Ultimately, the ongoing growth and success of this sector will depend on the connections which are created between different operations. Lodging, eating, entertainment, recreation, and gift opportunities can be tied together to provide a full slate of services. Extension, Tourism, and Chamber of Commerce personnel all have an interest in developing these partnerships; it is up to the individual farm operations to seek out and expand these relationships.

WINE, BEER, & CIDER

Virginia has an established and well regarded wine industry, which, as reported in the Virginia 2012 Commercial Grape Report, has grown to include 2,974 bearing acres as of 2012, a nearly seven percent increase from 2011 figures of 2,784 bearing acres. The value of grape production was nearly $11 million according to USDA ERS reports for 2012.

According to the Virginia Wine Board's Economic Impact Study of 2010 the overall retail value of Virginia wine was roughly $73 million of revenue, with direct sales accounting for $30 million of this figure. The figures for overall economic impact are even larger with the Virginia Wine Industry (including wine and grapes) contributing over $747 million to the state economy according to the same report. It is important to note that part of this total economic impact figure includes $131 million in wine-related tourism from 1.6 million tourists as well.

Overall, 95 percent of Virginia wineries can be classified as small producers (which is defined as those producing less than 10,000 cases annually). This growth in the amount of wineries has resulted in Virginia ranking 5th in the U.S. in quantity of wineries located in the state, with 222 wineries as of 2013.[53] While there are niche production markets centered on a variety of inputs for making various wine varieties, the majority of wines produced in Virginia are focused on grapes as an input source.

[53] "Wine Industry Profile." USDA Agricultural Marketing Resource Center. Accessed 7-10-14. www.agmrc.org.

Fueled by increasing interest in local, craft, and artisan style alcohol production, and increased interest in the unique varieties and flavors produced by wineries in the state, new opportunities have arisen for producers to meet this demand and further capitalize on their production through related agritourism activities. The wine industry in Virginia has proven to be an example of how agritourism and agricultural growth can be positively linked.

The Virginia Cooperative Extension's Agritourism Report states:

> *"As a prime illustration of how agritourism can support the agriculture industry, one can point at the Virginia wine industry and its notable growth. In 1979, there were only six wineries in the state, a number that increased to 130 by 2007 (VDACS 2013a). In 2013, there were 248 wineries — a 90 percent increase over 2007 statistics (Virginia Wine 2013). Importantly, from 2005 to 2010, the economic impact of the Virginia wine industry almost doubled to $750 million, and tourists associated with wineries increased by 620,000 over that same period (Felberbaum 2012). Furthermore, industry-related jobs also increased by nearly 1,600 in the same time period (Virginia Wine 2013). In summary, future synergies between a declining agricultural industry and an expanding tourism sector could provide additional revenue to Virginia's primary industry and create an economic revival in rural areas, as exemplified by the wine industry."*

Virginia wines are gaining national and international recognition for their qualities. Virginia's terroir – those special characteristics of the land that affect wine – helps vintners create wines stylistically between those of California and Europe. Several publications and recent articles reveal that Virginia is becoming well regarded for its wine production.

- The *Washington Post's* Dana Milbank highlights how Virginia Wines are beginning to compete with fine wines from California and Europe[54].
- The *New York Times*' Eric Asimov discusses the rise in quality and popularity of Virginia's dry cider offerings.[55]
- *Travel and Leisure* magazine's Bruce Schoenfeld proclaimed Virginia one of five up-and-coming wine regions (along with areas of Chile, Italy, Spain, and New Zealand) that "should be on the must-visit list of any adventurous wine traveler."[56]
- In *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, a reviewer wrote that "Virginia is making Cabernet Franc and Viognier wines that are world-beaters." Writing for *Saveur*, wine critic Paul Luckas named two Virginia Viogniers among the best available.
- In 2010, the Virginia wine industry was the subject of a documentary movie, *Vintage: The Winemaker's Year*. Since that time, the movie has been shown on PBS stations in Virginia and across the country.

While grape-growing and the establishment of wineries is a fairly new area of growth for the tri-county area with few large-scale producers, wine and grape production represent opportunities for growth and expansion in the future that can significantly impact the area.

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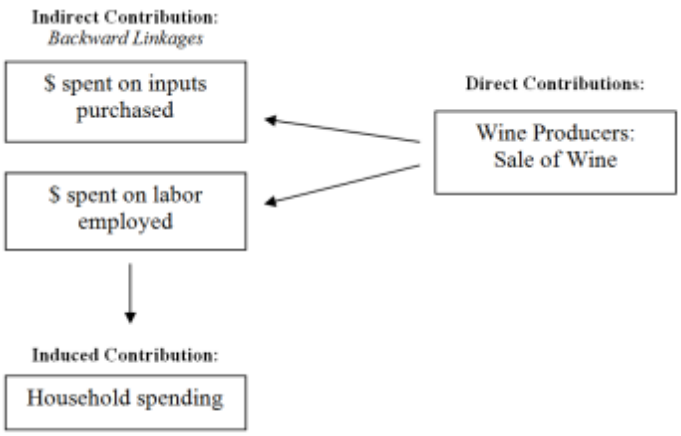
[54] Milbank, Dana. "Vineyards that are putting Virginia on the fine-wine map" (November 21, 2013).Washington Post Magazine. www.washingtonpost.com. Accessed 7-9-14.

[55] Asimov, Eric. "Dry Cider, an American Favorite, Rebounds." (November 8, 2013). The New York Times. www.nytimes.com. Accessed 7-9-14.

[56] www.vatc.org/newsletter/dashboard2010/dashboardOct2010.html. Last cited 4/1/2011.

A recent study produced by Colorado State University[57] provides some economic multiplier figures that were used to estimate the increase in economic activity for Colorado. The study utilizes IMPLAN (Impact Analysis for Planning) software to deduce multiplier figures that apply to the wine and related industries in Colorado. The following figure describes the IMPLAN multipliers components.

Figure 14: General Framework of Economic Contribution Analysis[58]



Taking into account the direct, indirect, and induced contributions by wineries to the overall economy in Colorado, it was found that for every $1 of wine sold, there was a contribution to the economy of $1.65. This composite figure does not reveal the individual effects of different scale producers and businesses and their relative contribution to the economy. Further work was conducted to examine how the production volume of the winery affected its ability to impact the economy. The study further estimated the total effects of various size entities and their overall impact on the economy. The results are summarized in the following table.

Table 5: Colorado Economic Contribution Multipliers by Entity Scale

Entity Size (# of Cases)	Multiplier	Explanation
Large (>4,800)	1.73	For every $1 spent, the economic contribution is $1.73
Midsize (700-4,800)	1.64	For every $1 spent, the economic contribution is $1.64
Small (<700)	1.53	For every $1 spent, the economic contribution is $1.53

Facilitating the growth of the wine industry in the tri-county area thus has the capability of significantly impacting the region. Because the economic effects of every dollar of wine sold impact more than just the producers conducting sales, efforts to promote this industry in the region can result in benefits to the entire region.

[57] "The 2012 Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry: An Overview of Sales Growth, Winery Economics and Tourism." Colorado State University, November 2013.
[58] "The 2012 Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry: An Overview of Sales Growth, Winery Economics and Tourism." Colorado State University, November 2013.

While grape growing and wine production in the tri-county area can be considered a nascent industry, and encouraging farmers to consider this as a viable option for diversifying their current operations, finding ways to move existing producers to greater volumes of production can increase the economic contribution of their sales in a shorter time horizon.

Supply & Demand

From discussions with extension personnel in the region, it appears that there exists a significant demand for grapes, a market condition that has led to the increase of vineyards and wine and related activities in the region. The table below provides information from the USDA Census of Agriculture for 2007 and 2012 for the three-county region that is the focus of this study.

Table 6: Acres in Grape Production 2007 & 2012

Geographic Area	2012		2007	
	Farms	**Acres**	**Farms**	**Acres**
Virginia	660	4,371	517	3,258
Giles	2	-	3	1
Montgomery	2	-	4	1
Pulaski	3	<.5 acre	7	1

While land in the region is suitable for grape production, the acreage seems to be below the tracking level of official statistics at the time of this latest Census. There has been a response of the area's producers to the increased demand for locally produced wine grapes. Conversations with Extension agents familiar with the region suggest that since the Census there has been a significant increase in vineyard plantings, with increases in vineyard plantings in throughout 2013. In 2014, Montgomery County producers planted approximately nine additional acres, Pulaski planted five, and Giles producers planted ten acres since March alone.

Though the area is experiencing increased demand, increasing production requires a long-term view, as vines can often take five to seven years before a usable harvest is produced. Extension agents mentioned that demand still outpaces production, and with the production lag inherent in wine-grape production, this condition is likely to persist.

Producers

The area has a wide range of interest in grape and wine production, from those with a passing interest to experienced vintners. The areas producers can be loosely grouped into two categories.

> **Category 1**: Producers interested in diversifying their existing operations by adding small parcels of land dedicated to grape production, often seeking to utilized unused land space or carve out smaller 2.5-5 acres sections for plantings. These producers are seeking ways to access the high value market exhibited by wine-grape production, but are seeking ways to mitigate the cost of infrastructure and labor associated with a large-scale operation, particularly given climate, topographical, and knowledge-gap risks.
>
> **Category 2**: Producers with existing grape production that are interested in capturing additional value through processing their own grapes into proprietary wines. These

producers are faced with addressing significant infrastructure and equipment needs as they seek to expand operations or add the production of wines to their on-farm activities.

Each category has unique production needs, but both often have similar information and educational needs. Those interested in beginning small-scale production are interested in adding value to their current crop offerings and are looking to maximize the value of a new crop planting. They require experience-based information regarding best practices, how to address production issues including disease and pest control, selecting the proper varieties for the regions climate and topography, and land suitability assessment. Those with established production are seeking expertise-based information on incorporating value-added wine production, as well as establishing agritourism related activities such as tasting rooms, wine trails, and other on-farm activities. Both categories can benefit from centralize information sources that address the production stage they are currently operating at, and access to educated and experienced labor.

Grapes are a new specialty crop in the region, and there are established information sources available regarding sound production practices and issues. The main obstacle highlighted by those who were contacted regarding the wine and grape industry in the region is one of access. Those who are experts on viticulture and enology are centered in grape and wine intensive sectors of Northern Virginia, and are often difficult to contact because the recent interest within the state in grape and wine production. Information centers are located at some distance from the three-county area, and producers have difficulty accessing the knowledge and experience represented within the education network.

Producers seem to be aware of the importance of learning lessons from other successful entities and programs in the state, as well as utilizing resources provided by state-level and regional organizations such as the Virginia Vineyards Association, which provides a Summer and Winter Annual Technical Meeting to address operational issues related to wine grape production.

To address the need for information for new producers or those interested in exploring wine related opportunities the NRV Grape Growers Association has coordinated efforts. Meetings are conducted four times a year by producers who serve as hosts for that particular meeting, with the goal of getting like-minded producers to collaborate and share information.

Producers, both potential and established, face some unique climatological and topographical obstacles that distinguish their production needs and obstacles from other counties in the state. These obstacles include cooler weather, a shorter growing season, mountainous terrain, and forested land located near grape production that represents a hazard to production due to its likelihood of harboring herbivorous animals and wild flora with harmful diseases unique to the region because of its climate.

Virginia Tech’s Department of Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology, and Weed Science Department and Virginia Cooperative Extension have taken steps to begin addressing the specific production obstacles of the region through establishing warm weather cover crop trials

and the future publication of a technical bulletin addressing specific issues related to steep topography and the use of cover crops in mitigating production issues.

The University of Minnesota has worked to develop and maintain information on cold hardy vines and grape varieties that can be used for viticulture purposes including wine-making. The university has fostered a breeding program established in the mid-1980's to develop high quality, cold hardy, and disease resistant grape cultivars, including four outstanding grape varieties that are producing Medal Winning Wines: Frontenac, Frontenac gris, La Crescent, and Marquette. There has been limited production using some of these varieties in Pulaski County, specifically Frontenac and La Crescent, and it appears that these varieties have been performing well.

Another method for addressing large-scale production obstacles is by maintaining smaller on-site acreage and contracting or leasing production from other regions of the state. **Attimo Winery**, with headquarters located in Christiansburg, produces wines from their own grape production, but according to their website also operates long-term leases with vineyards in Charlottesville and Bedford. This may serve as a model for others interested in beginning a winery in regions that do not lend themselves as easily to high production volumes. Because of the growth in Virginia's wine industry, arrangements can be made to procure quality grape inputs to be combined with on-site production.

Agritourism

Grape producers are also presented with opportunities in agritourism. The idyllic setting of vineyards lends itself to onsite events. Wineries producing their own wine bring visitors and potential customers on-site to make purchases through tasting rooms, and larger events are often organized through wine trails that link several producers to attract larger crowds. While the area may not have a long history of grape and wine production, there are several examples of successful enterprises in the area, particularly those that have incorporated complementary activities such as event marketing, lodging, and tourism activities.

The **Beliveau Estate** has capitalized on their wine production and vineyards by incorporating tourism and special event services to the vineyard. The Estate, located in Montgomery County near Blacksburg, includes a winery, bed & breakfast and lodging in the Maison Beliveau, catering, a wine club, the Lavender Festival, and other on-site activities and events.
Bedford County, VA is a nearby example of a county that has focused economic development activities around wineries with their Bedford Wine Trail.[59] In addition to a central information portal of five county wineries, this project has partnered with local providers of lodging, pottery, gifts, and baked goods to expand the options available as a tourist destination. Yadkin Valley Wine Country's comprehensive wine portal[60], focused on wineries in the Yadkin Valley region of North Carolina, also provides another strong program as an example.

[59] http://bedfordwinetrail.com
[60] www.yadkinvalleywinecountry.com

Working within the framework of the Agritourism strategy outlined previously in this document can provide yet another attraction to bring outside tourists to the area as well as draw out residents within the three-country region interested in local wines.

Cider, Beer, and Liquor

Other opportunities in the region include those centered on craft and micro-breweries or micro-distillery operations that cater to those interested in local flavors or non-traditional brews and liquors that are not often commercially available. Micro-distilleries, similar to micro-breweries in size and intent, are becoming more common in the state of Virginia. These business models allow smaller producers to enter into the spirits market by capitalizing on the overall local food trend without large-scale investment in equipment and labor.

While these entities may not impact the production side of agriculture in the region because inputs are often sourced in smaller quantities or from other areas of the state and country, these enterprises can represent a significant draw to a region or area. **Nesselrod Bed and Breakfast** and **Bull and Bones Brewhaus** have operated the **New River Brewfest** in the area since 2010 in an effort to showcase Virginia Brewery's handcrafted beer.[61] The Brewfest has grown to include four separate festivals as of 2014, including the Beer, Cider, & Whiskey Festival, the Wine & Beer Festival, the Wedding & Wine Festival, and the Beer, Cider, and Mead Oktoberfest.

Chateau Morrisette Winery and Restaurant	Foggy Ridge Cider
Located in nearby Floyd County, Virginia, Chateau Morrisette Winery and Restaurant creates Virginia wines and is a part of both the Mountain Road Wine Trail and Virginia's Crooked Road Music Heritage Trail. The winery, in collaboration with other Virginia wineries, hosts the Black Dog Rhythm and Vine Festival, which focuses on bringing together food, artists, and craftsmen as an agri-tourism event.	Located in Dugspur, Virginia, Foggy Ridge Cider is a local cidery that has the unique distinction of being the first in the South East to grow heirloom apples solely for the production of high quality hard cider. Apple production includes several varieties and their on-site cidery processes these apples into eight varietals of hard cider. Foggy Ridge Cider currently sells to different states along the East Coast including Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, Washington, DC, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee.
For more information, visit www.thedogs.com/	For more information, visit www.foggyridgecider.com

[61] "About Us." New River Brewfest. www.newriverbrewfest.com.

Analysis

Simply put, the New River Valley needs more grape production. Local wineries are looking for local grapes, and there is a strong Grape Growers Association that can help producers get started, network, and refine their production techniques.

The Association should continue their efforts at disseminating information at the producer level, and seek to reach out to established organizations that can provide additional knowledge and expertise. These efforts should seek to partner with local education institutions, such as the Giles Technology Center, community colleges in the area, or Virginia Tech to expand basic viticulture education to increase access for producers to information and a more educated workforce.

Education entities should consider the creation of a regional task force or panel to address issues specifically related to information transfer and dissemination or promoting the addition of viticulture education programs. Interested producers should participate in these programs and avail themselves of the information already available from other regions of the state and through Virginia Tech in order to educate themselves and achieve the best chance of success.

The current and predicted future of the green trend in consumer preference to "buy local" will be an important factor in expanding the customer base for Virginia wines. Because of the American consumer's newfound focus on farmers, particularly local ones, this attribute has become a valuable marketing tool.

Working from a regional perspective can offer the best chance of success for individual producers, and also provides the added benefit of attracting outside technical assistance. New River Valley Grape Growers have already begun working on a regional level to attempt to promote grape growing and production on a broader scale. An upcoming meeting scheduled with the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural Sustainability (FAIRS) to explore the option of working together and utilizing the foundations experience and knowledge base in promoting grape and wine production.

As the number of participating producers increases, the critical mass necessary to attract experts and experienced viticulturists will increase, leading to greater resources for the region. In lieu of access to informational resources, continued collaboration and information sharing is the best way to promote the industry as a whole in the tri-county region.

Chris Cook, Executive Director of Virginia FAIRS states,

"We believe strongly in networking with others involved in rural development efforts. Sharing lessons learned from producer issues and economic challenges with other entities, other mentors, and other developers in other regions can help overcome these obstacles. FAIRS typically applies a cluster approach for local development, and we view our direct technical assistance as one aspect of community development. Working with other regional entities that can impact multiple individual producers allows FAIRS to better leverage assistance and spread positive impacts to as many producers and producer organizations as possible. Not only does partnering and collaborating on a regional level foster the transfer of information and best practices, but also makes both individual projects and rural communities more viable."

EDUCATION

The region has access to several nearby institutions of higher learning, both within the three-county region of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, as well as nearby. These institutions include:

- Virginia Tech University (Blacksburg, VA)
- Radford University (Radford, VA)
- New River Community College (Dublin, VA)
- VA College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Virginia Intermont College (Bristol, VA)
- Virginia Highlands Community College (Abdingdon, VA)
- Wytheville Community College (Wytheville, VA)
- Emory and Henry College (Emory, VA)
- Washington County Adult Skill Center (Abingdon, VA)

Farmers expressed concern about the next generation growing up without an understanding of agricultural realities. There is strong support for the Ag in the Classroom program at the elementary level

for teacher training and resource materials[62], but a sense of a gap at the middle school level, other than those students directly participating in 4-H. High schools have maintained agriculture programs, but the agricultural community sees room for improvement. Several ideas emerged to address these educational needs.

The land lab at Giles County High School offers great potential to provide practical experience in agricultural learning and production, but it is severely underutilized as a teaching locale. Local farmers are willing to donate animals and equipment; it would just require leadership and planning at the school level. This resource could be used for entrepreneurship, extension trials, and on-farm demonstrations.

The high school curriculum in all three counties could be adjusted to create stronger ties with agriculture. While current coursework emphasizes forestry, companion animals, and horticulture, curriculum could also be expanded to include production agriculture education. Agriculture classes could be weighted so that taking those classes didn't hurt students' Grade Point Averages.

The curriculum could also be better integrated with a college prep program, such as having dual enrollment agriculture classes offered that count towards college credit, either at high school or at New River Community College. Although the schools would need teachers with Masters Degrees to do this, it would prevent students from having to choose between preparation for competitive college admissions and agriculture.

The Virginia Department of Education has recently completed a strategic review of Agricultural Education Programs throughout the state.[63] Virginia Tech offers a range of resources and expertise through their Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education. This includes links to model curricula, networks of Agricultural Educators across the state, sample curricula, and examples of Agricultural STEM programs at the secondary school level.[64]

The Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators provides an opportunity for networking with other teachers and school districts across the state. Within Virginia, the association is divided into five geographic areas, and like its parent organization, the National Association of Agricultural Educators, seeks to offer "professional development opportunities, legislative advocacy, leadership development education, technical inservice and many more services and opportunities[65]."

[62] https://www.agintheclass.org/
[63] http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/agriculture/agriculture_education_report.pdf
[64] http://www.alce.vt.edu/signature-programs/index.html
[65] Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators. Accessed at www.alce.vt.edu/vaae/.

The Virginia Western Community College Educational Foundation, Roanoke City Public Schools, and the City of Roanoke have partnered to create Food for Thought, a program whose focus is on "sustainable gardening, green lifestyle choices, the use of urban land for small scale vegetable gardening, and careers in related fields."[66]

The program includes curriculum for use in schools that introduces students to food and its sources, and attempts to strengthen the connection between individuals and agriculture by introducing topics such as local foods, food sustainability, and making healthy food choices to students at a young age. This appears to be an opportunity to solve both the problem expressed by farmers to access a labor pool, as well as provide for a more direct connection that could possibly attract a new generation of farmers and agricultural workers.

The enology and viticulture area also seem to be areas where local educational entities could have a significant impact. Partnering to provide information access through Extension offices, or working to create and offer basic wine workshops and classes could help address the needs of an education labor force that could then be accessed by area wine-grape producers. Offering such educational programs through community or technical colleges could help address this expressed need, and also serve to alleviate the burden from county Extension agents.

These local education entities can teach applicable skills to help create a deeper labor pool for producers, as well as disseminate production information to producers interested in diversifying their crops or seeking to expand their current grape production.

[66] "About Us." Food for Thought: An Edible Education Partnership. www.foodforthoughtva.org.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MODELS

In considering the role of the **Agriculture and Tourism Consortium,** and their goals to promote agriculture and its long-term sustainability in the region, the consultants have included examples of regional entities and their work promoting agriculture in their regions to suggest ideas for the Consortium to consider.

Throughout the document, specific examples have focused on certain industries or segments of agriculture in the tri-county area. This section highlights examples of institution level models that may be useful for the Consortium to consider as they attempt to take a broad-based regional approach to developing the region as a whole.

While none of the examples are intended to provide exact models for the Consortium to replicate, they do provide interesting and unique approaches to agricultural development with a whole-community perspective. The Consortium should continue its efforts to tie development as a whole together with agricultural development.

Gorge Grown Food Network *www.gorgegrown.com*

According to their website, the mission of Gorge Grown is "To build a resilient and inclusive regional food system that improves the health and well-being of our community."[67] Gorge Grown is a "network" that connects farmers, consumers, and the community. The network reaches five counties in Oregon and Washington and functions as a non-profit resource for farmers, food producers, consumers, policy-makers, educators, health promoters, and food enthusiasts.

Their main goals are focuses on education, demand, supply, and organization. Many of their projects are farmers markets, including one that focuses specifically on increasing the Hispanic community's access to fresh and local foods. They also have a publication titled *Who's Your Farmer*, which is a free directory of small farmers and producers within the five-county region. Another project by Gorge Grown Food Network is the Community Food Assessment, which "takes a big picture look at our food system in all its parts—production, distribution, consumption—so we can learn how it works and how to improve our food and farms." The group has completed the assessment and it is available upon request.

Intervale Center *www.intervale.org*

Located in Burlington, Vermont, the Intervale Center is a non-profit organization that focuses on strengthening the community foods system by being a resource to farmers and the community. The Intervale Center has been working to build a food system in their community that fosters food production, processing, distribution, and consumption for over 20 years.

According to their website[68], they are able to fulfill their mission through:

- New Farm incubation
- Farm business development
- Agricultural market development
- Agricultural land stewardship
- Food systems research and consulting
- Celebration of food and farmers

Through their Farms Program, the center is able to lease land, equipment, greenhouses, irrigation, and storage facilities to "small independent farmers." They are also a part of the Vermont New Farmer Project, through which they help beginning farmers with business planning and educating them on additional outside services.

Along with the services and resources the Intervale Center provides to farmers and producers, they also have a virtual food hub that operates year-round. Through the food hub, the center is able to provide the community with high quality, local foods while also bringing a stable market and fair prices to producers.

[67] Gorge Grown Food Network (2014). "About Us." www.gorgegrown.com/about-us.cfm
[68] Intervale Center (2014). "Our Mission and Vision." www.intervale.org/what-we-do/mission-vision/

The Highland Center *thehighlandcenter.org*

Located in Highland, Virginia, the overall focus of the center is on cultural and economic development; however, as a component of this, the center utilizes a Local Foods and Agriculture program that includes the following:

- *Community Kitchen*-Provides access to a full-service inspected kitchen for local food entrepreneurs.
- *Allegheny Mountain School*-A six-month intensive training program and twelve-month community outreach program for young adults focused on sustainable food production.
- *Allegheny Meats*-A USDA-inspected slaughter and educational center.
- *Faces of Farmers*-Profiles and stories of the areas farmers and producers.
- *Highland Farmers' Market*-A producer driven market selling Allegheny-grown products. Mountain Foods-A buying club focused on obtaining natural, organic, and local foods.
- *School Garden Project*-A partnership between the Highland Center, the Highland County Public School System and the Virginia Cooperative Extension/4-H to provide and maintain garden space for educational purposes.

Coordination Opportunities

The tri-county region has numerous existing marketing resources and websites that provide information related to culture, heritage, local foods, and agriculture in the region. In viewing these resources, it appears that greater coordination between sites and programs could be encouraged that would serve to tie together the various programs and sites and provide greater ease of access for consumers interested in visiting the area or local residents interested in further exploring what agricultural and heritage opportunities exist. Information regarding the sites and programs is excerpted from the entities corresponding website.

Southwest Virginia *www.myswva.org*

This regional branding initiative provides a well-designed website that collects and collates culture and activities in the area, both tourism and agritourism related. Counties may need to work with such established sites or initiatives to create stronger links back to county websites and local entities.

'Round the Mountain *www.myswva.org/rtm*

'Round the Mountain collects information on local artisans, and each county has their own 'Round the Mountain artisan trail/network. The site lists 15 individual trails related to artisan crafts. The 'Round the Mountain site provides links to individual county websites:

- Giles: Giles Art and Adventure Trail (www.gilescounty.org)
- Montgomery: Montgomery County Artisan Trail (www.yesmontgomeryva.org)
- Pulaski: New River Artisan Trail (Pulaski, Radford) Further Link: (www.pulaskichamber.info) or (www.visitradford.com)

This represents an opportunity to build on existing internet traffic and capture individuals browsing the site for tourism and other opportunities that can be more closely tied with agriculture in the region.

Mountain Road Wine Experience *www.mountainroadwineexperience.com*

According to their website, The Mountain Road Wine Experience offers "[a]n eclectic adventure with truly exceptional wine, cider, and mead in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains." The Experience includes seven businesses including wineries, a cidery, and a meadery, along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Each location features a tasting room so tourists and locals can experience locally produced items on-site. These businesses are:

- Foggy Ridge Cider
- Chateau Morrisette
- Amrhein Wine Cellars
- Stanburn Vineyard
- Attimo Winery
- Blacksnake Meadery
- Villa Appalaccia Winery

Throughout the year, special events are held that feature additional unique offerings at each location. For example, one year, the wineries, cidery, and meadery featured picnic themed food pairings with their beverages for visitors to try. Another event included each business hosting a local artist or artisan, such as jewelry makers and musicians. Visitors are required to purchase tickets for these special events, but one ticket allows access to all seven locations.

Located in Montgomery County, Attimo Winery is the only business part of the Mountain Road Wine Experience that is located in the New River area. Others are located in neighboring counties, including Floyd, Carroll, and Roanoke counties. Other wineries should be encouraged to join such networks, particularly since the greater the number of participants on a site, the more likely it will be to attract internet traffic.

Southwest Virginia Fresh *www.swvafresh.org*

Southwest Virginia is an independent community organization that focuses on developing the community of Southwest Virginia's local foods. Their mission is "to enhance a local foods economy in Southwest Virginia." It is Southwest Virginia Fresh's, also known as SO Fresh for short, goal to become "initiator and comprehensive 'point of contact' for all Southwest Virginia local foods efforts and information, thereby enhancing a region of connected and thriving community-based foods."

Southwest Virginia Fresh has a website that details their overall organization. This organization does not actually sell and distribute food, but rather they serve the purpose of being a resource for farmers and the community. They offer different services, including networking, education & resources, promotion, and collaborations. For the networking, they focus on matching the buyers with the farmers and producers. In terms of the education & resources, they offer a variety of resourced and workshops for both consumers and producers. Southwest Fresh offers promotion to help farmers

and small businesses get their names out and become a known aspect of the community. They also work primarily on collaborations in order to bring together buyers, farmers, and consumers.

On their website, there is also a page dedicated to their producers. They describe that they have over 25 local foods producers, and they are continuing to grow. For each of the individual producers listed, there is information about when the producers' products are available throughout the year. There is also information pertaining to where the products can be found outside of Southwest Virginia's website, like local farmers markets. Additionally, their website has a page that has information for local Southwest Virginia residents to become producers.

Barriers to Growth and Diversification

Other counties in Virginia, such as Halifax County, have faced opposition to agricultural development through some segments of the population. This has resulted in some regulatory constraints placed in these counties' ordinances. Although, at this time there seem to be no specific issues, interviews with farmers, staff, and the public, a few concerns surfaced which merit future attention:

Agricultural Zoning

There is no specific agricultural zoning category distinct from rural residential. Farms may have unique needs for accessory buildings, farm worker housing, advertising, public parking and facilities. Nonetheless, through interviews, the authors heard no specific complaints about any land use regulations or local ordinances hindering the development of new enterprises.

Regulatory Complexity

Citizens interested in developing new agricultural enterprises (especially value-added and agritourism related ventures) must negotiate a maze of regulatory and permitting issues. To facilitate the process, the county could consider designating an agricultural liaison to provide guidance on procedures and timeframes for creating new farm-related enterprises.

Food Safety

Safety certification is becoming more important in all areas of agricultural production. The rise of popularity of locally produced foods, along with numerous food safety scares, has made food safety of paramount importance to producers as well as buyers and consumers. Over time, policies such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) have become more and more important to the food industry, beginning with growers providing large scale quantities of commercially grown produce and working its way to smaller and smaller producers. Many foodservice companies work with suppliers to meet company mandated food safety and quality certification standards that are often more stringent than government mandated standards. These "third party certifications" vary by company and region. While not necessarily a requirement, safety certifications can pose an obstacle, especially for smaller producers who wish to access larger institutional purchasers, but who are unable to bear the expense associated with auditing and certification to meet the requirements of these types of customers.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

Local Foods, Local Places

This new program is designed to provide direct technical support to selected communities (with particular consideration for those in Appalachia and the Delta region) to help them develop and implement action plans promoting local food and downtown revitalization. Special consideration is given to communities in the early stages of developing or restoring local food enterprises and creating economically vibrant communities. Selected communities in Appalachia and the Delta region will be eligible to receive financial assistance to help them implement those plans.

Governor's Agriculture & Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID)

This funding program awards grants to eligible applicants who are looking create or expand a facility used to add value to Virginia grown agriculture or forestry items. The grant awards a maximum amount of $250,000, or 25 percent of qualified capital investment. The funding program does stipulate that at least 30 percent of the agricultural or forestry product used to make an end value-added product must come from Virginia.

NRV Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund

The New River Valley Revolving Loan fund is managed by the New River Valley Development Corporation, which was formed as a non-profit organization by several counties and towns

located in the New River Valley region of Virginia with the goal of helping to grow business and jobs by providing business assistance. According to the Corporations website, the loan can be used "to finance expansions, capital purchases, or startup costs." Loans are typically in the $10,000- $25,000 range, and are provided with low interest rates to businesses that might not otherwise be able to secure funding. Businesses wishing to apply must complete a pre-application screening and a formal application process.

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

According to their website, VA FAIRS is "a not for profit foundation based in Richmond, Virginia, with the mission of assisting rural agricultural enterprises." The Foundation offers technical and cooperative assistance that involves strategic planning, feasibility analysis, workshops and training, finance assistance, and assists with the creation of business documents in order to help producers and communities in "developing and advancing their agricultural, economic and social interests to enhance their quality of life."

Virginia Tech and Virginia State University Cooperative Extension[69]

The Virginia Cooperative Extension helps to link the resources of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University to individuals within the state. Working through collaborations between the Universities and other organizations, the Cooperative Extension program provides services through "107 county and city offices, 11 agricultural research and Extension centers, and six 4-H educational centers."

Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP)

Community Food Projects are designed to meet the food needs of low-income people, increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs, promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues, meet specific state, local, or neighborhood food and agriculture needs for infrastructure improvement and development, planning for long-term solutions, the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

Federal State Marketing Improvement Program Funds (FSMIP)

The program provides matching funds to State Departments of Agriculture, State agricultural experiment stations, and other appropriate State agencies to assist in exploring: new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products, research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system, and address barriers, challenges, and opportunities in marketing, transporting, and distributing U.S. food and agricultural products domestically and internationally.

[69] www.ext.vt.edu/about/index.html

Farmers' Marketing and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP)

The program is comprised of two competitive grant programs:

Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
The program assists eligible entities in promoting the domestic consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities. Additionally, all projects should support agricultural marketing enterprises where farmers or vendors sell their own products directly to consumers.

Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)
LFPP offers grant funds with a 25 percent match to support the development and expansion of local and regional food business enterprises to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets.

Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG)

The program is solely designed to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, defined as "fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)." Eligible plants must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops.

The program seeks to increase child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops, improve efficiency and reduce cost of distribution systems, assist all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain in developing "Good Agricultural Practices," "Good Handling Practices," "Good Manufacturing Practices," and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems for small farmers, packers and processors, as well as other objectives.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

This program provides agricultural producers and rural businesses with loan and grant options to help fund their eligible bio-energy projects. The program is made up of three areas: The Renewable Energy System and Energy Efficiency Improvement Loan and Grant Program, The Energy Audit and Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grant Program, and The Feasibility Studies Grant Program. This program is open to applicants in an eligible rural area, which is defined by the USDA as an area outside of cities with a population of 50,000 or more.

Bio-Refinery Assistance Program

This assistance program is administered through the USDA's Rural Development program and provides loans to those looking to develop, construct, and retrofit commercial-scale bio-refineries. They also help provide grants to help pay for the development and construction costs of demonstration-scale bio-refineries.

Community Facilities Program

Community Facilities Programs provide loans, grants, and loan guarantees for essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Loans and guarantees are available to public entities, such as municipalities, counties, parishes, boroughs,

and special-purpose districts, as well as to non-profit corporations and tribal governments. Priority is given to health care, education and public safety projects.

Typical projects are hospitals, health clinics, schools, fire houses, community centers and many other community based initiatives. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants.

Business and Industry Guarantee Loan Program

The purpose of the B&I Guaranteed Loan Program is to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. This purpose is achieved by bolstering the existing private credit structure through the guarantee of quality loans, which will provide lasting community benefits. It is not intended that the guarantee authority will be used for marginal or substandard loans or for relief of lenders having such loans.

Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG)

The program is designed to assist producers and associations that engage in value-added activities to develop strategies and create marketing opportunities for their value-added agriculture products, and/or for marketing or processing activities that add value to the commodities they raise, or for on-farm renewable energy generation projects. The goal of the program is to expand market opportunities for producers and increase the producer's share of revenue from their commodities.

Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)

The RMAP program aims to support the development and ongoing success of rural micro-entrepreneurs and microenterprises. Direct loans and grants are made to select Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs) for the benefit of rural micro-entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises. RMAP funding may be used to provide fixed interest rate microloans or to provide eligible MDOs with micro-lender technical assistance grants to provide technical assistance and training to micro-entrepreneurs that have received or are seeking a microloan under RMAP.

Individual citizens, micro-entrepreneurs, or micro-enterprises, as defined by the program and who are in need of business based technical assistance and training, are generally eligible to apply for loans from MDOs, provided they owe no delinquent debt to the Federal Government.

Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)

The REDLG program provides funding to rural projects through local utility organizations. Under the REDLG program, the USDA provides zero interest loans to local utilities, which they, in turn, pass through to local businesses (ultimate recipients) for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas. The ultimate recipients repay the lending utility directly. The utility is responsible for repayment to the Agency.

Farm Ownership Loans

Farm Ownership Loans are issued through the USDA Farm Service Agency and is specifically intended to help improve a farm overall. It can be used for purchasing farmland, constructing or

repairing buildings, and to promote water and soil conservation. The current maximum amount this loan will pay out is $300,000.

Farm Operating Loans

This loan is also offered through the USDA Farm Service Agency. It is meant to help improve the operations of a farm; it can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance, and other operating expenses. This loan can also be used to pay for minor improvements to buildings, land and water development, family subsistence, and to refinance debts. This loan's current maximum amount is $300,000.

Ford Foundation

Each year the Ford Foundation receives about 40,000 proposals and makes about 1,400 grants. Requests range from a few thousand to millions of dollars and are accepted in categories such as project planning and support, general support, and endowments. Types of grants include general/core support, project, planning, competition, matching, recoverable, individual, endowment, and foundation-administered project.

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE)

SARE covers numerous aspects related to research and education in agriculturally related fields. Since 1988, the SARE grants and education program has advanced agricultural innovation that promotes profitability, stewardship of the land, air and water, and quality of life for farmers, ranchers and their communities. SARE grants fund research and education projects exploring areas such as:

- On-farm renewable energy
- Pest and weed management
- Pastured livestock & rotational grazing
- No-till and conservation tillage
- Nutrient management
- Agro-forestry
- Marketing
- Sustainable communities
- Systems research
- Crop and livestock diversity
- and others

Since 1988, SARE has funded more than 5,000 projects with grants for farmers, ranchers, extension agents and educators, researchers, nonprofits, students, communities and others.

Virginia Wine Board

In recent years, the Virginia Wine Board has issued RFP's for research projects, and during 2012-2013 funded 14 projects related to grape growing and win making. Personnel at the VWB should be consulted to see if any specific funding can be arranged or is already available to help address information within the tri-county region that can help current and future grape and wine producers.

Other Notable Programs

The Healthy Food in Health Care program harnesses the purchasing power and expertise of the health care sector to advance the development of a sustainable food system. Through advocacy and education, the program seeks to motivate facilities to implement programs that explicitly connect all aspects of the food system with health.

USDA's WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program & Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) is associated with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, popularly known as WIC. The WIC Program provides supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education at no cost to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, as well as to infants and children up to five years of age, who are found to be at nutritional risk.

The WIC FMNP was established by Congress in 1992, to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants and to expand the awareness, use of, and sales at farmers' markets. Individuals that have been certified to receive WIC program benefits or who are on a waiting list for WIC certification are eligible to participate. A variety of fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs may be purchased with FMNP coupons.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) awards grants to States, U.S. Territories, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments to provide low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible foods (fruits, vegetables, honey, and fresh-cut herbs) at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs. The SFMNP is administered by State agencies such as your State Department of Agriculture or Agency on Aging.

RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

The following recommendations are intended as a guide, and are organized by category, with suggested partners and priority levels representing the timeframe within which the task could be completed.

Collaborating Organization Key
The primary parties responsible for the activities covered in the recommendation section are presented below. The anticipated lead partner for each activity has been **bolded** for emphasis. The recommendations will likely need to include the involvement of other entities not listed here to be successfully implemented.

- Agriculture and Tourism Consortium (ATC)
- Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)
- Virginia Department of Forestry (VDF)
- _____
- _____
-

Should additional entities be established subsequent to the consideration of this strategic plan, those entities should be considered for inclusion in the implementation of activities as well.
Priority Ratings

Please complete the following priority exercise. Priority ratings are based on the timeframe in which a recommendation could be completed. Please review each recommendation and add a short term (1), mid-term (2), or long-term (3) rating in the left-hand column. The timeframes are further described below:

1. Can be accomplished within the next 18 months. Significant partners ready to collaborate or infrastructure already available, either internally or on a regional basis.
2. Can be achieved within 2-3 years. Requires a longer time frame, organizational commitment on a broader scale, and the possibility of outside funding.
3. Long-term goal over the next 4-5 years. Requires significant relationship-building, development of grassroots support, outside funding, and possibly additional infrastructure.

Partner
Please indicate potential partners for each recommendation in the right-hand column.

Priority	Recommendation	Partner
Agriculture and Tourism Consortium		
The following recommendations are directed toward the Agriculture and Tourism Consortium. These are areas in which the Consortium can specifically focus to help improve its effectiveness and impact in the region.		
A. Structure & Continuity		
	Clarify the mission and role of the committee and formally organize. Having functioned to date as an ad hoc committee, the group could organize formally and delineate responsibility among its members through established roles and positions. Although this committee cannot drive agricultural development, it could facilitate it taking place, as needs are identified by the farming community.	
	Separate committee work from county level work. Each member of the committee currently has responsibility within their respective counties, but the work and efforts of the committee should be clearly separated from the individual job duties of its members. This will prevent "mission creep" for the committee, and allow it to better focus on regional cooperation and development activities.	
	Focus on communication and coordination, and have periodic progress checks. Collect and disseminate information relevant to the mission of the committee, as well as coordinate between individual entities and organizations within the three counties represented by the committee members. Review specific goals and tasks, using a scorecard to assess progress annually.	
	Determine resources to move into implementation phase. What do you want to do once these grants are finished? How will you pay for it?	

B. Networking & Communication		
	Facilitate a regular monthly agriculture meeting in each county. This informal meeting can provide a venue to share information, highlight innovative programs, share best practices, and generally foster closer communication and collaboration between the area's agriculture entities. For examples, see *Friends of Agriculture Breakfasts* in Polk and Buncombe Counties (NC).	
	Use LISTSERV's (electronic mailing lists) to better share information. A model for this type of networking is the Chatham NC Growing Small Farms program. Email lists can be established on a variety of topics and individual farmers or entities can subscribe to receive information updates based on specific topics.	
	Create a unified information portal for consumers. Some of these resources exist online through various websites, but they seem to be fragmented rather than comprehensive. The focus should be on providing streamlined ease of access to such resources. This may be accomplished by better coordinating or linking existing sources of information to allow consumers to find local food and agri-tourism opportunities, as well as plan for trips and activities utilizing local heritage resources.	
	Create a farmer advisory subcommittee. This group would focus on identifying needs and drive implementation by the agricultural community.	
	Reach out to other economic sectors. Continue to reach out to additional partners to gather their views and educate them about needs, opportunities, and unique assets. For example, the committee as established has no educators or community health workers.	
	Establish a committee calendar separate from an agricultural activities calendar. This will provide a central resource for the committee in planning meetings and other activities that are more focused on the committee's mission rather than overlapping with activities in each of the counties.	
	Increase coordination of regional marketing and information sites. While some coordination exists on sites such as Southwest Virginia Fresh, 'Round the Mountain, and Heartwood, stronger ties could be created to connect these and drive awareness within Giles, Pulaski, and Montgomery Counties specifically.	
	Establish informational links with Floyd County. Floyd County is naturally part of the New River Valley region, and the county has solid agricultural resources and initiatives that could help the efforts in the tri-county region. While the county declined to participate in the formation of this strategic plan, efforts should be made to establish a flow of information.	
	Develop user-friendly access and outreach plan for NRVPDC agriculture resource and local foods planning/mapping project. This should become the go-to info source for local farm assets	

C. Farmer Advisory Subcommittee		
These are recommended tasks should an advisory group be created by the Consortium.		
	Form a three-county Agriculture Development Board (ADB). A regional, agriculture-oriented body could serve to drive economic development, address regulatory issues, and implement new ideas while working with existing bodies such as Farm Bureau and Cooperative Extension. Use the information highlighted in this report to develop a work plan and strategic approach to agricultural entrepreneurship.	
	Utilize statewide knowledge and information sharing. Learn which counties are already doing agricultural economic development well and learn from their experience. The tri-county leadership should strongly consider placing an individual in the membership of VADO, the Virginia Agricultural Development Officers organization, to gain access to the experience and information represented by its members.	
	Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers. With the average age of 57 for local farmers, creating a new generation of farmers is crucial to the long-term survival of agriculture.	
	Keep a current inventory of agricultural supply providers. Owners of these businesses should be included in agricultural leadership roles, as they can see trends among a changing customer base, and their survival is crucial to farms' profitability.	
	Develop a farmer recruiting program. The crucial role of traditional economic development agencies to make new businesses feel welcome needs to be extended to the agricultural sector so any potential opportunities are not missed.	
	Find ways to better utilize local educational resources. In particular, Virginia Tech's College Farm (Kentland Farm) can be utilized so that local farmers have better opportunities to interact with the public.	
	Encourage farmers to purchase farm supplies locally. Increase the dialogue amongst farm supply businesses and farmers. By understanding the changing needs of the agricultural sector, these businesses can be more responsive to local needs. Buying local begins at the input level.	
	Serve locally grown food at all farmer events. It may be more expensive and convenient, but essential for local farm identity and a commitment to keeping dollars within the agricultural community.	

Priority	Recommendation	Partner
Agricultural Community		
The following recommendations are focused on the agricultural community and are aimed to help improve the industry for all parties involved. These recommendations can be applied to all realms of agriculture across the industry.		
	Identify and expand education and training opportunities. Multiple groups could benefit from increased educational opportunities including: professional service providers, new landowners, producers/farmers, and youth.	
	Strengthen communication. Communications should be strengthened across the board, specifically with state and federal legislators. Industry and university knowledge should also be better communicated to the agricultural community.	
	Promote the industry. Promotion of local farms as an important part of the community, as well as the promotion of agricultural and forestall districts. It is an easy, low-cost way to highlight local farms and agricultural communities.	
	Work together. Counties need each other for critical mass and infrastructure; farmers need each other for marketing, and local businesses need support. The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce has expressed interest in creating linkages between farms and local businesses. Collaborating with agritourism organizations around the region will also allow for new and innovative ideas, attending workshops, and gathering information from existing newsletters. Collaboration efforts with the NRV Grape Growers Association should be continued and their efforts should be supported and encouraged.	
	Create a proper legislative framework for agricultural development. This should include review and recommendations of potential ordinances at the county level. Possibilities may include: o Polling farmers for any specific issues that need changing. o Examining local zoning and regulations to identify potential barriers to new agricultural and agritourism enterprises. o Crafting local ordinances directly stating support for forestry and agricultural practices allowable under VA state law. Ensure agriculture is protected with water and zoning regulations. o Coordinating local food initiatives with local health codes.	

A. Virginia Cooperative Extension		
These recommendations focus on strengthening the agricultural community through extension programs.		
	Develop a stronger institutional relationship with Virginia Tech. Having the Land Grant University located locally is a huge potential asset. Encourage more collaboration involving on-farm research, demonstration projects and field days, and student labor on local farms.	
	Strengthen ties with existing Virginia Tech personnel and programs. Create a wish-list of potential research areas or projects for faculty and students. Focus on expanding on-farm research targeting local farm needs. Utilize students and farmers for project labor.	
	Create a resource reference list. Establish a reference list of service and technical assistance providers and make them available for farmers or local food entrepreneurs. Resources at Virginia Tech should be assembled and presented in a way that makes it easier for farmers and potential farmers to access.	
	Increase awareness of farm transition options. Foster connections between new and old landowners, including education programs designed to inform about farm transition options. Through the Farm Link Program, VDACS and the Virginia Farm Bureau offer a strong slate of services and resources for both landowners and farm seekers.	
B. Environment & Land Base		
	Provide introductory services to new landowners. Many newcomers to agriculture and rural land management are seeking ideas for farm viability and the technical assistance and cost-share programs to manage their land profitably as good stewards of natural resources.	
	Convene a land conservation summit led by Conservation District and Natural Resource Conservation Service. Educate landowners about key programs, services, and approaching deadlines. With concerns about storm water regulations and increasing pressures on land management practices associated with the Chesapeake Bay rules, landowners need to establish a long-term strategy and avoid the constraints of future regulations.	
	Maintain priority on funding and utilization of cost-share programs and best management practices. The current 100% cost-share for livestock exclusion applications submitted by June 2015 is a great opportunity to improve grazing infrastructure on the farm. Afterwards, livestock exclusion might become mandatory, with no cost-share.	
	Create more incentives for landowners to keep their land in agricultural use. Including tax incentives, subsidized professional advisory services, or local purchase of development rights programs. This will create a central point to share information about the loss of important ag. lands and connect to a statewide network of counties experienced at using population growth to the benefit of farmers.	

C. Core Agriculture Activities		
	Cattle	
	Create "Technical Advisor" teams to assist with Whole Farm Planning. These groups could serve as a resource for area producers, and could also focus on the coordination of resources, discuss long term improvements, programs, and assist with written plans.	
	Establish a grazing working group for dairy and beef. Collect and share information on rotational grazing, paddock design, lanes and waterers, and site-specific year-round forage rotations. Establish a regular schedule of pasture walks and on-farm research projects.	
	Keep the emphasis on the beef and dairy industries. This will continue to be, the heart and soul of New River Valley agriculture.	
	Beef	
	Begin collaborative beef marketing. Beef producers should consider expanding into backgrounding and keeping calves for an additional 45 days post-weaning. This will allow higher value sales thru tele-auction and truck loads sales.	
	Seek methods of beef facility improvement. Search for funding to create a cost-share program similar to the Southwest Virginia Beef Builder Initiative. Because the three counties are not part of the tobacco settlement, leadership will need to identify an alternative funding source.	
	Improve processing capacity and logistics. Work with existing facilities to specify needs and seek improvements. Because there does not appear to be enough volume for a new processing facility in the region without some sort of large ongoing public funding source, improving access and existing capacity will need to be utilized to provide opportunities for producers.	
	Timber/ Forestry	
	Encourage landowner consultation with government or private forestry services. Educate landowners on the value of advice and education prior to large-scale clear-cutting or other significant changes to the timber landscape of individual properties to alleviate the crisis management that can result from these changes if done incorrectly.	
	Incentivize Forest Management and Pre-Harvest Plans for landowners. The tri-county area should investigate if these plans would be cost-effective in the region. Depending on the findings, leadership should seek to enact any new requirements for forest management plans across all three counties in a consistent manner.	
	Encourage loggers to complete Sharp Loggers Certification. This course minimizes environmental disturbance from logging and activities and creates a high professional standard for the entire industry.	
	Encourage value-added processes that create economic opportunities. A creative artisan class could work with local timber companies to indentify high value species and explore bringing tourism benefits.	
	Explore the development of a local biomass utilization facility. Observing how other regions have encouraged the growth of this industry may lead to opportunities within the tri-county region.	

D. Local Foods/ Value-Added		
	Help farmers identify unmet consumer needs. Conduct off-season meetings to share the results of the Community Food Project surveys. Focus on key items that are always in short supply and provide technical growing information to encourage increased production.	
	Integrate supply and demand among food entrepreneurs. Develop a forum for discussion between local farmers and chefs, caterers, and stores. This can include area wineries, and beef entities. Local grains could be grown and sold for the specific needs of local breweries, and farmers could use the spent grains as a livestock feed. Joint promotional efforts will also serve to bring additional attention to tourism amenities and attract new spending within the region.	
	Develop a pilot project for "scaling up" to provide more produce for institutional customers. Do some joint production planning for 2-3 items that multiple farms can grow to produce the critical mass needed to begin supplying local schools, hospitals, or hospitality providers.	
	Support expanded urban agriculture opportunities. Community gardening offers a wonderful venue for fresh food, entrepreneurial training, and brightening up neighborhoods. The Prices Fork Development presents an immediate opportunity to create a substantial community gardening component.	
	Encourage the establishment of Community Supported Agriculture. These cooperative projects can help provide a base of supply and demand that can lead to other growth opportunities.	
	Create a food value-added center/shared use kitchen. This will help with the promotion of food-based entrepreneurship and increase awareness of local production.	
	Promote cluster development around greenhouse vegetables. The scale of the newly implemented Red Sun Farms facility offers enormous opportunities for spin-off activities and enterprises.	
E. Agritourism		
	Support the expansion of agritourism opportunities. This dynamic aspect of the current agricultural development landscape shows innovation and entrepreneurial energy. Room for growth exists in creating linkages and partnerships with other businesses in the region, and agritourism activities can significantly affect economic growth.	
	Develop an agritourism center along I-81. Make it a clearinghouse of information amongst farmers and agency personnel, and a "one-stop" source of information for tourists. A possible center could also include a local agricultural history museum.	
	Transform tourists into agritourists. Expand the traditional definition of agritourism to include existing tourism activities and add agriculture components when possible.	

	Include more agritourism opportunities on related websites and on-line directories. Focus on coordinating future brochures and publicity efforts. This could also include regional coordination with neighboring counties to include more integrated agritourism possibilities that could attract larger crowds.	
	Create a central calendar. This calendar could coordinate tourism related events to avoid conflicts and dilution of potential attendees, as well as partnerships between farms and other local businesses (inns, crafts, restaurants) for joint promotional efforts.	
	Increase the focus of tourism on local heritage and outdoor recreation. There are several historical and heritage based advantages that could be further utilized by the tri-county area. Hikers, boaters, and campers are all part of a growth sector in the county; these tend to be consumers with above-average income and a heightened appreciation of buying locally.	
	Assess agritourism opportunities and "next steps." o Conduct interest meetings for producers and interested individuals in local tourism businesses to determine the needs of both consumers and producers. This may entail regional meetings or a basic survey to assess tastes and preferences. o Assess the need for tourism related infrastructure that will lead to increased visits and economic impact. o Assess current and future promotional materials and marketing outlets that can be developed to increase agritourism activities. o Identify specific groups that might like local farms and work with leadership to organize events. (bicycle-to-farm, horse trail riders, birdwatchers, foodies, etc.)	
F. Wine, Beer, & Cider		
	Encourage wine grape production. Demand outstrips supply Practices that encourage more production would increase a high value crop with many agritourism linkages.	
	Coordinate existing producers with agritourism opportunities. Given the success of other regions in utilizing grape production and wineries to attract tourists and consumer spending, any opportunity to link local producers with such opportunities should be explored.	
G. Education & Next Generation		
	Further support and promote the 4-H and FFA programs. Financial and technical assistance are a worthy investment in the next generation of farmers and a stronger urban understanding of rural communities. Youth activities of all kinds are crucial to cultivate that next generation of farmers, with particular focus on middle schools.	
	Expand internship and placement programs. Programs such as these can help to expand entrepreneurial capacity and long term industry growth, as well as supplement labor shortages. Foster the next generation of farmers. Utilize apprenticeships, youth agriculture leadership programs and organizations. Farmers need assistance negotiating liability and legal concerns.	

	Work with education linkage programs such as Virginia Tech's *VT Engage*. Promote the placement of students in volunteer opportunities within the farming community. This type of collaboration should include diverse agricultural sectors, including horticulture, beef, dairy, and others.	

Category	Recommendation	Partner
County Specific		
Because many of the recommendations are applicable to each of the three counties that are the subject of this plan, the following county-specific recommendations cover only those that are unique to each county.		
Giles		
	Highlight the Land Lab at Giles County High School. This program provides huge potential for connecting current and aspiring farmers. The advisory team should work with school leadership to develop a short and long-term plan for the continued growth of this program.	
	Become the small ruminant center for the region. Giles is already drawing in customers from far away to the Giles Farm Bureau Cooperative Store. Add additional resources such as educational programming and networking to promote Giles County as a resource for the region.	
	Create agriculture and forestal district program. Mapping of agricultural and forestal districts could be used to raise public awareness of the existence of the local agricultural community.	
Montgomery		
	Establish a local farm tour. Setting up a weekend open-house type tour, similar to Carolina Farm Stewardship Association tours. These tours can help showcase local farms producing food for local consumers.	
	Highlight and clearly identify locally grown food. This should include some sort of branding initiative similar to other regions and state programs. Instituting this type of activity will help counteract the negative aspects of reseller markets.	
	Support Prices Fork Elementary School redevelopment project. The possibilities for redevelopment of this facility have included discussion of community gardens, food incubator, or value-added components.	
	Increase community involvement in local and value-added food activities. Leadership should seek to expand community gardens, work on cooking and canning skills, classes and workshops. Virginia Fresh Food Loan Fund is soliciting applications from the NRV area that could cover this and the previous recommendation.[70]	
	Work with chamber of commerce to develop partnerships between local businesses, including partnerships among hotels, and restaurants, or collaboration to create gift packages. The Chamber is looking for local farms to produce crafts and Christmas trees.	

[70] www.vacommunitycapital.org/uploads/VFFLFproduct.pdf

	Revisit the farmers' market ordinance. Participating farmers don't seem satisfied. Research and observe the best publicly run farmers' markets in Virginia, and seek to learn lessons and best practices to enhance the success of markets in Montgomery County.	
	Examine the storm water ordinance. Leadership should examine and clarify how this ordinance will impact agricultural producers.	
Pulaski		
	Become the greenhouse vegetable capital of the East Coast. Develop an internship and apprentice program. Work with Red Sun to find what purchased inputs could be produced locally.	
	Create agriculture and forestal district program. Mapping agricultural and forestal districts can be used to raise public awareness of the existence of the local agricultural community.	

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Is Your Community Farm-Friendly?

- Practical land use policies (from good info in Planning for an Ag Future)
    - Provide details in comprehensive plan
    - Separate plan for areas important to agricultural uses
    - Define and allow agricultural uses
    - Require buffer zones between agriculture and residential use zones
    - Make use of open space created by innovative residential zones
    - Acknowledge the changing nature of agriculture
- Reasonable Local Regulation (from Planning for an Ag Future)
    - Allow direct marketing such as roadside stands and PYO by right
    - Allow support businesses and value-added businesses to exist
    - Allow energy production systems to mitigate energy costs
    - Focus local ordinances on production agriculture not specific activities, equipment or structures.
    - Define home occupations or small businesses that are compatible with agricultural areas.
    - Allow simpler design standards for seasonal agricultural ventures.
    - Allow flexibility to accommodate the unusual needs of on premise production.
    - Allow temporary off-site signs to attract customers to seasonal agricultural activities.
- Promote and encourage stewardship principles (from Planning for an Ag Future)
- To encourage growth and development of agriculture, there needs to be a secure base of agriculture and a farm friendly regulatory environment.

Appendix B: Tri -County Vision Sessions with Local Agriculture Producers

Virginia Cooperative Extension recently conducted a Tri-County Vision Sessions were conducted with local producers and extension agents that covered agriculture and agritourism related resources and marketing ideas for each of the three counties. The main points from these meeting are provided below and serve as a reference in conjunction with the Agritourism section of this strategic plan. Many of the strategies outlined in the Agritourism section can be easily combined with the information gathered below to formulate a plan for implementation.

Report 1A: Giles County Producers and Extension Agents

Giles County:

- Connect public with agriculture
- Coordinate to make consistent supply for commercial use/sale → value added pricing → working together to get premium
- Focus on agribusiness
- Standards of quality
- Coop to make value added possible
- Bring more money into county
- Executive advice to market/manage/coordinate producers, and their products (i.e. who raises what, etc.)
- Calendar of events
- Marketing of what we have
- Non-producer member to coordinate producers
- Benefit to the greatest extent (as many producers as possible)
- Branding of the region → visual identification for the county
- Expand agribusiness → forestry
- Play off the "local" interest mindset

Name Suggestions:

- New River Valley and Agriculture Business
- Local
- Fresh
- Grown
- New River Bounty
- Agriculture
- Sustainability
- Harvest (ed)

Agritourism Definition:

- "More to See and Do"
- Education
- 2 Categories:
    - Bringing in people that spend money
    - Brining in people that spend time in Giles
- Package deal: having multiple events to visit collectively

- "Any agricultural activity that would encourage tourists to participate and learn about it."
- Diversified/value-added/additional income
- VCE definition of agritourism
- Concentrated organized ways to view nature

Advantages to Include in Marketing:

- 37 miles of New River
- Cascades
- Appalachian Trail
- National Forest/ Pandapas Pond
- Pretty farms
- Wildlife
- Mountains
- Lack of development
- Hiking
- Star gazing
- Sense of community → that recognizes the importance of agriculture
- Encouraging local/county government
- Fishing/boat ramps
- Strong agricultural businesses: TSC, livestock market
- The beginnings of school farm
- Space
- Route 460
- Close to VT → employees, and students that will spend more money

Report 1B: Pulaski County Producers and Extension Agents

Pulaski County:

Agritourism Definition:

- "No lazy vacations" –ACTIVE
- "Working"/Volunteering in addition to new experience
- Opportunity to diversify income
- Preserve rural character
- Help agriculture to be more sustainable
- Hunting
- Fishing (Carroll Co example): paying to do so
- Inclusive
- Learn and see stuff
- Demonstration- old farm equipment

Advantages to Include in Marketing:

- Air quality
- Natural resources
- Hunting

- Climate
- Access to quality water
- Mountains: Appalachian Trail, forests, hiking, scenery
- Roads/ease of access: public getting here, and products getting out
- Railroads
- Pricing: cheap stuff/activities
- People: character, friendly → sense of community
- Colleges
- Technology infrastructure (availability of information)
- VTC, NRV Explore

Mission:

- Access to school level/information (using it as a catalyst for information)
- Internet
- Up-to-date information
- Wineries
- Artisan tours: farms, crafters
- Coordinate/promote information
- Cross sector marketing→ industry/business
- Intra-marketing
- Industry support/involvement
- Education/information
- Reduce barriers of entry (into industry/agritourism)
- Agriculture industry friendly regulations
- Identified success stories

Name Suggestions:

- Contest (farmers, industry)
    - Efficient/clear
    - Name and picture
    - Ex: (Pulaski) Orchestrated by Nature
- Inclusive
    - With sub-categories
    - Ex: Kitchen Counter Cooking School
- Focus on language

Report 1C: Montgomery County Producers and Extension Agents

<u>Montgomery County:</u>

Agritourism Definition:

- Hands On --- Minds On Experience
- Active or participative
- Rural
- Exciting, experience
- Farm and Family showcase

- Preservation, culture sharing
- Income
- Liability
- Protection-farmers
- Respect of profession/lifestyle
- Enticement
- Kentland Farm –Farm & Family Showcase
- Kid's Activities
- Cultural Sharing
- Genealogy Research…Common Family Names
- Educational
- Share and advertise our great climatic conditions "Natural Air Conditioning"
- Barn Dances
- Outdoor cooking
- Trails, Rivers: natural resource activity
- Horse Trails, Stables, Family Activities
- Working Vacations/"Staycations"
    - Stay and harvest grapes
    - Sheer sheep…process wool
    - Learn about a NRV culture, an ag practice, cooking classes, apple butter, wheat to bread class, how to use any local product…

Production Agriculture:

- Highlight production agriculture with expos, farm tours
- Opportunities with and through the Vet school
- Needed infrastructure to expand markets and local food systems
    - Increased processing/aggregation opportunities

Advantages to Include in Marketing:

- Education
- Sharing of culture, uniqueness of the NRV
- Resource Sharing
- Where to does your food come from…more informed consumers/buyers
- Income generating
- AG Business Incubator
- Develop app. Toward production agriculture
- Educate about production
- Foster respect for agriculture and natural resources
- Incubator
- Farm Expo
- Keeping product local
- Improve infrastructure
- Agriculture friendly policy/regulation

Mission of Marketing:

- Income
- Safety
- Sharing an experience
- Gaining appreciation for rural character
- Rural character
- Sharing a process environment
- Finding the gaps
- Increase communication
- Information sharing
- Educational
- Sharing/connections
- Inspiration
- Marketing
- Unique-stand out

Name Suggestions:

- Land and Sky ex.
- Agribeauty-NRV
- Harvesting the Blue Ridge
- Agri-spire
- Fields of Green
- New River Foundations

How to Share Resources:

- Website
- Paper ADS –
- Newsletter for producers/farmers and a Public Newsletter to advertise events
    - Forums on the website --- Farmer/Service Provider Toolkits
- Listservs
- Facebook, Social Media

Statement:

"Agriculture is very important". We all are part of the agriculture system; we all eat, wear clothes, and live under shelter. We need to appreciate and support such a vital system to all parts of life.

<u>Sustain Floyd:</u>

- One way to increase the demand and interest in what farmers in our region are producing is to develop a marketing campaign that allows the farmers to differentiate their products from the products produced by other farmers outside of the region.
- One way to bring this difference to the attention of our customers/buyers is by branding our products.

Appendix C: Beef Slaughter Break-Even Analysis

The data utilized in examining the possibility of a beef processing facility are based upon information gathered from several small to medium scale processing facility studies. The data presented in this document is meant to provide information for decisions regarding the possibility of a facility in the tri-county area.

The table below presents details of the processing facilities which were utilized to estimate expense and revenue figures for the preliminary break even model. The three businesses fall within a reasonable range of a small to medium sized processing facility. The estimates utilized in the break even model are also presented in the column labeled NRV. More detailed explanations and the calculation of break even figures are presented later in the document.

Table 7: General Facility Descriptions

	VA Study 1	Georgia Study	VA Study 2	NRV Est.
Building	$975,000	$500,000	$975,000	$950,000.00
Design	$51,000	n/a	$60,000	$55,000.00
Land	$195,000	$250,000	$195,000	$185,000.00
Equipment	$152,530	$266,094	$175,000	$170,000.00
Labor	$320,687	$316,159	n/a	n/a
Size	6400 sq ft	"smaller"	n/a	“smaller”
Species	Beef	Multi-Species	Multi-Species	Beef

The following scenario results show the amount of cows that must be processed to cover the main expenses of a slaughter facility. Sales and expense figures were estimated based upon other studies of small to mid-sized multi-species slaughter facilities.

Capital Costs

The tables below present the capital costs of setting up the facility, which includes site preparation and equipment purchase. The Table below shows a total cost of processing cattle at $1.36 million which includes the processing facility, land, design and equipment.

Table 8: Capital Costs

Capital Costs	
Building	$950,000.00
Land/Site Preparation	$185,000.00
Equipment	$170,000.00
Design	$55,000.00
Total Cost of Capital	**$1,360,000.00**

Financing

As is typically, the venture is financed using both owner equity as well as loans. It is assumed that the processing equipment will be purchased utilizing 40% owner equity and 60% debt. The terms of the loan are seven years term loan at 7% interest. If the facility processes only cattle, the monthly payment will be approximately $1,600.00.

The financing assumptions for land/site preparation and the purchase of the processing facility include the fact that these types of loans are typically 20-40 years long, with an average applied interest rate of 8%, resulting in a total monthly payment of approximately $4,430.

The loan for build out/design is shown last. This is associated with the expense of creating a building design that will properly house the processing equipment and any installation related to the equipment such as higher volt electrical outlets or a thicker foundation. Due to the lower cost of this loan, this is expected to be financed mainly by equity. The monthly payment estimated for this component is $381.

It should be noted that the payments, lengths, and interest rates will vary based on how the firm chooses to finance each cost. The terms and interest rates that have been applied to this model are based upon industry averages. In total, the processing facility will incur a monthly loan payment of around $6,400.00.

Table 9: Total Monthly Finance Payment

Total Monthly Payment	$6,388.25

Revenue (per unit)
The anticipated average amount of revenue per unit that a facility could expect to make from each animal slaughtered and processed given the assumptions used is $315. The price charged to customers is made up of the fixed slaughter price and the variable processing charge, which is based upon the yield amount of each animal. For the purposes of this scenario we have assumed an average combined processing and slaughter charge.

Variable Margin
Next, the variable or contribution margin is what the firm expects to make off the average animal species after variable expenses have been accounted for. A variable margin percentage of 35% has been assumed based upon the rates applied in similar studies. This percentage means that after variable costs have been expensed, such as hourly processing labor, packaging and utilities, 35% of sales dollars remain and results in a dollar figure per unit of $110.25.

Break Even (Equipment and Variable Costs)
The following table shows the number of animals that must be processed in order to generate enough revenue to cover variable costs as well as the cost of equipment. Other fixed costs such as the building and land purchase are not included in this scenario.

In order to produce enough revenue to cover the monthly principal payment of $1,600.00 on the cattle equipment, the venture must slaughter 3 cows per week or 14 per month.

Break Even (Total Capital Costs and Variable Costs)
The next scenario takes into account all capital costs, ranging from the building and land purchase to equipment as well as variable costs. The facility would need to slaughter 14 cows per week or 58 per month.

Break Even (Capital Costs, Variable Expenses and Other Expenses)
The following scenario takes into account capital costs, variable costs, and other expenses. These other expenses are generally fixed costs and include items such as manager salaries, insurance payments, and professional service fees. As with the previously presented figures, these estimates were taken from a similar study of a plant.

Table 10: Other Expenses

Other Expenses	
Indirect Labor	$73,000.00
General and Administrative	$24,000.00
Overhead	$55,000.00
Total (Annual)	**$152,000.00**
Total (Monthly)	**$12,666.67**

Results and Analysis
The results show that to cover the three types of expenses, a potential facility would need to process about **41 cows per week, 173 per month or 2,074 per year**. To reach breakeven, the processing facility would need to maintain this level of sales thorough out the year regardless of seasonality constraints.

Table 11: Break Even – Variable, Capital and Fixed Costs

Capital/Variable/Fixed Costs	
Per Month	**173**
Per Week	**41**

Appendix D Wine Industry Resources

Selected Industry Resource Entities:

- **Virginia Winery Distribution Company (VWDC)**
  This company is the result of action by the Virginia General Assembly to provide Virginia wineries an alternative to using independent wine wholesalers. Any Virginia Cooperative that chooses to participate may distribute up to 3,000 cases of their wine per year through VWDC.

- **Virginia Wine Wholesalers Association**
  Created in 2008, the Virginia Wine Wholesalers Association provides another means of distribution for Virginia wineries. Under the membership provisions of this association, wineries are able to become agents of the state of Virginia. As agents, these wineries are allowed to take orders from retailers and deliver their product to the retail location.[71]

- **Virginia Tech Plant Pathology, Physiology, and Weed Science Department**
  - Virginia Tech Wine/Enology Grape Chemistry Group
    - www.vtwines.info

- **Virginia Vineyards Association**
  The Virginia Vineyards Association, incorporated in March 1983, originated in 1979/80 as a joint effort for information exchange and cooperation among viticulturists, wineries, and Virginia Tech. Membership is open to all who share an interest in the Virginia viticulture industry.

- **Virginia Wine Board**
  Created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1984 as part of Virginia's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Virginia Wine Board promotes the interests of vineyards and wineries in the Commonwealth through research, education and marketing. The Board fulfills duties such as dispensing funding from the Virginia Wine Promotion Fund for wine-related projects and initiatives, contracting research to improve viticultural and enological practices in the Virginia wine industry, promoting education about and appreciation for Virginia wines, promoting the growing of wine grapes and wine production throughout the Commonwealth, disseminating information on wine and viticultural topics, contracting marketing, advertising and other programs that promote the growth of the state's wine industry and the enjoyment of Virginia wines, and collaborating with state, regional, national, and international organizations on their work related to Virginia's wine industry.

- **Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural Sustainability (VA FAIRS)**
  The Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural sustainability (VA FAIRS) is a not for profit foundation based in Richmond, Virginia, with the mission of

[71] Felberbaum, Michael. Va. takes Novel Approach to Wine Distribution. http://thecabin.net/stories/060108/bus_0601080005.shtml

assisting rural agricultural enterprises in developing and advancing their agricultural, economic and social interests to enhance their quality of life. VA FAIRS offers services to all Virginia producers and rural areas, including farmers, groups, associations, and agricultural and rural development centers. As such, the Center's services have been used in rural areas in Virginia and bordering states.

- **NRV Grape Growers Association**
  This association seeks to disseminate information among the areas producers by holding regular meetings to address a variety of topics related to grape and wine production. The meetings provide access to experts on various topics, and allow producers to share best practices and collaborate.

Appendix E: Selected Entities, Institutions, and Agencies

This list presents selected entities located in Giles, Pulaski, or Montgomery County as listed in the Virginia Employment Commission's Community Profile reports for each of the respective counties.

Business:

- VTech Corporate Research Center
- New River Valley Business Center
- New River Valley Commerce Park
- Jacksonville Center (Floyd Co)
- Radford University Business Assistance Center

Healthcare:

- LewisGale Hospital (Montgomery)
- LewisGale Hospital (Pulaski)
- Carilion Giles Community Hospital
- Carilion New River Valley Medical Center
- Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in the Corporate Research Center

NGO:

- New River Land Trust
- The Appalachian Trail Conservancy
- Catawba LandCare

Agencies:

- New River Valley Planning District Commission
- Conservation Management Institute (CMI) at Virginia Tech
- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
- Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Community Design and Assistance Center (CDAC) at Virginia Tech
- New River Highlands Resource Conservation and Development Council
- New River Valley Economic Development Alliance
- New River Valley Livability Initiative
- The Natural Resources Working Group

Appendix F: Matson Consulting Background

Since its inception in 2001, Matson Consulting has adhered to its mission of applying state-of-the-art methodologies and innovative approaches to help agricultural clients succeed.

We are a recognized expert in the creation of high quality feasibility studies and business plans for agricultural value added and local food ventures. We have successfully partnered with our clients to secure millions of dollars in grants and other funding. We specialize in USDA Rural Development programs with a proven record of success.

Products

- Business Plans
- Grant Applications
- Feasibility Studies
- Strategic Agricultural Development Plans
- Marketing Plans
- Survey Design and Implementation
- Strategic Planning and Analysis

We maintain a network of expert consultants across government agencies, businesses and academia that provide the information necessary to help businesses succeed. Our experts are of the highest caliber and typically have more than twenty years of practical experience.

We have helped a diverse clientele across a wide range of agricultural initiatives. Based on these professional experiences, Matson Consulting seeks to form an invaluable business relationship with new clients.

Industry Segments

- Dairy
- Wine, Vineyard, Hard Cider
- Farmers Markets
- Farm Expansion
- Value-added Vegetable Production
- Bio-Fuels & Bio-Gas
- Energy-Efficient Construction
- Pasture Raised, Organic, and Natural Livestock including Pork Beef, Poultry, & Sheep

Business Planning
Developing written business plans, Designing organizational structure, Creating successful business strategies, Initiating New Generation Cooperatives, Limited Liability Companies, S-Corporations, and Partnerships, Identifying potential capital and financial resources

Grant Facilitation
Identifying sources for grants, Writing and reviewing grant proposals, Recommending providers of professional services, Managing grant application through closeout, Evaluating progress and effectiveness

Board Training
Training for Boards of Directors and shareholders, Facilitating strategic planning workshops, Developing and conducting employee training programs, Creating programs to foster teamwork and productivity

Market Identification
Creating marketing plans to guide business initiatives, Developing surveys, Conducting market research, Preparing new products for market entry, Identifying marketing strategies, Analyzing competitor's market position

Financial Analysis
Determining project equity requirements, Conducting sensitivity, risk, and cash-flow analyses, Preparing financial business models, Calculating economic returns, Present business projections to financial institutions

Technical Assistance
We help you prevent and overcome difficulties you encounter throughout development stages

Survey Preparation
We design, execute, compile and analyze membership and marketing surveys for your organization

Qualifications of Selected Key Staff

JAMES MATSON

James Matson serves as a business advisor with expertise in feasibility, marketing and business organization, primarily with rural businesses to increase their management capacity. Mr. Matson has nearly twenty five years marketing, developing, researching, writing, and teaching experience in management for private, government, and non-profit organizations. He has owned a consulting firm since 2001. His experience includes working on projects in more than 25 U.S. states and 20 foreign countries. He holds a M.S. in Agricultural Economics.

Education

M.S., Agricultural Economics, University of California, Davis
B.S., Agricultural Business Management, International, North Carolina State University
B.A., Spanish Language and Literature, North Carolina State University
B.A., Economics, Honors Program, North Carolina State University
Graduate Institute of Cooperative Leadership, University of Missouri

Professional Experience

Founder and Principal, Matson Consulting, Aiken, SC: (2001-Present) Created and managed a business consulting firm specializing in value added agricultural and biomass energy enterprises. Responsible for all aspects of business including project bidding, staff and sub-contractor management, economic research, authoring publications, public presentations, client contacts, and finance.

Primary project areas are feasibility studies, business plans, capital planning, and strategic plans for rural based businesses. Other practice areas include business structure design and securing USDA grants and business financing (both equity and loans) for clients. His experience has also included teaching presentations at seminars, workshops, and conferences. The business has assisted more than 400 clients, which range from newly formed Limited Liability Companies to non-profit foundations to farm based anaerobic methane digesters. The firm aided (helped) clients to obtain more than $25 million in grants and several hundred million dollars of loans. Matson Consulting has participated in more than 125 feasibility studies and similar numbers of business plans on clients behalf's.

Mr. Matson founded this company with the belief that when one door closes, anther opens. The firm aims to provide its clients with more than just a yes or no answer. It offers alternatives to negative responses, while providing valuable, independent, and objective feedback and guidance every step of the way.

Other Professional Experience

- Adjunct Professor of Economics, Aiken Technical College, Graniteville, SC (2010-Present)
- Partner, Heatherwood Consulting Group LLC, Aiken, SC (2002-2011)
- Senior Consultant, Community College Workforce Alliance, VA (2004-2006)
- Agribusiness Specialist, Development Alternatives, Inc. Bethesda, MD – Bolivia (2000-2001)

- Agricultural Marketing Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): Rural Business-Cooperative Service. Washington, D.C. (1998-2000)
- Interim Project Director, TechnoServe, Inc. Lima, Peru (1997-1998)
- Agribusiness Advisor, U. S. Peace Corps. Las Piedras, Uruguay (1995-1997)

GERRY COHN

While working as the Project Field Coordinator with Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA, Cohn supported farmers and communities developing new agricultural enterprises in tobacco dependent rural areas.

As the Southeast States Director with American Farmland Trust from 2000-2008, Cohn worked with communities across North Carolina to develop strategies that keep land in agricultural production and support viable farm businesses. As part of this national non-profit organization, he worked with a regional and nationwide network of professionals available to assist in understanding emerging agricultural issues, identifying relevant case studies and developing effective solutions.

While Southeast Regional Pool Manager with CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley from 2008-2013, Cohn recruited farmers to join a national marketing cooperative and provided technical assistance in all aspects of crop and livestock production to enhance the use of local resources and increase farm profitability.

As a private consultant, Cohn has developed County Agricultural Development Plans, business plans for individual farms, production budgets, supply and demand analyses, and local food enhancement strategies, working with a wide range of experts in the public, private, non-profit, and university sectors.

Education

M.S., Agricultural Economics, University of California, Davis
M.A., Development Studies, University of Dar Es Salaam – Tanzania. Rotary Scholar.
B.A., Peace War & Defense, University of North Carolina. Morehead Scholar.
Ag Biz Planner Course, Farm Credit University

Other Professional Experience

- Project manager, strategy development, farmer and community outreach, draft and final plan development.
- Southeast Pool Coordinator with Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative.
- Past Southeast Region Director with American Farmland Trust and Tobacco Communities Project Field Coordinator with Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA.
- Charter member of North Carolina Department of Agriculture Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund Advisory Committee and Black Family Land Trust.
- Authored *Planning for an Agricultural Future: A Guide for North Carolina Farmers and Local Governments*.
- Wrote or co-wrote agricultural development plans in seven North Carolina counties: Alamance, Buncombe, Caswell, Durham, Franklin, Guilford, and Wake.

AFID Planning Grant – Interim Report

Planning for Agritourism and Agribusiness Benefits in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

For Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products and diversifying the mix of tourism products and services available to visitors. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community. In addition, before the local farming community can consider the use of agriculture as a means of diversifying and increasing their income, the region needs to identify the challenges associated with creating agritourism and agribusiness opportunities.

I. Activities Performed

Summary of activities performed during the reporting period:

- Utilize the "Planning for an Agriculture Future Guide for Virginia Farmers and Local Governments" to identify what areas need to be addressed in order to create agriculture market expansion:
    - The Virginia Cooperative Extension compiled survey results from the March 20, 2014, Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, held in Riner. Workshop participants had the opportunity to review and add to the online asset inventory map, brainstorm ideas on how to create links between entities, and identify what was missing in the region. Some of the gaps in agritourism offerings, that workshop participants identified, included: forest/natural resource opportunities, horseback riding, farm to table restaurants, community supported agriculture, farm stays, commercial kitchens that host cooking preservation classes, tree farming, hunting/fishing, and identifying a brand for the region.

    - Next steps of the Education Subcommittee include continuing public outreach and education efforts that include a Agritourism Tour on September 12th. In addition, reporting public feedback to the Steering Committee for integration into the strategic planning effort.

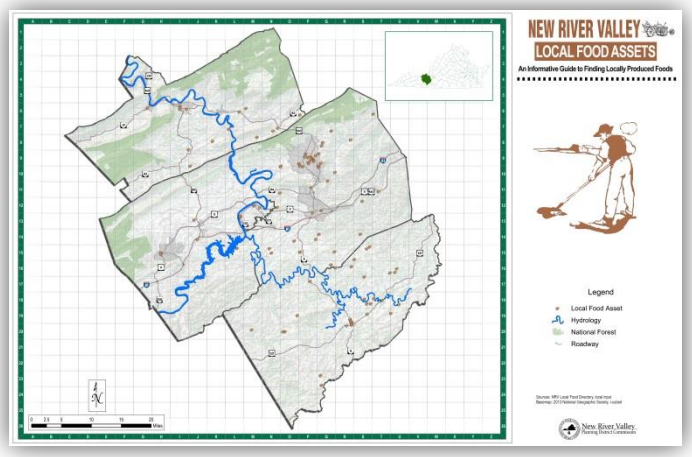
- Identify the general tourist markets for agritourism:
    - Completed June 9, 2014 with consultant group. Five key marketing groups have been identified: 1) Out-of-State Activity Seekers, long trip vacationers that are open to short trips; 2) In-State Explorers, seasonal short trips; 3) Loyal Enthusiasts, typically returning customers that need only moderately refined experiences; 4) Accidental Tourists, just passing through and only available for a short window of time; 5) Family Agritourism Adventurers, summer vacations that are focused on local experiences and food.
    - Next steps involve the Management Team working with the Strategic Plan Consultant to identify potential assets that align individually with each of the five marketing groups.
- Develop a marketing campaign for agritourism:
    - The consultant group outlined conceptual methods of engagement for each of the five market groups in a draft chapter of the strategic plan. The Marketing Subcommittee is currently working on a consumer rack card that features local Farmer's Market information on the front and information about the NRV Agritourism and Agribusiness project on the back.
    - The next steps of the Marketing Subcommittee include soliciting an RFQ for marketing assistance.
- Identify existing and potential agribusiness and agritourism products in the region – Develop a regional strategic plan for agriculture economic development:
    - The consultant group is in the early stages of collecting and integrating relevant data into the strategic plan. Work complete includes reviewing local agricultural trends such as the total number of farms, average farm size, market value of agriculture products sold (shown right), percentage of landuse dedicated to specific types of farming, and demographic data.
    - Next steps for the consultant group include continuing to develop the strategic plan by analyzing agriculture supply, market shares, developing strategies for the long-term health of products, and highlighting the possibility of accessing new markets. Over the next few months, a representative from each county will review and contribute to the development and completion of a draft strategic plan. The sub-committee is tasked with two goals: 1) provide suggestions/questions to the consultant regarding content, and 2) creating a basic overview that highlights each chapter for the Steering Committee.

Comparison of actual accomplishments with the approved Work Plan:

Goal 1: Develop a strategic plan for agriculture economic development in the region		
Establish a Steering Committee	Target: May 2013	Complete: August 2013
Utilize VA Guide to collect existing data in each county	Target: September 2013	Complete: September 2013
Host a strategic plan meeting	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
Prepare a summary report regarding information collected at each county	Target: April 2014	Complete: April 2014
Procure consultant (Matson)	Target: January 2014	Complete: January 2014
Participate in plan development	Target: July 2014	On Schedule
Complete a strategic plan	Target: August 2014	On Schedule
Goal 2: Identify capacity building programs for farmers		
Complete surveys that identify training needs of local farmers	Target: June 2014	Complete: April 2014
Present training needs to Steering Committee	Target: June 2014	Delayed – Target: August 2014
Goal 3: Collect information on existing markets and products		
Design and distribute survey (via online and traditional mail)	Target: February 2014	Integrated into consultant's scope of work
Compile survey feedback and present results to Steering Committee	Target: March 2014	Integrated into consultant's scope of work
Develop an online asset inventory map	Target: December 2014	Complete: February 2014
Develop and maintain GIS data	Target: December 2014	On Schedule
Goal 4: Strengthen, sustain, and increase opportunities for agritourism in the region		
Participate in monthly Steering Committee Meetings	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Host a roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations	Target: January 2014	Delayed – Post Strategic Plan
Provide recommendations to each county (policy/regulation)	Target: February 2014	Delayed – Post Strategic Plan
Goal 5: Establish a data collection system to evaluate the impact of agritourism and agribusiness		
Perform economic impact analysis	Target: June 2013	Delayed – Target: August 2014
Present research to the Steering Committee	Target: August 2014	On schedule

Present the significant contributions and role of project partners in the project:

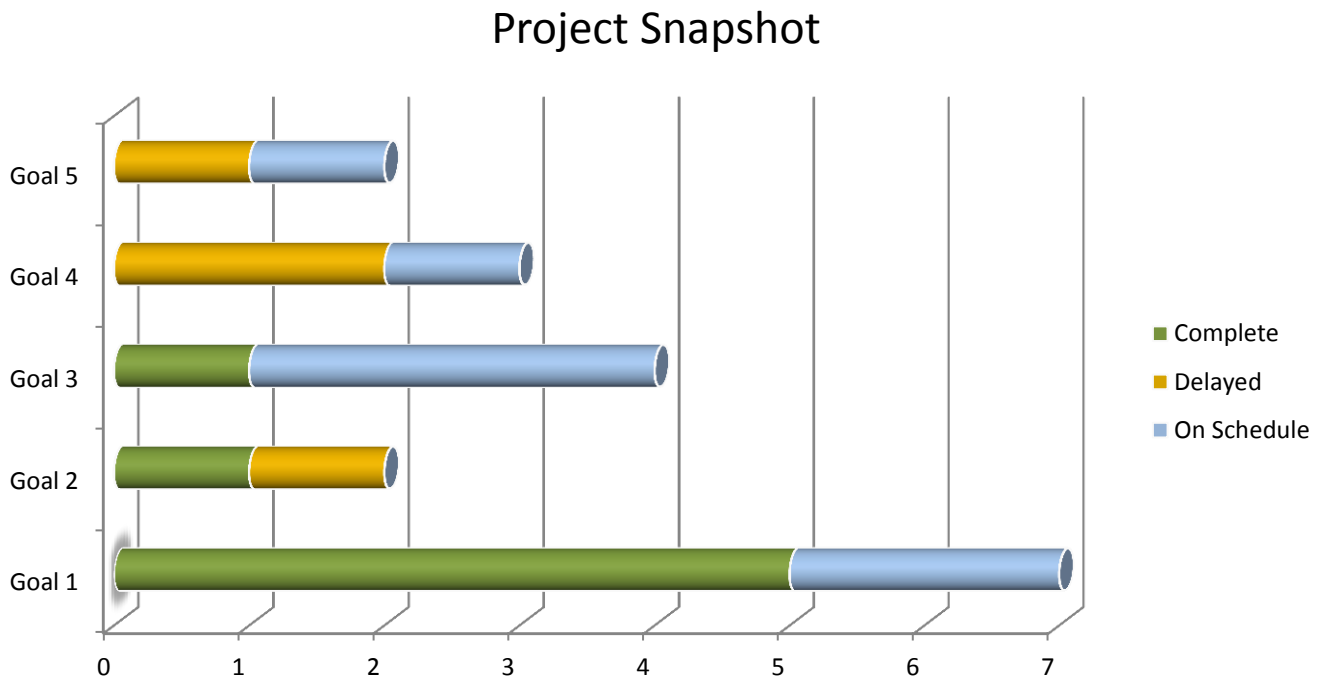
- This project continues to be led by a multijurisdictional and multidisciplinary team that includes representatives from: Giles County, Montgomery County, Pulaski County, local farmers, Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension, New River Valley Planning District Commission, Virginia Tourism Commission, and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Management Team:
    - Meetings in October 2013 and June 2014
    - Selection of Strategic Plan Consultant in March 2014
    - Supporting Strategic Plan Consultant with the development of a Strategic Plan
    - Contracting with New River Valley Planning District Commission for Grant Management in June 2014
- Education Subcommittee:
    - Local stakeholder group workshops, Summer of 2013, in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, 50+ participant total between three workshops
    - Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, Selah Springs Farm, March 20, 2014, 50+ participants
    - Farmer's Market – the Basics: Doe Creek Farm, May 28, 2014, 25+ participants
    - Continued Agritourism and Agribusiness educational programs – upcoming September local Agribusinesses tour
- Marketing Subcommittee:
    - Working with a Radford University communications class on Agritourism campaigns
    - Producing a consumer information piece design that features information about local Farmer's Markets and goals of this project
    - Developing marketing piece targeted towards producers
    - Continued research on marketing ideas for the initiative
    - Continued research on service providers that support multi-media platforms
- Consultant Support:
    - Development of interactive Local Food StoryMap, identifies: Farmer' s Markets, meat, dairy, eggs, produce, flowers, honey, bedding plants and gardening supplies, community supported agriculture, farmstands and pick-your-own, wine, ale, cider, restaurants and caterers, grocer and coop, food assistance programs, and food diversion groups. The map provides links to local agribusinesses websites and enables users to submit missing or new businesses. Link: http://www.nrvpdc.org/Agritourism/Local_Food/. Initial draft complete February 2014.



    - Initial draft content of the Strategic Plan submitting to Management Team, includes: Introduction and Background, Review of Agritourism, Analysis for Beef-Cattle supply, and a Land and Agriculture. Initial draft submitted for comment in July 2014.

II. Problems and Delays

- Currently, no unexpected delays or challenges have been encountered for this project; however, a few project deliverables are behind the initial target completion date. No changes are currently proposed to the scope of work as a result of delaying product deliverables. Tasks that are currently delayed include:
    - Goal 2 Deliverable, Present training needs to Steering Committee: Change took place due to lack of time on agenda – survey is complete and results are available for committee review. Presenting the results is scheduled for August 2014.
    - Goal 4 Deliverable, Host roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations: Change took place due to accommodating Strategic Plan schedule. Policy and regulation discussion may be more beneficial following the completion of the Strategic Plan. Opportunity to recommend aligning policies and regulations to support plan outcomes.
    - Goal 4 Deliverable, Provide policy/regulation recommendations to each county: Change took place due to accommodating Strategic Plan Schedule. Policy and regulation recommendations can be tailored to support opportunities and challenges specific to each participating local government.
    - Goal 5 Deliverable, Perform economic impact analysis: Change took place due to shifting financial resources to accommodate additional consultant support. Project deliverable scaled back.
- Due to the need for shifting financial resources; the economic impact analysis deliverable will be scaled back. The consultant developing the Strategic Plan is tasked with reviewing existing trends in the region and identifying potential opportunities in Agritourism and Agribusiness. In addition, the committee research and integrate case studies into the project.
- At this time, the work plan, outcomes, budget, and/or methodology doesn't need to be adjusted.
- At this time, no changes are anticipated in this project.



III. Funding Expended To Date

- Grant funds expended to date, brief project description, amount, date, source of funds, and relationship to the workplan:

Expenditure Description	Check Number	Cost	Funding Source						Program Totals	Relationship to Activities in the Workplan
			AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Montgomery County	Pulaski County	In-Kind		
			81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*			
			Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge		
Contract Execution - 3800			$1,250.00	$2,500.00	$918.00	$918.00	$918.00	$0.00	**$6,504.00**	Activities completed under contract execution directly relate to the initial project start-up. Tasks complete included coordinating management team meetings, assigning sub-group working committees, preparing management team meeting summaries and other supporting documentation. In addition, MOUs were completed with funding partners.
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	112809	$262.50	$50.45	$100.90	$37.05	$37.05	$37.05	$0.00	$262.50	
AFID Execution, Education, Planning, 04/02/14	114014	$227.50	$43.72	$87.45	$32.11	$32.11	$32.11	$0.00	$227.50	
Contract Execution, 01/23/14	113101	$140.00	$26.91	$53.81	$19.76	$19.76	$19.76	$0.00	$140.00	
RFP-Strategic Plan, 02/05/14	113400	$503.04	$96.68	$193.36	$71.00	$71.00	$71.00	$0.00	$503.04	
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	112809	$297.50	$57.18	$114.35	$41.99	$41.99	$41.99	$0.00	$297.50	
Contract Execution, 04/02/14	114014	$315.00	$60.54	$121.08	$44.46	$44.46	$44.46	$0.00	$315.00	
Contract Execution and Planning, 01/23/14	113101	$210.00	$40.36	$80.72	$29.64	$29.64	$29.64	$0.00	$210.00	
Contract Execution and Planning, 11/21/2013	111795	$630.00	$121.08	$242.16	$88.92	$88.92	$88.92	$0.00	$630.00	
Contract Execution, 09/04/2013	110502	$857.50	$164.80	$329.60	$121.03	$121.03	$121.03	$0.00	$857.50	
Contract Execution, Consultation, 09/04/2013	110502	$105.00	$20.18	$40.36	$14.82	$14.82	$14.82	$0.00	$105.00	
Contract Execution and Management, 10/02/2013	111002	$560.00	$107.63	$215.25	$79.04	$79.04	$79.04	$0.00	$560.00	
		Balance:	$460.48	$920.96	$338.18	$338.18	$338.18	$0.00	$2,395.96	
Research & Evaluation - 3801			$3,500.00	$6,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	**$23,011.00**	Activities completed under Research and Evaluation included working with the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau, and others to identify existing agritourism and agribusiness programs. The NRVPDC developed an interactive local food map.
Outreach and Contract Execution, 06/26/14	115122	$910.00	$318.50	$591.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$910.00	
NRVPDC, Asset Mapping, 06/04/14	114834	$1,100.00	$385.00	$715.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,100.00	
NRV Agriculture & Tourism, 06/11/2014	*Processing*	$405.00	$141.75	$263.25	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$405.00	
Local In-Kind Contributions	*Processing*	*Processing*	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
		Balance:	$2,654.75	$4,930.25	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	$20,596.00	
Education & Outreach - 3802			$4,500.00	$3,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,500.00	**$12,750.00**	Activities completed under Education and Outreach included a local input meeting in each county, Farmer's Market lectures, and a workshop titled Agritourism in a Creative Economy. Each event was attended very well and local input was documented so that it could be incorporated into the Strategic Planning Process.
Walmart, Farmer's Market: The Basics supplies, 6/19/14	115036	$87.87	$47.93	$39.94	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$87.87	
Office Max, Farmer's Market: The Basics supplies, 6/19/14	115036	$15.29	$8.34	$6.95	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$15.29	
Farmer's Market: The Basics postage, 6/19/14	115036	$49.00	$26.73	$22.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$49.00	
Outreach and Contract Execution, 06/26/14	115122	$875.00	$477.27	$397.73	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$875.00	
Farmer's Market: The Basics, Mileage, 06/26/14	115126	$179.20	$97.75	$81.45	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$179.20	
Farmer's Market: The Basics, Lecture Fee & Mileage, 06/26/14	115114	$430.72	$234.94	$195.78	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$430.72	
Hethwood Market, Lunch for 60 @ $11.00 each, 04/17/2014	114091	$784.58	$427.95	$356.63	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$784.58	
Hethwood Market, Lunch for 60 @ $11.00 each, 04/03/2014	114020	$940.75	$513.14	$427.61	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$940.75	
Walmart, Workshop, breakfast, 05/07/2014	114460	$91.82	$50.08	$41.74	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$91.82	
		Balance:	$2,615.87	$2,179.90	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,500.00	$9,295.77	
Marketing Strategy - 3803			$5,500.00	$4,500.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$0.00	**$13,750.00**	Activities completed under Marketing Strategy included research with local universities, developing draft materials, and identifying strategies that support the Strategic Plan.
Appalachian Grown, social media, 09/04/2013	110491	$50.00	$20.00	$16.36	$4.55	$4.55	$4.55	$0.00	$50.00	
Marketing and Planning, 01/23/14	113101	$70.00	$28.00	$22.91	$6.36	$6.36	$6.36	$0.00	$70.00	
		Balance:	$5,452.00	$4,460.73	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$0.00	$13,630.00	
Strategic Plan - 3804			$14,750.00	$7,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$0.00	**$25,000.00**	Activities completed under Strategic Plan included hiring a sub-consultant, interviews with local businesses, research, and developing draft materials for the Management Team.
Matson Consulting, Invoice # 3013, 07/17/2014	*Processing*	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	
		Balance:	$10,620.00	$5,220.00	$720.00	$720.00	$720.00	$0.00	$18,000.00	
Project Management - 3805			$5,500.00	$5,500.00	$2,622.00	$2,622.00	$2,622.00	$0.00	**$20,000.00**	Project Management is new to the process. The NRVPDC will have a stronger role in facilitating conversations, establishing milestones for the team, and reporting to grantors.
		Balance:	$5,500.00	$5,500.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$0.00	$18,986.00	

IV. Additional Information

- Project Primary Contacts
- Management Team
- Meeting Agendas/Notes
- Workshop Agendas
- Participant Lists
- Participant Surveys
- Local Food Assets Maps
- Strategic Plan Consultant Contract
- Project Management Consultant Contract

Primary Contacts

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	(804) 786-6911	Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	(804) 371-7167	Ramona.Chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
Giles County Administrator	Chris McKlarney	(540) 921-2525	cmcklarney@gilescounty.org
Montgomery County Administrator	Craig Meadows	(540) 382-6954	meadowsfc@montgomerycountyva.gov
Pulaski County Administrator	Peter Huber	(540) 980-7705	phuber@pulaskicounty.org
NRV Agritourism Project Manager	Elijah Sharp	(540) 639-9313	esharp@nrvpdc.org

Management Team

Project Role	Name	Affiliation
Chairperson	Chris McKlarney	Giles County
Project Coordination	Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Project Management, billing	Rhonda Tickle	Giles County
Regulation and Policy Sub-Committee Chair	Brea Hopkins	Montgomery County
Marketing & Tourism Sub-Committee Chair	Lisa Bleakley	Montgomery County
Education & Outreach Sub-Committee Chair	Kelly Scott	VA Cooperative Extension
Assessment and evaluation	Kevin Byrd	NRVPDC
Strategic Plan, tourism	Peggy White	Pulaski County
Grant writer	Dianne Dinger	Consultant
Capacity building and assessment	Jeannie Layton-Dudding	VA Cooperative Extension
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	DHCD
Project management, meeting facilitation, reporting	Elijah Sharp	NRVPDC

Meeting Agendas/Notes

AGRICULTURE & TOURISM CONSORTIUM
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2014
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – TRAINING ROOM
11:00 A.M.

I. Welcome & Introductions – Chris McKlarney
   A. Contract Execution & Outreach /Post Evaluation – Contract with NRVPDC
   B. Group Identification of the following (as requested by Ramona Chapman)
      i. Who are we?
      ii. Who do we serve?
      iii. What is our service?
      iv. What do we want to achieve?
      v. What is in it for the region and/or our targets?
      vi. Who do they contact?
   C. Review of June 4th meeting with Ramona Chapman

II. Subcommittee Updates
   A. Regulation/Policy Review – Brea Hopkins
   B. Building Capacity – Kelli Scott & Jeannie Dudding
   C. Asset Inventory/Economic Impact – Elijah Sharp (NRVPDC)
   D. Marketing Plan – Lisa Bleakley

III. Miscellaneous Team Items:
   A. Dainne Dinger – Outreach & Execution:
      i. Wholesale Dealers at local Farmers Markets
      ii. Effects of grape shortage on local wineries
   B. Kelli Scott – Statewide Assessment Meeting

IV. Strategic Plan Update – Matson Consulting

Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski Agritourism Project

Management Team Meeting June 9, 2014

Members Present: Chris McKlarney, Jenny McCoy, Jeannie Dudding, Brea Hopkins, Karen Drake, Kelly Scott, Lisa Bleakley, Danny Wilson, Peggy White, Dianne Dinger, Jim Matson, and Elijah Sharp.

Meeting Welcome & Introductions: McKlarney started the meeting at 11:08 am. Each meeting participant introduced themselves.

Contract Execution: McKlarney informed the group that the Agritourism Grant Management contract with the PDC was executed on June 6, 2014.

DHCD Questions: McKlarney informed the group that DHCD representative, Ramona Chapman, charged the group to answer the following questions:

1. Who are we?
2. Who do we serve?
3. What is our service?
4. What do we want to achieve?
5. What is in it for the region and/or our targets?
6. Who do they contact?

The group decided to table the conversation for a future meeting – mainly to allow the Management Team to consider how best to respond.

Subcommittee Updates:

- Regulation/Policy Review: Hopkins informed the group that this subcommittee was awaiting direction from Matson's Strategic Planning effort. The group supported this decision.
- Building Capacity: Scott informed the group that current public outreach and education efforts were underway. Work included developing a future workshop agenda, identifying core groups of stakeholders, linking community gems, and integrating ongoing statewide studies related to Agritourism. The group decided to invite the folks from the Virginia Cooperative Extension, who contributed to the recent publication on Agritourism, to the next Management Team Meeting.
- Asset Inventory/Economic Impact: Sharp informed the group that an interactive Storymap was complete and looking for a permanent website to host the information. The group asked the PDC to work with the Marketing Subcommittee to establish a project website that could later evolve into something broader for public use.
- Marketing Plan: Bleakley informed the group that she had recently completed a draft flyer that highlighted local Farmer's Markets on one side and featured a snapshot of the agritourism efforts on the second side. The group supported Bleakley's request to solicit an RFQ for marketing assistance with budgeted funds.
- Outreach& Execution: Dinger discussed local wholesale concerns of local farmers. Of particular concern are folks who buy produce from large markets and sell products as "local produce." In addition, a local winery had recently stressed concern regarding a shortage in VA grapes. The group discussed potential value of adding policy and regulation guidance to the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan Update and Outsider Perspectives:

- The group might consider reducing the amount of internal communication and create an internal calendar.
- Based on local feedback so far, can the group think of core areas the Strategic Plan could focus on?
- A draft Mission Statement was shared with the group. Initial thoughts and suggestions from the group involved removing references to specific commodities and agriculture opportunities – shifting the focus to helping farmers create more income.
- Reviewing local regulations that hinder famers from creating Agritourism related businesses could be valuable.
- How is Agritourism integrated into local Comprehensive Plans?
- Could water rights be an issue in the future?
- Are farmers adjacent to dense residential/populated area protected (sound wise) during early morning and later afternoon working hours?
- Audience of the Strategic Plan may need to be regulators – potential resource for localities.
- Beef Processing Facility would require $2.8M initial investment +180 head of cattle per month to sustain.
    - Potential reference Shenandoah Beef Cooperative: spent 4 years identifying market strategy
    - Potential reference Grayson Landcare
    - Potential consider lot where deliveries can occur night before large shipment
    - Potential CSA model for local beef
- May consider developing a Forestry Energy/Energy Generation Plan
- 5-key Marketing groups:
    - Out-of-State Activity Seekers: long trip vacationers, open to short trips – potential guide for activities within a certain driving distance.
    - In-State Explorers: Seasonal short trips
    - Loyal Enthusiasts: returning customers, need to refine experiences to continue return trips
    - Accidental Tourists: passing through, small window of time to entertain (1-2 hours)
    - Family Agritourism Adventurers: Summer vacationers focused on local food
- New website may not be needed – potentially tie into existing resources (So Fresh, Southwest Virginia Tourism, Explore NRV, etc.)
- Food Hub would require $1.5M – wine, produce, beef = good market sectors in NRV; fruit = not so good
- Farmers may be looking for training in traditional practice areas
- Consider methods to recruit new farmers to the area
- Create educational internships/experiences that line up with school curriculum

The group decided to have one representative from each locality review draft Strategic Plan content prior to sharing the full report with group. PDC will distribute draft chapters Scott, Dudding, and a to-be-determined Pulaski County representative.

Meeting Adjournment: 2:10 pm

Management Team Meeting with Ramona Chapman (DHCD)

The following items were discussed at the June 4th meeting; the following team members were present: Chris McKlarney, Jenny McCoy, Rhonda Tickle, Lisa Bleakley, Kevin Byrd, Elijah Sharp (NRVPDC), and Dianne Dinger.

Milestones Identified:

- Collaboration
  - College systems
  - School systems
    - Ag lab
  - Regional video assets
  - Flavours Magazine
  - Stronger relationship with Extension
- Communication with Ag Community
  - Farmers, producers, etc.
- Asset Inventory
  - Local foods & restaurants identified
- Raised Awareness with local government officials – greater connections & opportunities
- Capacity building
  - Visioning Sessions
  - 2 workshops hosted by Extension
- Producers identifying needs
  - The Green Market
  - Zoning
  - Marketing
- Inventory & asset mapping
  - Complete & online
- Agriculture representative meeting with tourism groups to plan itineraries
  - 5 agritourism itineraries created via Mingle on the Mountain

Needs Identified:

- Grant message needs to be affirmed
  - New opportunities & relationships
- Online presence/website
- Mailing list/links
- Communication with DMO's/VTC

Issues Identified:

- Wholesalers vs. Local Farmer Sales
- VA/local Grown vs. Out of State
  - Roadside Stand, Farmer's Markets, etc.
- Education of consumers
  - Seasonal foods
  - Preperation
- Education of Farmers
- Communication with Farmers
  - How do we talk to them?
    - Website(s)
    - Publications
    - Extension
- Criteria for inclusion/representation
  - Marketing
  - Local Support

- Bring on new partners
    - Farm Bureau
    - SBDC
    - Divers Farmers
    - Farm-to-Fork
- Farm value to the community
    - Need more positive image
    - Fairs & Festivals participation (Farmer presence)

Who are our *Targets*?

- Ag producers
- Agritourism Operators
- Tourists

Things to Identify:

1. Who are we?
2. Who do we serve?
3. What is our service?
4. What do we want to achieve?
5. What is in it for the region and/or our targets?
6. Who do they contact?

Miscellaneous Items:

- Ramona believes that it will not be an issue to extend the DHCD portion of the grant; moving the date from October 2014 to June 30, 2015 (AFID closes no later than August 31, 2015).
- All marketing pieces need the logos of the grantors and the localities represented.
- A letter explaining why the grant needs to be extended will need to be sent to DHCD.
- Key focus should be on creating a resource that can provide information for all ag related resources.

Summary of Tri-County Agritourism Meeting: Oct. 16th

With Dr. Martha Walker and Gus Ferreira

Survey Instrument:

- List of Objectives
- Ask Consumers the Agritourism need in the area
- Ask Producers what they need…how would they like to diversity

Audiences:

- Farmers looking to Diversify
- Beginning Farmers
- Current Agritourism Operators
- Consumers

Parts of a Strategic Plan

1. **Vision**
2. **Mission**
3. **Core Values**
4. **SWOT (Challenges & Opportunities)**
5. **Goals & Objectives**
6. **Budgets**
7. **Performance Indicators**

Plan of Work will follow the Strategic Plan

Martha Walker will provide a framework and suggestions for next steps.

Next Meeting, Nov. 20th in Radford.

Workshop Ideas:

Host a regional **"Agritourism in a Creative Economy"** workshop in a centralized location to the 3 counties. **(late February – early March)**.

- Follow-up with an Agritourism/Agribusiness in the New River Valley Farm Tours.
- Host a bus tour in each county this spring

I can develop the plan for the Montgomery County tour.

We will need someone to work on Giles and Pulaski County.

4 Day long Workshops/Tours

2 specialized workshops on Marketing

I suggest we have a total of 6 workshops of the area.

Agriculture Planning Management Team Meeting
Giles County Administration Committee
October 2, 2013

Subcommittees represented:
Subcommittee Contract Execution/Outreach: Jenny McCoy, Rhonda Tickle, and Dianne Dinger
Subcommittee Regulation/Policy: Steven Sandy, John Ross
Subcommittee Education: Kelli Scott, Jeannie Dudding
Subcommittee Strategic Planning: Kelli Scott
Subcommittee Research/Evaluation: Kevin Byrd
Subcommittee Marketing: Lisa Bleakley
Subcommittee: Post Planning: Dianne Dinger

Reports:

Subcommittee 1: Dianne Dinger

Contract Execution-

- AFID MOA signed agreement has been received. DHCD contract coming.Grant products have been integrated into subcommittee work plans and reports.Subcommittee activities were communicated to listserv through first electronic email.

Outreach

- Floyd:Memo circulated to MT Oct 2 re Floyd's participation (see below)

  (*Pat Sharkey- I do want to participate and help Floyd participate in the regional effort as much as possible given we are not "formal" partners. I will be doing an inventory of tourism-related businesses, which willinclude agri-tourism businesses this fall/ winter. The Task Force very much appreciates agriculture and forestry beingconsidered in our tourism planning - and I enjoyed talking to them about it.I also saw Jon Vest, our Floyd VCE agent, talked to him about the Giles-lead project, and gave him a copy your grant goals. He was enthusiastic (butextremely busy) about Floyd participation where possible. I think we can participate in any way that is appropriate without a formalgrant application.*)

Action Required: A general discussion occurred about the desire to have all the counties represented in the development of a NRV brand, Therelationship between another county joining the effort and the matching dollars contributed by Pulaski, Montgomery and Giles County was discussed, It was determined that an understanding of what other counties joining this effort would be required to contribute. County Administrators from the three counties will be asked to identify their expectations.

- Giles County Farm Bureau/New River Land Trust: John Eustis has notified us that the two entities will be hosting a meeting titled*Promoting and ProtectingAgriculture & Rural Character* in Giles on October 24 from 6-8 pm. As a representative of the agricultural community or a group who has an interest in the rural landscape and the community, we have been invited to send a representative.

General Discussion occurred regarding land conservation and how farmers could be educated about this initiative without aligning the grant or counties with one specific group, A list of resources at VT were provided to Kelli for her education workshops.

- Matching funds: Rhonda Tickle, Finance Director, asked each subcommittee to review their county match to determine what some of the sources that will be used to provide this.

  Action Required: If salaries or travel are to be used, please send Rhonda a letter so she can provide the team with the method that must be used to document this. Rhonda handed out Guidelines for Invoice Submission and talked about what is required to procure vendors. A suggestion was made to invite all three counties to send in the names of vendors they use when soliciting a bid for services so every county has an opportunity to communicate this needs.

- Communications between MT members

  Action Required: Jenny McCoy was asked to set up a drop box for MT communications

- Representation on MT of all three counties

  Action Required: Dianne was asked to draft a letter from the MT inviting Pulaski to identify a representative to sit on the MT.

- Meeting Schedule

  Action Required: Next meeting of MT is scheduled on Oct 16 from 9am to 10:30. It has been proposed that the MT meet monthly and the Steering Committee every other month. This will be presented at the Oct 16 meeting.

<u>Subcommittee 2</u>: Steve Sandy

Regulation and Policy Review

- Majority of costs associated with this objective are in-kind. First subcommittee will be held in late October. No action required.

<u>Subcommittee 3:</u> Kelli Scott/Jeannie Dudding

Education

-The subcommitteeplans to meet in October, tentatively on Monday, Oct. 7th. The subcommittee's most immediate goals are the development of the workshop series and survey tool used to gather data in the region. The chairs have a working list of suggestions and are also looking for venue and food prep options.

The subcommittee acquired 2 surveys instruments used to survey farmers in Virginia. The first from Kevin Byrd at the NRV Planning Commission and the second from an Agritourism Team (Gus Ferreira and Martha Walker, Virginia Tech/VCE). The chairs are looking at these surveys as possible models as we develop the survey. Once they get a draft, they will share the tool with the subcommittee members for comments. No action required.

<u>Subcommittee 4:</u> Kevin Byrd

Research and Evaluation

-This subcommittee is responsible for work plan 4 and 5
- NRVPDC is awaiting the start of a new employee on October 1st that will be responsible for the PDC portion of this project. They havediscussed how they are managing the deliverable for this project internally going forward and anticipate their portion of the work will pick up in a couple of weeks once they have staff in place. No action required.

<u>Subcommittee 6:</u> Kelli Scott

Strategic Planning

- Dr. Martha Walker will be attending the meeting Wednesday, Oct. 16th at 10:30am. The subcommittee was invited like to meet after the steering committee meeting for 30 minutes to an hour to get everyone on the same page. Three questions have been developed for members input:

What questions do you feel are most important to ask farmers about agribusiness and agritourism in the New River Valley?
What data do you think will be most important to this group?
What information will define the need of the region and help to drive this groups actions?

The goals for Subcommittee 6, Strategic Plan will develop in time. This is an ongoing and final piece of the tri-county grant effort.

It was asked how the grape growers, beef producers and forestry targets were identified as special targets. The histories of conversations/meetings during the vision sessions were briefly summarized.

Action Required: Kelli will ask Dr Martha Walker if she will officially accept the position as co-chair for this subcommittee. Dianne asked if the subcommittee would look at the Rhode Island strategic plan as a potential format.

Subcommittee 7: Lisa Bleakley

Marketing

Subcommittee members have been contacted and a meeting will be scheduled at the end of the month. A general discussion resulted re what will be marketed, who the intended audience is and what the priorities are at this time. Kelli shared a website model from Ashville. Cora had also shared a website model via email for the subcommittee's consideration.

Action Required: Propose name for project. Begin marketing subcommittee activities.

Subcommittee 8: Dianne Dinger

Post planning

Dianne explained the basic objectives this committee will address as one of the final components of the grant. Much of the work of this committee will not occur until the final quarter.

Workshop Agendas

INNOVATIVE COMMUNITIES

Agritourism in a Creative Economy

9:45 a.m.	**Welcome**	**
		**
10:00 a.m.	**Defining Virginia's Agritourism**	Leanne DuBois Virginia Department Agriculture and Consumer Services
10:45 a.m.	**Discovering and Linking to our Community's Hidden Gems**	
11:15 a.m.	**Connecting with the Planning & Zoning Ordinances**	
		**
11:45 a.m.	**Managing the Liability**	Martha A. Walker, Ph.D. Virginia Cooperative Extension
12:30 p.m.	***Networking Lunch sponsored by ******	
1:00 p.m.	**Marketing Strategies**	Sandra Tanner, Virginia Tourism Corporation
1:45 p.m.	**Brainstorming Agritourism Opportunities**	Martha Walker & Leanne DuBois
2:15 p.m.	**Learning from the Expert**	**
3:15 p.m.	**Next Steps & Evaluation**	Martha Walker

Agritourism programming in Virginia is co-sponsored by
Virginia Cooperative Extension,
Virginia Tourism, and
Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Proposed Agenda for Workshops

1. Agritourism in a Creative Economy (or similar title) [Walker & Team]

MARCH

2. Agritourism/Agribusiness Farm Tour for each county involved (currently 3 tours, Giles, Montgomery, & Pulaski**)** perhaps these 3 could be on Saturday, especially since the 'host producer' probably has a weekday job.
   Contacts for Tours:
   - Giles County, Jeannie Layton Dudding
   - Montgomery County, Kelli Scott
   - Pulaski County, Debbie Lineweaver, Scott McElfresh, with assistance from Jeannie & Kelli

JUNE/JULY

3. Marketing/Diversification/Local Food Systems/Farm Management (2 workshops) [VCE, Gus Ferreira] could include a local foods producer slant too. Meet & Greet with producers and buyers.

AUG/SEPT

Summary = 1 day long workshop, 3 day long county tours, 2 additional workshops = 6 total educational opportunities

Timeframe

March – end of October 2014.

Participant Lists

Participant list from the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop_March 20, 2014_Riner,VA

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Carol	Williams	The Rose
Stephen	Flinchum	Foggy Branch Farm
Jack	Wall	Floyd EcoVillage
Kamala	Bauers	Floyd EcoVillage
Pat	Sharkey	Floyd County Tourism Director
Whitney	Knollenberg	Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management (VT)
Nancy	McGehee	Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management (VT)
Amy	Komorowski	Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management (VT)
Steven	Bowman	Loan Officer | Farm Credit of the Virginias
Woody	Crenshaw	Riverstone Farm
Keith	Mileski	Mysitc River Lavender
Janice	Mileski	Mysitc River Lavender
Lee	Spiegel	Pulaski GROW
Jody Rose	Franko	
Mark	Bignell	
Steven	Porter	Loan Officer | Farm Credit of the Virginias
Diana B Blackburn	Blackburn	`Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network
Rhiannon	Leebrick	
Angie	Hall	Congressman Morgan Griffith Office VA-09
Gerry	Cohn	Matson Consultation
Chris	McKlarney	Giles County
Jenny	McCoy	Giles County
John	Ross	Giles County
Amy	Henderson	
Ernie	Maddy	Friends of Southwest Virginia
Hannah	Cooley	Sinkland Farms
Adam	Fariss	Fariss Farms
Bruce	Fariss.	Fariss Farms
Rachel		Chateau Morrisette
Myra	Adams	
David	Larsen	Chantilly Farm
Joyce	Bellevau	Beliveau Estate Winery
Debbie	Lineweaver	SO FRESH
Becky	Lattuca	
Whitney	Knollenberg	Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management (VT)
Barry	Robinson	Sustainable Agriculture Consultanting
Margaret	Smith	Big Oak Chuckwagon
Andy	Allen	Virginia Cooperative Extension - Craig County
Jeannie	Layton-Dudding	Virginia Cooperative Extension - Giles County
Kelli	Scott	Virginia Cooperative Extension - Montgomery County
Lisa	Bleakley	Montgomery County Tourism
Brea	Hopkins	Montgomery County Planning
Danny	Wilson	Pulaski County Planning
Robert	Hiss	Pulaski County
Jim	Politis	Buffalo & More
Mr.	Williams	Williams Orchard
Kevin	Byrd	New River Valley Planning District Commission
Linda	Robinson	Selah Springs Farm
Lori	Robertson	New River Valley Grape Growers Group
Dianne	Dinger	New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium
Jeff	Dinger	New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium
Martha	Walker	Virginia Cooperative Extension
Leanne	Dubois	Virginia Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services (VDACS)
Sandra	Tanner	Virginia Tourism Corporation
Gustavo	Ferreira	VT Dept. of Agriculture Economics

Participant Surveys

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

Innovative Communities

Agritourism in a Creative Economy:

March 20, 2014, Evaluation Summary

Selah Springs Farm 3320 Nolley Rd. Riner, VA

25 completed Evaluations (40% return rate on 60 participants)

Statement	*Strongly Disagree 1*	*Disagree 2*	*Neutral 3*	*Agree 4*	*Strongly Agree 5*
The workshop topic was timely, relevant, and practical for this group.				(8) 32%	(17) 68%
The workshop met my expectations.				(11) 44%	(14) 56%

	Low	*Neutral*	*High*
My understanding/knowledge on this topic ***prior to*** the program was…	*(6) 24%*	*(15) 60%*	*(4) 16%*
My understanding/knowledge on this topic ***after*** this program was…		(5) 20%	(20) 80%

	No Value	*Somewhat Helpful*	*Helpful*
Overall assessment of the program		(2) 8%	(23) 92%
Value of the information		(1) 4%	(24) 96%
Format of the program		(2) 8%	(23) 92%
Selection of presenters/instructors		(1) 4%	(24) 96%

Within the next six (6) months, what will you do with the information you gathered from this workshop?

- Put suggestions into action
- Business Plan
- Review Insurance Policy
- Share with Peers
- Use this info to successfully launch my business
- Work with groups/partners within the NRV AG & Tourism Consortium to implement some of the ideas presented
- Put up a Liability Sign
- Add more Social Media Advertisements
- Send out Brochure
- Start a Blog
- Use the Liability Info
- Collaborate Meetings between different constituents
- Share this info

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

RESULTS FROM MARCH 20, 2014

AGRITOURISM: *Linking our Community's Hidden Gems*

The Definition

Virginia law defined agritourism as *any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity* (Code of Virginia, § 3.2-6400 effective October 1, 2008 - http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+3.2-6400).

For most people, agricultural tourism refers to a visit to a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agribusiness operation in order to enjoy, be educated, or become actively involved in the activities of the farm or operation – getting a ***true farm experience***.

What agritourism operations are missing from the Regional Agritourism Asset Map?

Contact all of these farms before putting them on the map.

Add Forestry/Natural Resource opportunities	Ellen Stewart from the Blacksburg Farmers Market can provide a list of vendors with address to fill in the asset map.
Horseback riding venues (packages) [know where you are sending your customers to, who are you partnering with?]	Add "The Roost" Blacksburg Farmers Market Store to the Asset Map
New Southwest Highlands Wine Trail	Opening Soon: The Black Hen Farm to Table Restaurant on Jackson St. in Bburg
<u>Missing from Asset Map:</u> Beliveau Estate Winery Attimo Winery West Wind Winery (Wythe Co) Buffalo & More (Riner) Cut your own Christmas Tree farms Mountain Lake Resort & Restaurant (Giles) Newport Convenience Store (Giles) Thornspring Farm (Pulaski) Draper Merc. Blue Door Café (Pulaski) Farriss' Vineyard Floyd Eco Village Floyd Farmers Market Floyd Country Store Spikenard Farm & Bee Sanctuary (Floyd) Steele's Blueberry (Newport) Doe Creek Giles County Farm Bureau Coop Grant's Grocery (Narrows) <u>Missing from the Asset Map (cont):</u> Foggy Bottom Vineyard Gary Midkiff (berries & fruit-Rich Creek) Spruce Run Tree Farm (Newport) Palisades Restaurant Ganoe's Organics (Narrows) Sugar by Suzanne Jean Lucas – Goat Farm	"Share the Spare" Partnership with NRV Master Gardener Program & Blacksburg Farmers Market for the collection & distribution of surplus fresh vegetables to local food security organizations.

Lynn Cosell (Wool Fantasy Farm) Back County Alpacas Harmony Hills (Horse Riding/therapy) Forest Farms Selah Springs (Riner) Nolley Wood Farm (Riner) Winter Frost Farms	

How can the agritourism entities in the region be linked or networked?

Packages (B&B, Wineries, Livestock, Horses, Natural Resources, Local Food, On farm Experiences, The New River)	Blue Ridge Farmers Market Coalition, contact bbfarmersmarket@gmail.com for more info.
Crooked Road- add Agriculture to the Heritage of Music trail	Chambers of Commerce
This group need to incorporate all types of operations to realize the value of regional assets	So Fresh (website for advertisements/collaboration)
Local Government – need to establish and build a good relationship with local branches of Govt.	Need Regional Website w/ Active Calendar
Farm to Fork networks, canning & cooking classes-	Appalachian Virginia Food System Coucil
Master Food Volunteers / Master Gardener Volunteers	Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program
Caterers, Cake Makers, Local Food Service Providers	

What is absent from our agritourism offerings and how do we fill those gaps?

Branding/Label for region – aggregation/infrastructure	Forest/Natural Resource Opportunities
Promotion of NRV, not just VT	Horseback Riding
On Website - Page for Children's Programs: Market Kids, 4-H, JR Master Gardener, Seeds, etc.	Farm to Table Restaurants
Hunting/Fishing	CSA (community supported agriculture)/ farm share opportunities
Tree Farming	Farm Stays
Cooking & Serving Food (like B&Bs) work on an exemption. VDACS should do this not the Health Dept.	Commercial Kitchens to prepare value added farm products, host cooking/preservation classes.

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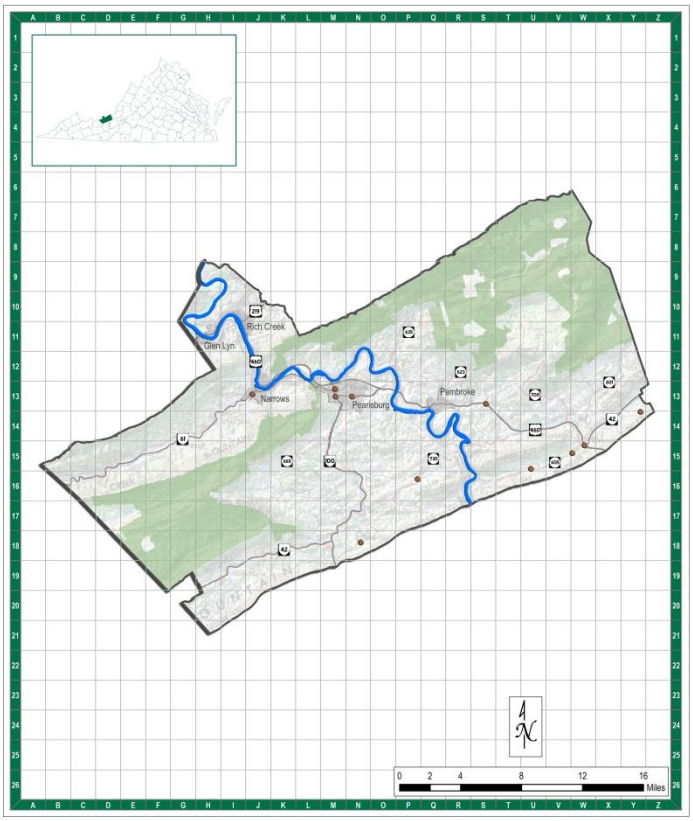
Local Food Maps

- Mikie's Seventh (W-15)
- Monticello Tea and Spce Co., LLC (W-15)
- Nanny's Garden (M-13)
- Narrows Farmers Market (J-13)
- Native Spring Farm (N-18)
- New River Community Action Food Pantry (N-13)
- Sinking Creek Farm (Y-14)
- Spruce Gap Farm (P-16)
- The Bank Food and Drink (M-13)
- The Green Market/Ayers Orchard (S-13)
- Windrush Farm (U-15)



NEW RIVER VALLEY
2nd Edition Featuring Giles County
FOOD DIRECTORY
An Informative Guide to Finding Locally Produced Foods

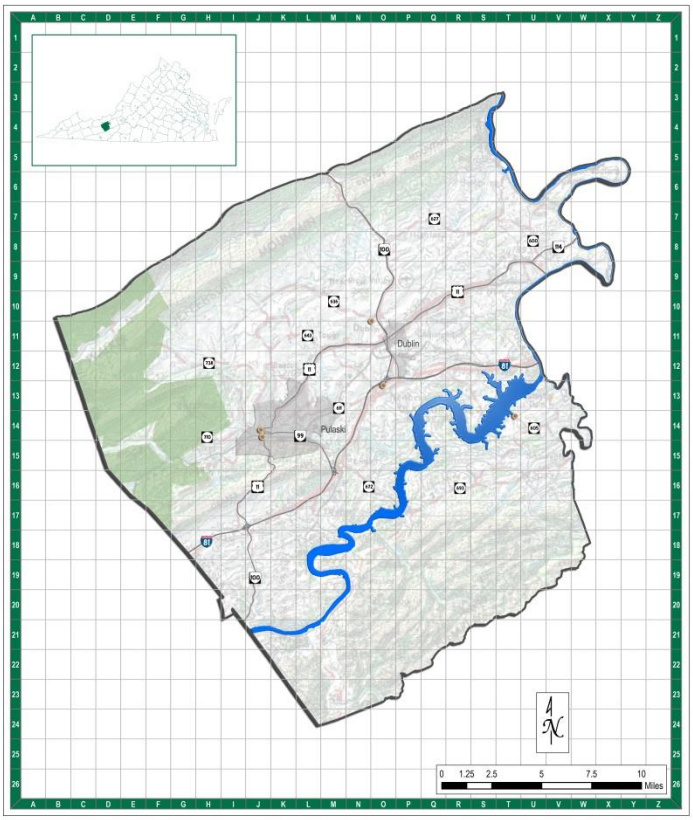
Legend

- Farmers Market
- Meat, Dairy, and Eggs
- Produce, Flowers, and Honey
- Bedding, Plants, and Gardening Supplies
- Community Supported Agriculture
- Farmstand and Pick-Your-Own
- Wine, Ale, Cider, and Mead
- Restaurant, Caterer, and Bakery
- Grocer and Coop
- Other
- Food Assistance Programs
- Food Diversion Groups
- Get Involved

Disclaimer:
Basemap: 2013 National Geogrpahic Society, i-cubed

New River Valley Planning District Commission

- Blueberry Hill Warren (T-14)
- Community Action - Pulaski (J-14)
- Rockwood Manor (O-10)
- Southwest Virginia Fresh (O-13)
- The Marketplace (J-14)



NEW RIVER VALLEY
2nd Edition Featuring Pulaski County
FOOD DIRECTORY
An Informative Guide to Finding Locally Produced Foods

Legend

- Farmers Market
- Meat, Dairy, and Eggs
- Produce, Flowers, and Honey
- Bedding, Plants, and Gardening Supplies
- Community Supported Agriculture
- Farmstand and Pick-Your-Own
- Wine, Ale, Cider, and Mead
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- Food Diversion Groups
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New River Valley Planning District Commission

NEW RIVER VALLEY

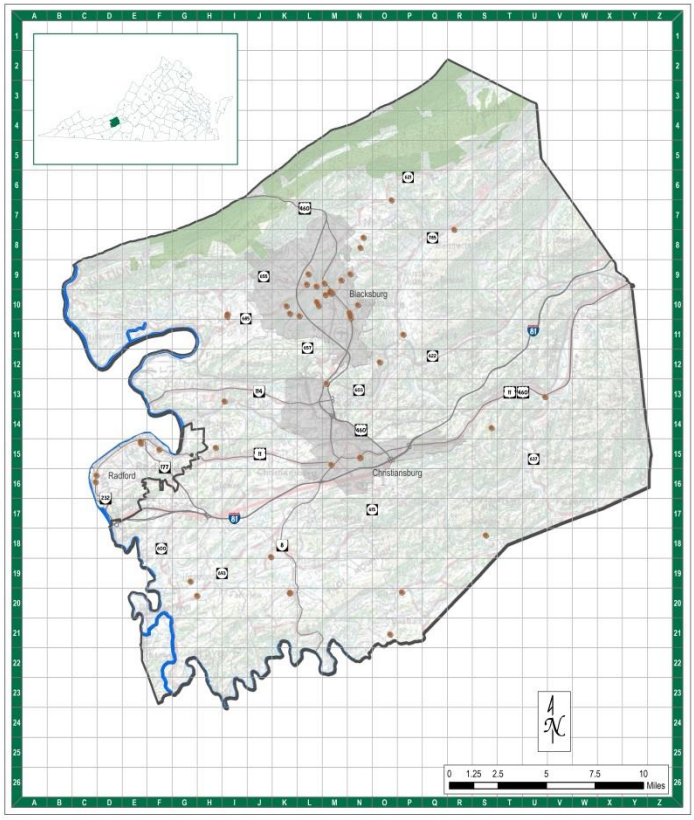
2nd Edition Featuring Montgomery County

FOOD DIRECTORY

An Informative Guide to Finding Locally Produced Foods

- 3 Birds Berry Farm (I-10)
- Agrarian Acres (H-15)
- Annie Kay's Main Street Market (N-10)*
- Attimo Winery LLC (G-20)
- Beans and Rice (C-16)
- Big Oak Angus Beef (K-20)
- Big Oak Chuckwagon, LLC (K-20)
- Blacksburg Farmers Market (M-10)*
- Brush Creek Aquaponics (P-20)
- Brush Creek Buffalo Farm (O-21)
- Cedar Ridge Farm (I-13)
- Chinkapin Hill Forest Farms (L-9)*
- Christiansburg Farmers Market (M-15)
- Crow's Nest Greenhouses (I-10)
- Eats Natural Foods (M-9)*
- Eclipse Winery LLC (G-20)
- Ellett Valley Beef Co. (P-11)
- Farms and Fields Project (M-10)*
- Gillie's (M-10)*
- Goodwin Farms and Apiary (S-14)
- Greenstar Farm (O-12)
- Happy Hollow Honey (N-9)*
- Happy Hollow Woods (N-8)
- Hethwood Market (K-10)*
- Honeywood Acres (N-8)
- Idyllwood Farms (S-18)
- Interfaith Food Pantry (M-9)*
- Johnson Ridge Farm (R-7)
- Little River Produce (K-10)*
- Meadowbrook Market (U-13)
- Mill Creek Farms (J-18)
- Montgomery Co. Emergency Assistance (M-10)*
- Oasis World Market (N-10)*
- Our Daily Bread Bakery and Cafe (N-10)*
- Radford Fairlawn Daily Bread (F-15)
- Radford Farmers Market (E-15)
- Rawlicious (L-9)*
- Rebekah's Country Garden (O-7)
- Salvation Army (N-15)
- Share the Spare (N-15)
- Shawsville Farmers Market (U-13)
- Snap-Ed (L-10)*
- Spiritual Roots Food Ministry (M-13)
- Stonecrop Farm (G-19)
- Sustainable Food Corps at Virginia Tech (L-10)*
- Taylor Hollow Farms (C-15)
- Under the Green Umbrella (N-10)*
- VT Engage (L-10)*
- Women's Resource Center (E-15)
- Zeppolis (L-9)*

*See Town of Blacksburg map for detailed location



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New River Valley Planning District Commission

NEW RIVER VALLEY

2nd Edition Featuring Town of Blacksburg

FOOD DIRECTORY

An Informative Guide to Finding Locally Produced Foods

- Annie Kay's Main Street Market (T-17)
- Blacksburg Farmers Market (Q-13)
- Chinkapin Hill Forest Farms (N-12)
- Eats Natural Foods (O-12)
- Farms and Fields Project (P-13)
- Gillie's (Q-13)
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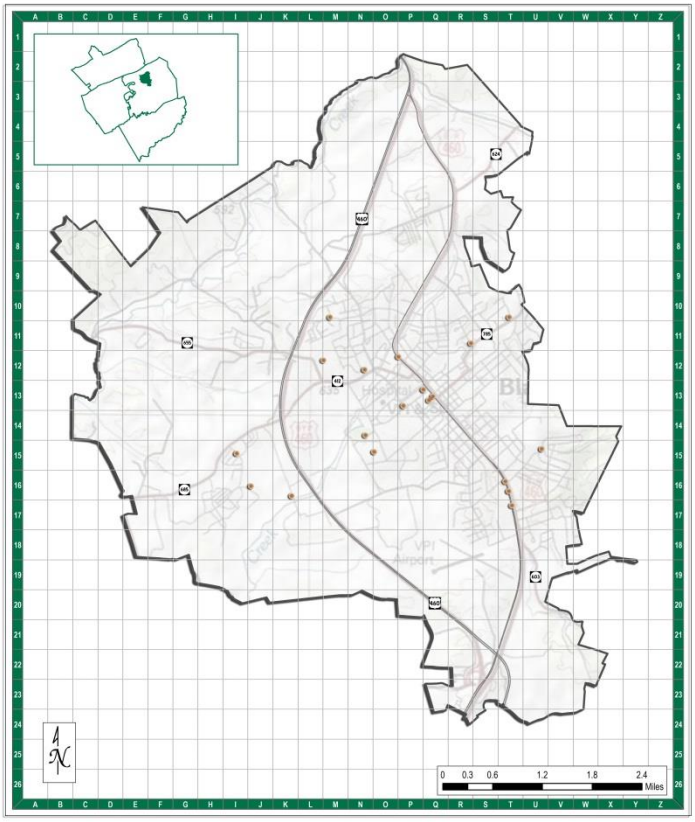

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New River Valley Planning District Commission

Strategic Plan Consultant Contract

Professional Services Agreement: New River Valley
Agricultural Development Strategy Plan
3-18-14

MATSON CONSULTING
AGRIBUSINESS SOLUTIONS

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

This agreement is entered into between Matson Consulting (the Consultant) for the preparation and presentation of an agricultural development strategic plan for the New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium (the Client).

1. Service Performed. Matson Consulting will make itself available to prepare a Strategic Plan on behalf of the Client. These activities are to give an overall evaluation and analysis of the agriculture industry within Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties to help The Client determine alternative options for the county that will help to develop the agricultural economy and enhance the current industry. The details of the consultancy and timeline are included in the proposal submitted to the Client on March 13, 2014. A copy of this proposal is attached to this agreement as Appendix A. It is understood that all services performed will require information and assistance by The Client to successfully complete this consultancy.

The Strategic Plan will be compiled in both written (MS Word) and PDF versions and presented by the Consultant to representatives of The Client.

2. Terms. The consultancy will begin with the payment of Installment 1 as outlined in the proposal document, and is intended to be completed within a 4 month timeframe. The timeframe of the project is subject to obtaining supporting information from the Client as delineated in the proposal document, including the most current County Comprehensive Plan, census data, maps, and general community information. The timeliness of obtaining this information may be beyond control of both the Consultant and the Client.

3. Warranty. Matson Consulting shall provide services and meet obligations under this Contract in a timely and workmanlike manner, using knowledge and recommendations for performing the services which meet generally acceptable standards, and will provide a standard of care equal to, or superior to, care used by service providers on similar projects.

4. Business Relationship. Matson Consulting is and remains open to conducting similar tasks or activities for clients other than the Client. Matson Consulting holds itself out to the public to be a separate business entity than the Client and as such is responsible for payment of all taxes, fees, licenses, insurances, and other standard business expenses.

5. Protection of Confidentiality. The Consultant will not at any time or in any manner, either directly or indirectly, use for personal benefit, or divulge, disclose, or communicate, any information that is proprietary to the Client. Any information provided by the Client that is not readily available in the public domain is considered confidential. Matson Consulting will protect such information and treat it as strictly confidential.

MATSON CONSULTING
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

6. Payment Terms. Matson Consulting will submit the invoices to The Client for services based on a service fee of $25,000.

$	10,000	Due at project initiation and contract signing (40%)
$	7,000	Due at submission of strategic plan rough draft (28%)
$	7,000	Due at submission of final document (28%)
$	1,000	Due at project conclusion (4%)
$	25,000	Total Strategic Plan Preparation Fee

The Client is solely responsible for the payment of fees for this contract. The terms are net fifteen (15) days. Travel Costs for the proposal are capped at $3,500. Additional time beyond the 4 months estimated for the duration of the study due to delays on the client side will be billed at $50 per month for administrative overhead.

7. Representation. The Client warrants that it is a legal entity in good standing with the State of Virginia. Both signers to this contract warrant that they are authorized by their respective organizations to sign this contract and bind their organizations to its terms.

8. Termination. The Consultant or The Client shall be able to terminate, for any reason, this agreement provided that the terminating party provides ten (10) days notice in writing to the other. Expenses incurred at the time of the termination notice shall be paid by The Client providing that they are within the scope of the contract.

Signed and acknowledged by authorized signers as of the date written below.

	3/19/14		3/19/2014
New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium	**Date**	**James Matson, Matson Consulting**	**Date**

Project Management Consultant Contract

Tri-County Agritourism Grant Management

Task Order between Giles County and
New River Valley Planning District Commission (PDC)

1. Agreement: This TASK ORDER is issued pursuant to the terms and conditions of this agreement between Giles County and the PDC for completion of work on the DHCD Agritourism Regional Planning Grant and the VDACS AFID Planning Grant.

2. Scope of Service:

   - PDC will provide leadership and oversight on the two projects to ensure completion of Products/Deliverables

   Deliverables include the following:

   - Completion of an agriculture system Needs Assessment and Survey (*to include agritourism and agribusiness-related activities*)
   - Completion of an Economic Impact Analysis *(general economic data for the agriculture industry, case studies and highlight business opportunities)*
   - Completion of an agriculture system Asset Inventory & Map
   - Provide recommendations on an Agritourism Organization Plan or Framework for sustainability
   - Seek funding availability for sustainability of the agritourism initiative
   - Provide leadership on the regional agriculture-agritourism education and Ag community outreach plan
   - Provide leadership on completion of the regional Agriculture-agritourism 3-5 year strategic plan
   - Provide leadership and oversight of the project committees and subcommittees
   - Provide leadership and oversight of the project's Marketing Strategy to include all project-related publications and social media links
     1. Develop a tri-fold brochure to concisely convey the project
   - Prepare project reports (narrative) to funders
   - Compile financial reports for Giles County to submit to funders
   - Staff support for meetings (coordinate location, time, take minutes)

- Develop a project website (*wordpress*)
- Serve as project point of contact within the region. Giles County remains the ultimate point of contact for the grantor (VA Dept. of Housing and Community Development).
- Continuously reinforce project direction and encourage open communication among the project Management Team.

3. Period of Performance: The work to be performed under this TASK ORDER shall be started upon acceptance of this agreement and continued until all project tasks are completed for each Planning Grant unless otherwise amended under the provisions of this TASK ORDER.

4. Cost of Service: The cost of service not to exceed $20,000 based on a Pay for Performance Schedule as required by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

5. Giles County agrees to make available any and all information, documentation or records requested by the PDC in order to complete the identified services outlined in this Task Order.

6. Amendment and Termination: This TASK ORDER may be amended or terminated at any time by written agreement between Giles County and the PDC.

Accepted for the New River Valley Planning District Commission

Name: Kim R. [illegible]

Title: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Date: 6/5/2014

Accepted for Giles County

Name: Chris McCleary

Title: COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Date: 6/6/14

AFID Planning Grant – Project Narrative

Planning for Agritourism and Agribusiness Benefits in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

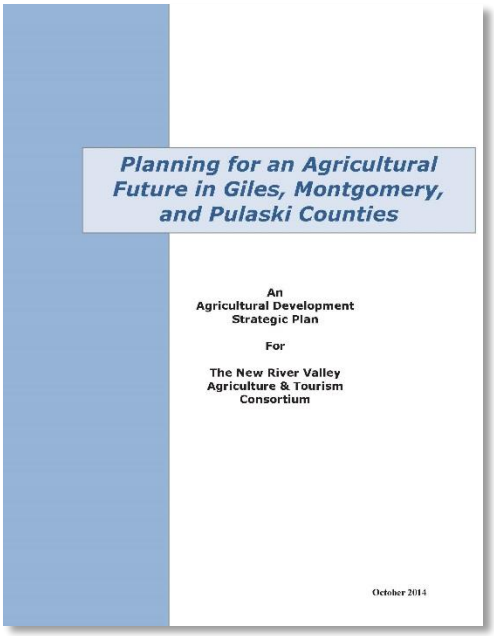
For Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products and diversifying the mix of tourism products and services available to visitors. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community. In addition, before the local farming community can consider the use of agriculture as a means of diversifying and increasing their income, the region needs to identify the challenges associated with creating agritourism and agribusiness opportunities.

I. Activities Performed

Summary of activities performed during the reporting period:

- Utilize the "Planning for an Agriculture Future Guide for Virginia Farmers and Local Governments" to identify what areas need to be addressed in order to create agriculture market expansion:
    - A general Needs Assessment Survey was completed in March 2014, at the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, held in Riner. The Strategic Plan was completed in November 2014 and provided additional insight into potential opportunity sectors for the NRV region.
    - Next steps involve contracting with the Virginia Cooperative Extension to facilitate and engaging the Steering Committee in the development of an Agritourism implementation strategy. The workshop will be scheduled in the Spring of 2015.
- Identify the general tourist markets for agritourism:
    - Complete: June 9, 2014 with consultant group. Five key marketing groups have been identified: 1) Out-of-State Activity Seekers, long trip vacationers that are open to short trips; 2) In-State Explorers, seasonal short trips; 3) Loyal Enthusiasts, typically returning customers that need only moderately refined experiences; 4) Accidental Tourists, just passing through and only available for a short window of time; 5) Family Agritourism Adventurers, summer vacations that are focused on local experiences and food.
    - Next steps involve Team Marketing working with the Management Team and Steering Committee to identify marketing strategies and programs that will benefit agriculture and agritourism in the region. Team Marketing is comprised of 15 representative from the public and private sector.
- Develop a marketing campaign for agritourism:
    - The consultant group outlined conceptual methods of engagement for each of the five market groups in a draft chapter of the strategic plan. Fall 2014, the marketing team did not have any activity pertaining specifically to marketing. Now that the Strategic Plan is complete, and specific strategies have been identified, Team Marketing will begin to develop strategies and to implement programs that support this initiative.
    - The next steps of the Team Marketing include soliciting an RFQ for marketing assistance.

- Identify existing and potential agribusiness and agritourism products in the region – Develop a regional strategic plan for agriculture economic development:
    - A Memorandum of Understanding was established between the New River Valley Planning District Commission and Southwest Virginia Fresh. The MOU provides the framework for an initial three year partnership between the two agencies. The purpose of the agreement is to formalize a partnership to establish and maintain an interactive local food directory for a 14 county region, located in South-western Virginia. SO Fresh will maintain the directory and serve as the primary contact. The Commission will maintain and host the interactive map.
    - Next steps involve revising the map content and launching the content as a component of SO Fresh's new website.
    - November 2014, the Strategic Plan was complete. Although a specific implementation strategy is not defined, the document establishes the groundwork for continued agriculture development planning and discussions. The plan offers nearly 80 ideas oriented around structure and continuity, networking and communication, farmer advisory committees, education and training opportunities, promoting industry, teamwork, Virginia Cooperative Extension, environment and land base, core activities, local foods and value added, agritourism, spirits, and the next generation.

      
      Planning for an Agricultural Future in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

      An
      Agricultural Development
      Strategic Plan

      For

      The New River Valley
      Agriculture & Tourism
      Consortium

      October 2014

      The document addresses the needs of traditional agriculture activities and farmers, while also highlighting opportunities and practices that can benefit new entrepreneurial agriculture growth in areas such as direct marketing and agritourism. In addition, local profiles for each of the three counties, along with an evaluation of current sectors is provided. The conclusion offers a few key recommendations developed by the Management Team and consultant.

      The private sector is charged with the role of driving future success of agriculture in the region. Very few local regulatory and policy barriers were identified as hindrances to new enterprise development.

      The consultant presented the Strategic Plan in-person at the December 18th Steering Committee meeting. The presentation was very 1-on-1 oriented and offered the local agriculture community to engage with the plan developer.
    - Next steps involve the Management Team developing implementation strategies for key recommendations identified in the plan or during the Steering Committee meeting on December 18th.

Comparison of actual accomplishments with the approved Work Plan:

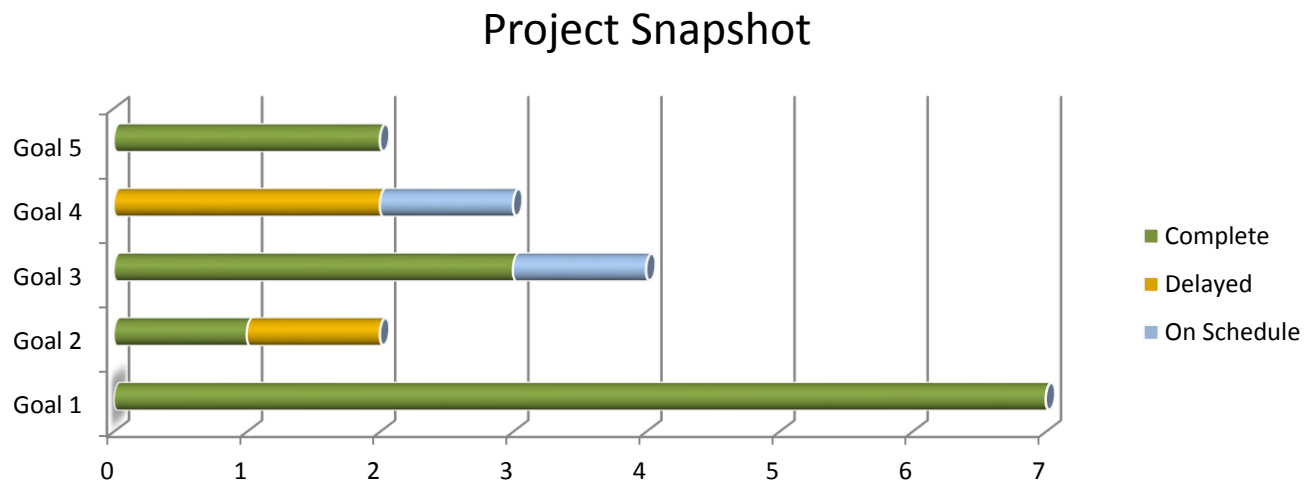
Goal 1: Develop a strategic plan for agriculture economic development in the region		
Establish a Steering Committee	Target: May 2013	Complete: August 2013
Utilize VA Guide to collect existing data in each county	Target: September 2013	Complete: September 2013
Host a strategic plan meeting	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
Prepare a summary report regarding information collected at each county	Target: April 2014	Complete: April 2014
Procure consultant (Matson)	Target: January 2014	Complete: January 2014
Participate in plan development	Target: July 2014	Complete: November 2014
Complete a strategic plan	Target: August 2014	Complete: November
Goal 2: Identify capacity building programs for farmers		
Complete surveys that identify training needs of local farmers	Target: June 2014	Complete: April 2014
Present training needs to Steering Committee	Target: June 2014	Delayed – Target: Spring 2015
Goal 3: Collect information on existing markets and products		
Design and distribute survey (via online and traditional mail)	Target: February 2014	Complete: November 2014
Compile survey feedback and present results to Steering Committee	Target: March 2014	Complete: November 2014
Develop an online asset inventory map	Target: December 2014	Complete: February 2014
Develop and maintain GIS data	Target: December 2014	MOU: Dec. 2014; Ongoing
Goal 4: Strengthen, sustain, and increase opportunities for agritourism in the region		
Participate in monthly Steering Committee Meetings	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Host a roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations	Target: January 2014	Delayed – Target: Spring 2015
Provide recommendations to each county (policy/regulation)	Target: February 2014	Delayed – Target: Spring 2015
Goal 5: Establish a data collection system to evaluate the impact of agritourism and agribusiness		
Perform economic impact analysis	Target: June 2013	Complete: November 2014
Present research to the Steering Committee	Target: August 2014	Complete: December 2014

Present the significant contributions and role of project partners in the project, July – December 2014:

- This project continues to be led by a multijurisdictional and multidisciplinary team that includes representatives from: Giles County, Montgomery County, Pulaski County, local farmers, Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension, New River Valley Planning District Commission, Virginia Tourism Commission, and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Management Team:
    - Meetings: July 30th, August 6th, September 3rd, October 20th, and December 18th
    - Work with the Steering Committee to identification of project priorities
    - Identification of Sub-committee representatives, December 2014
- Consultant Support:
    - DHCD Management Team Workshop, July 30, 2014: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis on the agriculture industry and on the management team. Positioning questions: Who are we? Who do we serve? What is our service? What do we want to achieve? What's in it for the region and/or our targets? Who do they contact?
    - New River Valley Planning District Commission, Contract Execution & Project Management: meeting coordination, facilitating discussions, reviewing project related invoices to determine eligibility, and preparing reimbursement and project reports. In addition, working with the Management Team to complete the Strategic Plan activities.
    - Matson Consulting, Strategic Plan: worked with the Management Team to review content, identify key recommendations, and presented plan to Steering Committee in December. Plan includes case studies, economic data, and key recommendations.

II. Problems and Delays

- Currently, no unexpected delays or challenges have been encountered for this project; however, a few project deliverables are behind the initial target completion date. No changes are currently proposed to the scope of work as a result of delaying product deliverables. Tasks that are currently delayed include:
    - Goal 2 Deliverable, Present training needs to Steering Committee: Anticipated Team Education & Outreach Task, Spring 2015.
    - Goal 4 Deliverable, Host roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations: Anticipated Team Research & Evaluation task, Spring 2015
    - Goal 4 Deliverable, Provide policy/regulation recommendations to each county: Anticipated Team Research & Evaluation task, Spring 2015.
- At this time, the work plan, outcomes, budget, and/or methodology doesn't need to be adjusted.
- At this time, no changes are anticipated in this project.



III. Funding Expended To Date

- Grant funds expended to date, brief project description, amount, date, source of funds, and relationship to the workplan:

Expenditure Description	Check Number	Cost	*Funding Source*						Program Totals	Supplies & Material	Contractual		
			AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Mont. County	Pulaski County	In-Kind			Name of Consultant or Vendor	Date	Relevance and Nature of Service
			81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*						
			Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge					
Contract Execution - 3800			$1,250.00	$2,500.00	$918.00	$918.00	$918.00	$0.00	**$6,504.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$4,108.04	$789.52	$1,579.04	$579.82	$579.82	$579.82	$0.00	$4,108.04	yes	All	June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Contract Execution Strategy, Meal 06/11/2014	115535	$405.00	$77.84	$155.67	$29.64	$29.64	$29.64	$0.00	$405.00	no	Sylvia Wynn	8/6/2014	AFID presentation, team coordination: 6.5 hours @ $35/hr
		Balance:	$382.64	$765.28	$281.01	$281.01	$281.01	$0.00	$1,990.96				
Research & Evaluation - 3801			$3,500.00	$6,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	**$23,011.00**				
Project Expenses thru June 2014		$2,010.00	$703.50	$1,306.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,010.00	no	All	June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Placeholder	000000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	y/n	Vendor	Date	Description
		Balance:	$2,796.50	$5,193.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	$21,001.00				
Education & Outreach - 3802			$4,500.00	$3,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,500.00	**$12,750.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$2,513.48	$1,370.99	$1,142.49	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,513.48	yes	All	June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Flavors Media, Project back-up reporting	116777	$315.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$315.00	$315.00	yes	OfficeMax	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies
		Balance:	$3,129.01	$2,607.51	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,185.00	$9,921.52				
Marketing Strategy - 3803			$5,500.00	$4,500.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$0.00	**$13,750.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$120.00	$48.00	$39.27	$10.91	$10.91	$10.91	$0.00	$120.00	no	All	Ending June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Placeholder	000000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	y/n	Vendor	Date	Description
		Balance:	$5,452.00	$4,460.73	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$0.00	$13,630.00				
Strategic Plan - 3804			$14,750.00	$7,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$0.00	**$25,000.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	Matson	June 2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3052	117122	$10,000.00	$5,900.00	$2,900.00	$400.00	$400.00	$400.00	$0.00	$10,000.00	No	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3032	116467	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	No	Matson	10/16/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3037	117122	$1,000.00	$590.00	$290.00	$40.00	$40.00	$40.00	$0.00	$1,000.00	no	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan development
		Balance:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00				
Project Management – 3805			$5,500.00	$5,500.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$0.00	**$18,986.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$7,341.68	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	NRVPDC	June 2014	Project Management
NRVPDC, Invoice #737	116688	$2,280.16	$660.53	$660.53	$319.70	$319.70	$319.70	$0.00	$2,280.16	No	NRVPDC	11/5/2014	Project Management
NRVPDC, Invoice #758	117240	$1,545.14	$447.61	$447.61	$216.64	$216.64	$216.64	$0.00	$1,545.14	No	NRVPDC	12/10/2014	Project Management
NRVPDC, Invoice #773	117339	$589.33	$170.72	$170.72	$82.63	$82.63	$82.63	$0.00	$589.33	no	NRVPDC	12/18/2014	Project Management
		Balance:	$2,094.35	$2,094.35	$1,013.66	$1,013.66	$1,013.66	$1,013.66	$7,229.69				

IV. Additional Information

- Project Primary Contacts
- Management Team
- NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Priorities
- NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Teams
- Meeting Agendas/Notes

Primary Contacts

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	(804) 786-6911	Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	(804) 371-7167	Ramona.Chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
Giles County Administrator	Chris McKlarney	(540) 921-2525	cmcklarney@gilescounty.org
Montgomery County Administrator	Craig Meadows	(540) 382-6954	meadowsfc@montgomerycountyva.gov
Pulaski County Administrator	Peter Huber	(540) 980-7705	phuber@pulaskicounty.org
NRV Agritourism Project Manager	Elijah Sharp	(540) 639-9313	esharp@nrvpdc.org

Management Team

Project Role	Name	Affiliation
Chairperson	Chris McKlarney	Giles County
Project Coordination	Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Project Management, billing	Rhonda Tickle	Giles County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Cora Gnegy	Giles County
Team Research & Evaluation Co-Chair	Brea Hopkins	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Lisa Bleakley	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Peggy White	Pulaski County
Strategic Plan Development	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County
Team Agritourism Facilitator	Martha Walker	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Kelly Scott	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Jeannie Layton-Dudding	VA Cooperative Extension
Local Food Directory	Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh
Assessment and evaluation	Kevin Byrd	NRVPDC
Grant writer	Dianne Dinger	Consultant
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	DHCD
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	AFID
Project management, meeting facilitation, reporting	Elijah Sharp	NRVPDC

NRV Agriculture & Tourism Initiative Priorities

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM INITIATIVE PRIORITIES

1. FORM AN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
   A MULTIJURISDICTIONAL AGRICULTURE-ORIENTED BODY THAT MEETS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, REGULATORY ISSUES, AND HOW TO IMPLEMENT NEW IDEAS WHILE WORKING WITH EXISTING AGENCIES SUCH AS THE FARM BUREAU, VT COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, ECT.

2. PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE
   THE LOCAL AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXPLORE PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE SITES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO MAXIMIZE THE LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MEATS AND PRODUCE.

3. SMALL PRODUCER NETWORK
   AN INFORMAL GROUP OF LOCAL FARMERS AND PRODUCERS THAT MEET ON A REGULAR BASIS TO SHARE INFORMATION, HIGHLIGHT SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES, INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS, CHALLENGES, AND GENERALLY FOSTER CLOSER COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION.

4. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS FOR BEGINNING FARMERS
   WITH THE AVERAGE AGE OF 57 FOR LOCAL FARMERS, CREATING A NEW GENERATION OF FARMERS IS CRUCIAL TO THE LONG TERM SURVIVAL OF AGRICULTURE. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SHOULD BE CREATED AND/OR EXPANDED TO ENCOURAGE THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS.

5. CREATE TEAMS TO ASSIST WITH WHOLE FARM PLANNING
   TO SERVE AS A RESOURCE FOR AREA PRODUCERS, FOCUSING ON COORDINATION OF RESOURCES, DISCUSSING LONG TERM IMPROVEMENTS, PROGRAMS, AND ASSIST WITH WRITTEN PLANS.

Note: Priorities identified on December 18, 2014 during the NRV Agriculture and Agritourism Steering Committee Meeting. Over 20 participants cast two votes each, for the following results: Agriculture Development Board (9), Production Infrastructure (9), Small Producer Network (7), Identify Opportunities and Needs for Beginning Farmers (6), and Create Teams to Assist with Whole Farm Planning (5).

NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Teams

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

TEAM EDUCATION & OUTREACH:

Name	Representing	Email
Jeannie Layton-Dudding*	Virginia Cooperative Extension	jdudding@vt.edu
Kelli Scott*	Virginia Cooperative Extension	kescottl@vt.edu
Jessica Schultz	Blacksburg Farmer's Market	schultz.jessica.vt@gmail.com
Ellen Stewart	Consortium/Prices Fork Project	estewart@blacksburg.gov
Linda Robinson	Montgomery County	ldr920@gmail.com
Jim Politis	Small Farms	bcbuffalo@aol.com
Mike Burton	Self	mikeburton745@gmail.com
Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh	mtn2mtn@psknet.com
Peggy White	Pulaski County	peggywhite@pulaskichamber.info
Kevin Byrd	New River Valley PDC	kbyrd@nrvpdc.org
Elijah Sharp	New River Valley PDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org

*Denotes Co-Chairperson

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

TEAM MARKETING:

Name	Representing	Email
Lisa Bleakley*	Montgomery County	bleakleyts@montgomerycountyva.gov
Cora Gnegy*	Giles County	cgnegy@gilescounty.org
Peggy White*	Pulaski County	peggywhite@pulaskichamber.info
Michelle Workman	VA Tourism Commission	mworkman@virginia.org
Randall Rose	VA Tourism Commission	rrose@virginia.org
Jessica Schultz	Blacksburg Farmer's Market	schultz.jessica.vt@gmail.com
Ellen Stewart	Consortium/Prices Fork Project	estewart@blacksburg.gov
Michael Solomon	Pulaski County	msolomon@pulaskicounty.org
Kelli Scott	Montgomery County	kescottl@vt.edu
Georgia Haverty	Doe Creek Farm – Giles County	doecreekfarm@gmail.com
Jim Politis	Small Farms	bcbuffalo@aol.com
Mike Burton	Self	mikeburton745@gmail.com
Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh	mtn2mtn@psknet.com
Kevin Byrd	New River Valley PDC	kbyrd@nrvpdc.org
Elijah Sharp	New River Valley PDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org

*Denotes Co-Chairperson

Meeting Agendas/Notes

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2014 – 1:00 – 2:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Progress Report:
   A. AFID Interim Report
   B. Revised Budget
   C. Revised Project Schedule
   D. DHCD Workshop Overview

III. Strategic Plan:
   A. What do we want to achieve?
      i. What are the top goals of this project?
   B. What do we want to learn?
      i. What do we hope is reflected in the plan?

IV. Identify Tasks for Subcommittees

V. Key points to share with Steering Committee

VI. Next steps
   A. Set monthly meetings

VII. Adjournment (15 minute break)

Part II – Steering Committee Meeting, 2:15 pm – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism for Virginia; Gustavo Ferreira and Martha Walker

IV. Adjournment

New River Valley Agritourism Project

Management Team Meeting—Strategic Planning Discussion

What do we want to achieve?

* Three local governments exploring partnership opportunities that could grow the agriculture economy.

List your top 3 goals for this project:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What do we want to learn?

What do we hope is reflected in the plan?

Notes from July 30, 2014 DHCD Workshop:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Transportation Routes Natural Beauty – open land Awareness Community Support Strong Agriculture Heritage Oldest Agriculture Fair in Virginia Traditional infrastructure (farmers have equipment, land, etc.) Farm to table	Funding Extension – lack of local awareness of services Lack of day-trips to prolong visitor's stay Marketing of Agriculture Increased costs combined with increased regulations Potential liability of farmers Next generation of farmers Local food – incentives for restaurants to use Niche – specialist misunderstanding Lack of market access
Opportunities	**Threats**
School/Agriculture programs Legislation opportunity to source food locally Community events educational opportunities Institutions desire to have local food More involvement Food security need International visitors National movements (buy/eat local, 100-mi. dinners, etc.) Local movements (So Fresh, local food, etc.)	Next generation farmers Surrounding regional exports Local politics Time Legislation Development – retaining farm land High beef prices Fear of change Widespread illness Need more small growers to support local food programs

Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski Agritourism Project

Management Team Meeting August 6, 2014

Members Present: Jenny McCoy, Brea Hopkins, Peggy White, Michael Solomon, Dianne Dinger, and Elijah Sharp

Guests Present: Dr. Martha Walker, and Dr. Gustavo Ferreira

Meeting Welcome & Introductions: The meeting began at 1:05 pm. Each meeting participant introduced themselves.

Progress Report: Sharp provided the group with a brief overview of recent grant related activities, including: AFID Interim Report submittal on July 22nd, AFID Interim Report acceptance on July 23rd, a revised project budget that aligns funding resources with specific agreement deliverables, a revised project schedule that extends funding from DHCD and AFID through June 2015, and a brief DHCD Workshop overview.

Strategic Plan: The management team worked collaboratively to contribute ideas for the Strategic Plan. The following feedback was received:

1. <u>What do we want to achieve?</u>
    - Three local governments exploring partnership opportunities that could grow the agriculture economy.
    - If the statement (above) was a vision statement, what else should be reflected?
        i. The Agriculture community or region
        ii. That agriculture is highly productive and valued
        iii. The need to engage youth
        iv. The need to provide value-added assistance to farmers
        v. Inclusive of all realms of agriculture (specialty, new, traditional, etc.)
2. <u>What are the primary goals for this effort?</u>
    - Increase educational opportunities for youth (how to grow through market phases)
    - Create a brand for the region (identify boundary, increase marketing of assets, made in NRV, etc.)
    - Identify policies that encourage farmers to implement agritourism/agribusiness ideas (enable more products to be purchased at farms)
    - Create networking opportunities for the ag-community (improve information sharing, create a regional farmers market, build on existing programs, support with technology, etc.)
    - Identify, promote, utilize, and produce local and regional agriculture products
    - Prevent effort from being an academic exercise – utilize the Strategic Plan to communicate opportunities with regional stakeholders
3. What do we want to learn from the Strategic Plan?
    - Remove "New vs. Traditional" and focus on specific markets: Livestock Production, Forestry/Timber, Emerging AG, Wine/Beer/Cider, and Agritourism
    - Include examples/case studies from other States
    - Provide examples of before/after pro-AG policies (provide a conversation starting point for the Policy/Regulation sub-committee)
    - Identify trends in farm size (acres) vs. the ability to support activities, educational opportunities, and market sectors
    - Workforce vs. individual training
    - Statistics on tourists

4. What do we hope is reflected in the Strategic Plan?
    - Equal analysis/framework per market sector
    - Highlight the regions strengths: Interest in agritourism in VA, proximity of agritourism/agribusiness to above average household income counties, community support, strong heritage, and others captured in DHCD Workshop SWOT analysis
    - Incorporate the value of Agriculture in the Introduction and Project Background
    - How do we compare to neighboring States
    - The need for local champions to lead projects

Identify Tasks for Subcommittees: No activities were identified at this meeting.

Key Points to share with the Steering Committee: The Management Team elected McCoy to update the Committee on the project budget and timeline.

Next Steps: The Management Team identified first Wednesdays, 10 am to 12 noon, for monthly Management meetings.

Meeting Adjournment: 2:00 pm

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2014 – 2:00 – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Strategic Plan:
   A. Thoughts and General Recommendations

III. Priority Recommendations:
   A. How to utilize the homework assignment moving forward

IV. Subcommittee Deliverables

V. Local Food Directory
   A. Potential partnership with SO Fresh

VI. Progress Report:
   A. Budget
   B. Deliverables

VII. Adjournment (15 minute break)

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2014 – 2:15 – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. Presentation:

   A. A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism for Virginia

   Join the NRV Agritourism Steering Committee for a special presentation from the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension. Dr. Martha Walker and Dr. Gustavo Ferreira will discuss their findings and results of their recent statewide study on Agritourism.

IV. Roundtable Discussion

V. Adjournment

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2014 – 9:00 – 11:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. Presentation:

A. Planning for an Agriculture Future in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

Join the NRV Agritourism Steering Committee for a special presentation from Matson Consulting. Gerry Cohn has developed County Agriculture Development Plans, business plans for individual farms, production budgets, supply and demand analyses, and local food enhancement strategies. Cohn has worked with a wide range of experts in the public, private, non-profit, and university sectors.

B. Questions about the Strategic Plan

IV. Roundtable Discussion:

A. Top Recommendations from the Planning Process

i. Form a Three-County Agriculture Board
ii. Facilitate a regular monthly agriculture meeting in each county
iii. Use LISTSERVs to better share information
iv. Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers
v. Provide introductory services to new landowners
vi. Create "Technical Advisor" teams to assist with Whole Farm Planning
vii. Develop a stronger institutional relationship with Virginia Tech

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski

December 18th, 2014 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Interested in helping our team complete deliverables? Place a check mark in each area of interest.				Email (if new)
			Agritourism	Education/Outreach	Marketing	Research/Evaluation	
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRV	✓	✓	✓	✓	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	Michelle Workman	VTC	✓		✓		mworkman@virginia
3	Randall Rose	VTC	✓		✓		rrose@virginia.org
4	Dave Rundgren	Self					
5	Marcus Gray	New River-Highlands RC&D	✓				mgraynrhrcd@centurylink.net
6	CHRIS McKLARNEY	GILES COUNTY	✓			✓	CMCKLARNEY@GILESCOUNTY.ORG
7	Jenny McCoy	Giles County	✓				jmccoy@gilescounty.org
8	Cora Gregy	Giles County	✓		✓		cgregy@gilescounty.or
9	Jeannie Dudding	VCE - Giles		✓			jdudding@vt.edu
10	Jessica Schultz	Blacksburg Farmers Mkt	✓	✓	✓	✓	schultz.jessica.vt@gmail.com
11	Ellen Stewart - NRV HOME Consortium / Prices Fork Project		✓	✓	✓		estewart@blacksburg.go
12	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County	✓		✓		msolomon@pulaski.county.org
13	Linda D Robinson	Montgomery County	✓	✓			LDR920@gmail.com
14	Kelli Scott	Montgomery County	✓	✓	✓	✓	kescott1@vt.edu
15	Lisa Bleakley	Mont. Co. Tourism	✓		✓		bleakleyTS@montgomerycountyva.g
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Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski

December 18th, 2014 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Interested in helping our team complete deliverables? Place a check mark in each area of interest.				Email (if new)
			Agritourism	Education/Outreach	Marketing	Research/Evaluation	
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRV	✓	✓	✓	✓	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	GEORGIA HAUGERTY	DOCCREEKFARM-GILES	✓		✓		
3	Jim Politis	Small Farms	✓	✓	✓		bcbussalo@aol.com
4	William CRenshaw	Riverstone Farm	✓				
5	GERRY COHN	MATSON CONSULTING					
6	Mike Burton	Mike Burton - ~~LEG~~		✓	✓	✓	mike burton 745@gmail.com
7	Debbie Unemaver	Go Fresh		✓	✓	✓	mtn2mtn@psknet.com
8	Peggy White	Pulaski County	✓	✓	✓		peggywhite@pulaskichamber.info
9	KEVIN BYRD	NRVPDC	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Margaret Smith	Big Cole Chuckwagon	✓			✓	bocbchuckwagon@gm
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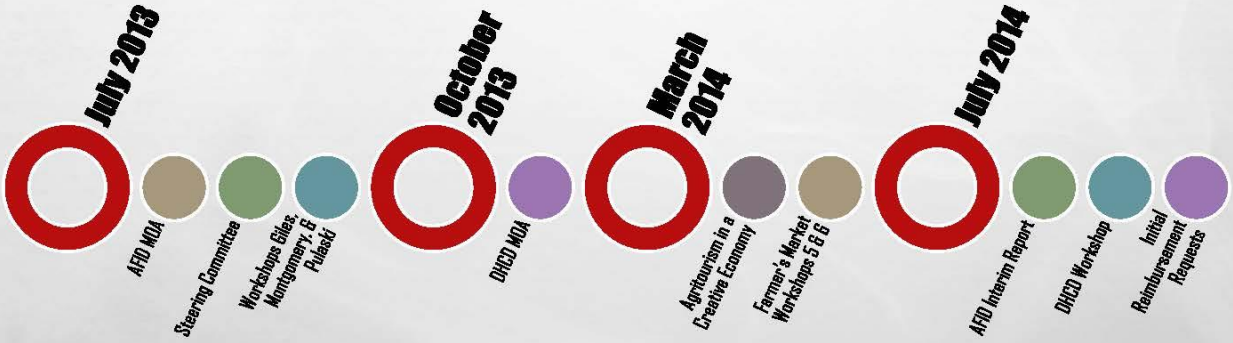
NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, DECEMBER 18, 2014

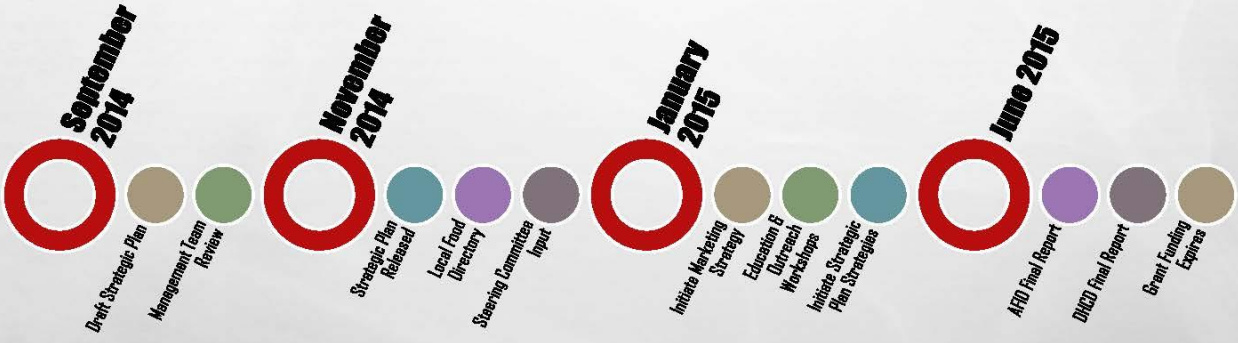
PROJECT UPDATE

- PROJECT SCHEDULE
- WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE?
- NEW TOOLS & PARTNERSHIPS
- FUNDING

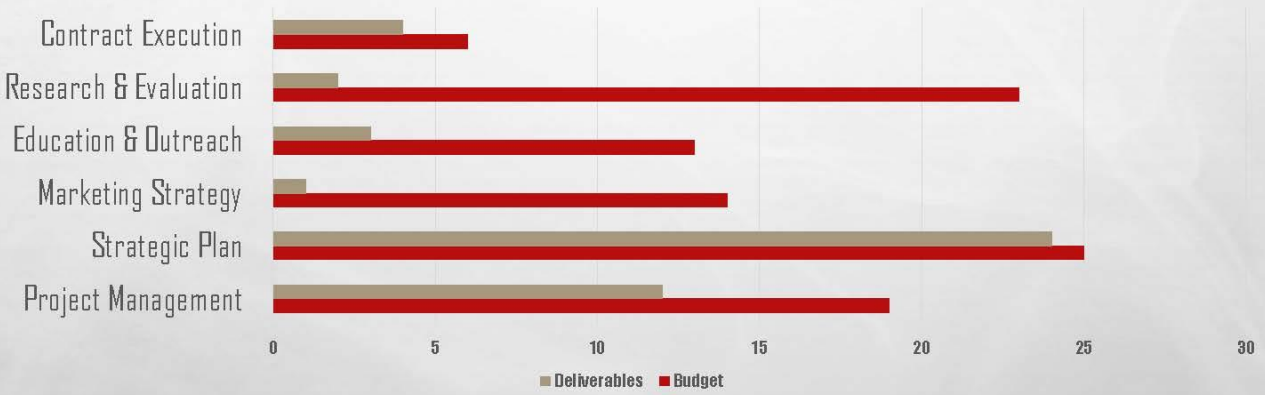
PROJECT SCHEDULE



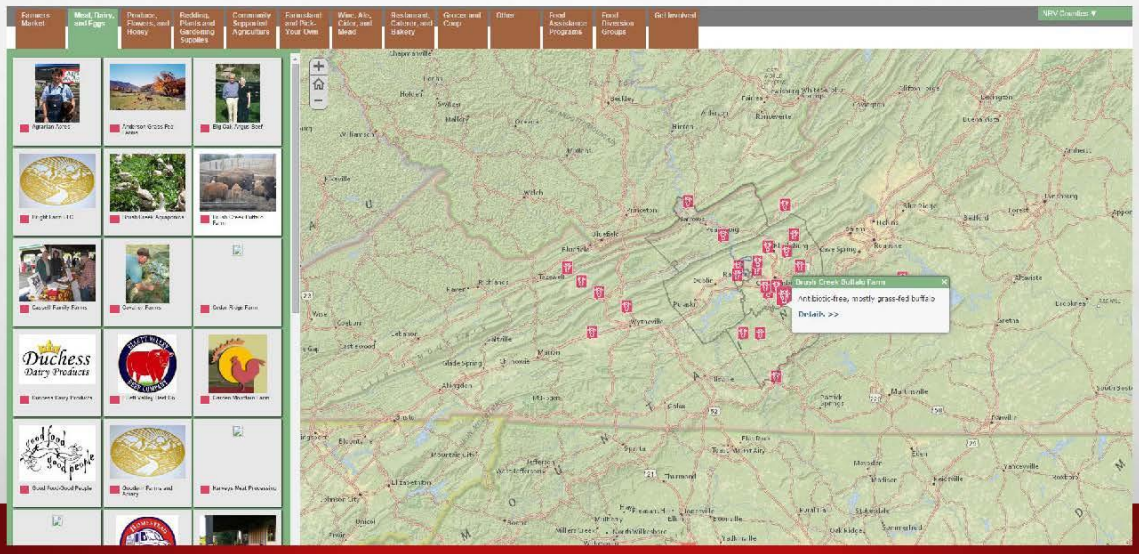
PROJECT SCHEDULE



WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE?



NEW TOOLS & PARTNERSHIPS



FUNDING

- VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES (AFID)
  - $35,000
- VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DHCD)
  - $30,000
- LOCAL CASH MATCH
  - $5,830 PER COUNTY
- LOCAL IN-KIND MATCH
  - $5,837 PER COUNTY

FUNDING

- GILES COUNTY
- TOTAL PROJECT CASH + IN-KIND = $100,000
- JULY 2014 REIMBURSEMENT = $13,142.01
- ALLOCATED EXPENDITURES = $44,493.83
- REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 2014

AFID Planning Grant – Project Narrative

Planning for Agritourism and Agribusiness Benefits in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

For Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products and diversifying the mix of tourism products and services available to visitors. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community. In addition, before the local farming community can consider the use of agriculture as a means of diversifying and increasing their income, the region needs to identify the challenges associated with creating agritourism and agribusiness opportunities.

I. Activities Performed

Summary of activities performed during the reporting period:

- Education & Outreach:
  - Beginning in March 2015, the Virginia Cooperative Extension agents were able to complete educational programs 7-12. The programs included: whole farm planning, cattle risk management, farm management, produce safety, and a 4-H livestock fieldtrip. In total, the target of 12 educational programs was achieved.
  - The Planning for Agritourism and Agribusiness Benefits project was a collaborative effort supported by over 100 representatives from across the region. As a capstone to this work, a statewide conference was held on September 21-22, 2015 in Blacksburg. The Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia Conference featured an extensive list of speakers from across the Commonwealth. Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Todd Haymore joined the conference and shared his vision for the future of agriculture in Virginia. Secretary Haymore is pictured at the event (right).

    Day one of the conference agenda included: an official kick-off by Dr. Martha Walker, VCE Specialist; Fields of Gold – Shenandoah Valley's Farm Trail by Tracey Coltrain, Agritourism Coordinator; NRV Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Agritourism by Kelli Scott, Lisa Bleakley, and Elijah Sharp, Project Management Team Members; lunch with the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry; local farm tours; and a conference reception.

    Day two of the conference focused on local permitting for farm enterprises, on-farm local food sales,and production infrastructure. Panelists included: Joell Eifert, VT Innovations Program; Emily Gibson, Montgomery County; James Cornwell, Jr., Sands Anderson; Fred Wydner, Pittsylvania County; Danny Neel, VDAC; Mike Burton, Sustain Floyd; and Rosalea Potter, Buffalo Creek Beef and Donalds Meat Processing. The event was accepted by the Virginia Department of Zoning Officials as part of their educational requirements for recertification.

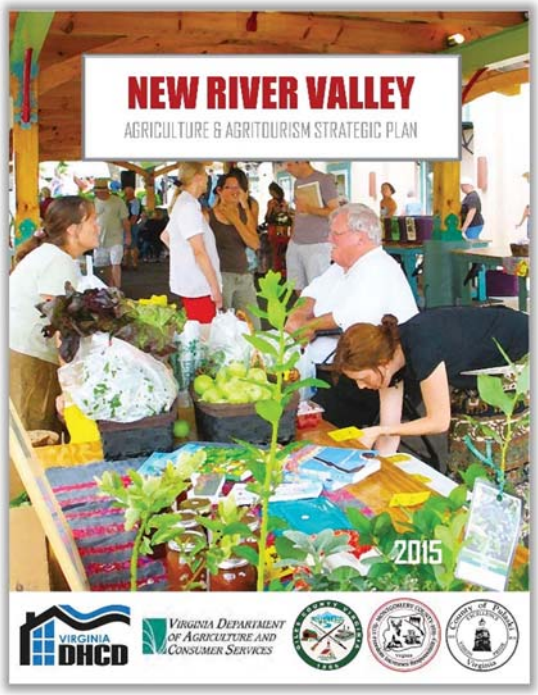
- Research & Evaluation:
  - The Steering Committee identified three topic areas to focus on: on-farm local food sales, working with health regulations; planning for agritourism, navigating and understanding local zoning regulations; and production infrastructure. The topics were integrated in to the Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia Conference, September 21-22, 2015. Farm Tour, Hillside Robotic Dairy (top right) and Reception, Sinkland Farm (bottom right) photos.
  - DHCD Management Team Workshop, July 30, 2014: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis on the agriculture industry and on the management team. Positioning questions: Who are we? Who do we serve? What is our service? What do we want to achieve? What's in it for the region and/or our targets? Who do they contact?

  - A Memorandum of Understanding was established between the New River Valley Regional Commission and Southwest Virginia Fresh. The MOU provides the framework for an initial three year partnership between the two agencies. The purpose of the agreement is to establish and maintain an interactive local food directory for a 14 county region, located in South-western Virginia. SO Fresh will maintain the directory and serve as the primary contact. The Commission will maintain and host the interactive map. Visit the website for more information: http://www.swvafresh.org/food-producers/

  - Agritourism in a Creative Economy, 2015 Virginia Agritourism Conference, Staunton, Virginia, March 10th – 11th, 2015. The Management Team elected to send four representatives from the New River Valley to participate in the statewide conference: Morgan Paulette, VCE Pulaski County Agent; Margaret Smith, Agribusiness Owner; Linda Robinson, Agritourism Business Owner; and Niona Nester, Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce all attended the event. Conference participants shared their experiences with Team Agritourism when the returned.

- Develop a Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Agritourism for the New River Valley:
    - November 2014, a Regional Assessment was completed by Matson Consulting. Although a specific implementation strategy was not defined, the document establishes the groundwork for continued agriculture development planning and discussions. The plan offers nearly 80 ideas oriented around structure and continuity, networking and communication, farmer advisory committees, education and training opportunities, promoting industry, teamwork, Virginia Cooperative Extension, environment and land base, core activities, local foods and value added, agritourism, spirits, and the next generation.

      The document addresses the needs of traditional agriculture activities and farmers, while also highlighting opportunities and practices that can benefit new entrepreneurial agriculture growth in areas such as direct marketing and agritourism. In addition, local profiles for each of the three counties, along with an evaluation of current sectors is provided. The conclusion offers a few key recommendations developed by the Management Team and consultant.



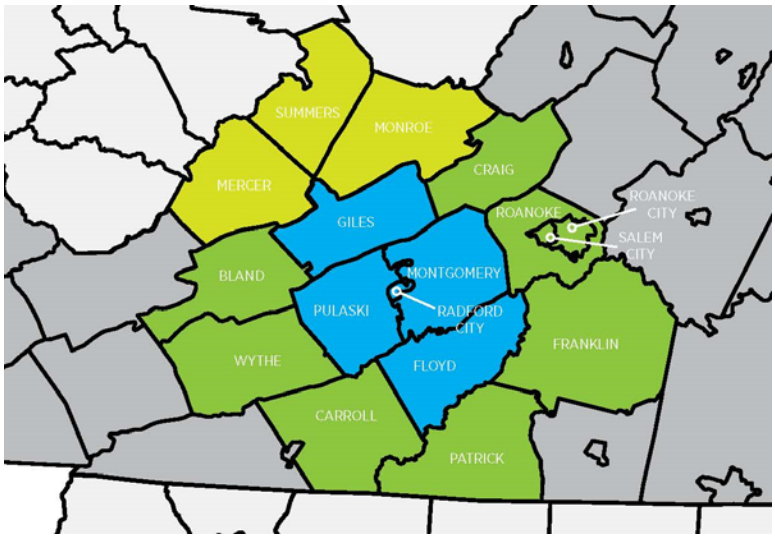
      June 2015, New River Valley partners developed a 3-year strategy that focuses on the promotion of agricultural related experiences in the region. A separate plan of work was developed for Agribusiness and Agritourism initiatives. For Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Floyd Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products, and diversifying the mix of products and services available to visitors. The purpose of the New River Valley Agriculture and Agritourism Strategic Plan was two-fold: 1) gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community; and 2) develop a plan of work that will support and enhance agriculture and agritourism in the region.

      Key recommendations for Agribusiness include: 1) developing Agriculture Development Boards at each county; 2) exploring production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce; 3) establishing a small producer network to generally foster closer communication and collaboration; 4) identifying opportunities for beginning farmers; 5) creating teams to assist with whole farm planning.

      Regional partners have identified specific strategies that outline resources needed, responsible parties, timeline, and anticipated outcome. Next steps involve the Management Team developing implementation strategies for key recommendations identified in the plan. The final report was compiled by the New River Valley Regional Commission.

- Marketing:
  - June 9, 2014 with Matson Consulting identified five key general tourist market sectors: 1) Out-of-State Activity Seekers, long trip vacationers that are open to short trips; 2) In-State Explorers, seasonal short trips; 3) Loyal Enthusiasts, typically returning customers that need only moderately refined experiences; 4) Accidental Tourists, just passing through and only available for a short window of time; 5) Family Agritourism Adventurers, summer vacations that are focused on local experiences and food.

    Additional work was completed during the branding process with Uncork-it. The work identified the counties/cities that comprise of the region's core local agritourism audience. Of the 179,000 residents in the NRV, 25,514 fall into one of 16 segments that are attracted to agritourism; and 50,984 in the broader core market area (shown right).



  - Develop a marketing campaign for agritourism. Matson Consulting group outlined conceptual methods of engagement for each of the five market groups in a draft chapter of the strategic plan. Team Marketing developed, printed, and distributed rack cards that featured local farmer's market information on one side and information about this project on the other. In June 2015, the team contracted with Uncork-it to develop a market brief, brand, logo, and tagline. The work was completed in October 2015. Sample logo and taglines shown below.
  - The next steps of Team Marketing involve developing a marketing strategy to identify the potential uses of the new brand.

Comparison of actual accomplishments with the approved Work Plan:

Goal 1: Develop a strategic plan for agriculture economic development in the region		
Establish a Steering Committee	Target: May 2013	Complete: August 2013
Utilize VA Guide to collect existing data in each county	Target: September 2013	Complete: September 2013
Host a strategic plan meeting	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
Prepare a summary report regarding information collected at each county	Target: April 2014	Complete: April 2014
Procure consultant (Matson)	Target: January 2014	Complete: January 2014
Participate in plan development	Target: July 2014	Complete: November 2014
Complete a strategic plan	Target: August 2014	Complete: November
Goal 2: Identify capacity building programs for farmers		
Complete surveys that identify training needs of local farmers	Target: June 2014	Complete: April 2014
Present training needs to Steering Committee	Target: June 2014	Incomplete
Goal 3: Collect information on existing markets and products		
Design and distribute survey (via online and traditional mail)	Target: February 2014	Complete: November 2014
Compile survey feedback and present results to Steering Committee	Target: March 2014	Complete: November 2014
Develop an online asset inventory map	Target: December 2014	Complete: February 2014
Develop and maintain GIS data	Target: December 2014	MOU: Dec. 2014; Ongoing
Goal 4: Strengthen, sustain, and increase opportunities for agritourism in the region		
Participate in monthly Steering Committee Meetings	Target: Monthly	Complete: June 2015
Host a roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations	Target: January 2014	Complete: September 2015
Provide recommendations to each county (policy/regulation)	Target: February 2014	Target: November 2015
Goal 5: Establish a data collection system to evaluate the impact of agritourism and agribusiness		
Perform economic impact analysis	Target: June 2013	Complete: November 2014
Present research to the Steering Committee	Target: August 2014	Complete: December 2014

Present the significant contributions and role of project partners in the project, January – October 2015:

- This project continues to be led by a multijurisdictional and multidisciplinary team that includes representatives from: Giles County, Montgomery County, Pulaski County, local farmers, Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension, New River Valley Planning District Commission, Virginia Tourism Commission, and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Management Team Meetings: January 14th, February 9th, and April 22nd
- Steering Committee Meetings: March 12th, and June 19th
- Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia Conference: September 21st – 22nd
- Team Agritourism Meetings: February 23rd, March 16th and 30th, and April 14th
- Team Agribusiness Meetings: May 7thand 29th
- Team Marketing/Branding Meetings: June 30th, July 23rd, and September 3rd, 9th, and 18th
- Team Agriculture Conference Meetings: June 18th, July 10th, and August 14th and 27th
- Consultant Support:
    - Virginia Cooperative Extension: Dr. Martha Walker contributed significant volunteer time to lead Team Agritourism through the development of a plan of work for agritourism. All four meetings lasted half a day each.
    - Uncork-it: Develop a market brief, design logo, and develop a tagline. The Market Brief documented the regional marketplace, product offerings, customer descriptions, competitors, and set the groundwork for specific objectives and strategies. The logo needed to be applicable across a broad spectrum of agritourism events and agribusiness products. The tagline married the concepts of agriculture and tourism and succinctly communicated the client message defined by the market brief and conveyed in the logo.
    - NRVRC Contract Administration: Commission staff continued to track the project budget and align expenditures with project deliverables. In addition, the Commission coordinated and facilitated several project oriented meetings to develop a Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Agritourism, Blue to New Branding, and the Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia Conference.

II. Problems and Delays

- August 4, 2015 the Commission formally requested an MOA extension from August 31, 2015 to October 31, 2015. The purpose of the extension was to enable the Management team to complete deliverables identified under research/evaluation and marketing.
- Presenting training needs of farmers to the Steering Committee is incomplete; however, several education/outreach strategies are incorporated into the regional plan of work.

III. Funding Expended To Date

- Grant funds expended to date, brief project description, amount, date, source of funds, and relationship to the workplan:

Expenditure Description	Cost	Funding Source						Program Totals	Supplies & Materials	Contractual		
		AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Montgomery County	Pulaski County	In-Kind			Name of Consultant or Vendor	Date	Relevance and Nature of Service
		81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*						
		Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge					
Contract Execution - 3800		$867.38	$2,748.72	$636.98	$636.98	$636.98	$0.00	**$5,527.04**				
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	$262.50	$50.45	$100.90	$37.05	$37.05	$37.05	$0.00	$262.50	no	Dinger	Oct-Nov 2013	Communication, bid specs, updates: 7.5 hours @ $35/hr
AFID Execution, Education, Planning, 04/02/14	$227.50	$43.72	$87.45	$32.11	$32.11	$32.11	$0.00	$227.50	no	Dinger	Jan-Feb 2014	AFID presentation, team coordination: 6.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 01/23/14	$140.00	$26.91	$53.81	$19.76	$19.76	$19.76	$0.00	$140.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Subcommittee meeting, correspondence: 4 hours @ $35/hr
RFP-Strategic Plan, 02/05/14	$503.04	$96.68	$193.36	$71.00	$71.00	$71.00	$0.00	$503.04	no	Roanoke Times	1/22/2014	Request for Proposal Advertisement
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	$297.50	$57.18	$114.35	$41.99	$41.99	$41.99	$0.00	$297.50	no	Dinger	Oct-Nov 2013	Agenda Development, meetings: 8.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 04/02/14	$315.00	$60.54	$121.08	$44.46	$44.46	$44.46	$0.00	$315.00	no	Dinger	Jan-Mar 2014	Subcommittee coordination, comm: 9 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution and Planning, 11/21/2013	$630.00	$121.08	$242.16	$88.92	$88.92	$88.92	$0.00	$630.00	no	Dinger	Sep-Oct 2013	Meeting coordination/facilitation: 18 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 09/04/2013	$857.50	$164.80	$329.60	$121.03	$121.03	$121.03	$0.00	$857.50	no	Dinger	June-Aug 2013	Reporting, research, meeting dev: 24.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, Consultation, 09/04/2013	$105.00	$20.18	$40.36	$14.82	$14.82	$14.82	$0.00	$105.00	no	Dinger	June-Aug 2013	Follow-up reports, communication: 3 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution and Management, 10/02/2013	$560.00	$107.63	$215.25	$79.04	$79.04	$79.04	$0.00	$560.00	no	Dinger	Aug-Sep 2013	Work plans, deliverables, budget: 16 hours @ $35/hr
Communications and Management, 01/23/2014	$210.00	$40.36	$80.72	$29.64	$29.64	$29.64	$0.00	$210.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Contractual budget, monthly report: 6 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution Strategy, Meal 05/28/2014	$405.00	$77.84	$155.67	$57.16	$57.16	$57.16	$0.00	$405.00	yes	Sylvia Wynn	Aug-14	Local Meeting, contracted meal: 45 @ $9.00/person
NRVPDC Invoice #Final Part 2 of 2	$1,014.00	$0.00	$1,014.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,014.00	no	NRVPDC		
	Balance:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00				
Research & Evaluation - 3801		$3,500.00	$3,853.43	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	**$20,364.43**				
Research & Evaluation support, 06/26/14	$910.00	$318.50	$591.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$910.00	no	Dinger	Mar-Apr 2014	outreach report, farmers workshop: 26 hours @ $35/hr
NRVPDC, Asset Mapping, 06/04/14	$1,100.00	$385.00	$715.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,100.00	no	NRVPDC	5/16/2014	Local food workshop + interactive mapping
Giles County-Gnegy	$121.88	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$121.88	$121.88	no	Giles County	4/14/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Giles County-McCoy	$226.73	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$226.73	$226.73	no	Giles County	4/27/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
General-Walker	$1,305.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,305.00	$1,305.00	no	VCE	4/17/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Montgomery County-Hopkins	$1,314.01	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,314.01	$1,314.01	no	Montgomery County	5/19/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
General-Scott 1A	$3,185.70	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,185.70	$3,185.70	no	VCE	6/8/2015	Kelli Scott In-kind staff time contribution 1/2
Montgomery County - Gibson	$810.65	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$810.65	$810.65	no	Montgomery County	6/5/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Montgomery County - Bleakly	$3,029.17	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,029.17	$3,029.17	no	Montgomery County	6/12/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Pulaski County - White	$406.03	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$406.03	$406.03	no	Pulaski County	6/17/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Fields/Gold Strategy; Branding, Uncork-it Part 1 of 2 (half)	$2,546.93	$0.00	$2,546.93	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,546.93	no	NRVPDC	6/22/2015	Strategy meeting; market brief, logo, tagline, strategic plan
General-Paulette 1B	$495.40	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$495.40	$495.40	no	VCE	6/18/2015	Morgan Paulette In-kind staff time contribution
General-Dudding Part 1A	$1,889.30	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,889.30	$1,889.30	no	VCE	6/15/2015	Jeannie Dudding In-kind staff time contribution
Quest USA – Conference Bus Tours	$1,642.00	$1,642.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,642.00	no	Quest USA	9/2/2015	Shuttle services for farm tours and reception
Conference Speaker Mileage: Fred Wydner	$103.00	$103.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$103.00	no	Wydner	10/2/2015	Speaker and mileage fee: 206 miles @ $0.50/mile
Conference Speaker Mileage: Rosalea Potter	$83.50	$83.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$83.50	no	Potter	10/1/2015	Speaker and mileage fee: 166 miles @ $0.50/mile
Hethwood Market, Conference Reception Food for 60	$817.80	$817.80	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$817.80	no	Heathwood Market	9/21/2015	Food/Dinner for 60 @ $13.63/ea.
Conference/reception photographer and photos	$150.00	$150.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$150.00	no	Wild Country Studios	9/24/2015	Photography and photos for reception
	Balance:	$0.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$227.13	$227.63				

Expenditure Description		Funding Source						Program Totals	Supplies & Materials	Contractual		
		AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Montgomery County	Pulaski County	In-Kind			Name of Consultant or Vendor	Date	Relevance and Nature of Service
		81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*						
		Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge					
Education & Outreach - 3802		$9,949.40	$4,325.89	$983.08	$983.08	$983.08	$4,500.00	**$12,750.00**				
Walmart, Farmer's Market: The Basics supplies, 6/19/14	$87.87	$47.93	$39.94	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$87.87	yes	Walmart	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies and snacks
Office Max, Farmer's Market: The Basics supplies, 6/19/14	$15.29	$8.34	$6.95	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$15.29	yes	OfficeMax	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies
Farmer's Market: The Basics postage, 6/19/14	$49.00	$26.73	$22.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$49.00	yes	Post Office	5/21/2014	100 stamps for Farmer's Market Program
Education & Outreach support, 06/26/14	$875.00	$477.27	$397.73	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$875.00	no	Dinger	May-Jun 2014	outreach report, farmers workshop: 25 hours @ $35/hr
Farmer's Market: The Basics, Mileage, 06/26/14	$179.20	$97.75	$81.45	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$179.20	no	Eric Eberly	6/13/2014	Speaker and mileage fee: 320 miles @ $0.56/hour
Farmer's Market: The Basics, Lecture Fee & Mileage, 06/26/14	$430.72	$234.94	$195.78	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$430.72	no	ChiknEGG Produc.	6/13/2014	Lecture fee: $200; mileage: 412 miles @ $0.56/mile
Hethwood Market, Lunch for 60 @ $11.00 each, 04/17/2014	$784.58	$427.95	$356.63	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$784.58	yes	Heathwood Mark.	4/1/2014	Lunch for 60 @ $11.00/ea + $50 delivery fee
Walmart, Workshop, breakfast, 05/07/2014	$91.82	$50.08	$41.74	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$91.82	yes	Walmart	3/19/2014	Breakfast items for workshop
Flavors Media, Project back-up reporting	$315.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$315.00	$315.00	no	Dinger	11/5/2014	Project request reporting
NRVPDC-State Ag-Conference & Agritourism Work Plan	$2,091.96	$0.00	$2,091.96	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,091.96	yes	NRVPDC	4/2/2015	State Ag Conference x4 + Agritourism Plan-Wordsprint ($388.56)
NRV Whole Farm Planning Part 1 of 2	$158.56	$86.49	$72.07	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$158.56	yes	Hethwood Market	3/13/2015	Lunch for 14 @ $11.33/ea
NRV Whole Farm Planning Part 2 of 2	$139.63	$76.16	$63.47	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$139.63	yes	Hethwood Market	3/29/2015	Lunch for 14 @ $9.90/ea
Matzah Rizing, Master Plan Steering Committee	$100.00	$54.55	$45.45	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$100.00	no	Matzah Rizing	1/4/2015	In-person presentation/travel for Regional Assessment
Cattle Risk Management Workshop, VCE flyers	$341.18	$186.10	$155.08	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$341.18	yes	VCE	4/29/2015	Flyers promoting educational program
VCE 4-H Livestock Education, Charter Bus	$850.00	$463.64	$386.36	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$850.00	no	VCE	6/5/2015	Partial payment for 4-H Charter Bus, Educational Trip
General-Scott 1B	$3,185.70	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,185.70	$3,185.70	no	VCE	6/8/2015	Kelli Scott In-kind staff time contribution 1/2
General-Paulette 1B	$495.40	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$495.40	$495.40	no	VCE	6/18/2015	Morgan Paulette In-kind staff time contribution
General-Dudding 1B	$1,889.29	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,889.29	$1,889.29	no	VCE	6/15/2015	Jeannie Dudding In-kind staff time contribution
Farm Management Workshop, 4/21/2015	$234.00	$0.00	$234.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$234.00	yes	Sylvia Wynn	4/21/2015	Lunch for 24 @ $9.75/ea
Fresh Produce Risk Workshop, 5/28/2015	$135.00	$0.00	$135.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$135.00	yes	Sylvia Wynn	5/28/2015	Lunch for 10 @ $13.50/ea
VT Skelton Center – Agriculture Conference Venue	$8,397.13	$5,447.89	$0.00	$983.08	$983.08	$983.08	$0.00	$8,397.13	no	Inn at Virginia Tech	10/1/2015	Venue, meals, rooms, and incidentals for full conference
FedEx Postage – Mail hard copy plans	$12.00	$12.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$12.00	no	FedEx	9/8/2015	Postage for hard copy reports to grantor
Conference Preparation Mileage: Phillips	$16.50	$16.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$16.50	yes	Phillips	9/21/2015	Mileage for conference staff assistance; 33 miles @ $0.50/mile
Staples-Badges for name tags	$85.26	$85.26	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$85.26	no	Staples	9/17/2015	Badges, clips, and straps
Sinkland Farm Venue	$150.00	$150.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$150.00	yes	Sinkland Farms	10/21/2015	Venue for reception
	Balance:	$1,999.82	$0.01	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	-$1,385.39	$614.44				
Marketing Strategy - 3803		$1,330.23	$3,318.77	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$0.00	**$8,399.00**				
Appalachian Grown, social media, 09/04/2013	$50.00	$20.00	$16.36	$4.55	$4.55	$4.55	$0.00	$50.00	no	Wild Cntry Studios	8/6/2013	Facebook page set-up for Appalachian Grown
Marketing and Planning, 01/23/14	$70.00	$28.00	$22.91	$6.36	$6.36	$6.36	$0.00	$70.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Electronic e-mail newsletter: 2 hours @ $35/hr
Farmer's Market Rack Card, Old Town Printing	$732.58	$0.00	$732.58	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$732.58	yes	Montgomery County	Jun-15	Farmers Market Rack Cards, 10,000
Fields/Gold Strategy; Branding, Uncork-it Part 1 of 2 (half)	$2,546.92	$0.00	$2,546.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,546.92	no	Uncork-It	6/17/2015	Develop market brief, create logo, develop tagline
Uncork-It Final Invoice	$4,999.50	$1,282.23	$0.00	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$0.00	$4,999.50	no	Uncork-It	10/15/2015	Complete market brief, create logo, develop tagline
	Balance:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00				

Expenditure Description		Funding Source						Program Totals	Supplies & Materials	Contractual		
		AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Montgomery County	Pulaski County	In-Kind			Name of Consultant or Vendor	Date	Relevance and Nature of Service
		81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*						
		Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge					
Strategic Plan - 3804		$14,750.00	$7,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$0.00	**$25,000.00**				
Matson Consulting, Project Initiation, Invoice # 3052	$10,000.00	$5,900.00	$2,900.00	$400.00	$400.00	$400.00	$0.00	$10,000.00	no	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan Project Initiation
Matson Consulting, Invoice # 3013, 07/17/2014	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	Matson	8/6/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3032, 9/29/2014	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	Matson	10/16/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3037, 11/17/2014	$1,000.00	$590.00	$290.00	$40.00	$40.00	$40.00	$0.00	$1,000.00	no	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan Final Invoice
	Balance:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00				
Project Management - 3805		$4,602.99	$8,503.19	$1,959.94	$1,959.94	$1,959.94	$0.00	**$18,986.00**				
NRVPDC Invoice #725	7,341.68	$2,126.79	$2,126.79	$1,029.37	$1,029.37	$1,029.37	$0.00	$7,341.68	no	NRVPDC	9/18/2014	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #737	$2,280.16	$660.53	$660.53	$319.70	$319.70	$319.70	$0.00	$2,280.16	no	NRVPDC	11/5/2014	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #758	$1,545.14	$447.61	$447.61	$216.64	$216.64	$216.64	$0.00	$1,545.14	no	NRVPDC	12/10/2014	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #773	$589.33	$170.72	$170.72	$82.63	$82.63	$82.63	$0.00	$589.33	no	NRVPDC	12/18/2014	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #788	$1,042.65	$302.04	$302.04	$146.19	$146.19	$146.19	$0.00	$1,042.65	no	NRVPDC	1/29/2015	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #813	$1,179.74	$341.76	$341.76	$165.41	$165.41	$165.41	$0.00	$1,179.74	no	NRVPDC	2/9/2015	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #834	$2,468.33	$553.56	$1,914.77	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,468.33	no	NRVPDC	3/9/2015	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #858	$1,361.58	$0.00	$1,361.58	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,361.58	no	NRVPDC	3/31/2015	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #886	$924.44	$0.00	$924.44	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$924.44	no	NRVPDC	5/11/2015	Contract administration
NRVPDC Invoice #Final Part 1 of 2	$252.95	$0.00	$252.95	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$252.95	no	NRVPDC	6/23/2015	Contract administration
	Balance:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00				

- Overall Project Expenditures:

Funding Source	Program Deliverables						Program Totals	Balance
	Contract Execution	Research & Evaluation	Education & Outreach	Marketing Strategy	Strategic Plan	Project Management		
AFID/VDAC	$867.38	$3,500.00	$9,949.40	$1,330.23	$14,750.00	$4,602.99	$35,000.00	$2,000.32
DHCD	$2,748.72	$3,853.43	$4,325.89	$3,318.77	$7,250.00	$8,503.19	$30,000.00	$0.01
Giles County Cash	$636.98		$983.08	$1,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,959.94	$5,830.00	$0.00
Montgomery County Cash	$636.98		$983.08	$1,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,959.94	$5,830.00	$0.00
Pulaski County Cash	$636.98		$983.08	$1,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,959.94	$5,830.00	$0.00
Giles County In-Kind		$4,337.00	$1,500.00				$5,837.00	-$386.09
Montgomery County In-Kind		$4,337.00	$1,500.00				$5,837.00	-$386.09
Pulaski County In-Kind		$4,337.00	$1,500.00				$5,837.00	-$386.09
Budget Total:	**$5,527.04**	**$20,364.43**	**$21,724.53**	**$8,399.00**	**$25,000.00**	**$18,986.00**	$100,001.00	$2,000.33 (cash)
Balance:	$0.00	$227.63	$614.44	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00		

IV. Additional Information

- Project Primary Contacts
- Management Team
- NRV Agribusiness Priorities
- Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia
- Marketing Brief
- Branding Guide
- Meeting Agendas/Notes

Primary Contacts

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	(804) 786-6911	Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	(804) 371-7167	Ramona.Chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
Giles County Administrator	Chris McKlarney	(540) 921-2525	cmcklarney@gilescounty.org
Montgomery County Administrator	Craig Meadows	(540) 382-6954	meadowsfc@montgomerycountyva.gov
Pulaski County Administrator	Peter Huber	(540) 980-7705	phuber@pulaskicounty.org
NRV Agritourism Project Manager	Elijah Sharp	(540) 639-9313	esharp@nrvrc.org

Management Team

Project Role	Name	Affiliation
Chairperson	Chris McKlarney	Giles County
Project Coordination	Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Project Management, billing	Rhonda Tickle	Giles County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Cora Gnegy	Giles County
Team Research & Evaluation Co-Chair	Brea Hopkins	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Lisa Bleakley	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Peggy White	Pulaski County
Strategic Plan Development	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County
Team Agritourism Facilitator	Martha Walker	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Kelly Scott	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Jeannie Layton-Dudding	VA Cooperative Extension
Local Food Directory	Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh
Assessment and evaluation	Kevin Byrd	NRVPDC
Grant writer	Dianne Dinger	Consultant
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	DHCD
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	AFID
Project management, meeting facilitation, reporting	Elijah Sharp	NRVRC

NRV Agribusiness Priorities

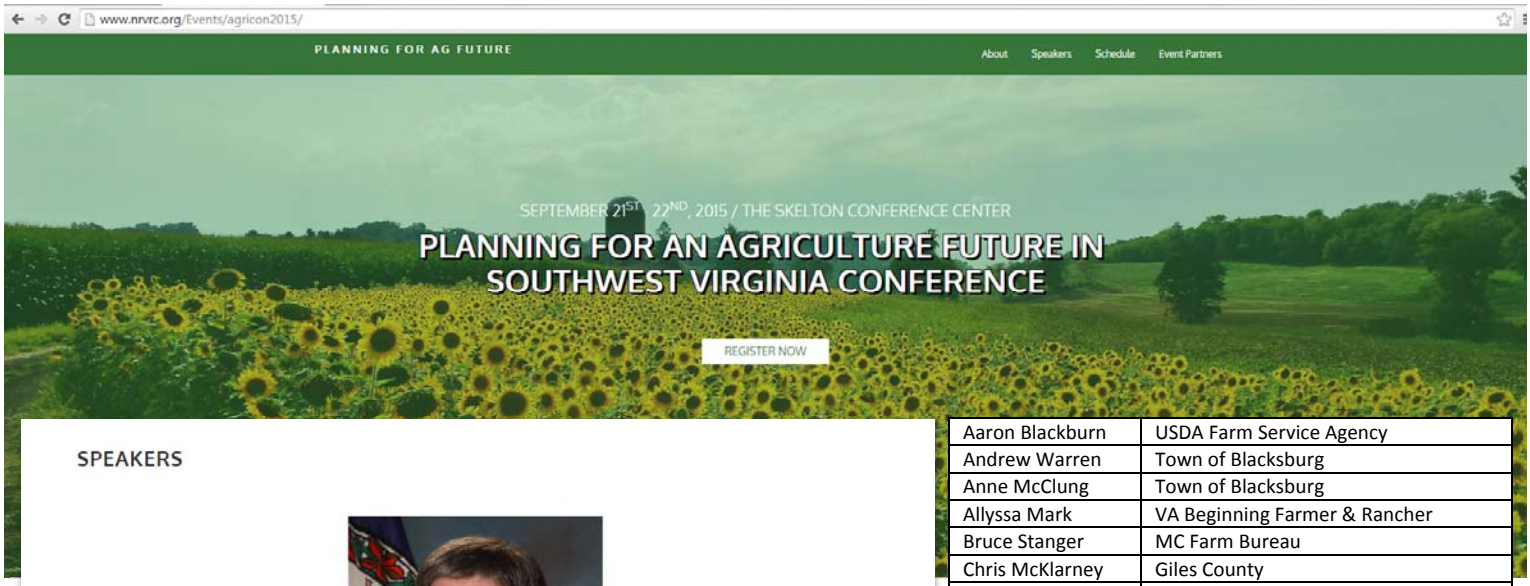
Agriculture is Virginia's largest and oldest industry, generating over $52 billion annually. The agriculture sector provides 357,000 jobs, consists of over 46,000 farms, and when combined with forestry, accounts for about 8.1% of the state's GDP. Almost 90% of Virginia's farms are family owned and operated.

In the New River Valley, beef and forestry/timber are the largest agriculture sectors, generating over $60 million annually. Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties have a total of 1,426 farms, nearly 270,000 acres of farmland. Regionally, the population is aging and the average aged farmer is 57. While the agriculture landscape is dominated by grass grazing animals and steep forests, acreage in forages and forestry continue to grow. Additionally, agriculture continues to have a significant economic impact across the region.

December 18, 2014, the NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Project Steering Committee reviewed the Regional Assessment, prepared by Matson Consulting, and collaboratively identified five priority recommendations:

1. Form an agriculture development board
2. Explore production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce
3. Establish a small producer network
4. Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers
5. Create teams to assist with whole farm planning

Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia



SPEAKERS

TODD HAYMORE
SECRETARY
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

DR. MARTHA WALKER
EXTENSION SPECIALIST
COMMUNITY VIABILITY
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

TRACY COLTRAIN
AGRITOURISM COORDINATOR
FIELDS OF GOLD – SHENANDOAH VALLEY'S FARM TRAIL

JOELL EIFERT
DIRECTOR
VIRGINIA TECH FOOD INNOVATIONS PROGRAM

DANNY NEEL
MARKETING SPECIALIST
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

FRED WYDNER
AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

MIKE BURTON
PROGRAM COORDINATOR
SUSTAIN FLOYD
SPECIALTY FOODS

ROSALEA RILEY POTTER
MANAGER
BUFFALO CREEK BEEF AND DONALDS MEAT PROCESSING

JAMES CORNWELL, JR.
ATTORNEY
SANDS ANDERSON

KELLI SCOTT
EXTENSION AGENT
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

LISA BLEAKLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

ELIJAH SHARP
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & PROGRAMS
NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

EMILY GIBSON
PLANNING DIRECTOR
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

www.nrvrc.org/Events/agricon2015/

Aaron Blackburn	USDA Farm Service Agency
Andrew Warren	Town of Blacksburg
Anne McClung	Town of Blacksburg
Allyssa Mark	VA Beginning Farmer & Rancher
Bruce Stanger	MC Farm Bureau
Chris McKlarney	Giles County
Craig Meadows	Montgomery County
Danny Neel	VDACS
Dari Jenkins	Montgomery County
Elijah Sharp	NRVRC
Emily Gibson	Montgomery County
Fred Wydner	Pittsylvania County
Irene Kilmer	Montgomery County
Jack Leffel	Botetourt County
Jay Brenchick	Botetourt County
Jennifer Wilsie	NRVRC
Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Jewel Hairston	USDA Farm Service Agency
Jim Cornwell	Sands Anderson
Joell Eifert	VT Food Innovations Program
Julie Phillips	NRVRC
Kelli Scott	VCE - Montgomery County
Kevin Bohon	USDA Farm Service Agency
Kitty Barker	Virginia Tourism Corporation
Lauren Yoder	Floyd County
Leanne Dubois	VDACS
Linda Robinson	Selah Springs Farm
Lisa Bleakley	Montgomery County
Lorien MacAuley	VA Beginning Farmer & Rancher
Mark Cox	First Bank & Trust
Margaret Smith	Big Oak Angus Beef
Martha Walker	VCE
Mary Casey	Dead oak hollow farm
Michael Solomon	Pulaski County
Mike Burton	Sustain Floyd
Misty Crigger	USDA Farm Service Agency
Morgan Paulette	VCE - Pulaski County
Patrick Burton	NRVRC
Peggy White	Pulaski County
Peter Huber	Pulaski County
Ramona Chapman	DHCD
Rosalea Potter	BC Beef & Donalds Meat Processing
Scott Kroll	Montgomery County
Stephen Versen	VDACS
Todd Haymore	VA Department of Agriculture & Forestry
Tracey Coltrain	Fields of Gold

Marketing Brief

MARKET BRIEF

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRICULTURE & TOURISM CONSORTIUM BRANDING

A. OBJECTIVE

The New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium is interested in developing a regional brand identity for agritourism activities and farm products. While speaking to agritourists and local residents, the regional brand will encourage stakeholders to cooperate in building strong experiences and a larger agritourism economy.

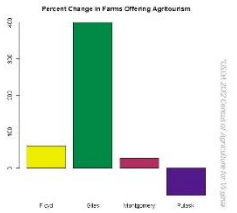
B. AGRITOURISM MARKET

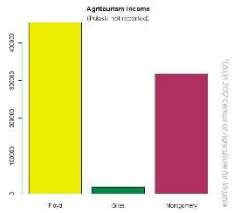
The Code of Virginia, in § 3.2-6400 defines "agritourism activity" as "any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity."

While the Code of Virginia defines agritourism by limiting it to activities on farms or ranches, agritourism for marketing purposes is expanded to include festivals and markets that might not be on farms, but where customers can interact with farmers and producers.

According to the USDA's 2012 Census of Agriculture for Virginia, the agritourism and recreational services industry is thriving in Virginia. The number of farms offering some form of agritourism activity increased by 42% from 2007 to 2012, and income increased by $2.3 million dollars over the same time period.

The counties comprising the New River Valley are largely reflective of this trend — the number of farms offering agritourism activities or services increased by 27% in Montgomery County, 400% in Giles County, and 61% in Floyd County; income earned by agritourism activities or services increased by $318,000 in Montgomery county, $18,000 in Giles County, and $454,000 in Floyd — though Pulaski County struggles (the number of farms offering agritourism activities or services fell by 75%; income was unreported in 2012).



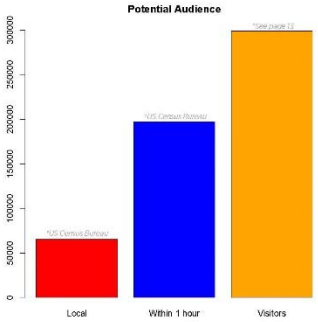


According to a study published by Iowa State University about agritourism in Iowa, agritourists tend to skew female (55%), live in non-urban areas (67.8%), are largely Caucasian/white (93.69%), and nearly 83% have a high school diploma or bachelor's degree.

The same study tells us that more than two-thirds (69%) of survey respondents are willing to drive up to 50-miles to reach an agritourism destination (30% of respondents are willing to drive 51+ miles, and 1% aren't willing to go at all).

Though Iowa certainly isn't the NRV, parallels can be drawn since the demographic make-up of Iowa is similar to that of the NRV.

Based on this assumption, we have divided the potential market into local New River Valley residents, people who live outside the four counties, but within an hour's drive, and out-of-area visitors. This brings the entire possible market size for agritourism activities to be about 560,000 (local population plus area population within a one-hour drive plus potential area visitors; see chart below), about half of whom are out-of-area visitors. The market size for the brand will be larger, as the products grown in the region can be branded and are sold beyond these borders.



We filtered the local and 1-hour-away residents by their probable interest in such activities and arrived at a permanent market group of more than 75,000.

TRENDS, FORECASTS, PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Eat local: The green trend in consumer preference to buy local and eat local is an important factor for regional agricultural enterprises. Consumers and restaurants are increasingly interested in foods with local sources.

Direct-to-consumer marketing of products has emerged as a way for producers to capitalize on the increased interest in local foods found across the United States. Farm stands, CSAs, U-Picks, Farmers Markets, Roadside Stands, Food Hubs, have all emerged as viable methods of selling directly to the consumer. These direct to consumer sales, often referred to under the umbrella of "local foods," have an impact on the greater food economy in a region as well.

Foodie: There is a growing trend of persons cooking and enjoying the subtle flavors of food. These people tend to seek out fresh and distinctive foods both at home and when dining in restaurants.

Homesteading: Millennials have been leading a movement they call homesteading, in which participants are more involved in preparing food, clothes, and furnishings themselves. This has increased people interested in canning, preserving, and growing their own food.

Continued growth of organic eating: The ranks of vegetarians and individuals interested in feeding their families organic and fresh foods provides an opportunity for local producers to engage with them.

C. AGRICULTURE OFFERINGS IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

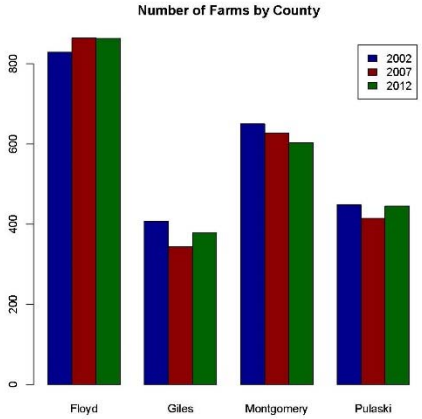
1. OVERVIEW

The New River Valley comprises 1,458 square miles in the counties of Montgomery, Giles, Pulaski, and Floyd.

These counties are located between the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountain Ranges in Southwestern Virginia. The largest town in each county are Blacksburg (Montgomery), Pulaski (Pulaski), Pearisburg (Giles), Floyd (Floyd), and the City of Radford (City of Radford). The region is serviced by two major interstate highways, I-81 connecting Knoxville, Tennessee and Roanoke, Virginia, as well as I-77 connecting Charleston, West Virginia and Charlotte, North Carolina. The region is home to two large state universities: Virginia Tech, a land-grant university, and Radford University.

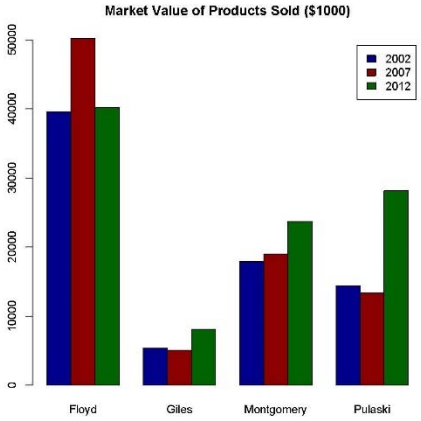
2. AGRICULTURE IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

In the mountainous New River Valley, agriculture occupies 38% of the land. The region has a total of 2,251 farms. Regionally, the agricultural population is aging and the average aged farmer is 57. In 2007, 58% of farmers relied on on an off-farm job as their primary source of income. While the agriculture landscape is dominated by grass grazing animals and steep forests, acreage in forages and forestry continue to grow. In the New River Valley, beef and forestry/timber are the largest agriculture sectors, generating more than $60 million annually.



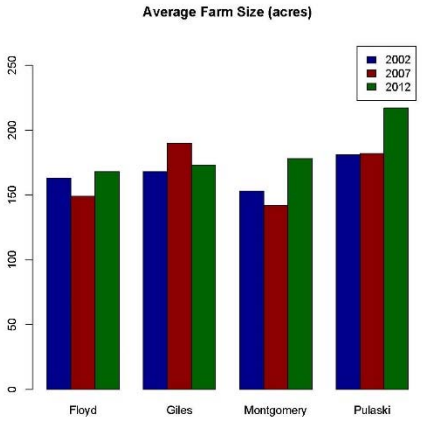
As shown in the figure, the amount of farms in each county has fluctuated slightly without major decreases or increases between 2002 and 2012. Floyd County continues to contain the most farms even after experiencing decreases over the ten-year period. Giles County contains the least amount of farms but is not far behind Pulaski County.

*USDA Agriculture Census of Virginia



All counties experienced an increase in product value between 2007 and 2012 but the value of Pulaski County products significantly increased during this time period. Floyd County averages higher, due to its higher percentage of crop production.

USDA Agricultural Census of Virginia



The size of the farms within each county has only slightly changed over the past ten years. Pulaski and Montgomery counties have experienced increase in farm size during recent years. Pulaski has consistently contained the largest farms while Montgomery County's farms have only recently caught up to the size of Giles County farms.

USDA Agricultural Census of Virginia

3. AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

While dominated by mountains, valleys, and a hilly plateau, the New River Valley region has a variety of microclimates where a wide variety of agricultural plants and animals can thrive. The US Department of Agriculture lists a variety of hardiness zones for crops, from 5B to 7B. This enables many fruits, berries, vegetables, roots, grains, and nuts to be grown, with the exception of tropical plants, such as citrus fruits. The region is in a rain shadow created by the mountains of West Virginia and its rainfall amounts are among the lowest in the state. The region is at the edge of two very divergent climate patterns, rainfall and temperatures are inconsistent year to year, leading to frequent droughts and crop failures.

Virginia averages about 70% of its agricultural sales based in livestock and 30% based in crops; the corresponding NRV averages are 77% of NRV's agricultural sales in livestock and 23% in crops. The NRV is home to the 7th largest cattle population in Virginia. Livestock makes up the majority of market sales in every county. Currently, the only USDA certified meat processing facility is located in Giles County.

The top crops for the NRV are: forage land (for livestock), hay, corn, wheat, rye, fruits and vegetables, cut Christmas trees, sod, nursery stock, and short rotation wood crops. Floyd County averages much higher earnings per farm than the rest of the NRV due to their higher percentage of crop production.

The Virginia wine industry is growing and is in search of more grapes being grown in the state. Grape production is not a major enterprise in the New River Valley, but is considered a growth product and strongly encouraged. While land in the region is suitable for grape production, the acreage seems to be below the tracking level of official statistics at the time of this latest Census. There has been a response of the area's producers to the increased demand for locally produced wine grapes. Conversations with Extension Agents familiar with the region suggest that since the Census there has been a significant increase in vineyard plantings, with increases in vineyard plantings in throughout 2013. In 2014, when the consultant surveyed growers, Montgomery County producers planted approximately nine additional acres, Pulaski planted five, and Giles producers planted 10 acres.

4. STAKEHOLDERS

Farmers

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, there are 31,648 farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers. This number is forecast to decline nearly 30% to 22,336 by 2022. The average age of local farmers is 57 and 30% of farmers are age 65 and older. The average 2012 income per farm is $41,000. 90% of farms in Virginia are owned by families or individuals. Less than 16¢ per consumer dollar spent on food goes back to the farmer.

Agriculture-related operations

- Restaurants that use a majority of locally-grown foods
- Grocers (large scale and small/independent)/farm stands
- Food Hub/Food Innovation District (system to connect farmers, businesses, and consumers)
- Farmers Markets
- Nurseries and greenhouses
- Food and ag-related commodity producers

Government Agencies and NGOs

- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Montgomery County
- Giles County
- Pulaski County

- Virginia Office of Farmland Preservation
- Floyd County
- City of Radford
- Town of Christiansburg
- Town of Blacksburg
- Virginia Tech
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- USDA
- Virginia Farm Bureau
- New River Valley Planning District Commission
- National Committee for the New River
- New River Valley Health Consortium
- Community Foundation of the New River Valley
- New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

2. AGRITOURISM ACTIVITIES IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

Agritourism opportunities have been expanding in the New River Valley. With a stronger emphasis and greater cooperation, this can continue to grow. Generally, agritourism activities fall into three core categories:

Farm-based, which includes activities like hay rides, horseback riding, bird-watching/wildlife viewing, special events, photography, painting, farm/ranch work experience (roundup, branding, haying, fencing, calving, etc.), u-pick operations for fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees, corn mazes, wagon rides, children's camps, seeing and feeding farm animals, hunting and fishing (guided or unguided), snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, off-road motorcycling, mountain-biking, school and educational tours, tour of farm or ranch operation, on farm/ranch get-a-way. Local examples include Sinkland Farms; Joe's Tree Farm; U-pick berry picking at Crow's Nest; Doe Creek apple picking; Buffalo & More; and Spikenard Farm & Bee Sanctuary.

Food-based, which includes activities like harvest and food festivals, farmers' markets, winery tours and tastings, microbrewery visits, food processing site visits (cheese, jam, cider). Local examples include the Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Pearisburgs farmers markets; area wineries, like Beliveau Estate, Attimo, and Chateau Morrissette; Bull & Bones and The River breweries; Due South BBQ; The Palisades; and Draper Mercantile Blue Door Cafe.

Heritage-based, which includes activities like county fairs, historical museums, agricultural history sites, pioneer settlements, rodeos, and livestock shows. Local examples include Smithfield

Plantation; the Wilderness Trail Festival; Summer Solstice Festival; the New River Valley Fair; Floyd Country Store; and Steppin' Out.

Some specific examples:
Belleveau Estate Winery
Attimo Winery
West Wind Winery (Wythe Co)
Buffalo & More (Riner)
Cut your own Christmas Tree farms
Mountain Lake Resort & Restaurant (Giles)
Newport Convenience Store (Giles)
Thornspring Farm (Pulaski)
Draper Merc. Blue Door Café (Pulaski)
Farriss' Vineyard
Floyd Eco Village
Floyd Farmers Market
Floyd Country Store
Spikenard Farm & Bee Sanctuary (Floyd)
Steele's Blueberry (Newport)
Doe Creek
Giles County Farm Bureau Coop
Grant's Grocery (Narrows)
Foggy Bottom Vineyard
Gary Midkiff (berries & fruit-Rich Creek)
Spruce Run Tree Farm (Newport)
Palisades Restaurant
Black Hen Restaurant
Ganoe's Organics (Narrows)
Sugar by Suzanne
Jean Lucas – Goat Farm

D. AGRITOURISTS IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

LOCAL

The New River Valley has a population of about 179,000. Population growth is expected to be between 7 and 8% over the next couple decades, which is smaller than Virginia's 10% and the national growth of 16%. While its residents' educational achievements (24% with a bachelor's degree or higher) is lower than in Virginia (32%) and the United States in general (26%), their English speaking skills are much higher, with less than 1% speaking less than well, compared to 2.6% in Virginia and 4.6% throughout the country.

The New River Valley has a smaller percentage of people in the working and family-rearing ages of

Age of Population in the New River Valley

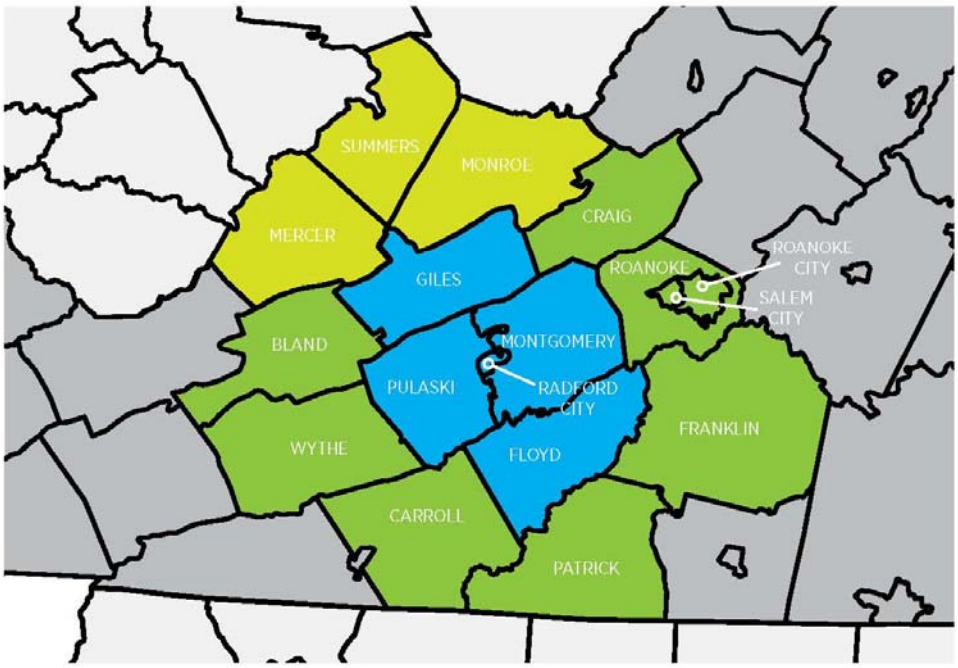
Under 5 years	8,465
5-19 years	35,160
20-24 years	29,383
25-34 years	20,867
35-44 years	20,482
45-54 years	21,278
55-64 years	19,959
65+	22,754

Age	NRV	VA	US
Under 5 years	5%	6%	7%
5 to 19 years	20%	20%	20%
20 to 24 years	16%	7%	7%
25 to 34 years	12%	14%	13%
35 to 39 years	11%	14%	13%
45 to 54 years	12%	15%	15%
55 to 64 years	11%	12%	12%
65+	13%	12%	13%

25-64 (46%), compared to the rest of Virginia (55%) and the country in general (53%). There is a significant, disproportionate percentage of college-aged population.

The Valley has a median adjusted gross household income of $56,568 (2007) and a cost-of-living index of 94.4.

According to a study published by Iowa State University about agritourism in Iowa, over two-thirds (69%) of agritourists are willing to drive up to 50-miles to reach an agritourism destination (30% of respondents are willing to drive 51+ miles, and 1% aren't willing to go at all). Though Iowa certainly isn't the NRV, parallels can be drawn since the demographic make-up of Iowa is similar to that of the NRV. Given this, we have identified 17 counties/cities within the NRV and the surrounding area that make up the Consortium's core local audience that reside either in the NRV or within a one-hour drive.



Counties/cities in the core local audience

To further define who is most likely to be interested in the Consortium's offerings, we employed a demographic, consumer behavior, and geographic audience segmentation platform that gives us insight into the likes, dislikes, lifestyles and purchase behaviors of the residents of these 17 counties. We identified 16 of the platform's 66 segments contain characteristics befitting of an agritourist. In the NRV, 25,514 residents fall into one of these 16 segments; in surrounding areas, 50,984 residents fit the bill:

Big Fish, Small Pond (Upscale Older without Kids) — 12,695
Older, upper-class, college-educated professionals, the members of Big Fish, Small Pond are often among the leading citizens of their small-town communities. These upscale, empty-nesting couples enjoy the trappings of success, including belonging to country clubs, maintaining large investment portfolios, and spending freely on computer technology.

God's Country (Upscale Older with Kids) — 2,930
When city dwellers and suburbanites began moving to the country in the 1970s, God's Country emerged as the most affluent of the nation's exurban lifestyles. Today, wealthier communities exist in the hinterlands, but God's Country remains a haven for upscale couples in spacious homes. Typically college educated Baby Boomers, these Americans try to maintain a balanced lifestyle between high-power jobs and laid-back leisure.

Upward Bound (Upscale Middle Age with Kids) — 928
More than any other segment, Upward Bound appears to be the home of those legendary Soccer Moms and Dads. In these small satellite cities, upscale families boast dual incomes, college degrees, and new split-levels and colonials. Residents of Upward Bound tend to be kid obsessed, with heavy purchases of computers, action figures, dolls, board games, bicycles, and camping equipment.

New Empty Nest (Upper Mid Mature without Kids) — 1,884
With their grown-up children recently out of the house, New Empty Nests is composed of upper-middle income older Americans who pursue active—and activist—lifestyles. Most residents are over 65 years old, but they show no interest in a rest-home retirement. This is the top-ranked segment for all-inclusive travel packages; the favorite destination is Europe.

Beltway Boomers (Upper Mid Older with Kids) — 831
The members of the postwar Baby Boom are all grown up. One segment of this huge cohort—college-educated, upper-middle-class, and home-owning—is found in Beltway Boomers. Like many of their peers who married late, these Boomers are still raising children in comfortable suburban subdivisions, and they're pursuing kid-centered lifestyles.

Kids & Cul-de-Sacs (Upper Mid Younger with Kids) — 738
Upper-middle-class, suburban, married couples with children—that's the skinny on Kids & Cul-de-Sacs, an enviable lifestyle of large families in recently built subdivisions. With a high rate of Hispanic and Asian Americans, this segment is a refuge for college-educated, white-collar professionals with administrative jobs and upper-middle-class incomes. Their nexus of education, affluence, and children translates into large outlays for child-centered products and services.

Fast Track Families (Upscale Middle Age with Kids) — 4,388
With their upscale incomes, numerous children, and spacious homes, Fast-Track Families are in their prime acquisition years. These middle-aged parents have the disposable income and educated sensibility to want the best for their children. They buy the latest technology with impunity: new computers, DVD players, home theater systems, and video games. They take advantage of their rustic locales by camping, boating, and fishing.

Greenbelt Sports (Upper Mid Older without Kids) — 4,324
A segment of upscale exurban couples, Greenbelt Sports is known for its active lifestyle. Most of these older residents are married, college-educated, and own new homes. And few segments have higher rates for pursuing outdoor activities such as skiing, canoeing, backpacking, boating, and mountain biking.

Up & Comers (Upper Mid Younger without Kids) — 3,924
Up-and-Comers is a stopover for younger, upper-midscale singles before they marry, have families, and establish more deskbound lifestyles. Found in second-tier cities, these mobile adults, mostly age 25 to 44, include a disproportionate number of recent college graduates who are into athletic activities, the latest technology, and nightlife entertainment.

Traditional Times (Upper Mid Older without Kids) — 11,521
Traditional Times is the kind of lifestyle where small-town couples nearing retirement are beginning to enjoy their first empty-nest years. Typically in their fifties and older, these upper-middle-class Americans pursue a kind of granola-and-grits lifestyle. On their coffee tables are magazines with titles like Country Living and Country Home. But they're big travelers, especially in recreational vehicles and campers.

New Homesteaders (Upper Mid Younger with Kids) — 3,177
Traditional Times is the kind of lifestyle where small-town couples nearing retirement are beginning to enjoy their first empty-nest years. Typically in their fifties and older, these upper-middle-class Americans pursue a kind of granola-and-grits lifestyle. On their coffee tables are magazines with titles like Country Living and Country Home. But they're big travelers, especially in recreational vehicles and campers.

Big Sky Families (Upper Mid Younger with Kids) — 6,921
Scattered in placid towns across the American heartland, Big Sky Families is a segment of middle-aged rural families who have turned high school educations and blue-collar jobs into busy, upper-middle-class lifestyles. Residents enjoy baseball, basketball, and volleyball, as well as fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. To entertain their sprawling families, they buy virtually every piece of sporting equipment on the market.

Boomtown Singles (Midscale Younger without Kids) — 6,716
Affordable housing, abundant entry-level jobs, and a thriving singles scene—all have given rise to the Boomtown Singles segment in fast-growing satellite cities. Single and working-class, these residents pursue active lifestyles amid sprawling apartment complexes, bars, convenience stores, and laundromats.

Blue Chip Blues (Midscale Younger with Kids) — 931
Blue-Chip Blues is known as a comfortable lifestyle for ethnically-diverse, young, sprawling families with well-paying blue-collar and service jobs. The segment's aging neighborhoods feature compact, modestly priced homes surrounded by commercial centers that cater to child-filled households.

Heartlanders (Lower Mid Older Mostly without Kids) — 10,750
America was once a land of small middle-class towns, which can still be found today among Heartlanders. This widespread segment consists of older couples with white-collar jobs living in sturdy, unpretentious homes. In these communities of small families and empty-nesting couples, Heartlanders residents pursue a rustic lifestyle where hunting and fishing remain prime leisure activities along with cooking, sewing, camping, and boating.

City Startups (Low Income Younger without Kids) — 8,064
In City Startups, young to middle-aged, multi-ethnic singles have settled in neighborhoods filled with cheap apartments and a commercial base of cafés, bars, laundromats, and clubs that cater to twentysomethings. One of the youngest segments in America—with ten times as many college students as the national average—these neighborhoods feature low incomes and high concentrations of African-American and Hispanic households.

VISITORS

Many people visit the NRV each year. They may not be here with the strict intention of partaking in agritourism activities, but they may ready and willing to participate. We estimate this audience to present nearly 300,000 (see figures below) additional prospects to the agritourism market. The largest group of these visitors is people driving through the region. Although large (180,000), this group has a smaller chance of engaging.

Virginia Tech football games: 25,000/game (Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development)
Virginia Tech and Radford parents: 82,000 (student populations x 2)
Passing-through (via I-81): 180,000
Floyd-festers: 12,000 (average of recent years' attendees)

F. COMPETITION

Nearby agritourism activities provide competition for New River Valley agritourists. However, with a large close-to-home market, the competition also includes other outdoor or active activities, and even doing nothing at all.

Other outdoor activities include sports (participating and watching), hiking, tubing, and eating out. Families looking to entertain children represent a sizable audience for agritourism. Competition for that group includes swimming, kids museums and activities, and organized sports. In addition, Roanoke and Salem beckon with their activities.

Following is a brief collection of agritourism and agricultural brands nearby:

VIRGINIA BRANDS

1. Virginia Wine
http://www.virginiawine.org

- "Discover and Taste Virginia Wines"
- lists events, learn about info, downloadable 'passport' to Virginia Wineries, where to buy, scenic wine trails
- Live music hosting (this is the big one), wine bootcamp, art gallery, production tours and tastings, Food and Wine Festivals, yoga and wine outings, activities where dogs are allowed, triple threat wine, cheese, and chocolate pairing classes.

2. Virginia Peanuts
http://www.aboutpeanuts.com

- "Energy for the good (the 'o's are a peanut sideways) life"
- Education packet for teachers, shop, recipes, merchandising guides, nutrition facts, peanut news
- Peanut crops of Virginia and the Carolinas.

3. Virginia Grown
http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/vagrown

- "Locally Known, Virginia Grown" "Farm. Fresh. Pledge!"
- Marketing services, Education packets for teachers, Farmers market listings, Social media, News, Trade events
- Aquaculture & Marine Products, Christmas Trees, Horticulture & Nursery Items, Dairy and Eggs, Feed, Seed, and Non-food items, Fruits and Vegetables, Meat, Poultry, and Livestock, Organic, Peanuts, Small Grains, Cotton, and Fibers, Specialty Products (Beer, Wine, Honey, Tree Nuts)

4. Southwest Virginia Fresh
http://www.swvafresh.org

- Independent community service organization in late 2012 and a 501c3 charitable nonprofit in 2014, having been launched in 2010 as Pulaski Fresh, a local foods initiative of Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce. It is operated by a Board of Directors, which serves as primary staff, and volunteers from our Advisory Board, both of which include consumers and producers from throughout southwestern Virginia.
- Serves the entire blue ridge highlands region.
- "SO Fresh!"
- Youth in agriculture initiative, workshops, plant your own workshops, producers workshops

VIRGINIA NEIGHBORS

1. Tennessee
http://www.tnvacation.com/agritourism

- "The Soundtrack of America" "Made in Tennessee" "Taste of Tennessee" "Pick Tennessee"
- Vineyards, farmers markets, pick-your-own, farm-raised meats, Museum of Appalachia, wildflowers, gardens and arboretums, wedding destinations, corn maze and hayrides, Christmas tree farms, Great Smoky Arts & Crafts Community, farm fresh fun (farm tours, petting zoo, pumpkin patch), fish farms, breweries, distilleries, plant nurseries, heritage & culture (family farms passed down for 100 years or more, living history farms, general stores, National Ornamental Metal Museum, quilting)
- Live music, farmers markets, Relay for Life, Car shows, Worlds Largest Yard Sale

2. North Carolina
http://www.gottobenc.com

- "Got to be NC" "Goodness Grows in NC" "Grown. Raised. Caught. Made."
- Barnyard Animals, Fiber Animals, Farm Riding Trails, Walking Trails & Crafts, Camping, Bird Watching, Fishing, Hunting, Farm Bed & Breakfasts, Country Cabins, Retreats, Hay Rides, Mazes, Pumpkin Patches, Historic Farms, Quilt Barns, Reunions, Museums, Events, Holiday Farms, Christmas Trees, Crafts, Pick Your Own Farms, Farm Roadside Stands, Nurseries, Flowers, Picnics, Parties, Weddings, Honeymoons, School Field Trips, Summer Camps, Farm Vacations, Slow Food, Dining, Vineyards, Wineries, Organic, seafood.

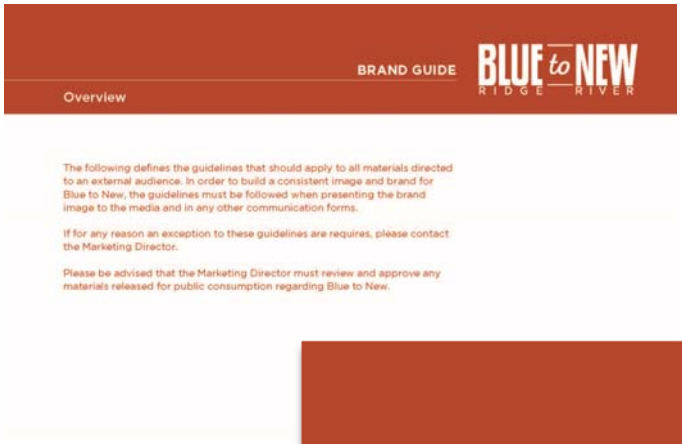
Additional Resources for Farmers

- Resources for farmers, classes in agritourism for farmers, networking association, Agritourism liability insurance directory, Agricultural tourism highway signs program and application process resources

3. Kentucky

- "Farms are Fun" "Kentucky Proud" " The Land of Unbridled Adventure"
- Distilleries and Breweries, Farmers Markets, Museums and historic farms, Wineries, Bed and Breakfests, Trail Rides (horse), Christmas tree farms, Horse Farms and Racing, Gardens and Nurseries, greenhouses and horticulture farms, Restaurants (local produce sourced), Orchards, Mazes, hayrides, U-pick, Livestock expos and shows, Walking trails with sculpture, amphitheaters, lakes, special theme gardens, butterfly gardens, animal topiaries, moon gardens, and other thematic features, farm attractions (food and fiber), roadside markets, Archery and Guns, Horsedrawn carriage, master crafts, botanical gardens.

Branding Guide



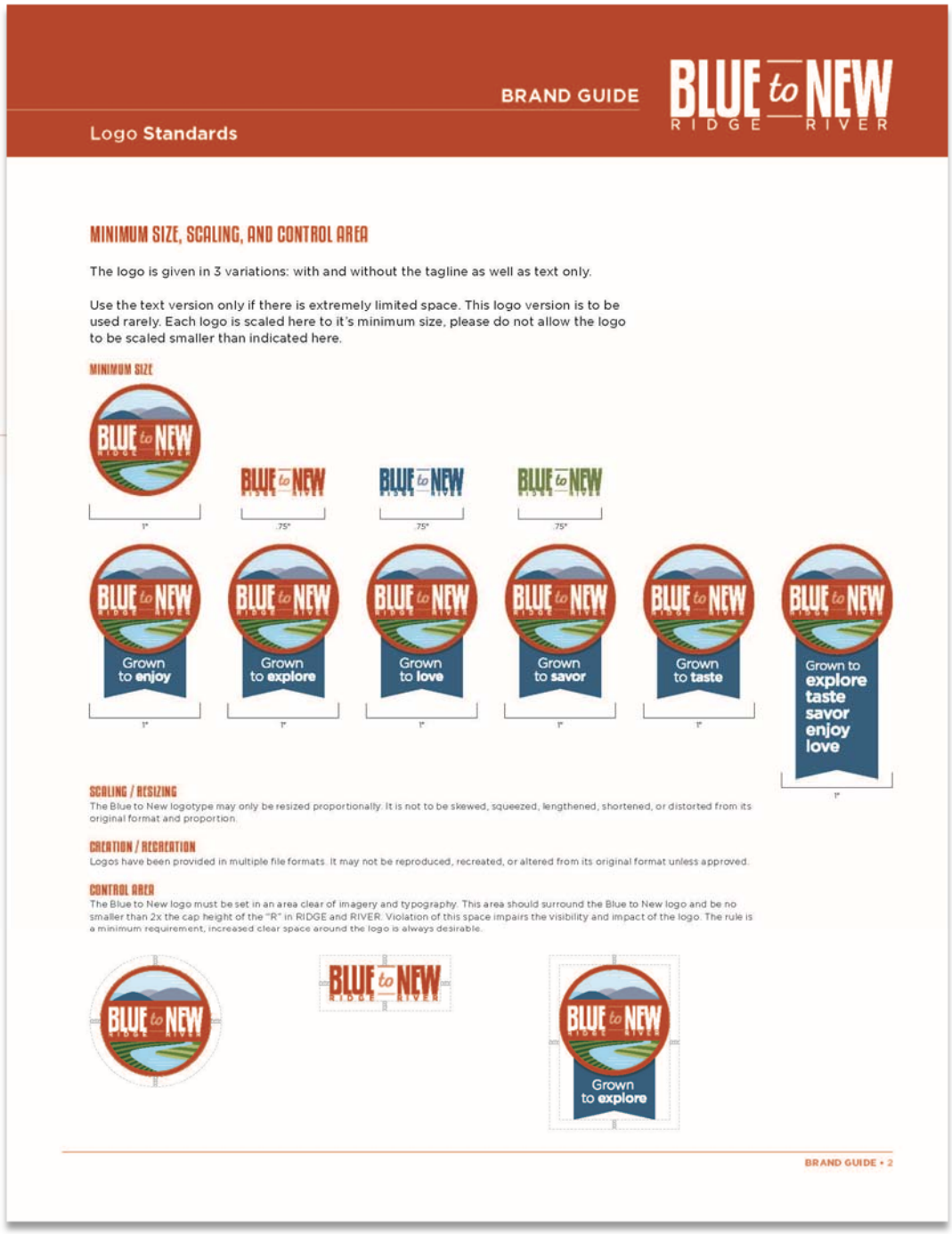
BRAND GUIDE

Overview

The following defines the guidelines that should apply to all materials directed to an external audience. In order to build a consistent image and brand for Blue to New, the guidelines must be followed when presenting the brand image to the media and in any other communication forms.

If for any reason an exception to these guidelines are requires, please contact the Marketing Director.

Please be advised that the Marketing Director must review and approve any materials released for public consumption regarding Blue to New.



BRAND GUIDE

Logo Standards

MINIMUM SIZE, SCALING, AND CONTROL AREA

The logo is given in 3 variations: with and without the tagline as well as text only.

Use the text version only if there is extremely limited space. This logo version is to be used rarely. Each logo is scaled here to it's minimum size, please do not allow the logo to be scaled smaller than indicated here.

MINIMUM SIZE

1" .75" .75" .75"

Grown to enjoy

Grown to explore

Grown to love

Grown to savor

Grown to taste

Grown to explore taste savor enjoy love

1"

SCALING / RESIZING

The Blue to New logotype may only be resized proportionally. It is not to be skewed, squeezed, lengthened, shortened, or distorted from its original format and proportion.

CREATION / RECREATION

Logos have been provided in multiple file formats. It may not be reproduced, recreated, or altered from its original format unless approved.

CONTROL AREA

The Blue to New logo must be set in an area clear of imagery and typography. This area should surround the Blue to New logo and be no smaller than 2x the cap height of the "R" in RIDGE and RIVER. Violation of this space impairs the visibility and impact of the logo. The rule is a minimum requirement, increased clear space around the logo is always desirable.

Grown to explore

BRAND GUIDE • 2

Branding Guide

BRAND GUIDE

Overview

The following defines the guidelines that should apply to all materials directed to an external audience. In order to build a consistent image and brand for Blue to New, the guidelines must be followed when presenting the brand image to the media and in any other communication forms.

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BRAND GUIDE

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MINIMUM SIZE

1" .75" .75" .75"

1" 1" 1" 1" 1" 1"

Grown to enjoy
Grown to explore
Grown to love
Grown to savor
Grown to taste
Grown to explore taste savor enjoy love

SCALING / RESIZING
The Blue to New logotype may only be resized proportionally. It is not to be skewed, squeezed, lengthened, shortened, or distorted from its original format and proportion.

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Grown to explore

BRAND GUIDE • 3

LOGO USAGE

The logo is given in 3 color versions: full color, black, and white.

FULL COLOR

Use only the color version supplied on this page. The full color logo will be the most used. Most printed jobs will be 4-color and will require the CMYK logo. See color breakdowns on page 6.

BLACK AND WHITE VERSION

When no color (black only) is available, use the gray-scale logo provided. The logo may be printed reversed on dark backgrounds as shown below.

BRAND GUIDE

Logo Standards

TEXT ONLY VERSION

A text only version has been provided if there is limited space.

TAGLINE

The tagline for Blue to New has 6 variations. These taglines are versatile as to encompass the multitude of products and activities that Blue to New has to offer.

Grown to enjoy
Grown to explore
Grown to love
Grown to savor
Grown to taste

The tagline will vary as appropriate.

It is at marketing's discretion to determine the inclusion or exclusion of the tagline on various materials. All 5 words may be used simultaneously if deemed appropriate.

BRAND GUIDE

Logo Standards

LOGO LEGIBILITY

It is preferred that the logo always be placed on a white background and used in full color.

If the logo needs to be on a photograph, please use the guidelines here.

ON PHOTOGRAPH

The logo may be placed on a photograph, however the preferred placement is on a white background. A gradient of black multiplied at 22% - 30% may be placed over the photograph.

BRAND GUIDE

Color Palette

Colors used for the approved Blue to New palette are as follows:

PRIMARY COLOR

The primary color for Blue to New is orange. The color builds are below.

CMYK 18-86-100-7
RGB 178-64-28
HEX B2401C

SECONDARY COLORS

This set of colors is for supplemental design elements and can be used sparingly.

CMYK 92-55-25-5
RGB 32-90-126
HEX 205A7E

CMYK 60-28-83-9
RGB 100-126-72
HEX 647E48

EXTENDED COLOR PALETTE

This set of colors includes the primary and secondary colors.

CMYK 95-61-49-21
RGB 26-70-92
HEX 1A465C

CMYK 100-0-0-0
RGB 0-163-230
HEX 00A3E6

CMYK 89-36-100-30
RGB 25-85-38
HEX 195526

CMYK 67-27-100-10
RGB 85-122-48
HEX 557A30

CMYK 36-11-62-0
RGB 156-179-114
HEX 9CB372

BRAND GUIDE

Typography

The typefaces used in the logo are Kenyan Coffee and Gotham. Kenyan Coffee may be used sparingly for headings. The preferred font is Gotham.

KENYAN COFFEE REGULAR
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

KENYAN COFFEE ITALIC
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

KENYAN COFFEE BOLD
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

KENYAN COFFEE BOLD ITALIC
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

GOTHAM BOOK
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
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GOTHAM ITALIC
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GOTHAM BOLD ITALIC
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Steering Committee Agendas/Materials

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Steering Committee Meeting

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM WEDNESDAY,
March 12, 2015 – 9:00 – 10:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Updates
   A. Budget & Progress Report
   B. Team Marketing
   C. Team Education & Outreach
   D. Team Research & Evaluation
   E. Team Agritourism

III. Presentation:
   A. SO Fresh Website Launch, Debbie Lineweaver
   B. Local Food Directory, Jonnell Sanciangco

IV. Roundtable Discussion:
   A. Establishing an Agriculture Development Board
   B. NRV Strategic Plan

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski

March 12th, 2015 - 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Kelli Scott	VCE	kescott1@vt.edu
2	Morgan Paulette	VCE	paulette@vt.edu
3	Jeannie Dudding	VCE	jdudding@vt.edu
4	Cora Gregory	Giles County	cgregory@gilescounty.org
5	GEORGIA HAVERTY	GILES CO.	[illegible]
6	LISA BREAKLEY	Mont Co Tourism	[illegible]
7	Sam Poletis	Farming	[illegible]
8	Margaret Smith	Big Bit Chuckwagon	[illegible]
9	Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh	mtn2mtn@pstnet.com
10	Dave Runyon	Self Farming	
11	Todd King	McArr. Co.	tking4078@aol.com
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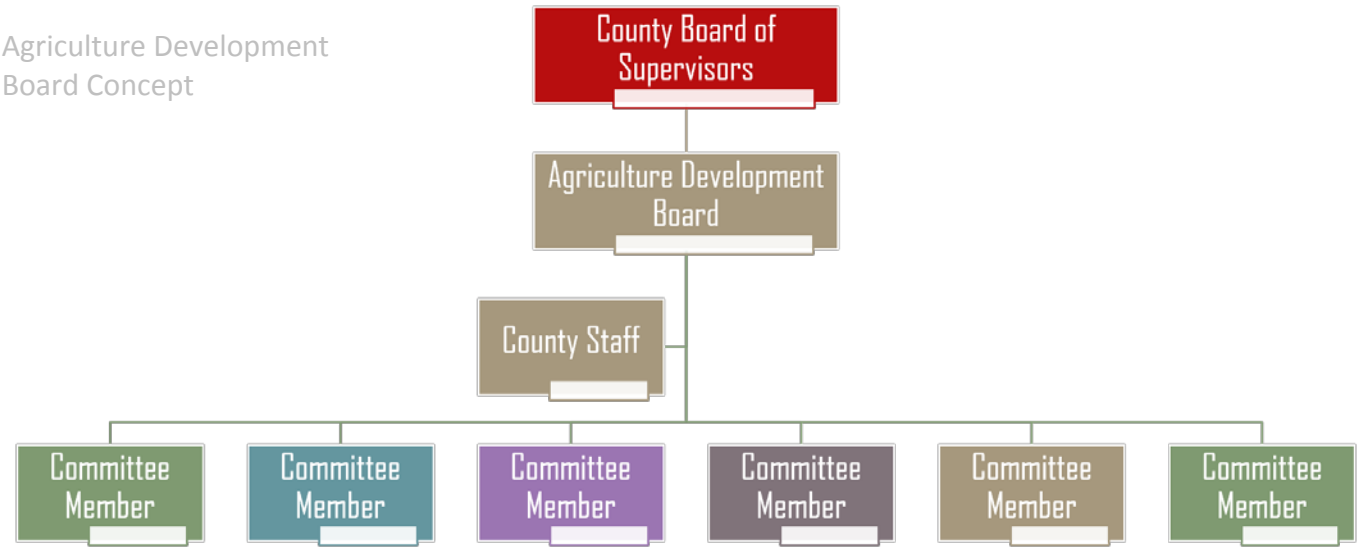
Agriculture Development Board Concept



NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Steering Committee Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
Friday, June 19, 2015 – 9:00 – 11:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Presentation:
   A. NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Strategic Plan, Elijah Sharp
   B. Local Food Directory, Jonnell Sanciangco

III. Roundtable Discussion:
   A. Comments/Suggestions for Agribusiness Plan of Work
   B. Comments/Suggestions for Agritourism Plan of Work

IV. Project Updates
   A. Budget & Progress Report
   B. Team Marketing
      i. Branding Agriculture & Agritourism in the NRV
      ii. Farmer's Market Rack Cards
   C. Team Education & Outreach
      i. VCE supported programs
   D. Team Research & Evaluation
      i. Southwest Virginia Agriculture Summit 2015
   E. Team Agritourism
      i. Developing the Plan of Work

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski
June 19th, 2015 - 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Jonnell Sanciangco	NRVRC	
2	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVRC	
3	Margaret Smith	Chase Kingson	
4	Jerday Smith	"	
5	Jerry McCoy	Giles County	
6	KEVIN BYRD	NRVRC	
7	Sarah Lyon-Hill	Virginia Tech OED	sarahlh@vt.edu
8	Elli Travis	Virginia Tech OED	emtravis@vt.edu
9	Jennifer McClellan	Nolley Wood Farm	
10	Mike Burton	Pulaski & Floyd	
11	Kelli Scott	VCE	
12	Ramona Chapman	DHCD	ramona.chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
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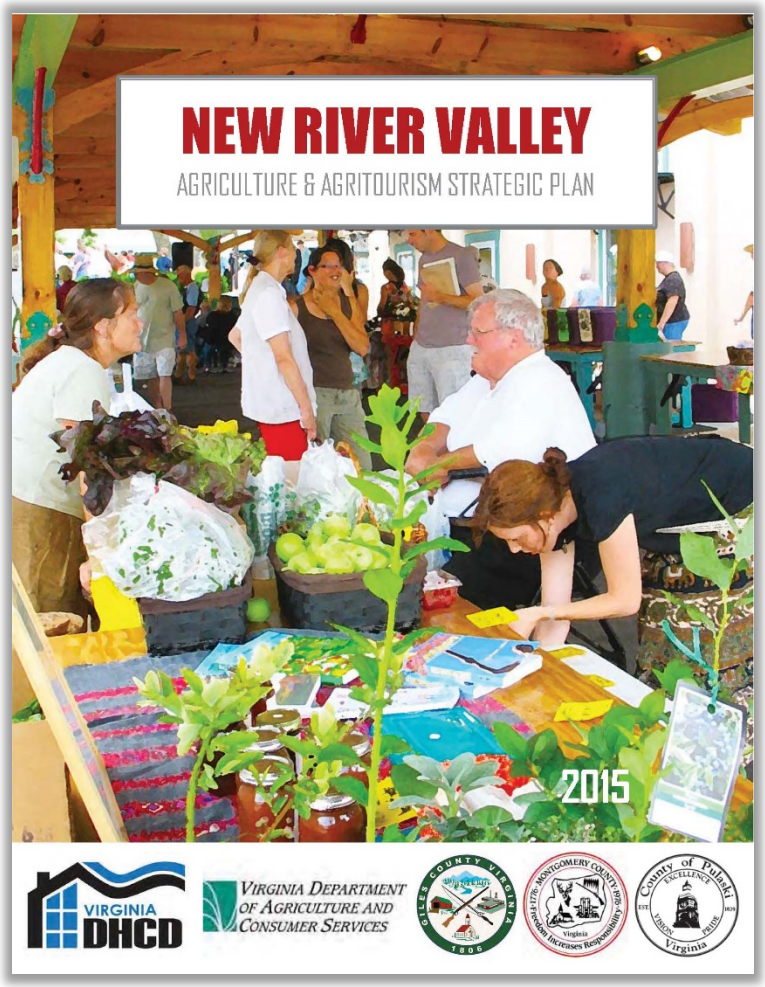

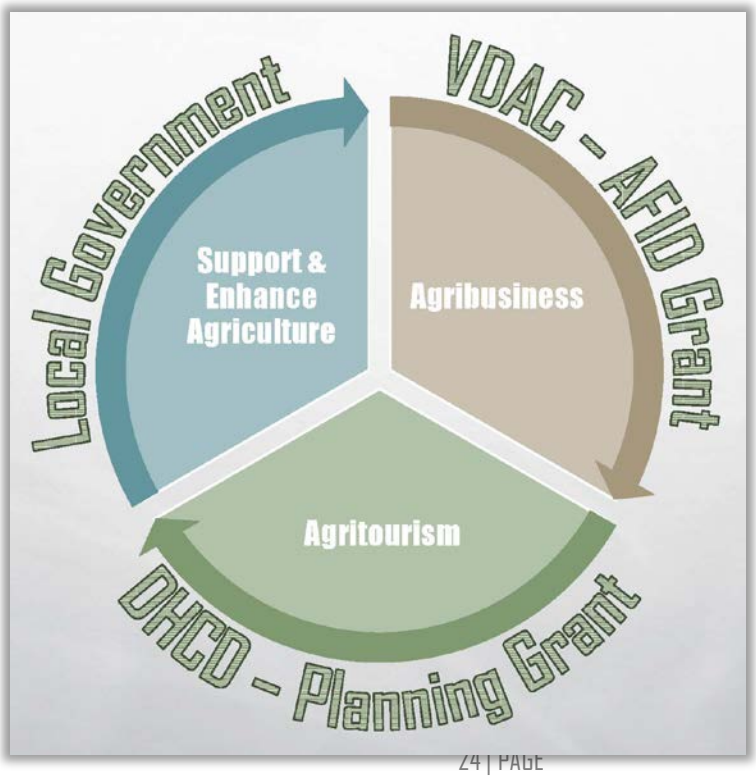

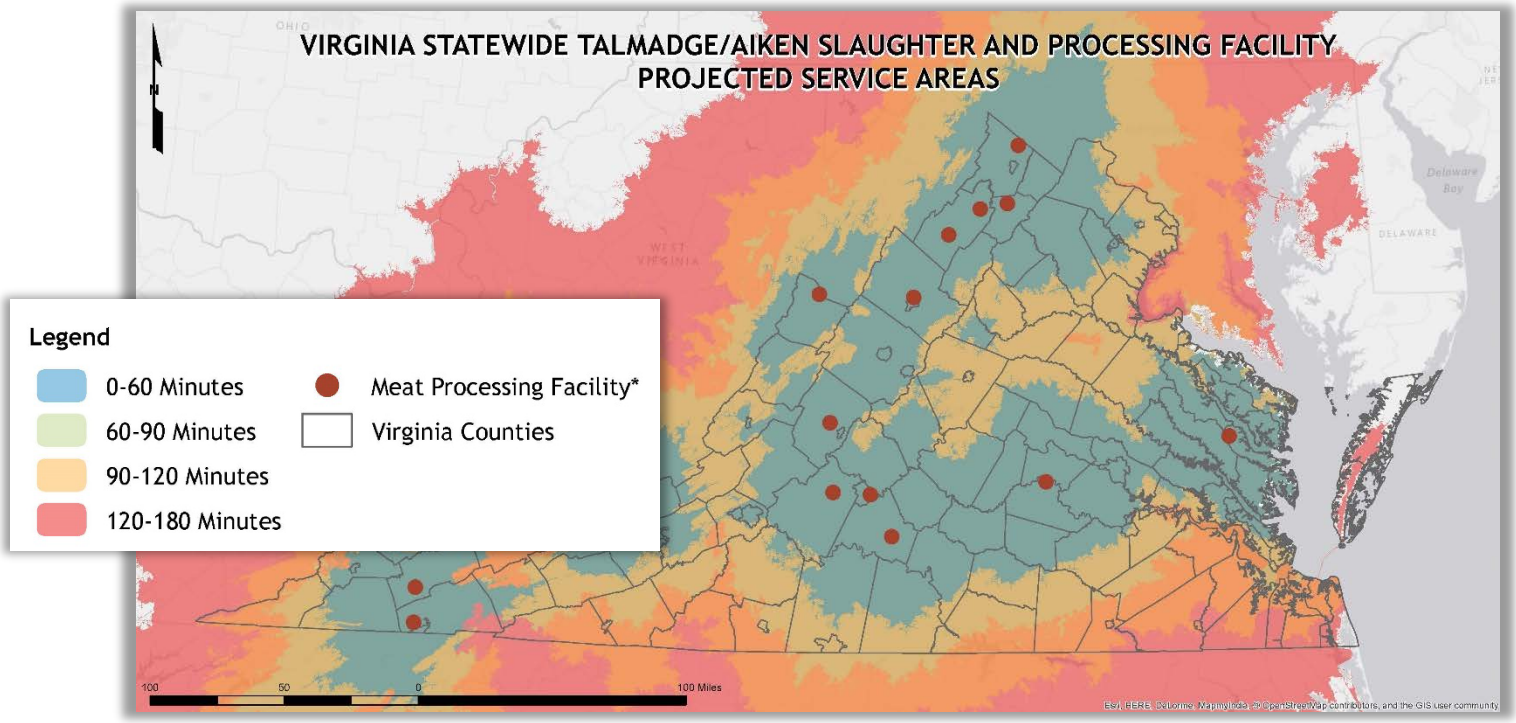
VIRGINIA STATEWIDE TALMADGE/AIKEN SLAUGHTER AND PROCESSING FACILITY
PROJECTED SERVICE AREAS
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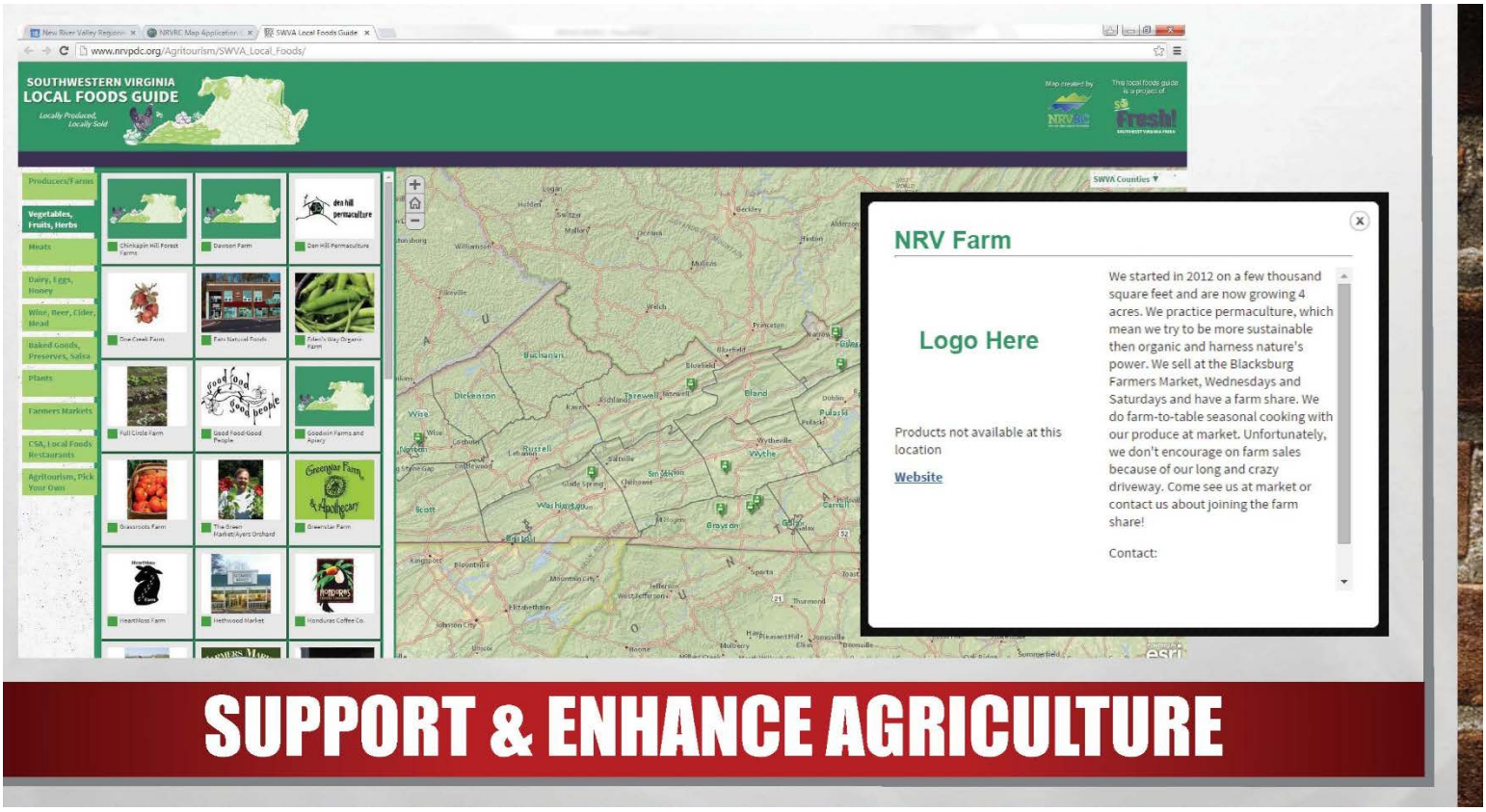
SOUTHWESTERN VIRGINIA
LOCAL FOODS GUIDE
NRV Farm
Logo Here
Products not available at this location
Website
We started in 2012 on a few thousand square feet and are now growing 4 acres. We practice permaculture, which mean we try to be more sustainable then organic and harness nature's power. We sell at the Blacksburg Farmers Market, Wednesdays and Saturdays and have a farm share. We do farm-to-table seasonal cooking with our produce at market. Unfortunately, we don't encourage on farm sales because of our long and crazy driveway. Come see us at market or contact us about joining the farm share!
Contact:
SUPPORT & ENHANCE AGRICULTURE

Management Team Agendas/Materials

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Management Team Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2015 – 10:00 – 11:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update
   A. Project Budget
   B. Project Status

III. Top 5 Priorities
   A. Roundtable Discussion
   B. Subcommittee Strategies
      i. Marketing
      ii. Education & Outreach
      iii. Research & Evaluation
      iv. Agritourism

IV. Next Steps

V. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski

January 14th, 2015 - 10:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	KEVIN BYRD	"	
3	Jenny McCoy	Giles County	
4	Lisa Blakley	Montgomery Co Rec/Tourism	
5	Jeannie Dudding	Giles Extension	jdudding@vt.edu
6	Kelli Scott	Montgomery County	kescott1@vt.edu
7	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County	msolomon@pulaskicounty.org
8	Peggy Wade	P.C.	pwade@pulaskichamber.info
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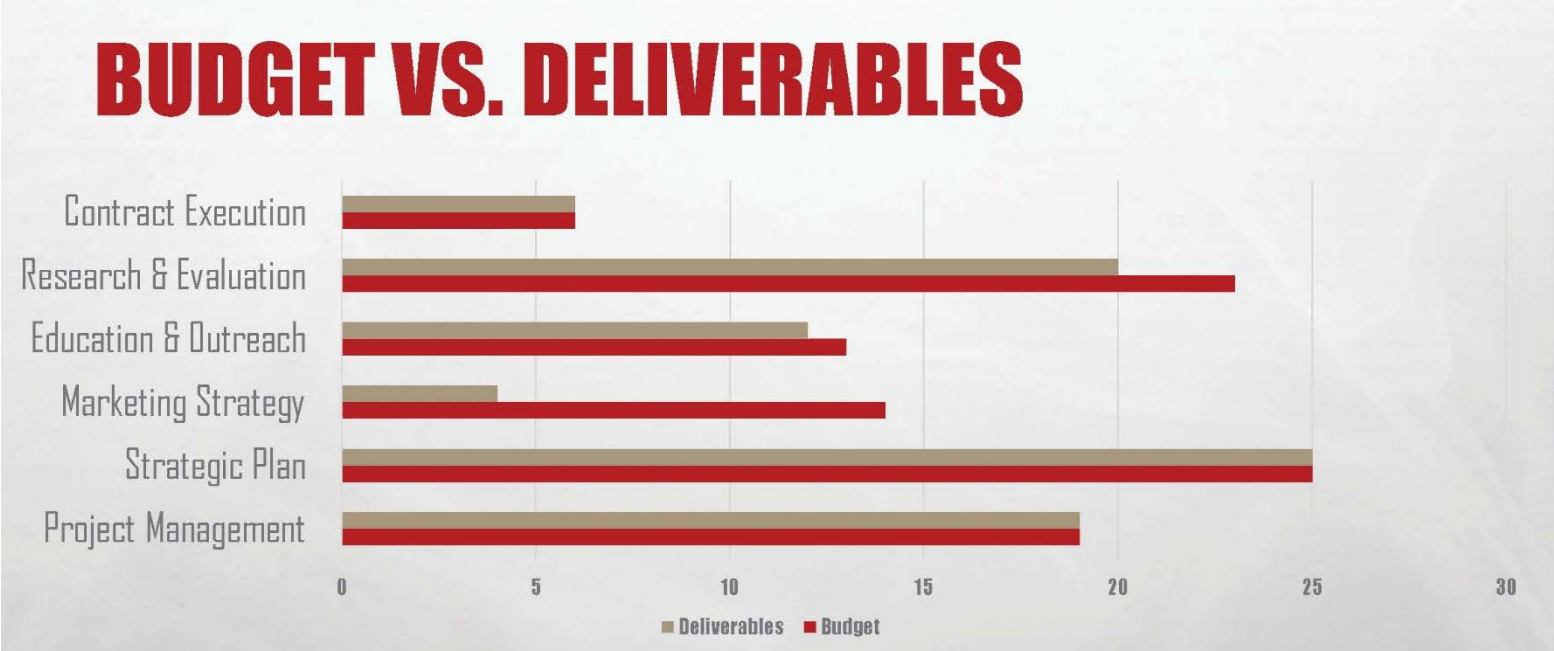

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Management Team Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2015 – 2:00 – 4:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Roundtable Discussion: Establishing an Agriculture Development Board

III. Agritourism Workshops
   A. Completing the list
   B. Location(s)

IV. Subcommittee Reports
   A. Marketing
   B. Education & Outreach
   C. Research & Evaluation
   D. Agritourism

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski
February 9th, 2015 - 2:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Eli Sharp	NRVPDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	Morgan Paulette	Pulaski Co. Extension	paulette@vt.edu
3	Ramona Chapman	DHCD	ramona.chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
4	Peggy White	PC Chamber	peggywhite@pulaskichamber.info
5	LISA Bleakley	Mont. Co. Tourism	bleakleyts@montgomerycountyva.gov
6	Kevin Byrd		
7	Jenny McCoy	Giles County	
8	Chris McKlarney	Giles County	
9	Jeannie Duddarar	Giles Extension	
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NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Management Team Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015 – 1:30 – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Strategic Plan Approach
   A. Plan vs. Assessment
   B. Approach to Agriculture Development Boards
   C. Plan of Work for Agribusiness

III. Subcommittee Reports
   A. Team Marketing
      i. Strategy Moving Forward
   B. Team Education & Outreach
      i. Recent & Upcoming Activities
   C. Team Research & Evaluation
      i. Proposed Work Session(s): 1) Working with the Health Department, 2) Zoning, and 3) Production Infrastructure
   D. Team Agritourism:

IV. Next Steps
   A. Documenting In-Kind Work

V. Adjournment

4/22 NRV Ag+AgTourism Project
Management Team Mtg

Name	Agency
Emily Gibson	Montgomery County
Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Ramona Chapman	DHCD
Morgan Paulette	Pulaski County VCE
Peggy White	P.C.C.
Kelli Scott	VCE
LISA Bleakley	Mont. County Regional Tourism
Elijah Sharp	
Kevin Byrd	

Team Agritourism Agendas/Materials

Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Session 1: Monday, Feb. 23rd 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the Discussions is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive Discussion to Define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

1:00pm **Welcome & Defining the Session** ....Elijah Sharp & Martha Walker, Ph.D.
New River Valley Planning Commission/Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:15pm **Review "Planning for an Agricultural Future in the NRV"** ....Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:00pm **ID Agritourism Priorities for the Region**....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:30pm **Define Activities to Achieve Priorities**....Martha A. Walker
Virginia Cooperative Extension

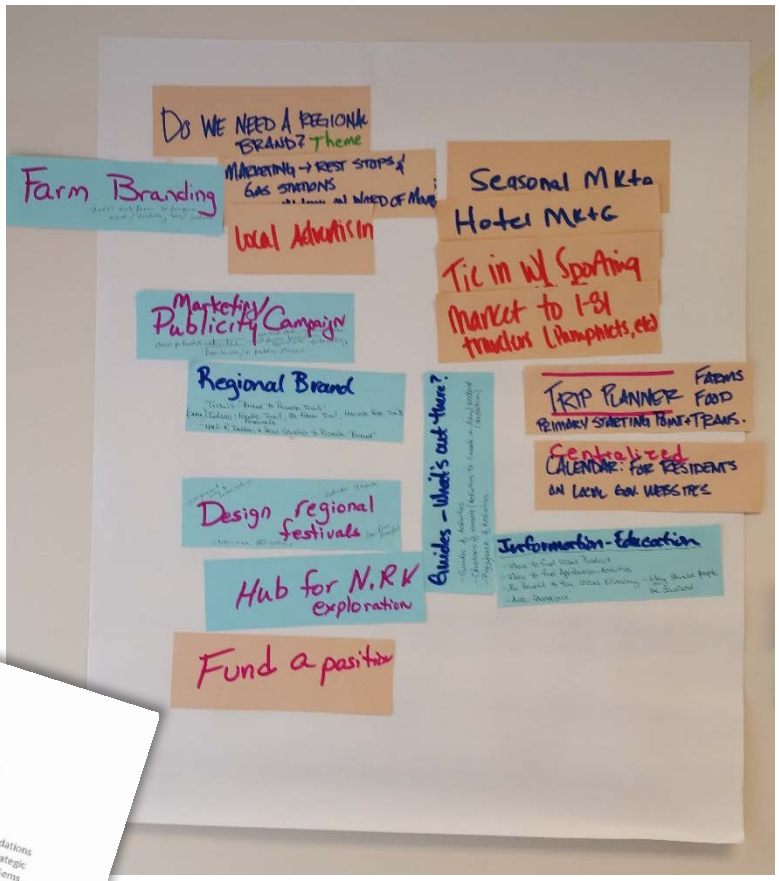
3:30pm **Next Steps/Homework/Prep for Session**....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

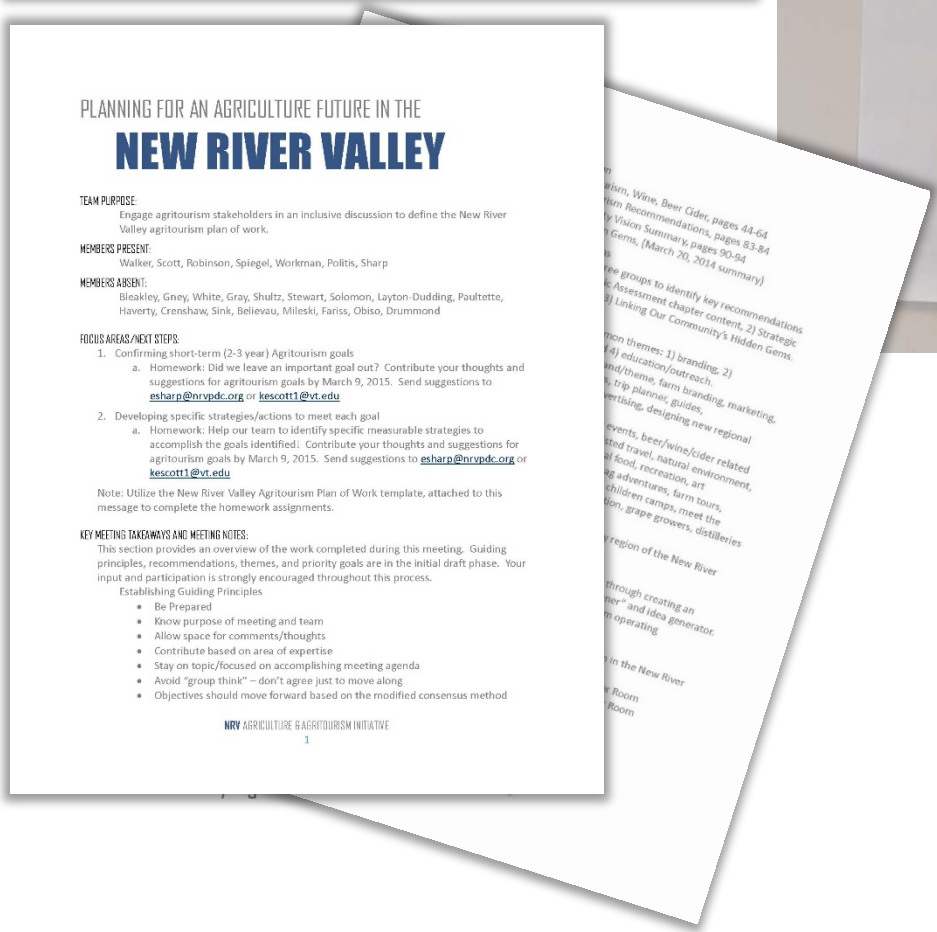
SAVE THE DATE

Session 2: Monday, March 16th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

Session 3: Monday, March 30th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development**. Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: ***"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."***





PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

TEAM PURPOSE:
Engage agritourism stakeholders in an inclusive discussion to define the New River Valley agritourism plan of work.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Walker, Scott, Robinson, Spiegel, Workman, Politis, Sharp

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Bleakley, Gney, White, Gray, Shultz, Stewart, Solomon, Layton-Dudding, Paultette, Haverty, Crenshaw, Sink, Believau, Mileski, Fariss, Obiso, Drummond

FOCUS AREAS/NEXT STEPS:
1. Confirming short-term (2-3 year) Agritourism goals
   a. Homework: Did we leave an important goal out? Contribute your thoughts and suggestions for agritourism goals by March 9, 2015. Send suggestions to esharp@nrvpdc.org or kescott1@vt.edu
2. Developing specific strategies/actions to meet each goal
   a. Homework: Help our team to identify specific measurable strategies to accomplish the goals identified: Contribute your thoughts and suggestions for agritourism goals by March 9, 2015. Send suggestions to esharp@nrvpdc.org or kescott1@vt.edu

Note: Utilize the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work template, attached to this message to complete the homework assignments.

KEY MEETING TAKEAWAYS AND MEETING NOTES:
This section provides an overview of the work completed during this meeting. Guiding principles, recommendations, themes, and priority goals are in the initial draft phase. Your input and participation is strongly encouraged throughout this process.

Establishing Guiding Principles
- Be Prepared
- Know purpose of meeting and team
- Allow space for comments/thoughts
- Contribute based on area of expertise
- Stay on topic/focused on accomplishing meeting agenda
- Avoid "group think" – don't agree just to move along
- Objectives should move forward based on the modified consensus method

NRV AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM INITIATIVE
1

Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Session 2: Monday, March 16th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the effort is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive discussion to define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

1:00pm **Welcome & Introductions**.....Elijah Sharp & Martha Walker, Ph.D.
New River Valley Planning Commission/Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:15pm **Review Agritourism Priorities & Goals**.....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:00pm **Clarify & Expand Activities for Each Priority**.....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:30pm **Edit Plan of Work**.....Martha A. Walker
Virginia Cooperative Extension

3:30pm **Next Steps/Homework/Prep for Session**.....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

SAVE THE DATE

Session 3: Monday, March 30th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.** Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: ***"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."***

PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

March 16th, 2015 - 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Michelle Roorman	Virginia Tourism	
2	GEORGIA HAVERTY	DOE CREEK FARM	DOECREEKFARM@GMAIL.COM
3	Wendy Crouchelow	RIVERSTONE FARM	WILLHAU@JSENA.
4	Linda Robinson	Selah Springs Farm	LJR920@gmail.com
5	Frank Drummond	Rockwood Market	Rockwoodmarket@gmail.com
6	Morgan Paulette	VCE - Pulaski	paulette@vt.edu
7	Lee Spiegel	Pulaski Grow	PulaskiGROW@gmail.com
8	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	
9	Margaret Smith	beebe chuckwagon	beebechuckwagon@ga
10	Jeanne Dudding	Giles VCE →	jdudding@vt.edu →
11	~~[illegible]~~	~~[illegible]~~	

Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Session 3: Monday, March 30th, 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the Discussions is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive Discussion to Define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

1:00pm **Welcome & Defining the Session**.....Elijah Sharp & Martha Walker, Ph.D.
New River Valley Planning Commission/Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:15pm **Review Agritourism Priorities & Goals**.....Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:45pm **Complete Agritourism Work Plan**.....Martha Walker
Virginia Cooperative Extension

3:30pm **Wrap-up/Next Steps**.....Martha Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.** Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: ***"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."***

PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

March 30th, 2015 - 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Kelli Scott	VCE	
2	Sam Poletis	Franklin Natural Foods	
3	Lee Spiegel	Pulaski Grow	
4	GEORGIA HAVERTY	DOE CREEK FARM	
5	Marvis Gray	NRH ROAD Council	
6	Morgan Paulette	VCE Pulaski	
7	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	
8	Margaret Smith	beebe chuckwagon	
9	Michelle Roorman	Virginia Tourism	
10	Jennifer McClellan	Producer Nikky Wood Farm	
11	Linda Robinson	Selah Spring Farm	

Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Final Session: Tuesday, April 14th, 10-11:30 am
New River Valley Business Center, Conference Room
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the Discussions is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive Discussion to Define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

10:00 am **Welcome & Introductions** .... Kelli Scott, Virginia Cooperative Extension

10:05 am **Overview of Final Agritourism Plan of Work** .... Kelli Scott, Virginia Cooperative Extension

10:30 am **Agritourism Plan of Work Timeline** .... Elijah Sharp, NRV Planning District Commission

10:45 am **Integrating Agritourism Work in to Strategic Plan** .... Elijah Sharp, NRV Planning District Commission

11:00 am **Team Agritourism Wrap-up** .... Roundtable Discussion

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.** Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: *"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."*

PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

April 14th, 2015 - 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	Jim Politis	FARMER	
3	Kelli Scott	VCE	
4	Marcus Gray	RCFD	
5	Margaret Smith	BOAB Chuckwagon	
6	Georgia Haverty	DOE CREEK FARM	
7	Linda LoSinson	Selah Springs	LDR920@gmail.com
8	Jennifer Miller-McClellan	Nolley Wood Farm	
9	Lisa Bleakley	MontCo B'burg CBurg Tourism	

Agritourism - Plan of Work Timeline

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop and enhance agritourism marketing strategies for the NRV
OBJECTIVE 2: Increase the number of festivals and events held on farms.
OBJECTIVE 3: Create an interactive web-based tool to promote and grow agritourism in the NRV.
OBJECTIVE 4: Provide educational opportunities for the NRV agritourism community.
OBJECTIVE 5: Increase opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced food and value added products.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
3-1	Compile a list of local agritourism options individually and by clusters.	NRV PDC information, list from previous Agritourism event, volunteer team, detailed maps of the area counties.	NRVPDC	Jun-15	Completed list
3-3	Draft a layout for an online interactive Trip Planner.	Samples from other similar sites, compiled list of agritourism options, calendar of events, volunteer team, interactive application consultant	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVPDC, VTC	Jun-15	
4-1	Develop and deliver educational programs for agritourism farmers.	Knowledgeable speakers/farmers with expertise in the areas of scaled production infrastructure, year around production (grazing, produce), small producer networks, beginning farmers, whole farm planning, agritourism trails, marketing events, branding, festivals/event preparation, best management practices, production training resources, farm management plans, farm tax business resources, and specialty crops; meeting space for activities; and materials for packets. Grants for equipment/structures (e.g. seed drill to be shared among grazers, high tunnels for produce).	VCE, VA Tourism Corp, USDA, SO Fresh, VDACS, Dept. of Forestry, NRCS, Local Soil & Water, NRV Grape Growers Group, Food Safety Team, VA Beef Quality Assurance Training	Jun-15	Educational Plan of Work for Agritourism in the NRV Attendance at events Build on current programs, VCE offering local opportunities, VDACS and VA Tourism offering statewide resources (farm to school, VA Agritourism Conference) Building Collaborative Efforts with local and state wide groups and resources to enhance communication and outreach efforts.
2-2	Explore creative alternative ideas for on farm events & festivals	Part-time coordinator, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), SO Fresh, local agritourism operators	VCE, SO Fresh	Sep-15	Press releases submitted by coordinator and Extension agents as they work with individual producers or host workshops. So Fresh/NRVPDC website listing of farms, Extension data-base list of producers Increase in number of producers beginning their own events.
3-2	Create a detailed calendar of local agritourism events.	Chamber of Commerce information, So Fresh calendars, volunteer team, Next Three Days, Explore NRV website, VDACS Marketing Tool	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Marketing	Sep-15	Completed calendar
4-2	Foster relationships among agritourism operations. Facilitate and Enhance an Agritourism Network of producers/operators to dialog and learn from pragmatic experiences. (Operators learning from Operators – "Mentoring")	Production Association(s). Skilled farmers and Agribusiness operators to demonstrate or volunteer on-site learning experiences. (mentoring) Provide space/time for networking Potential integration into farmer panels and farm tours. Create hands-on experiences for beginning farmers and farmers interested in diversifying business.	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, Team Education and Outreach	Sep-15	Skilled farmers in meat/whole food and produce are identified. Initial demonstrations and/or on-site learning experiences are scheduled for Calendar Year 2016. Specific local needs by county are integrated into each educational opportunity. Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices.
4-3	Provide Farm Tours for Agritourism Operators to see what is possible. Highlight Season Extension (winter grazing and growing cold-season produce)	Farmers willing to share their experiences, consultants to organize and hold workshops, High Tunnel Programs, Forage & Grassland Council – Grazing programs.	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, NRCS, VA Forage & Grassland Council, other regional consultants	Sep-15	Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices Support farmers with annual production and season extension practices.
4-4	Host "Meet the Farmer" days for the Local Products Buyer and Sellers and also for direct consumers.	Survey of existing local restaurants, schools, and hospitals focusing on local produce, meat, dairy products desired, database manager to link farmers and product seekers, educational materials and local events for the consumer and farmer	Staff for each county, new VCE or SO Fresh position?	Sep-15	Planning potential round 2 AFID/DHCD grant application, funding and staffing plan complete for database manager.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
4-5	Provide educational resources regarding regulations and best management practices on farm stays and "staycations".	Research current rules and regulations. Explore where there are barriers to offering staycations. Labor laws – Liability	VCE, VTC	Sep-15	Memo prepared and submitted to County Administrators and local farmers.
3-5	Build partnerships between "cluster" event sites for marketing and trip planning purposes.	Staff person to facilitate cluster community work, website consultant, funds for print marketing for clusters CO-OP Marketing (VA Tourism)	Staff position, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Community Partners, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)	Dec-15	List of at least 3 cluster communities
5-2	Explore the feasibility of establishing a commercial kitchen.	Site, building, value-added products survey, cost analysis, funding, and technical advisors: Sustain Floyd Study; Allie Hill (Charlottesville)	Local farmers/producers	Dec-15	Location(s), building conceptual design; survey of interested producers; list equipment, and cost analysis
1-2	Develop a regional brand for trails, farms, and festivals specific to each season. Name & Logo for the region .	Funding: VTC Marketing Leverage Program, AFID & DHCD Grants marketing/branding firm	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing	Jan-16	Economic impact through travelers spending, lodging, number of visits to trip planner, survey travelers, website visitation, social media metrics
1-3	Partner with other local and regional tourism initiatives, rest stops, hotels, sporting events, gas stations, universities, and other public spaces to market agritourism	Funding for printed materials such as, rack cards, coupons, brochures Call to Action listed	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Marketing	Mar-16	Print Materials (3 types), placement of print material throughout 5 tourism businesses, placement Virginia Welcome Center, establish hub space with partners.
2-1	Provide technical assistance to farms to develop farm brands.	Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, County Tourism (DMOs), seasoned Agritourism businesses, marketing consultant. Secure funding partners	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Marketing Consultant, Team Marketing, possible agritourism position	Mar-16	Develop assistance program, create printed materials for assistance, branding toolkit/resources to share, workshop created, marketing tools including website, brochures, logo, and other materials.
2-1	Inventory the festivals currently held on the New River Valley.	Funding with grant money for part-time coordinator (first year). "Next Three Days" is a possible coordinator, information sharing from: extension databases, and tourism directors.	Events: Agricultural Development Board (ADB), Team Marketing, County Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO).	Mar-16	Revenue generated, number of festivals increased, coordinator reports to ADB(s)
2-3	Create a support team working with the local landowner to tailor resources needed for planning and executing an event or festival.	Tools for evaluating economic feasibility, a marketing strategy, one-on-one or workshops on: food safety, liability insurance, zoning ordinances, VDOT (site distance requirements, etc.); another producer and/or an extension agent with expertise in showcasing produce as an event; volunteers to assist in preparation and on day of event.	Sub-Committee of county Agricultural Development Board	Mar-16	A list of contact information for persons and organizations willing to volunteer their time and/or resources. At least 1 new successful farm event held Initiated in Montgomery County.
5-3	Showcase producers' value-added products and providing brochures with directions to each producer's farm for future sales and their own special events.	Advertising such as press releases, brochures at Virginia Tourism Centers, etc., and coordinators to plan and execute events, products. Farms willing to showcase	VCE, DMOs	Apr-16	Event well publicized and well attended
1-1	Establish regional position to serve as the coordinator for regional agritourism activities.	Find partners and funding to support position, office space. Focus early on sustainable funding (not just start-up funds)	Team Agritourism, NRVPDC, New River Highlands RC&D	Jun-16	Funding secured, position hired
1-4	Develop a digital marketing campaign.	Marketing firm, marketing funding, review by VA Tourism Corp (VTC) staff	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Marketing Consultant	Jun-16	Active marketing campaign, working website
2-2	Deliver production information & Workshops related to agritourism topics including Grapes and Hops production for sale to wineries/breweries and Food Safety Regulations for local product producers and farmers mkt. managers.	Initial survey of local industry needs might be helpful here. Meet the farmer position could link wineries, breweries, and cideries to local producers. Enhance the safety of locally grown produce. GAP Training & Certification	Staff for each county, new VCE or SO Fresh position? VCE, Farm Safety Team, VT Food Innovations	Jun-16	Local wineries, breweries, and cideries have a single point of contact that can link them to a series of local agribusiness owners (that specifically meet their needs).
2-4	Assess county based policies affecting agritourism festivals and events.	Links to or hard copies of local ordinances and regulations	Team Research and Evaluation, Agriculture Development Board	Jun-16	
3-4	Create interactive web-based product site.	List of local agritourism venues individually and by clusters, draft calendar, draft trip planner, Volunteer team Paid or volunteer website consultant Seek funding (application for regional branding)	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVPDC, VTC	Sep-16	Interactive site is up and running
5-1	Support on-farm Farm to Fork Events.	Producers, local products, approved kitchen & staff	VCE and local partners	Sep-16	

DHCD Planning Grant – Project Narrative

Giles County Regional Agritourism Initiative

For Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products and diversifying the mix of tourism products and services available to visitors. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community. In addition, before the local farming community can consider the use of agriculture as a means of diversifying and increasing their income, the region needs to identify the challenges associated with creating agritourism and agribusiness opportunities.

How can the agritourism entities in the region be linked or networked?

Packages (B&B, Wineries, Livestock, Horses, Natural Resources, Local Food, On farm Experiences, The New River)	Blue Ridge Farmers Market Coalition, contact bbfarmersmarket@gmail.com for more info.
Crooked Road- add Agriculture to the Heritage of Music trail	Chambers of Commerce
This group need to incorporate all types of operations to realize the value of regional assets	So Fresh (website for advertisements/collaboration)
Local Government – need to establish and build a good relationship with local branches of Govt.	Need Regional Website w/ Active Calendar
Farm to Fork networks, canning & cooking classes-	Appalachian Virginia Food System Coucil
Master Food Volunteers / Master Gardener Volunteers	Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program
Caterers, Cake Makers, Local Food Service Providers	

What is absent from our agritourism offerings and how do we fill those gaps?

Branding/Label for region – aggregation/infrastructure	Forest/Natural Resource Opportunities
Promotion of NRV, not just VT	Horseback Riding
On Website - Page for Children's Programs: Market Kids, 4-H, JR Master Gardener, Seeds, etc.	Farm to Table Restaurants
Hunting/Fishing	CSA (community supported agriculture)/ farm share opportunities
Tree Farming	Farm Stays
Cooking & Serving Food (like B&Bs) work on an exemption. VDACS should do this not the Health Dept.	Commercial Kitchens to prepare value added farm products, host cooking/preservation classes.

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

I. Activities Performed

Summary of activities performed during the reporting period:

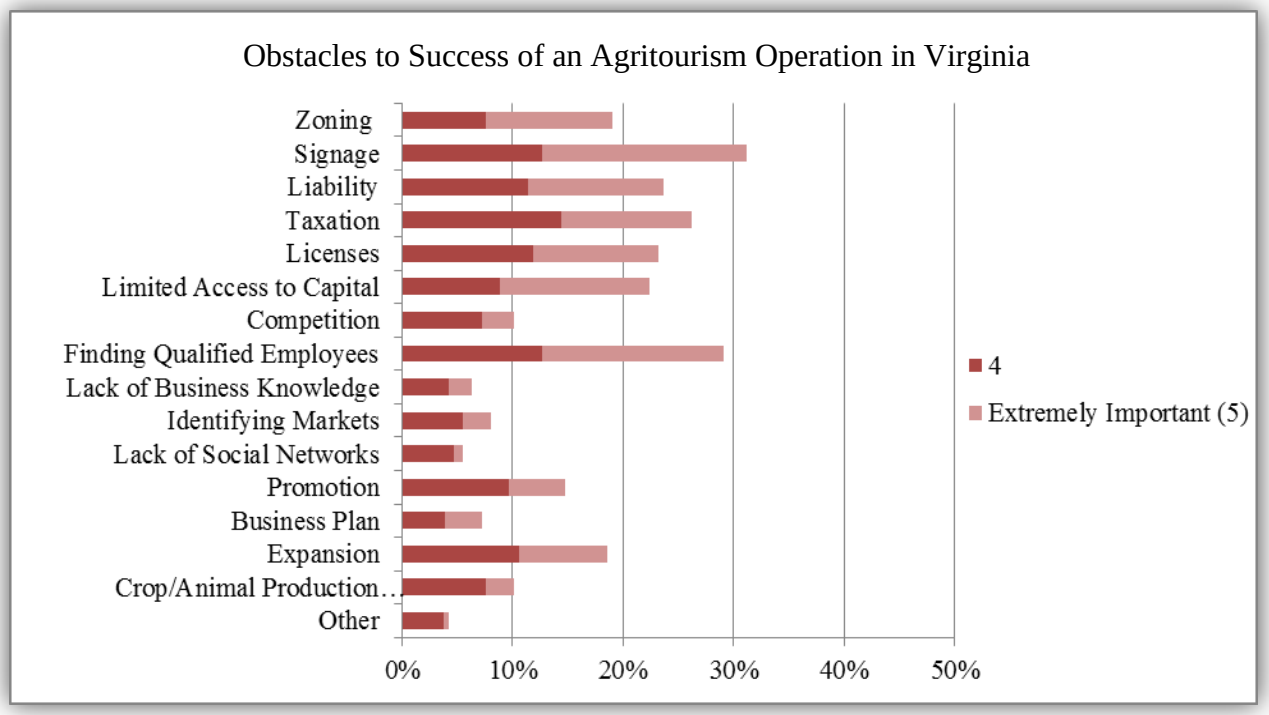
- Needs Assessment and Survey:
  - The subcommittee utilized the "Planning for an Agriculture Future Guide for Virginia Farmers and Local Governments" to identify areas for agriculture market expansion. March 2014, the Virginia Cooperative Extension compiled survey results from the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, held in Riner. Workshop participants had the opportunity to review and add to the online asset inventory map, brainstorm ideas on how to create links between entities, and identify what was missing in the region. Some of the gaps in agritourism offerings, that workshop participants identified, included: forest/natural resource opportunities, horseback riding, farm to table restaurants, community supported agriculture, farm stays, commercial kitchens that host cooking preservation classes, tree farming, hunting/fishing, and identifying a brand for the region.
  - Next steps involve completing the Strategic Plan, identifying tasks for subcommittee working groups, and engaging the Steering Committee in the implementation process.
- Economic Impact Analysis:
  - The Economic Impact Analysis task was slightly revised to account for increased contractual needs for the Strategic Plan development and overall project management. The deliverable for this task now involves the Commission collecting general economic data for the agriculture industry, preparing 2-5 case studies, and highlighting business opportunities. In addition, the Strategic Plan examines the production overview of existing market sectors, life cycle analysis, potential facility needs, and cost estimates.
  - Next steps involve completing the Strategic Plan and developing case studies that align with goals and recommendations identified in the plan.

- Asset Inventory Map:
    - February 2014, the NRVPDC completed the initial draft asset inventory maps for each participating county. In addition, the Commission developed an interactive Local Food StoryMap, identifies: Farmer' s Markets, meat, dairy, eggs, produce, flowers, honey, bedding plants and gardening supplies, community supported agriculture, farmstands and pick-your-own, wine, ale, cider, restaurants and caterers, grocer and coop, food assistance programs, and food diversion groups. The map provides links to local agribusinesses websites and enables users to submit missing or new businesses. Link: http://www.nrvpdc.org/Agritourism/Local_Food/.
    - Next steps involve the Management Team identifying a host and management strategy for the interactive map.
- Organization Plan:
    - In July 2014, the Management Team participated in a half-day workshop with representatives from DHCD. The purpose of the workshop was to challenge the NRV group to begin thinking about the goals and potential outcomes of the project. DHCD representatives challenged the group to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT Analysis) of both the team and the industry. Although the group is unsure of a potential organizational structure at this time, the team will have a firmer understanding following the completion of the Strategic Plan. The table (below) illustrates the SWOT Analysis for the NRV industry that was collected during the DHCD facilitated workshop.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Transportation Routes Natural Beauty – open land Awareness Community Support Strong Agriculture Heritage Oldest Agriculture Fair in Virginia Traditional infrastructure (farmers have equipment, land, etc.) Farm to table	Funding Extension – lack of local awareness of services Lack of day-trips to prolong visitor's stay Marketing of Agriculture Increased costs combined with increased regulations Potential liability of farmers Next generation of farmers Local food – incentives for restaurants to use Niche – specialist misunderstanding Lack of market access
Opportunities	**Threats**
School/Agriculture programs Legislation opportunity to source food locally Community events educational opportunities Institutions desire to have local food More involvement Food security need International visitors National movements (buy/eat local, 100-mi. dinners, etc.) Local movements (So Fresh, local food, etc.)	Next generation farmers Surrounding regional exports Local politics Time Legislation Development – retaining farm land High beef prices Fear of change Widespread illness Need more small growers to support local food programs

    - Next steps involve the Management Team contributing to the development of a vision, goals, and recommendations of the Strategic Plan. Once the plan is complete, the Management Team will develop a work plan for local stakeholders.

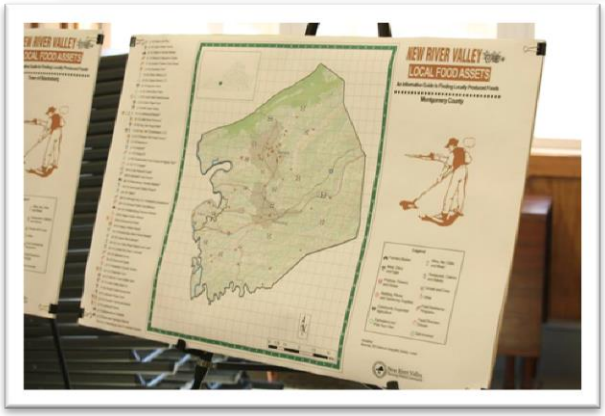
- Research & Evaluation:
  - June 2014, the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension shared their recent statewide study with the Management Team, A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism in Virginia. Since 1997, the National Agriculture Statistics Service has reported a continuous decrease in the number of farms and the number acres being farmed. Over the years, Virginia has continued to follow this trend; however, in 2012, there was a slight increase in farming. The study evaluates recent trends that justify the recent increased interest in agriculture. The study also evaluated potential obstacles for the future success for the Agritourism and Agribusiness industry. The table (below) highlights feedback collected during the study.



In addition to the study shared by Virginia Tech, Matson Consulting continues to research market sector opportunities and challenges in the NRV. The Management Team is supporting research and evaluation efforts by providing local data, participating in regional discussions, identifying goals for the Strategic Plan, and collecting feedback during education and outreach activities.

  - Next steps involve the Management Team identifying activities for each subcommittee that complement the Strategic Plan and local feedback. Activities will include the evaluation of local regulations and policies, identifying and marketing a regional brand, and developing outreach and education strategies.

- Education & Outreach:
    - Fall 2013, the Education and Outreach Subcommittee began facilitating local agriculture meetings in each of the three counties. In March 2014, the Education and Outreach Subcommittee partnered with the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension to host the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, in Riner. In May 2014, the subcommittee coordinated a Farmer's Market – Back to Basics Workshop, in Pembroke. Each event averaged over 20 local/regional participants.
    - Next steps of the Education Subcommittee include continuing public outreach and education efforts that include an Agritourism Tour on September 12th. In addition, reporting public feedback to the Steering Committee for integration into the strategic planning effort.



- Marketing Strategy:
    - June 2014, the consultant group identified five key marketing groups: 1) Out-of-State Activity Seekers, long trip vacationers that are open to short trips; 2) In-State Explorers, seasonal short trips; 3) Loyal Enthusiasts, typically returning customers that need only moderately refined experiences; 4) Accidental Tourists, just passing through and only available for a short window of time; 5) Family Agritourism Adventurers, summer vacations that are focused on local experiences and food. The consultant group outlined conceptual methods of engagement for each of the five market groups in a draft chapter of the strategic plan. The Marketing Subcommittee is currently working on a consumer rack card that features local Farmer's Market information on the front and information about the NRV Agritourism and Agribusiness project on the back.
    - Next steps involve the Management Team working with the Strategic Plan Consultant to identify potential assets that align individually with each of the five marketing groups. In addition, the Marketing Subcommittee plans to solicit an RFQ for marketing assistance.

- Strategic Plan:
    - June 2014, the consultant group submitted a draft Strategic Plan for the Management Team to review. While the Management Team reviews the draft materials, the consultant continues to collect and integrate relevant data into the strategic plan. Work complete includes reviewing local agricultural trends such as the total number of farms, average farm size, market value of agriculture products sold (shown right), percentage of landuse dedicated to specific types of farming, and demographic data.

    - Next steps for the consultant group include continuing to develop the strategic plan by analyzing agriculture supply, market shares, developing strategies for the long-term health of products, and highlighting the possibility of accessing new markets. Over the next few months, Matson Consulting will work with the Management Team to review the draft plan, contribute feedback on potential recommendations, and contribute local research and data.
- Contract Execution & Project Management:
    - In June 2014, the NRVPDC was contracted to provide project management services for the NRV Agritourism Project. The Management Team continues to lead the process; however, moving forward, the Commission will have a stronger role in facilitating conversations, establishing milestones for the team, and reporting to grantors. A primary role of the Commission is to increase the consistency of project documentation and ensure the engagement of stakeholders. Since June, the Management Team has resumed regular monthly meetings, participated in a DHCD facilitate workshop, aligned project deliverables with funding sources, established a revised project schedule, and established project goals.
    - Next steps involve the Commission continuing to coordinate and facilitate monthly Management Team meetings, reviewing project related invoices to determine eligibility, and preparing reimbursement and project reports for each funding entity.

New River Valley Agritourism Project Work Plan			
Component 1: Contract Execution			
AFID/DHCD	Establish a Steering Committee	Target: May 2013	Complete: August 2013
AFID/DHCD	Participate in monthly Steering Committee Meetings	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Procure consultant (Matson)	Target: January 2014	Complete: January 2014
AFID/DHCD	Coordinate a strategic plan meeting between the Steering Committee and the consultant	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
Component 2: Research & Evaluation			
AFID	Complete surveys that identify training needs of local farmers	Target: June 2014	Complete: April 2014
AFID	Utilize VA Guide to collect existing data in each county	Target: September 2013	Complete: September 2013
AFID	Prepare a summary report regarding information collected at each county	Target: April 2014	Complete: April 2014
AFID	Participate in Strategic Plan development	Target: July 2014	Delayed – Continue through October 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop an online asset inventory map	Target: December 2014	Complete: February 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop and maintain GIS data	Target: December 2014	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Organization Plan & project post-evaluation	Target: April 2015	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Present research findings to the Steering Committee	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Component 3: Education & Outreach			
DHCD	Workshops 1-3, Local stakeholder (1 per county)	Target: August 2013	Complete: August 2013
DHCD	Workshop 4, Agritourism in a Creative Economy	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
DHCD	Workshop 5, Farmer's Market – The Basics	Target: May 2014	Complete: May 2014
DHCD	Workshop 6, Local Agritourism Tour – Montgomery County	Target: September 2014	On Schedule
DHCD	Workshops 7-12, TBD	Target: Every Other Month	Ongoing
AFID/DHCD	Customized Educational & Capacity Building Outreach Plan	Target: December 2014	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Host a roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations	Target: January 2014	Delayed – Post Strategic Plan
AFID/DHCD	Provide recommendations to each county (policy/regulation)	Target: February 2014	Delayed – Post Strategic Plan
AFID/DHCD	Present workshop feedback to the Steering Committee	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Component 4: Marketing Strategy			
SC	RFQ for marketing assistance	Target: August 2014	Delayed – Post Strategic Plan
AFID	Identify general tourist markets for agritourism	Target: June 2014	Complete: June 2014
AFID/DHCD	Agritourism Marketing Strategy – Develop a campaign	Target: December 2014	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Present marketing strategies to the Steering Committee	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Component 5: Strategic Plan			
AFID/DHCD	Develop a regional vision for agriculture	Target: October 2014	On Schedule
SC	Identify capacity building programs for farmers	Target: October 2014	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Economic Impact Analysis - collect information on existing markets and products	Target: June 2013	Delayed – Integrated into consultant's scope of work
AFID/DHCD	Provide a summary of regulations/policies that support the expansion and success of agriculture in a region	Target: February 2014	Delayed – Integrated into consultant's scope of work
AFID/DHCD	Evaluate current and potential demand for ag-products	Target: October 2014	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Establish regional goals and objectives for agriculture development with key objectives for each county	Target: October 2014	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Develop potential implementation strategies	Target: October 2014	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Complete a strategic plan	Target: October 2014	On Schedule
Component 6: Project Management			
DHCD/SC	Provide leadership and oversight of grant funding to ensure completion of products/deliverables	Target: Ongoing	Ongoing
SC	Review project invoices and compile financial reports and reimbursement requests for Giles County	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Prepare project reports for Grantors'	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Staff support for meetings (coordination, minutes, etc.)	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
DHCD	Complete agriculture system Needs Assessment Survey	Target: December 2014	On Schedule
DHCD	Prepare case studies regarding business opportunities in agriculture	Target: December 2014	On Schedule
SC	Complete Asset Inventory Map	Target: August 2014	Complete: February 2014
SC	Actively participate in Steering Committee meetings	Target: Monthly	Ongoing

Abbreviations:
AFID = Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund
DHCD = Department of Housing and Community Development
SC = Steering Committee

III. Funding Expended To Date

- Grant funds expended to date, brief project description, amount, date, source of funds, and relevance to the workplan:

Expenditure Description	Check Number	Cost	Funding Source						Program Totals	Supplies & Material	Contractual		
			AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Mont. County	Pulaski County	In-Kind			Name of Consultant or Vendor	Date	Relevance and Nature of Service
			81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*						
			Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge					
Contract Execution - 3800			$1,250.00	$2,500.00	$918.00	$918.00	$918.00	$0.00	**$6,504.00**				
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	112809	$262.50	$50.45	$100.90	$37.05	$37.05	$37.05	$0.00	$262.50	no	Dinger	Oct-Nov 2013	Communication, bid specs, updates: 7.5 hours @ $35/hr
AFID Execution, Education, Planning, 04/02/14	114014	$227.50	$43.72	$87.45	$32.11	$32.11	$32.11	$0.00	$227.50	no	Dinger	Jan-Feb 2014	AFID presentation, team coordination: 6.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 01/23/14	113101	$140.00	$26.91	$53.81	$19.76	$19.76	$19.76	$0.00	$140.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Subcommittee meeting, correspondence: 4 hours @ $35/hr
RFP-Strategic Plan, 02/05/14	113400	$503.04	$96.68	$193.36	$71.00	$71.00	$71.00	$0.00	$503.04	no	Roanoke Times	1/22/2014	Request for Proposal Advertisement
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	112809	$297.50	$57.18	$114.35	$41.99	$41.99	$41.99	$0.00	$297.50	no	Dinger	Oct-Nov 2013	Agenda Development, meetings: 8.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 04/02/14	114014	$315.00	$60.54	$121.08	$44.46	$44.46	$44.46	$0.00	$315.00	no	Dinger	Jan-Mar 2014	Subcommittee coordination, comm: 9 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution and Planning, 11/21/2013	111795	$630.00	$121.08	$242.16	$88.92	$88.92	$88.92	$0.00	$630.00	no	Dinger	Sep-Oct 2013	Meeting coordination/facilitation: 18 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 09/04/2013	110502	$857.50	$164.80	$329.60	$121.03	$121.03	$121.03	$0.00	$857.50	no	Dinger	June-Aug 2013	Reporting, research, meeting dev: 24.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, Consultation, 09/04/2013	110502	$105.00	$20.18	$40.36	$14.82	$14.82	$14.82	$0.00	$105.00	no	Dinger	June-Aug 2013	Follow-up reports, communication: 3 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution and Management, 10/02/2013	111002	$560.00	$107.63	$215.25	$79.04	$79.04	$79.04	$0.00	$560.00	no	Dinger	Aug-Sep 2013	Work plans, deliverables, budget: 16 hours @ $35/hr
Communications and Management, 01/23/2014	113101	$210.00	$40.36	$80.72	$29.64	$29.64	$29.64	$0.00	$210.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Contractual budget, monthly report: 6 hours @ $35/hr
		Balance:	$460.48	$920.96	$338.18	$338.18	$338.18	$0.00	$2,395.96				
Research & Evaluation - 3801			$3,500.00	$6,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	**$23,011.00**				
Research & Evaluation support, 06/26/14	115122	$910.00	$318.50	$591.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$910.00	no	Dinger	Mar-Apr 2014	outreach report, farmers workshop: 26 hours @ $35/hr
NRVPDC, Asset Mapping, 06/04/14	114834	$1,100.00	$385.00	$715.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,100.00	no	NRVPDC	5/16/2014	Local food workshop + interactive mapping
NRV Agriculture & Tourism, 06/11/2014		$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	yes	Sylvia Wynn	6/11/2014	Local Meeting, contracted meal: 45 @ $9.00/person
		Balance:	$2,796.50	$5,193.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	$21,001.00				
Education & Outreach - 3802			$4,500.00	$3,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,500.00	**$12,750.00**				
Walmart, Farmer's Market: The Basics, 6/19/14	115036	$87.87	$47.93	$39.94	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$87.87	yes	Walmart	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies and snacks
Office Max, Farmer's Market: The Basics, 6/19/14	115036	$15.29	$8.34	$6.95	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$15.29	yes	OfficeMax	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies
Farmer's Market: The Basics postage, 6/19/14	115036	$49.00	$26.73	$22.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$49.00	yes	Post Office	5/21/2014	100 stamps for Farmer's Market Program
Education & Outreach support, 06/26/14	115122	$875.00	$477.27	$397.73	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$875.00	no	Dinger	May-Jun 2014	outreach report, farmers workshop: 25 hours @ $35/hr
Farmer's Market: The Basics, 06/26/14	115126	$179.20	$97.75	$81.45	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$179.20	no	Eric Eberly	6/13/2014	Speaker and mileage fee: 320 miles @ $0.56/hour
Farmer's Market: The Basics, 06/26/14	115114	$430.72	$234.94	$195.78	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$430.72	no	ChiknEGG Prod.	6/13/2014	Lecture fee: $200; mileage: 412 miles @ $0.56/mile
Hethwood Market, Lunch, 04/17/2014	114091	$784.58	$427.95	$356.63	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$784.58	yes	Heathwood Mkt	4/1/2014	Lunch for 60 @ $11.00/ea + $50 delivery fee
Walmart, Workshop, breakfast, 05/07/2014	114460	$91.82	$50.08	$41.74	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$91.82	yes	Walmart	3/19/2014	Breakfast items for workshop
		Balance:	$3,129.01	$2,607.51	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,500.00	$10,236.52				
Marketing Strategy - 3803			$5,500.00	$4,500.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$0.00	**$13,750.00**				
Appalachian Grown, social media, 09/04/2013	110491	$50.00	$20.00	$16.36	$4.55	$4.55	$4.55	$0.00	$50.00	no	Wild Cntry Stud	8/6/2013	Facebook page set-up for Appalachian Grown
Marketing and Planning, 01/23/14	113101	$70.00	$28.00	$22.91	$6.36	$6.36	$6.36	$0.00	$70.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Electronic e-mail newsletter: 2 hours @ $35/hr
		Balance:	$5,452.00	$4,460.73	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$0.00	$13,630.00				
Strategic Plan - 3804			$14,750.00	$7,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$0.00	**$25,000.00**				
Matson Consulting, Invoice # 3013, 07/17/2014	115683	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	Matson	7/17/2014	Strategic Plan development
		Balance:	$10,620.00	$5,220.00	$720.00	$720.00	$720.00	$0.00	$18,000.00				
Project Management - 3805			$5,500.00	$5,500.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$2,622.00	$0.00	**$18,986.00**				
		Balance:	$5,500.00	$5,500.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$0.00	$18,986.00				

IV. Additional Information

- Project Primary Contacts
- Management Team
- Meeting Agendas/Notes

Primary Contacts

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	(804) 786-6911	Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	(804) 371-7167	Ramona.Chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
Giles County Administrator	Chris McKlarney	(540) 921-2525	cmcklarney@gilescounty.org
Montgomery County Administrator	Craig Meadows	(540) 382-6954	meadowsfc@montgomerycountyva.gov
Pulaski County Administrator	Peter Huber	(540) 980-7705	phuber@pulaskicounty.org
NRV Agritourism Project Manager	Elijah Sharp	(540) 639-9313	esharp@nrvpdc.org

Management Team

Project Role	Name	Affiliation
Chairperson	Chris McKlarney	Giles County
Project Coordination	Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Project Management, billing	Rhonda Tickle	Giles County
Regulation and Policy Sub-Committee Chair	Brea Hopkins	Montgomery County
Marketing & Tourism Sub-Committee Chair	Lisa Bleakley	Montgomery County
Education & Outreach Sub-Committee Chair	Kelly Scott	VA Cooperative Extension
Assessment and evaluation	Kevin Byrd	NRVPDC
Strategic Plan, tourism	Peggy White	Pulaski County
Strategic Plan	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County
Grant writer	Dianne Dinger	Consultant
Capacity building and assessment	Jeannie Layton-Dudding	VA Cooperative Extension
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	DHCD
Project management, meeting facilitation, reporting	Elijah Sharp	NRVPDC

Meeting Agendas/Notes

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2014 – 2:15 – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. Presentation:

A. A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism for Virginia
Join the NRV Agritourism Steering Committee for a special presentation from the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension. Dr. Martha Walker and Dr. Gustavo Ferreira will discuss their findings and results of their recent statewide study on Agritourism.

IV. Roundtable Discussion

V. Adjournment

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2014 – 1:00 – 2:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Progress Report:
   A. AFID Interim Report
   B. Revised Budget
   C. Revised Project Schedule
   D. DHCD Workshop Overview

III. Strategic Plan:
   A. What do we want to achieve?
      i. What are the top goals of this project?
   B. What do we want to learn?
      i. What do we hope is reflected in the plan?

IV. Identify Tasks for Subcommittees

V. Key points to share with Steering Committee

VI. Next steps
   A. Set monthly meetings

VII. Adjournment (15 minute break)

Part II – Steering Committee Meeting, 2:15 pm – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism for Virginia; Gustavo Ferreira and Martha Walker

IV. Adjournment

Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski Agritourism Project

Management Team Meeting August 6, 2014

Members Present: Jenny McCoy, Brea Hopkins, Peggy White, Michael Solomon, Dianne Dinger, and Elijah Sharp

Guests Present: Dr. Martha Walker, and Dr. Gustavo Ferreira

Meeting Welcome & Introductions: The meeting began at 1:05 pm. Each meeting participant introduced themselves.

Progress Report: Sharp provided the group with a brief overview of recent grant related activities, including: AFID Interim Report submittal on July 22nd, AFID Interim Report acceptance on July 23rd, a revised project budget that aligns funding resources with specific agreement deliverables, a revised project schedule that extends funding from DHCD and AFID through June 2015, and a brief DHCD Workshop overview.

Strategic Plan: The management team worked collaboratively to contribute ideas for the Strategic Plan. The following feedback was received:

1. <u>What do we want to achieve?</u>
    - Three local governments exploring partnership opportunities that could grow the agriculture economy.
    - If the statement (above) was a vision statement, what else should be reflected?
        i. The Agriculture community or region
        ii. That agriculture is highly productive and valued
        iii. The need to engage youth
        iv. The need to provide value-added assistance to farmers
        v. Inclusive of all realms of agriculture (specialty, new, traditional, etc.)
2. <u>What are the primary goals for this effort?</u>
    - Increase educational opportunities for youth (how to grow through market phases)
    - Create a brand for the region (identify boundary, increase marketing of assets, made in NRV, etc.)
    - Identify policies that encourage farmers to implement agritourism/agribusiness ideas (enable more products to be purchased at farms)
    - Create networking opportunities for the ag-community (improve information sharing, create a regional farmers market, build on existing programs, support with technology, etc.)
    - Identify, promote, utilize, and produce local and regional agriculture products
    - Prevent effort from being an academic exercise – utilize the Strategic Plan to communicate opportunities with regional stakeholders
3. What do we want to learn from the Strategic Plan?
    - Remove "New vs. Traditional" and focus on specific markets: Livestock Production, Forestry/Timber, Emerging AG, Wine/Beer/Cider, and Agritourism
    - Include examples/case studies from other States
    - Provide examples of before/after pro-AG policies (provide a conversation starting point for the Policy/Regulation sub-committee)
    - Identify trends in farm size (acres) vs. the ability to support activities, educational opportunities, and market sectors
    - Workforce vs. individual training
    - Statistics on tourists

4. What do we hope is reflected in the Strategic Plan?
    - Equal analysis/framework per market sector
    - Highlight the regions strengths: Interest in agritourism in VA, proximity of agritourism/agribusiness to above average household income counties, community support, strong heritage, and others captured in DHCD Workshop SWOT analysis
    - Incorporate the value of Agriculture in the Introduction and Project Background
    - How do we compare to neighboring States
    - The need for local champions to lead projects

Identify Tasks for Subcommittees: No activities were identified at this meeting.

Key Points to share with the Steering Committee: The Management Team elected McCoy to update the Committee on the project budget and timeline.

Next Steps: The Management Team identified first Wednesdays, 10 am to 12 noon, for monthly Management meetings.

Meeting Adjournment: 2:00 pm

New River Valley Agritourism Project

DHCD Management Team Workshop July 30, 2014

Members Present: Chris McKlarney, Jenny McCoy, Lisa Bleakley, Peggy White, Michael Solomon, Kevin Byrd, Ramona Chapman, Douglas Jackson, and Elijah Sharp.

Introductions: Jackson started the meeting at 9:10 am. Each meeting participant introduced themselves and shared Agriculture/Agritourism things they noticed on their drive to the meeting.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis: Jackson led the group through a two-part exercise. First, meeting participants were asked to conduct a SWOT analysis on the Agriculture Industry. Second, meeting participants were asked to conduct a SWOT analysis on the Management Team. Here are some of the results:

1. SWOT analysis on the Agriculture Industry in the NRV:
    a. Strengths:
        i. Transportation Routes
        ii. Natural Beauty – open land
        iii. Awareness
        iv. Community Support
        v. Strong Agriculture Heritage
        vi. Oldest Agriculture Fair in Virginia
        vii. Traditional infrastructure (farmers have equipment, land, etc.)
        viii. Farm to table
    b. Weaknesses:
        i. Funding
        ii. Extension – lack of local awareness of services
        iii. Lack of day-trips to prolong visitor's stay
        iv. Marketing of Agriculture
        v. Increased costs combined with increased regulations
        vi. Potential liability of farmers
        vii. Next generation of farmers
        viii. Local food – incentives for restaurants to use
        ix. Niche – specialist misunderstanding
        x. Lack of market access
    c. Opportunities:
        i. School/Agriculture programs
        ii. Legislation opportunity to source food locally
        iii. Community events educational opportunities
        iv. Institutions desire to have local food
        v. More involvement
        vi. Food security need
        vii. International visitors
        viii. National movements (buy/eat local, training, 100-mile dinners, etc.)
        ix. Local movements (So Fresh, local food, etc.)

d. Threats:
    i. Next generation farmers
    ii. Surrounding regional exports
    iii. Local politics
    iv. Time
    v. Legislation
    vi. Development – retaining farm land
    vii. High beef prices
    viii. Fear of change
    ix. Widespread illness
    x. Need more small growers to support local food programs

2. SWOT analysis on the Management Team:
    a. Strengths:
        i. PDC leadership
        ii. Local knowledge – access to information and resources
        iii. Well represented by local government DMOs
        iv. Inclusive
        v. Mutual benefit
        vi. Local government partnership
        vii. Understood importance
        viii. Creative
        ix. Doesn't set boundaries
        x. Service to farmers
    b. Weaknesses:
        i. Political bosses
        ii. Need a farmer champion – mainstream, respected
        iii. Role definition
        iv. Need process understanding
        v. Need specific goals
        vi. Need team vs. individual strategies
        vii. Time constraints
        viii. Nice (too?)
        ix. Floyd County not at the table
    c. Opportunities:
        i. Engage private sector – potential transition post project completion
        ii. More outreach
        iii. University outreach/connection
        iv. Use strengths in strategies
        v. Engage farmers/producers
        vi. Implement new programs – farmers, schools, etc.
        vii. Current political will
        viii. Individual enthusiasm
        ix. To build on strengthening relationships
        x. Marketing
    d. Threats:
        i. Resistance of farmers
        ii. Competing with existing businesses
        iii. Communication overload – engaging team
        iv. Internal focus leads to external confusion
        v. Losing energy/interest
        vi. C.A.V.E. people (citizens against virtually everything)
        vii. Threat of scale/attention
        viii. Changing methods

AGRICULTURE & TOURISM CONSORTIUM
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2014
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – TRAINING ROOM
11:00 A.M.

I. Welcome & Introductions – Chris McKlarney
   A. Contract Execution & Outreach /Post Evaluation – Contract with NRVPDC
   B. Group Identification of the following (as requested by Ramona Chapman)
      i. Who are we?
      ii. Who do we serve?
      iii. What is our service?
      iv. What do we want to achieve?
      v. What is in it for the region and/or our targets?
      vi. Who do they contact?
   C. Review of June 4th meeting with Ramona Chapman

II. Subcommittee Updates
   A. Regulation/Policy Review – Brea Hopkins
   B. Building Capacity – Kelli Scott & Jeannie Dudding
   C. Asset Inventory/Economic Impact – Elijah Sharp (NRVPDC)
   D. Marketing Plan – Lisa Bleakley

III. Miscellaneous Team Items:
   A. Dainne Dinger – Outreach & Execution:
      i. Wholesale Dealers at local Farmers Markets
      ii. Effects of grape shortage on local wineries
   B. Kelli Scott – Statewide Assessment Meeting

IV. Strategic Plan Update – Matson Consulting

Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski Agritourism Project

Management Team Meeting June 9, 2014

Members Present: Chris McKlarney, Jenny McCoy, Jeannie Dudding, Brea Hopkins, Karen Drake, Kelly Scott, Lisa Bleakley, Danny Wilson, Peggy White, Dianne Dinger, Jim Matson, and Elijah Sharp.

Meeting Welcome & Introductions: McKlarney started the meeting at 11:08 am. Each meeting participant introduced themselves.

Contract Execution: McKlarney informed the group that the Agritourism Grant Management contract with the PDC was executed on June 6, 2014.

DHCD Questions: McKlarney informed the group that DHCD representative, Ramona Chapman, charged the group to answer the following questions:

1. Who are we?
2. Who do we serve?
3. What is our service?
4. What do we want to achieve?
5. What is in it for the region and/or our targets?
6. Who do they contact?

The group decided to table the conversation for a future meeting – mainly to allow the Management Team to consider how best to respond.

Subcommittee Updates:

- Regulation/Policy Review: Hopkins informed the group that this subcommittee was awaiting direction from Matson's Strategic Planning effort. The group supported this decision.
- Building Capacity: Scott informed the group that current public outreach and education efforts were underway. Work included developing a future workshop agenda, identifying core groups of stakeholders, linking community gems, and integrating ongoing statewide studies related to Agritourism. The group decided to invite the folks from the Virginia Cooperative Extension, who contributed to the recent publication on Agritourism, to the next Management Team Meeting.
- Asset Inventory/Economic Impact: Sharp informed the group that an interactive Storymap was complete and looking for a permanent website to host the information. The group asked the PDC to work with the Marketing Subcommittee to establish a project website that could later evolve into something broader for public use.
- Marketing Plan: Bleakley informed the group that she had recently completed a draft flyer that highlighted local Farmer's Markets on one side and featured a snapshot of the agritourism efforts on the second side. The group supported Bleakley's request to solicit an RFQ for marketing assistance with budgeted funds.
- Outreach& Execution: Dinger discussed local wholesale concerns of local farmers. Of particular concern are folks who buy produce from large markets and sell products as "local produce." In addition, a local winery had recently stressed concern regarding a shortage in VA grapes. The group discussed potential value of adding policy and regulation guidance to the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan Update and Outsider Perspectives:

- The group might consider reducing the amount of internal communication and create an internal calendar.
- Based on local feedback so far, can the group think of core areas the Strategic Plan could focus on?
- A draft Mission Statement was shared with the group. Initial thoughts and suggestions from the group involved removing references to specific commodities and agriculture opportunities – shifting the focus to helping farmers create more income.
- Reviewing local regulations that hinder famers from creating Agritourism related businesses could be valuable.
- How is Agritourism integrated into local Comprehensive Plans?
- Could water rights be an issue in the future?
- Are farmers adjacent to dense residential/populated area protected (sound wise) during early morning and later afternoon working hours?
- Audience of the Strategic Plan may need to be regulators – potential resource for localities.
- Beef Processing Facility would require $2.8M initial investment +180 head of cattle per month to sustain.
    - Potential reference Shenandoah Beef Cooperative: spent 4 years identifying market strategy
    - Potential reference Grayson Landcare
    - Potential consider lot where deliveries can occur night before large shipment
    - Potential CSA model for local beef
- May consider developing a Forestry Energy/Energy Generation Plan
- 5-key Marketing groups:
    - Out-of-State Activity Seekers: long trip vacationers, open to short trips – potential guide for activities within a certain driving distance.
    - In-State Explorers: Seasonal short trips
    - Loyal Enthusiasts: returning customers, need to refine experiences to continue return trips
    - Accidental Tourists: passing through, small window of time to entertain (1-2 hours)
    - Family Agritourism Adventurers: Summer vacationers focused on local food
- New website may not be needed – potentially tie into existing resources (So Fresh, Southwest Virginia Tourism, Explore NRV, etc.)
- Food Hub would require $1.5M – wine, produce, beef = good market sectors in NRV; fruit = not so good
- Farmers may be looking for training in traditional practice areas
- Consider methods to recruit new farmers to the area
- Create educational internships/experiences that line up with school curriculum

The group decided to have one representative from each locality review draft Strategic Plan content prior to sharing the full report with group. PDC will distribute draft chapters Scott, Dudding, and a to-be-determined Pulaski County representative.

Meeting Adjournment: 2:10 pm

Management Team Meeting with Ramona Chapman (DHCD)

The following items were discussed at the June 4th meeting; the following team members were present: Chris McKlarney, Jenny McCoy, Rhonda Tickle, Lisa Bleakley, Kevin Byrd, Elijah Sharp (NRVPDC), and Dianne Dinger.

Milestones Identified:

- Collaboration
  - College systems
  - School systems
    - Ag lab
  - Regional video assets
  - Flavours Magazine
  - Stronger relationship with Extension
- Communication with Ag Community
  - Farmers, producers, etc.
- Asset Inventory
  - Local foods & restaurants identified
- Raised Awareness with local government officials – greater connections & opportunities
- Capacity building
  - Visioning Sessions
  - 2 workshops hosted by Extension
- Producers identifying needs
  - The Green Market
  - Zoning
  - Marketing
- Inventory & asset mapping
  - Complete & online
- Agriculture representative meeting with tourism groups to plan itineraries
  - 5 agritourism itineraries created via Mingle on the Mountain

Needs Identified:

- Grant message needs to be affirmed
  - New opportunities & relationships
- Online presence/website
- Mailing list/links
- Communication with DMO's/VTC

Issues Identified:

- Wholesalers vs. Local Farmer Sales
- VA/local Grown vs. Out of State
  - Roadside Stand, Farmer's Markets, etc.
- Education of consumers
  - Seasonal foods
  - Preperation
- Education of Farmers
- Communication with Farmers
  - How do we talk to them?
    - Website(s)
    - Publications
    - Extension
- Criteria for inclusion/representation
  - Marketing
  - Local Support

- Bring on new partners
    - Farm Bureau
    - SBDC
    - Divers Farmers
    - Farm-to-Fork
- Farm value to the community
    - Need more positive image
    - Fairs & Festivals participation (Farmer presence)

Who are our *Targets*?

- Ag producers
- Agritourism Operators
- Tourists

Things to Identify:

1. Who are we?
2. Who do we serve?
3. What is our service?
4. What do we want to achieve?
5. What is in it for the region and/or our targets?
6. Who do they contact?

Miscellaneous Items:

- Ramona believes that it will not be an issue to extend the DHCD portion of the grant; moving the date from October 2014 to June 30, 2015 (AFID closes no later than August 31, 2015).
- All marketing pieces need the logos of the grantors and the localities represented.
- A letter explaining why the grant needs to be extended will need to be sent to DHCD.
- Key focus should be on creating a resource that can provide information for all ag related resources.

DHCD Planning Grant – Project Narrative

Giles County Regional Agritourism Initiative

For Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products and diversifying the mix of tourism products and services available to visitors. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community. In addition, before the local farming community can consider the use of agriculture as a means of diversifying and increasing their income, the region needs to identify the challenges associated with creating agritourism and agribusiness opportunities.

I. Activities Performed

Summary of activities performed during the reporting period:

- Needs Assessment and Survey:
  - A general Needs Assessment Survey was completed in March 2014, at the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, held in Riner. The Strategic Plan was completed in November 2014 and provided additional insight into potential opportunity sectors for the NRV region.
  - Next steps involve contracting with the Virginia Cooperative Extension to facilitate and engaging the Steering Committee in the development of an Agritourism strategy. The workshop will be scheduled in the Spring of 2015.
- Economic Impact Analysis:
  - The Strategic Plan offered several Case Studies within the context of the report. In addition, the study examines the production overview of existing market sectors, life cycle analysis, potential facility needs, and cost estimates.
  - Next steps involve developing implementation strategies for the Top 5 New River Valley Agriculture and Agritourism Initiative Priorities. The Case Studies provided in the Strategic Plan will serve as good references, prior to implementation of strategies.

Giles – Montgomery – Pulaski

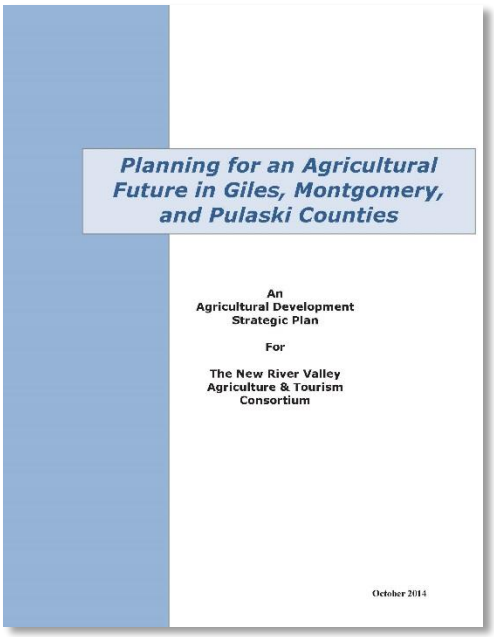
Agriculture Data 2012

- 1,426 Farms
- 269,442 acres
- $59,000,000 market value
- $41,374 average per farm

- Asset Inventory Map:
  - A Memorandum of Understanding was established between the New River Valley Planning District Commission and Southwest Virginia Fresh. The MOU provides the framework for an initial three year partnership between the two agencies. The purpose of the agreement is to formalize a partnership to establish and maintain an interactive local food directory for a 14 county region, located in South-western Virginia. SO Fresh will maintain the directory and serve as the primary contact. The Commission will maintain and host the interactive map.
  - Next steps involve revising the map content and launching the content as a component of SO Fresh's new website.

- Organization Plan:
    - The Steering Committee established 5 priorities for the New River Valley Region. The priorities include the development of a multijurisdictional agriculture-oriented body that would meet on an annual basis to discuss economic development opportunities, regulatory issues, and how to implement new ideas while working with existing agencies such as the Farm Bureau and the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension. Similar regions have coined this type of group as an Agriculture Development Board. In addition, the team identified needs for a small producer network and teams to assist with whole farm planning. Each of these concepts will need additional thought and input from the Steering Committee prior to finalizing organizational plans.
    - Next steps involve working with the Management Team and Steering Committee to develop organizational plans for each area identified as a regional priority.
- Research & Evaluation:
    - The Steering Committee established 5 priorities for the New River Valley Region. The priorities included the need to identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers. With the average age of 57 for local farmers, creating a new generation of farmers is crucial to the long term survival of agriculture. Educational programs for elementary, middle, and high school students should be created and/or expanded to encourage the next generation of farmers. In addition, the team identified the need to better support the existing agriculture industry by exploring infrastructure sites and infrastructure to maximize the local economic impact of meats and produce.
    - Next steps involve Team Research & Evaluation working with the Management Team and Steering Committee to identify potential opportunities for agriculture and agritourism in the New River Valley region. Team Research & Evaluation is comprised of 9 representative from the public and private sector.
- Education & Outreach:
    - Fall 2014, the team did not have education & outreach programs related to this project. The final 6 programs will align with the New River Valley Agriculture & Agritourism Initiative Priorities. The Strategic Plan was not complete until late November 2014.
    - Next steps involve Team Education & Outreach working with the Management Team and Steering Committee to identify potential programs to support the region's priorities. Team Education & Outreach is comprised of 11 representatives from the public and private sector.
- Marketing Strategy:
    - Fall 2014, the team did not have any activity pertaining specifically to marketing. Now that the Strategic Plan is complete, and specific strategies have been identified, Team Marketing will begin to develop strategies and to implement programs that support this initiative.
    - Next steps involve Team Marketing working with the Management Team and Steering Committee to identify marketing strategies and programs that will benefit agriculture and agritourism in the region. Team Marketing is comprised of 15 representative from the public and private sector.

- Strategic Plan:
  - November 2014, the Strategic Plan was complete. Although a specific implementation strategy is not defined, the document establishes the groundwork for continued agriculture development planning and discussions. The plan offers nearly 80 ideas oriented around structure and continuity, networking and communication, farmer advisory committees, education and training opportunities, promoting industry, teamwork, Virginia Cooperative Extension, environment and land base, core activities, local foods and value added, agritourism, spirits, and the next generation.

    
    Planning for an Agricultural Future in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

    An Agricultural Development Strategic Plan

    For

    The New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

    October 2014

    The document addresses the needs of traditional agriculture activities and farmers, while also highlighting opportunities and practices that can benefit new entrepreneurial agriculture growth in areas such as direct marketing and agritourism. In addition, local profiles for each of the three counties, along with an evaluation of current sectors is provided. The conclusion offers a few key recommendations developed by the Management Team and consultant.

    The private sector is charged with the role of driving future success of agriculture in the region. Very few local regulatory and policy barriers were identified as hindrances to new enterprise development.

    The consultant presented the Strategic Plan in-person at the December 18th Steering Committee meeting. The presentation was very 1-on-1 oriented and offered the local agriculture community to engage with the plan developer.

  - Next steps involve the Management Team developing implementation strategies for key recommendations identified in the plan or during the Steering Committee meeting on December 18th.

- Contract Execution & Project Management:
  - Since June 2014, the Commission has been supporting the Management Team with overall project management and contract reporting. In addition, the Commission coordinated meetings, speakers, content, and facilitated group discussions to complete the deliverables outlined in the grantors. Specific activities included: Management Team Meetings on July 30th, August 6th, September 3rd, October 20th, and December 18th. Steering Committee Meetings on August 6th and December 18th.

    The Commission assisted the Management Team to identifying: what do we want to achieve; what are the top goals of the project; what do we want to learn; and what do we hope is reflected in the plan? The feedback was submitted to Matson Consulting to be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

  - Next steps involve the Commission continuing to coordinate and facilitate monthly Management Team meetings, reviewing project related invoices to determine eligibility, and preparing reimbursement and project reports for each funding entity.

New River Valley Agritourism Project Work Plan			
Component 1: Contract Execution			
AFID/DHCD	Establish a Steering Committee	Target: May 2013	Complete: August 2013
AFID/DHCD	Participate in monthly Steering Committee Meetings	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Procure consultant (Matson)	Target: January 2014	Complete: January 2014
AFID/DHCD	Coordinate a strategic plan meeting between the Steering Committee and the consultant	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
Component 2: Research & Evaluation			
AFID	Complete surveys that identify training needs of local farmers	Target: June 2014	Complete: April 2014
AFID	Utilize VA Guide to collect existing data in each county	Target: September 2013	Complete: September 2013
AFID	Prepare a summary report regarding information collected at each county	Target: April 2014	Complete: April 2014
AFID	Participate in Strategic Plan development	Target: July 2014	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop an online asset inventory map	Target: December 2014	Complete: February 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop and maintain GIS data	Target: December 2014	SO Fresh MOU: December 2014, Ongoing
AFID/DHCD	Organization Plan & project post-evaluation	Target: April 2015	On Schedule
AFID/DHCD	Present research findings to the Steering Committee	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Component 3: Education & Outreach			
DHCD	Workshops 1-3, Local stakeholder (1 per county)	Target: August 2013	Complete: August 2013
DHCD	Workshop 4, Agritourism in a Creative Economy	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
DHCD	Workshop 5, Farmer's Market – The Basics	Target: May 2014	Complete: May 2014
DHCD	Workshop 6, Local Agritourism Tour – Montgomery County	Target: September 2014	Delayed – Spring 2015
DHCD	Workshops 7-12, TBD	Target: Every Other Month	Ongoing
AFID/DHCD	Customized Educational & Capacity Building Outreach Plan	Target: December 2014	Delayed: January 2015
AFID/DHCD	Host a roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations	Target: January 2014	Delayed – Spring 2015
AFID/DHCD	Provide recommendations to each county (policy/regulation)	Target: February 2014	Delayed – Spring 2015
AFID/DHCD	Present workshop feedback to the Steering Committee	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Component 4: Marketing Strategy			
SC	RFQ for marketing assistance	Target: August 2014	Delayed – Spring 2015
AFID	Identify general tourist markets for agritourism	Target: June 2014	Complete: June 2014
AFID/DHCD	Agritourism Marketing Strategy – Develop a campaign	Target: December 2014	Delayed – Spring 2015
AFID/DHCD	Present marketing strategies to the Steering Committee	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
Component 5: Strategic Plan			
AFID/DHCD	Develop a regional vision for agriculture	Target: October 2014	Complete: October 2014
SC	Identify capacity building programs for farmers	Target: October 2014	Delayed – Spring 2015
AFID/DHCD	Economic Impact Analysis - collect information on existing markets and products	Target: June 2013	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Provide a summary of regulations/policies that support the expansion and success of agriculture in a region	Target: February 2014	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Evaluate current and potential demand for ag-products	Target: October 2014	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Establish regional goals and objectives for agriculture development with key objectives for each county	Target: October 2014	Complete: December 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop potential implementation strategies	Target: October 2014	Delayed – January 2015
AFID/DHCD	Complete a strategic plan	Target: October 2014	Complete: November 2014
Component 6: Project Management			
DHCD/SC	Provide leadership and oversight of grant funding to ensure completion of products/deliverables	Target: Ongoing	Ongoing
SC	Review project invoices and compile financial reports and reimbursement requests for Giles County	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Prepare project reports for Grantors'	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Staff support for meetings (coordination, minutes, etc.)	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
DHCD	Complete agriculture system Needs Assessment Survey	Target: December 2014	Delayed – Spring 2015
DHCD	Prepare case studies regarding business opportunities in agriculture	Target: December 2014	Complete: November 2014
SC	Complete Asset Inventory Map	Target: August 2014	Complete: February 2014
SC	Actively participate in Steering Committee meetings	Target: Monthly	Ongoing

Abbreviations:
AFID = Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund
DHCD = Department of Housing and Community Development
SC = Steering Committee

III. Funding Expended To Date

- Grant funds expended to date, brief project description, amount, date, source of funds, and relevance to the workplan:

Expenditure Description	Check Number	Cost	Funding Source						Program Totals	Supplies & Material	Contractual		
			AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Mont. County	Pulaski County	In-Kind			Name of Consultant or Vendor	Date	Relevance and Nature of Service
			81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*						
			Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge					
Contract Execution - 3800			$1,250.00	$2,500.00	$918.00	$918.00	$918.00	$0.00	**$6,504.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$4,108.04	$789.52	$1,579.04	$579.82	$579.82	$579.82	$0.00	$4,108.04	yes	All	June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Contract Execution Strategy, Meal 06/11/2014	115535	$405.00	$77.84	$155.67	$29.64	$29.64	$29.64	$0.00	$405.00	no	Sylvia Wynn	8/6/2014	AFID presentation, team coordination: 6.5 hours @ $35/hr
		Balance:	$382.64	$765.28	$281.01	$281.01	$281.01	$0.00	$1,990.96				
Research & Evaluation - 3801			$3,500.00	$6,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	**$23,011.00**				
Project Expenses thru June 2014		$2,010.00	$703.50	$1,306.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,010.00	no	All	June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Placeholder	000000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	y/n	Vendor	Date	Description
		Balance:	$2,796.50	$5,193.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	$21,001.00				
Education & Outreach - 3802			$4,500.00	$3,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,500.00	**$12,750.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$2,513.48	$1,370.99	$1,142.49	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,513.48	yes	All	June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Flavors Media, Project back-up reporting	116777	$315.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$315.00	$315.00	yes	OfficeMax	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies
		Balance:	$3,129.01	$2,607.51	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,185.00	$9,921.52				
Marketing Strategy - 3803			$5,500.00	$4,500.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$0.00	**$13,750.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$120.00	$48.00	$39.27	$10.91	$10.91	$10.91	$0.00	$120.00	no	All	Ending June 2014	Reimbursement Request #1
Placeholder	000000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	y/n	Vendor	Date	Description
		Balance:	$5,452.00	$4,460.73	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$0.00	$13,630.00				
Strategic Plan - 3804			$14,750.00	$7,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$0.00	**$25,000.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	Matson	June 2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3052	117122	$10,000.00	$5,900.00	$2,900.00	$400.00	$400.00	$400.00	$0.00	$10,000.00	No	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3032	116467	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	No	Matson	10/16/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3037	117122	$1,000.00	$590.00	$290.00	$40.00	$40.00	$40.00	$0.00	$1,000.00	no	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan development
		Balance:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00				
Project Management – 3805			$5,500.00	$5,500.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$0.00	**$18,986.00**				
Project expenses thru June 2014		$7,341.68	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	NRVPDC	June 2014	Project Management
NRVPDC, Invoice #737	116688	$2,280.16	$660.53	$660.53	$319.70	$319.70	$319.70	$0.00	$2,280.16	No	NRVPDC	11/5/2014	Project Management
NRVPDC, Invoice #758	117240	$1,545.14	$447.61	$447.61	$216.64	$216.64	$216.64	$0.00	$1,545.14	No	NRVPDC	12/10/2014	Project Management
NRVPDC, Invoice #773	117339	$589.33	$170.72	$170.72	$82.63	$82.63	$82.63	$0.00	$589.33	no	NRVPDC	12/18/2014	Project Management
		Balance:	$2,094.35	$2,094.35	$1,013.66	$1,013.66	$1,013.66	$1,013.66	$7,229.69				

IV. Additional Information

- Project Primary Contacts
- Management Team
- NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Priorities
- NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Teams
- Meeting Agendas/Notes

Primary Contacts

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	(804) 786-6911	Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	(804) 371-7167	Ramona.Chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
Giles County Administrator	Chris McKlarney	(540) 921-2525	cmcklarney@gilescounty.org
Montgomery County Administrator	Craig Meadows	(540) 382-6954	meadowsfc@montgomerycountyva.gov
Pulaski County Administrator	Peter Huber	(540) 980-7705	phuber@pulaskicounty.org
NRV Agritourism Project Manager	Elijah Sharp	(540) 639-9313	esharp@nrvpdc.org

Management Team

Project Role	Name	Affiliation
Chairperson	Chris McKlarney	Giles County
Project Coordination	Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Project Management, billing	Rhonda Tickle	Giles County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Cora Gnegy	Giles County
Team Research & Evaluation Co-Chair	Brea Hopkins	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Lisa Bleakley	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Peggy White	Pulaski County
Strategic Plan Development	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County
Team Agritourism Facilitator	Martha Walker	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Kelly Scott	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Jeannie Layton-Dudding	VA Cooperative Extension
Local Food Directory	Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh
Assessment and evaluation	Kevin Byrd	NRVPDC
Grant writer	Dianne Dinger	Consultant
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	DHCD
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	AFID
Project management, meeting facilitation, reporting	Elijah Sharp	NRVPDC

NRV Agriculture & Tourism Initiative Priorities

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM INITIATIVE PRIORITIES

1. FORM AN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
   A MULTIJURISDICTIONAL AGRICULTURE-ORIENTED BODY THAT MEETS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, REGULATORY ISSUES, AND HOW TO IMPLEMENT NEW IDEAS WHILE WORKING WITH EXISTING AGENCIES SUCH AS THE FARM BUREAU, VT COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, ECT.

2. PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE
   THE LOCAL AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXPLORE PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE SITES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO MAXIMIZE THE LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MEATS AND PRODUCE.

3. SMALL PRODUCER NETWORK
   AN INFORMAL GROUP OF LOCAL FARMERS AND PRODUCERS THAT MEET ON A REGULAR BASIS TO SHARE INFORMATION, HIGHLIGHT SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES, INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS, CHALLENGES, AND GENERALLY FOSTER CLOSER COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION.

4. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS FOR BEGINNING FARMERS
   WITH THE AVERAGE AGE OF 57 FOR LOCAL FARMERS, CREATING A NEW GENERATION OF FARMERS IS CRUCIAL TO THE LONG TERM SURVIVAL OF AGRICULTURE. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SHOULD BE CREATED AND/OR EXPANDED TO ENCOURAGE THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS.

5. CREATE TEAMS TO ASSIST WITH WHOLE FARM PLANNING
   TO SERVE AS A RESOURCE FOR AREA PRODUCERS, FOCUSING ON COORDINATION OF RESOURCES, DISCUSSING LONG TERM IMPROVEMENTS, PROGRAMS, AND ASSIST WITH WRITTEN PLANS.

Note: Priorities identified on December 18, 2014 during the NRV Agriculture and Agritourism Steering Committee Meeting. Over 20 participants cast two votes each, for the following results: Agriculture Development Board (9), Production Infrastructure (9), Small Producer Network (7), Identify Opportunities and Needs for Beginning Farmers (6), and Create Teams to Assist with Whole Farm Planning (5).

NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Teams

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

TEAM EDUCATION & OUTREACH:

Name	Representing	Email
Jeannie Layton-Dudding*	Virginia Cooperative Extension	jdudding@vt.edu
Kelli Scott*	Virginia Cooperative Extension	kescottl@vt.edu
Jessica Schultz	Blacksburg Farmer's Market	schultz.jessica.vt@gmail.com
Ellen Stewart	Consortium/Prices Fork Project	estewart@blacksburg.gov
Linda Robinson	Montgomery County	ldr920@gmail.com
Jim Politis	Small Farms	bcbuffalo@aol.com
Mike Burton	Self	mikeburton745@gmail.com
Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh	mtn2mtn@psknet.com
Peggy White	Pulaski County	peggywhite@pulaskichamber.info
Kevin Byrd	New River Valley PDC	kbyrd@nrvpdc.org
Elijah Sharp	New River Valley PDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org

*Denotes Co-Chairperson

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

TEAM MARKETING:

Name	Representing	Email
Lisa Bleakley*	Montgomery County	bleakleyts@montgomerycountyva.gov
Cora Gnegy*	Giles County	cgnegy@gilescounty.org
Peggy White*	Pulaski County	peggywhite@pulaskichamber.info
Michelle Workman	VA Tourism Commission	mworkman@virginia.org
Randall Rose	VA Tourism Commission	rrose@virginia.org
Jessica Schultz	Blacksburg Farmer's Market	schultz.jessica.vt@gmail.com
Ellen Stewart	Consortium/Prices Fork Project	estewart@blacksburg.gov
Michael Solomon	Pulaski County	msolomon@pulaskicounty.org
Kelli Scott	Montgomery County	kescottl@vt.edu
Georgia Haverty	Doe Creek Farm – Giles County	doecreekfarm@gmail.com
Jim Politis	Small Farms	bcbuffalo@aol.com
Mike Burton	Self	mikeburton745@gmail.com
Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh	mtn2mtn@psknet.com
Kevin Byrd	New River Valley PDC	kbyrd@nrvpdc.org
Elijah Sharp	New River Valley PDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org

*Denotes Co-Chairperson

Meeting Agendas/Notes

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2014 – 1:00 – 2:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Progress Report:
   A. AFID Interim Report
   B. Revised Budget
   C. Revised Project Schedule
   D. DHCD Workshop Overview

III. Strategic Plan:
   A. What do we want to achieve?
      i. What are the top goals of this project?
   B. What do we want to learn?
      i. What do we hope is reflected in the plan?

IV. Identify Tasks for Subcommittees

V. Key points to share with Steering Committee

VI. Next steps
   A. Set monthly meetings

VII. Adjournment (15 minute break)

Part II – Steering Committee Meeting, 2:15 pm – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism for Virginia; Gustavo Ferreira and Martha Walker

IV. Adjournment

New River Valley Agritourism Project

Management Team Meeting—Strategic Planning Discussion

What do we want to achieve?

* Three local governments exploring partnership opportunities that could grow the agriculture economy.

List your top 3 goals for this project:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What do we want to learn?

What do we hope is reflected in the plan?

Notes from July 30, 2014 DHCD Workshop:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Transportation Routes Natural Beauty – open land Awareness Community Support Strong Agriculture Heritage Oldest Agriculture Fair in Virginia Traditional infrastructure (farmers have equipment, land, etc.) Farm to table	Funding Extension – lack of local awareness of services Lack of day-trips to prolong visitor's stay Marketing of Agriculture Increased costs combined with increased regulations Potential liability of farmers Next generation of farmers Local food – incentives for restaurants to use Niche – specialist misunderstanding Lack of market access
Opportunities	**Threats**
School/Agriculture programs Legislation opportunity to source food locally Community events educational opportunities Institutions desire to have local food More involvement Food security need International visitors National movements (buy/eat local, 100-mi. dinners, etc.) Local movements (So Fresh, local food, etc.)	Next generation farmers Surrounding regional exports Local politics Time Legislation Development – retaining farm land High beef prices Fear of change Widespread illness Need more small growers to support local food programs

Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski Agritourism Project

Management Team Meeting August 6, 2014

Members Present: Jenny McCoy, Brea Hopkins, Peggy White, Michael Solomon, Dianne Dinger, and Elijah Sharp

Guests Present: Dr. Martha Walker, and Dr. Gustavo Ferreira

Meeting Welcome & Introductions: The meeting began at 1:05 pm. Each meeting participant introduced themselves.

Progress Report: Sharp provided the group with a brief overview of recent grant related activities, including: AFID Interim Report submittal on July 22nd, AFID Interim Report acceptance on July 23rd, a revised project budget that aligns funding resources with specific agreement deliverables, a revised project schedule that extends funding from DHCD and AFID through June 2015, and a brief DHCD Workshop overview.

Strategic Plan: The management team worked collaboratively to contribute ideas for the Strategic Plan. The following feedback was received:

1. <u>What do we want to achieve?</u>
    - Three local governments exploring partnership opportunities that could grow the agriculture economy.
    - If the statement (above) was a vision statement, what else should be reflected?
        i. The Agriculture community or region
        ii. That agriculture is highly productive and valued
        iii. The need to engage youth
        iv. The need to provide value-added assistance to farmers
        v. Inclusive of all realms of agriculture (specialty, new, traditional, etc.)
2. <u>What are the primary goals for this effort?</u>
    - Increase educational opportunities for youth (how to grow through market phases)
    - Create a brand for the region (identify boundary, increase marketing of assets, made in NRV, etc.)
    - Identify policies that encourage farmers to implement agritourism/agribusiness ideas (enable more products to be purchased at farms)
    - Create networking opportunities for the ag-community (improve information sharing, create a regional farmers market, build on existing programs, support with technology, etc.)
    - Identify, promote, utilize, and produce local and regional agriculture products
    - Prevent effort from being an academic exercise – utilize the Strategic Plan to communicate opportunities with regional stakeholders
3. What do we want to learn from the Strategic Plan?
    - Remove "New vs. Traditional" and focus on specific markets: Livestock Production, Forestry/Timber, Emerging AG, Wine/Beer/Cider, and Agritourism
    - Include examples/case studies from other States
    - Provide examples of before/after pro-AG policies (provide a conversation starting point for the Policy/Regulation sub-committee)
    - Identify trends in farm size (acres) vs. the ability to support activities, educational opportunities, and market sectors
    - Workforce vs. individual training
    - Statistics on tourists

4. What do we hope is reflected in the Strategic Plan?
    - Equal analysis/framework per market sector
    - Highlight the regions strengths: Interest in agritourism in VA, proximity of agritourism/agribusiness to above average household income counties, community support, strong heritage, and others captured in DHCD Workshop SWOT analysis
    - Incorporate the value of Agriculture in the Introduction and Project Background
    - How do we compare to neighboring States
    - The need for local champions to lead projects

Identify Tasks for Subcommittees: No activities were identified at this meeting.

Key Points to share with the Steering Committee: The Management Team elected McCoy to update the Committee on the project budget and timeline.

Next Steps: The Management Team identified first Wednesdays, 10 am to 12 noon, for monthly Management meetings.

Meeting Adjournment: 2:00 pm

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2014 – 2:00 – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Strategic Plan:
   A. Thoughts and General Recommendations

III. Priority Recommendations:
   A. How to utilize the homework assignment moving forward

IV. Subcommittee Deliverables

V. Local Food Directory
   A. Potential partnership with SO Fresh

VI. Progress Report:
   A. Budget
   B. Deliverables

VII. Adjournment (15 minute break)

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2014 – 2:15 – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. Presentation:

   A. A Geographic Analysis of Agritourism for Virginia

   Join the NRV Agritourism Steering Committee for a special presentation from the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension. Dr. Martha Walker and Dr. Gustavo Ferreira will discuss their findings and results of their recent statewide study on Agritourism.

IV. Roundtable Discussion

V. Adjournment

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRITOURISM PROJECT

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2014 – 9:00 – 11:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update

III. Presentation:

A. Planning for an Agriculture Future in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties

Join the NRV Agritourism Steering Committee for a special presentation from Matson Consulting. Gerry Cohn has developed County Agriculture Development Plans, business plans for individual farms, production budgets, supply and demand analyses, and local food enhancement strategies. Cohn has worked with a wide range of experts in the public, private, non-profit, and university sectors.

B. Questions about the Strategic Plan

IV. Roundtable Discussion:

A. Top Recommendations from the Planning Process

i. Form a Three-County Agriculture Board
ii. Facilitate a regular monthly agriculture meeting in each county
iii. Use LISTSERVs to better share information
iv. Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers
v. Provide introductory services to new landowners
vi. Create "Technical Advisor" teams to assist with Whole Farm Planning
vii. Develop a stronger institutional relationship with Virginia Tech

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski

December 18th, 2014 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Interested in helping our team complete deliverables? Place a check mark in each area of interest.				Email (if new)
			Agritourism	Education/Outreach	Marketing	Research/Evaluation	
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRV	✓	✓	✓	✓	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	Michelle Workman	VTC	✓		✓		mworkman@virginia
3	Randall Rose	VTC	✓		✓		rrose@virginia.org
4	Dave Rundgren	Self					
5	Marcus Gray	New River-Highlands RC&D	✓				mgraynrhrcd@centurylink.net
6	CHRIS McKLARNEY	GILES COUNTY	✓			✓	CMCKLARNEY@GILESCOUNTY.ORG
7	Jenny McCoy	Giles County	✓				jmccoy@gilescounty.org
8	Cora Gregy	Giles County	✓		✓		cgregy@gilescounty.or
9	Jeannie Dudding	VCE - Giles		✓			jdudding@vt.edu
10	Jessica Schultz	Blacksburg Farmers Mkt	✓	✓	✓	✓	schultz.jessica.vt@gmail.com
11	Ellen Stewart - NRV HOME Consortium / Prices Fork Project		✓	✓	✓		estewart@blacksburg.go
12	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County	✓		✓		msolomon@pulaski.county.org
13	Linda D Robinson	Montgomery County	✓	✓			LDR920@gmail.com
14	Kelli Scott	Montgomery County	✓	✓	✓	✓	kescott1@vt.edu
15	Lisa Bleakley	Mont. Co. Tourism	✓		✓		bleakleyTS@montgomerycountyva.g
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Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski

December 18th, 2014 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Interested in helping our team complete deliverables? Place a check mark in each area of interest.				Email (if new)
			Agritourism	Education/Outreach	Marketing	Research/Evaluation	
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRV	✓	✓	✓	✓	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	GEORGIA HAUGERTY	DOCCREEKFARM-GILES	✓		✓		
3	Jim Politis	Small Farms	✓	✓	✓		bcbussalo@aol.com
4	William CRenshaw	Riverstone Farm	✓				
5	GERRY COHN	MATSON CONSULTING					
6	Mike Burton	Mike Burton - ~~LEG~~		✓	✓	✓	mike burton 745@gmail.com
7	Debbie Unemaver	Go Fresh		✓	✓	✓	mtn2mtn@psknet.com
8	Peggy White	Pulaski County	✓	✓	✓		peggywhite@pulaskichamber.info
9	KEVIN BYRD	NRVPDC	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Margaret Smith	Big Cole Chuckwagon	✓			✓	bocbchuckwagon@gm
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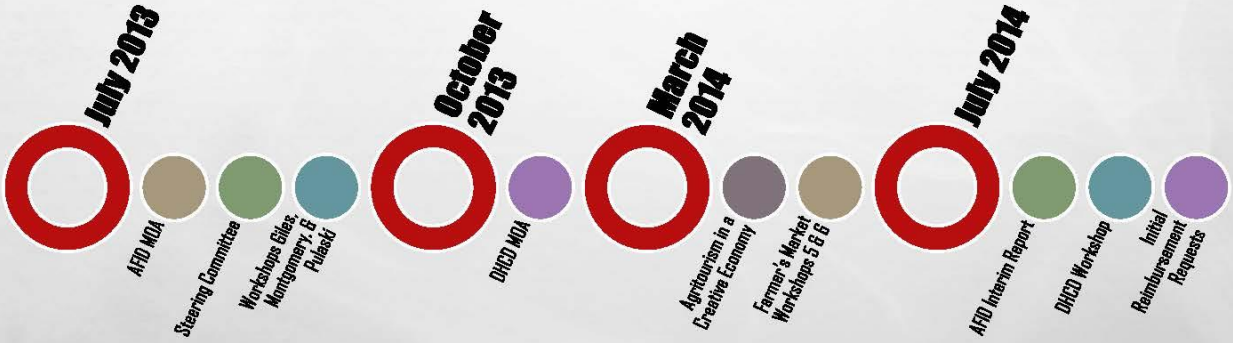
NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, DECEMBER 18, 2014

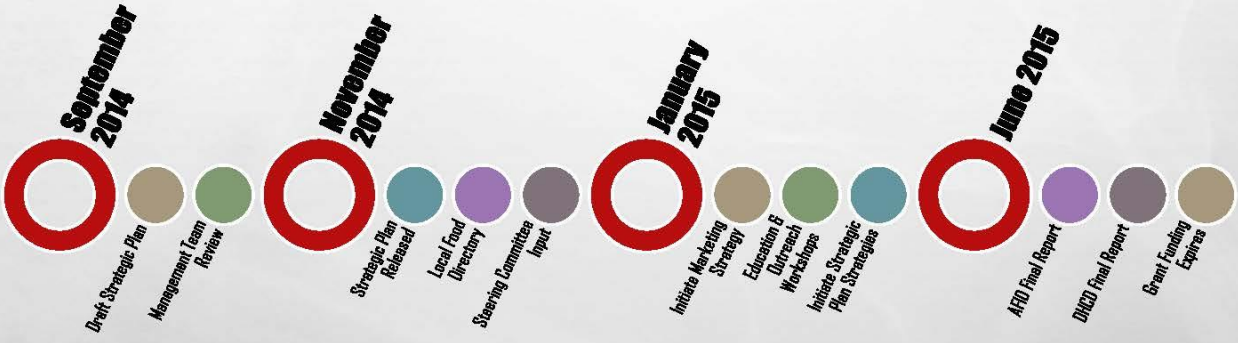
PROJECT UPDATE

- PROJECT SCHEDULE
- WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE?
- NEW TOOLS & PARTNERSHIPS
- FUNDING

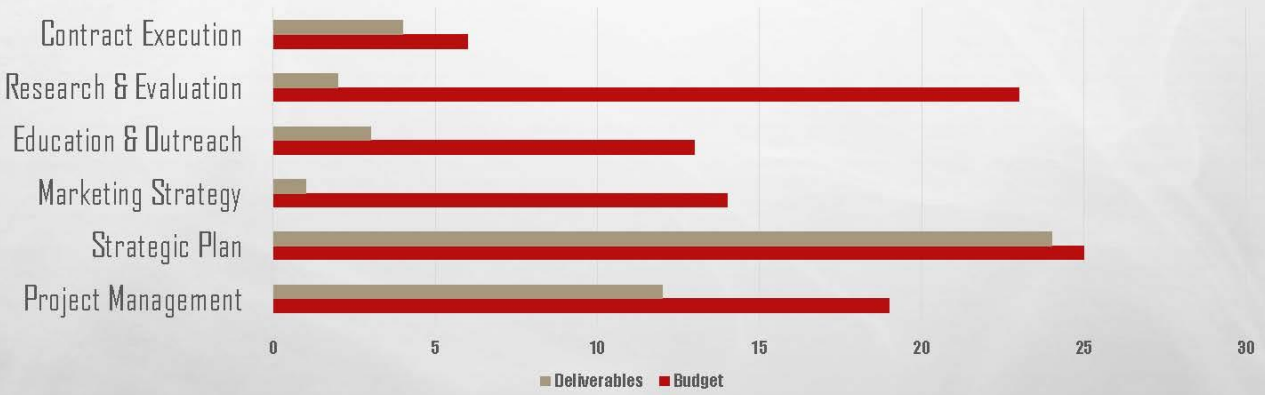
PROJECT SCHEDULE



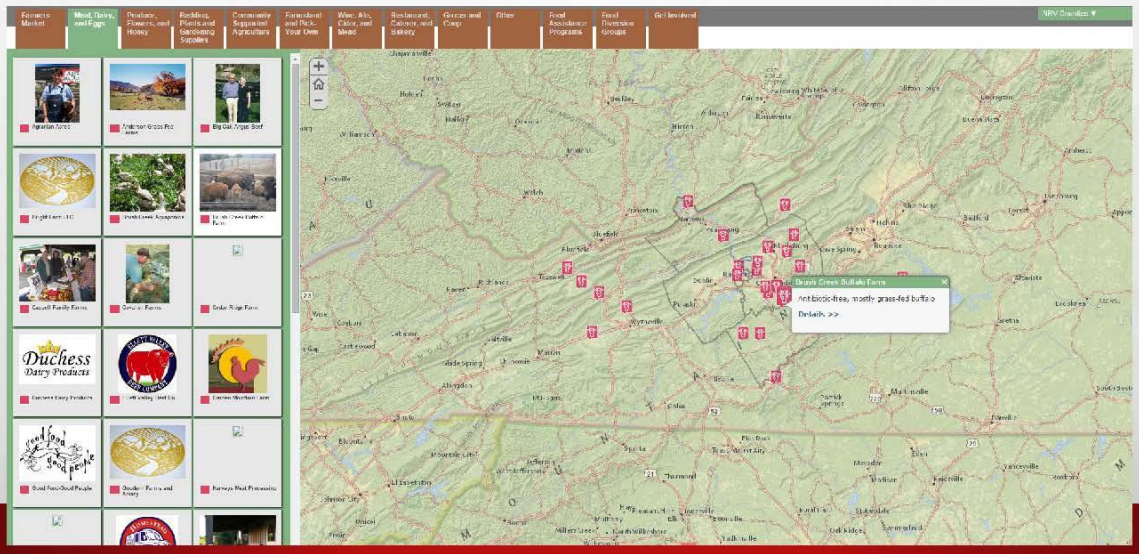
PROJECT SCHEDULE



WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE?



NEW TOOLS & PARTNERSHIPS



FUNDING

- VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES (AFID)
  - $35,000
- VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DHCD)
  - $30,000
- LOCAL CASH MATCH
  - $5,830 PER COUNTY
- LOCAL IN-KIND MATCH
  - $5,837 PER COUNTY

FUNDING

- GILES COUNTY
- TOTAL PROJECT CASH + IN-KIND = $100,000
- JULY 2014 REIMBURSEMENT = $13,142.01
- ALLOCATED EXPENDITURES = $44,493.83
- REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 2014

DHCD Planning Grant – Project Narrative

Giles County Regional Agritourism Initiative

For Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products and diversifying the mix of tourism products and services available to visitors. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community. In addition, before the local farming community can consider the use of agriculture as a means of diversifying and increasing their income, the region needs to identify the challenges associated with creating agritourism and agribusiness opportunities.

Project Outcome: partners of the New River Valley Agritourism Initiative have developed a 3-year strategy that focuses on the promotion of agricultural related experiences in the region. A separate plan of work has been developed for Agribusiness and Agritourism initiatives. Key recommendations for Agritourism include: 1) developing and enhancing agritourism marketing strategies in the NRV; 2) increasing the number of festivals and events held on farms; 3) creating an interactive web-based tool that promotes and grows agritourism in the region; 4) providing educational opportunities for the agritourism community; and 5) increasing opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced food and value added products.

Regional partners have identified specific strategies that outline resources needed, responsible parties, timeline, and anticipated outcome. One of the first steps is to develop a regional brand to market agriculture in the NRV. In June 2015, local partners hired a consultant to develop a market brief, logo, and tagline. The work will be unveiled in the Fall at the Planning for an Agricultural Future in Southwest Virginia Conference, in Blacksburg, Virginia.

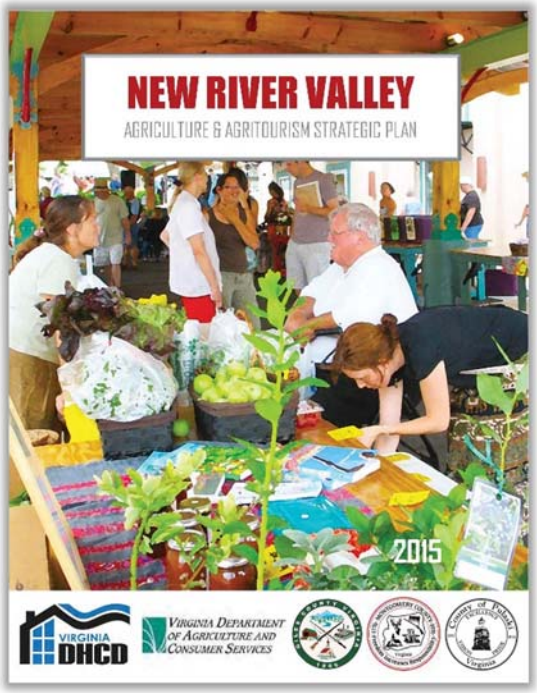
Dr. Martha Walker, Virginia Cooperative Extension, leads a discussion with Team Agritourism during the second of four meetings (picture above). Team Agritourism met for four hours at each meeting to develop the Agritourism Plan of Work.

I. Activities Performed

Summary of activities performed during the reporting period:

- Needs Assessment and Survey:
  - A general Needs Assessment Survey was completed in March 2014, at the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, held in Riner. A Regional Assessment was completed in November 2014 and provided additional insight into potential opportunity sectors for the NRV region.
- Economic Impact Analysis:
  - The Regional Assessment, prepared by Matson Consulting, offers several Case Studies within the context of the report. In addition, the assessment examines the production overview of existing market sectors, life cycle analysis, potential facility needs, and cost estimates.
- Asset Inventory Map:
  - A Memorandum of Understanding was established between the New River Valley Regional Commission and Southwest Virginia Fresh. The MOU provides the framework for an initial three year partnership between the two agencies. The purpose of the agreement is to formalize a partnership to establish and maintain an interactive local food directory for a 14 county region, located in South-western Virginia. SO Fresh will maintain the directory and serve as the primary contact. The Commission will maintain and host the interactive map. Visit the website for more information: http://www.swvafresh.org/food-producers/
- Organization Plan:
  - The Agritourism Plan of Work outlines several strategies and potential partners. Several teams will focus on completing the strategies outlined in the plan rather than a single organization moving forward. In the short-term, Agriculture Development Boards may be established at each county. In the long-term, a regional position is suggested to continue the promotion and marketing of agriculture in the region.
- Research & Evaluation:
  - The Steering Committee identified three topic areas to focus on: on-farm local food sales, working with health regulations; planning for agritourism, navigating and understanding local zoning regulations; and production infrastructure. The topics will be integrated in to a two-day conference in the Fall of 2015.
  - Next steps involve planning a two-day conference in Blacksburg, Virginia. Target date for completion is October 2015.
- Education & Outreach:
  - Beginning in March 2015, the Virginia Cooperative Extension agents were able to complete educational programs 7-12. The programs included: whole farm planning, cattle risk management, farm management, produce safety, and a 4-H livestock fieldtrip. In total, the target of 12 educational programs was achieved.
- Marketing Strategy:
  - In June 2015, Team Marketing solicited for proposals and selected a local consultant to assist with developing a regional logo and tagline.
  - Next steps involve Team Marketing working with the consultant to complete the branding process. Target date for completion is October 2015.

- Revised Strategic Plan - Regional Assessment:
    - June 2015, the Strategic Plan was revised to focus on a plan of work for Agritourism and Agribusiness. The new document outlines specific objectives, strategies, resources needed, responsible parties, timeline, and projected outcome. Additionally, an appendix incorporates all prior work and project reports.



    - Next steps involve adding branding deliverables and outcomes from the conference scheduled in the Fall of 2015.
- Contract Execution & Project Management:
    - Since January 2015, the Commission has continued to support the Management Team with overall project management and contract reporting. In addition, the Commission coordinated meetings, speakers, content, and facilitated group discussions to complete the deliverables outlined by the grantors. Specific activities included: Management Team meetings on January 14th, February 9th, and April 22nd. Steering Committee meetings on March 12th, and June 19th. Team Agritourism meetings on February 23rd, March 16th, March 30th, and April 14th. Team Agribusiness meetings on May 7th, and May 29th. Agritourism Branding kick-off meeting on June 30th.
    - Next steps involve the Commission continuing to coordinate and facilitate meetings to complete branding and planning for the agriculture conference. Target date for completion is October 2015.

New River Valley Agritourism Project Work Plan			
Component 1: Contract Execution			
AFID/DHCD	Establish a Steering Committee	Target: May 2013	Complete: August 2013
AFID/DHCD	Participate in monthly Steering Committee Meetings	Target: Monthly	Complete: June 2015
SC	Procure consultant (Matson)	Target: January 2014	Complete: January 2014
AFID/DHCD	Coordinate a strategic plan meeting between the Steering Committee and the consultant	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
Component 2: Research & Evaluation			
AFID	Complete surveys that identify training needs of local farmers	Target: June 2014	Complete: April 2014
AFID	Utilize VA Guide to collect existing data in each county	Target: September 2013	Complete: September 2013
AFID	Prepare a summary report regarding information collected at each county	Target: April 2014	Complete: April 2014
AFID	Participate in Strategic Plan development	Target: July 2014	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop an online asset inventory map	Target: December 2014	Complete: February 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop and maintain GIS data	Target: December 2014	Complete: December 2014
AFID/DHCD	Organization Plan & project post-evaluation	Target: April 2015	Target: October 2015
AFID/DHCD	Present research findings to the Steering Committee	Target: Monthly	Complete: Jun 2015
Component 3: Education & Outreach			
DHCD	Workshops 1-3, Local stakeholder (1 per county)	Target: August 2013	Complete: August 2013
DHCD	Workshop 4, Agritourism in a Creative Economy	Target: March 2014	Complete: March 2014
DHCD	Workshops 5-6, Farmer's Market – The Basics	Target: May 2014	Complete: May 2014
DHCD	Workshop 7-8, Whole Farm Planning	Target: March 2015	Complete: March 2015
DHCD	Workshop 9, Cattle Risk Management	Target: April 2015	Complete: April 2015
DHCD	Workshop 10, Farm Management	Target: May 2015	Complete: May 2015
DHCD	Workshop 11, NRV Produce Safety	Target: May 2015	Complete: May 2015
DHCD	Workshop 12, 4-H Livestock Fieldtrip	Target: June 2015	Complete: July 2015
AFID/DHCD	Customized Educational & Capacity Building Outreach Plan	Target: December 2014	Delayed: July 2015
AFID/DHCD	Host a roundtable discussion on local policies and regulations	Target: January 2014	Delayed: Fall 2015
AFID/DHCD	Provide recommendations to each county (policy/regulation)	Target: February 2014	Delayed: Fall 2015
Component 4: Marketing Strategy			
SC	RFQ for marketing assistance	Target: August 2014	Complete: June 2015
AFID	Identify general tourist markets for agritourism	Target: June 2014	Complete: June 2014
AFID/DHCD	Agritourism Marketing Strategy – Develop a campaign	Target: December 2014	Delayed: Fall 2015
AFID/DHCD	Present marketing strategies to local partners	Target: June 2015	Delayed: Fall 2015
Component 5: Strategic Plan			
AFID/DHCD	Develop a regional vision for agriculture	Target: October 2014	Complete: October 2014
SC	Identify capacity building programs for farmers	Target: October 2014	Complete: June 2015
AFID/DHCD	Economic Impact Analysis - collect information on existing markets and products	Target: June 2013	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Provide a summary of regulations/policies that support the expansion and success of agriculture in a region	Target: February 2014	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Evaluate current and potential demand for ag-products	Target: October 2014	Complete: November 2014
AFID/DHCD	Establish regional goals and objectives for agriculture development with key objectives for each county	Target: October 2014	Complete: December 2014
AFID/DHCD	Develop potential implementation strategies	Target: October 2014	Complete: June 2015
AFID/DHCD	Complete a strategic plan	Target: October 2014	Complete: June 2015
Component 6: Project Management			
DHCD/SC	Provide leadership and oversight of grant funding to ensure completion of products/deliverables	Target: Ongoing	Ongoing
SC	Review project invoices and compile financial reports and reimbursement requests for Giles County	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Prepare project reports for Grantors'	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
SC	Staff support for meetings (coordination, minutes, etc.)	Target: Monthly	Ongoing
DHCD	Complete agriculture system Needs Assessment Survey	Target: December 2014	Delayed: Fall 2015
DHCD	Prepare case studies regarding business opportunities in agriculture	Target: December 2014	Complete: November 2014
SC	Complete Asset Inventory Map	Target: August 2014	Complete: February 2014
SC	Actively participate in Steering Committee meetings	Target: Monthly	Complete: June 2015

Abbreviations:
AFID = Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund
DHCD = Department of Housing and Community Development
SC = Steering Committee

III. Funding Expended To Date

- Grant funds expended to date, brief project description, amount, date, source of funds, and relevance to the workplan:

Expenditure Description	Cost	Funding Source						Program Totals	Supplies & Materials	Contractual		
		AFID	DHCD	Giles County	Montgomery County	Pulaski County	In-Kind			Name of Consultant or Vendor	Date	Relevance and Nature of Service
		81201	*81202*	*81203-3806*	*81204-3806*	*81205-3806*						
		Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge	Charge					
Contract Execution - 3800		$1,250.00	$2,500.00	$918.00	$918.00	$918.00	$0.00	**$6,504.00**				
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	$262.50	$50.45	$100.90	$37.05	$37.05	$37.05	$0.00	$262.50	no	Dinger	Oct-Nov 2013	Communication, bid specs, updates: 7.5 hours @ $35/hr
AFID Execution, Education, Planning, 04/02/14	$227.50	$43.72	$87.45	$32.11	$32.11	$32.11	$0.00	$227.50	no	Dinger	Jan-Feb 2014	AFID presentation, team coordination: 6.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 01/23/14	$140.00	$26.91	$53.81	$19.76	$19.76	$19.76	$0.00	$140.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Subcommittee meeting, correspondence: 4 hours @ $35/hr
RFP-Strategic Plan, 02/05/14	$503.04	$96.68	$193.36	$71.00	$71.00	$71.00	$0.00	$503.04	no	Roanoke Times	1/22/2014	Request for Proposal Advertisement
Contract Execution, October - November, 12/19/13	$297.50	$57.18	$114.35	$41.99	$41.99	$41.99	$0.00	$297.50	no	Dinger	Oct-Nov 2013	Agenda Development, meetings: 8.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 04/02/14	$315.00	$60.54	$121.08	$44.46	$44.46	$44.46	$0.00	$315.00	no	Dinger	Jan-Mar 2014	Subcommittee coordination, comm: 9 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution and Planning, 11/21/2013	$630.00	$121.08	$242.16	$88.92	$88.92	$88.92	$0.00	$630.00	no	Dinger	Sep-Oct 2013	Meeting coordination/facilitation: 18 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, 09/04/2013	$857.50	$164.80	$329.60	$121.03	$121.03	$121.03	$0.00	$857.50	no	Dinger	June-Aug 2013	Reporting, research, meeting dev: 24.5 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution, Consultation, 09/04/2013	$105.00	$20.18	$40.36	$14.82	$14.82	$14.82	$0.00	$105.00	no	Dinger	June-Aug 2013	Follow-up reports, communication: 3 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution and Management, 10/02/2013	$560.00	$107.63	$215.25	$79.04	$79.04	$79.04	$0.00	$560.00	no	Dinger	Aug-Sep 2013	Work plans, deliverables, budget: 16 hours @ $35/hr
Communications and Management, 01/23/2014	$210.00	$40.36	$80.72	$29.64	$29.64	$29.64	$0.00	$210.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Contractual budget, monthly report: 6 hours @ $35/hr
Contract Execution Strategy, Meal 05/28/2014	$405.00	$77.84	$155.67	$57.16	$57.16	$57.16	$0.00	$405.00	yes	Sylvia Wynn	Aug-14	Local Meeting, contracted meal: 45 @ $9.00/person
NRVPDC Invoice #Final Part 2 of 2	$1,014.00	$0.00	$1,014.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,014.00	no	NRVPDC		
	Balance:	$382.64	-$248.72	$281.01	$281.01	$281.01	$0.00	$976.96				
Research & Evaluation - 3801		$3,500.00	$6,500.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$13,011.00	**$23,011.00**				
Research & Evaluation support, 06/26/14	$910.00	$318.50	$591.50	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$910.00	no	Dinger	Mar-Apr 2014	outreach report, farmers workshop: 26 hours @ $35/hr
NRVPDC, Asset Mapping, 06/04/14	$1,100.00	$385.00	$715.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,100.00	no	NRVPDC	5/16/2014	Local food workshop + interactive mapping
Giles County-Gnegy	$121.88	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$121.88	$121.88	no	Giles County	4/14/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Giles County-McCoy	$226.73	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$226.73	$226.73	no	Giles County	4/27/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
General-Walker	$1,305.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,305.00	$1,305.00	no	VCE	4/17/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Montgomery County-Hopkins	$1,314.01	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,314.01	$1,314.01	no	Montgomery County	5/19/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
General-Scott 1A	$3,185.70	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,185.70	$3,185.70	no	VCE	6/8/2015	Kelli Scott In-kind staff time contribution 1/2
Montgomery County - Gibson	$810.65	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$810.65	$810.65	no	Montgomery County	6/5/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Montgomery County - Bleakly	$3,029.17	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,029.17	$3,029.17	no	Montgomery County	6/12/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Pulaski County - White	$406.03	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$406.03	$406.03	no	Pulaski County	6/17/2015	In-kind staff time contribution
Fields/Gold Strategy; Branding, Uncork-it Part 1 of 2 (half)	$2,546.93	$0.00	$2,546.93	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,546.93	no	NRVPDC	6/22/2015	Strategy meeting; market brief, logo, tagline, strategic plan
General-Paulette 1B	$495.40	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$495.40	$495.40	no	VCE	6/18/2015	Morgan Paulette In-kind staff time contribution
General-Dudding Part 1A	$1,889.30	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,889.30	$1,889.30	no	VCE	6/15/2015	Jeannie Dudding In-kind staff time contribution
	Balance:	$2,796.50	$2,646.57	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$227.13	$5,670.20				
Education & Outreach - 3802		$4,500.00	$3,750.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,500.00	**$12,750.00**				
Walmart, Farmer's Market: The Basics supplies, 6/19/14	$87.87	$47.93	$39.94	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$87.87	yes	Walmart	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies and snacks
Office Max, Farmer's Market: The Basics supplies, 6/19/14	$15.29	$8.34	$6.95	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$15.29	yes	OfficeMax	5/27/2014	Meeting supplies
Farmer's Market: The Basics postage, 6/19/14	$49.00	$26.73	$22.27	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$49.00	yes	Post Office	5/21/2014	100 stamps for Farmer's Market Program
Education & Outreach support, 06/26/14	$875.00	$477.27	$397.73	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$875.00	no	Dinger	May-Jun 2014	outreach report, farmers workshop: 25 hours @ $35/hr
Farmer's Market: The Basics, Mileage, 06/26/14	$179.20	$97.75	$81.45	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$179.20	no	Eric Eberly	6/13/2014	Speaker and mileage fee: 320 miles @ $0.56/hour

Farmer's Market: The Basics, Lecture Fee & Mileage, 06/26/14	$430.72	$234.94	$195.78	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$430.72	no	ChiknEGG Produc.	6/13/2014	Lecture fee: $200; mileage: 412 miles @ $0.56/mile
Hethwood Market, Lunch for 60 @ $11.00 each, 04/17/2014	$784.58	$427.95	$356.63	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$784.58	yes	Heathwood Mark.	4/1/2014	Lunch for 60 @ $11.00/ea + $50 delivery fee
Walmart, Workshop, breakfast, 05/07/2014	$91.82	$50.08	$41.74	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$91.82	yes	Walmart	3/19/2014	Breakfast items for workshop
Flavors Media, Project back-up reporting	$315.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$315.00	$315.00	no	Dinger	11/5/2014	Project request reporting
NRVPDC-State Ag-Conference & Agritourism Work Plan	$2,091.96	$0.00	$2,091.96	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,091.96	yes	NRVPDC	4/2/2015	State Ag Conference x4 + Agritourism Plan-Wordsprint ($388.56)
NRV Whole Farm Planning Part 1 of 2	$158.56	$86.49	$72.07	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$158.56	yes	Hethwood Market	3/13/2015	Lunch for 14 @ $11.33/ea
NRV Whole Farm Planning Part 2 of 2	$139.63	$76.16	$63.47	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$139.63	yes	Hethwood Market	3/29/2015	Lunch for 14 @ $9.90/ea
Matzah Rizing, Master Plan Steering Committee	$100.00	$54.55	$45.45	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$100.00	no	Matzah Rizing	1/4/2015	In-person presentation/travel for Regional Assessment
Cattle Risk Management Workshop, VCE flyers	$341.18	$186.10	$155.08	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$341.18	yes	VCE	4/29/2015	Flyers promoting educational program
VCE 4-H Livestock Education, Charter Bus	$850.00	$463.64	$386.36	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$850.00	no	VCE	6/5/2015	Partial payment for 4-H Charter Bus, Educational Trip
General-Scott 1B	$3,185.70	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,185.70	$3,185.70	no	VCE	6/8/2015	Kelli Scott In-kind staff time contribution 1/2
General-Paulette 1B	$495.40	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$495.40	$495.40	no	VCE	6/18/2015	Morgan Paulette In-kind staff time contribution
General-Dudding 1B	$1,889.29	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,889.29	$1,889.29	no	VCE	6/15/2015	Jeannie Dudding In-kind staff time contribution
Farm Management Workshop, 4/21/2015	$234.00	$0.00	$234.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$234.00	yes	Sylvia Wynn	4/21/2015	Lunch for 24 @ $9.75/ea
Fresh Produce Risk Workshop, 5/28/2015	$135.00	$0.00	$135.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$135.00	yes	Sylvia Wynn	5/28/2015	Lunch for 10 @ $13.50/ea
	Balance:	$2,262.08	-$575.89	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	-$1,385.39	$300.80				
Marketing Strategy - 3803		$5,500.00	$4,500.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$1,250.00	$0.00	**$13,750.00**				
Appalachian Grown, social media, 09/04/2013	$50.00	$20.00	$16.36	$4.55	$4.55	$4.55	$0.00	$50.00	no	Wild Cntry Studios	8/6/2013	Facebook page set-up for Appalachian Grown
Marketing and Planning, 01/23/14	$70.00	$28.00	$22.91	$6.36	$6.36	$6.36	$0.00	$70.00	no	Dinger	Dec-13	Electronic e-mail newsletter: 2 hours @ $35/hr
Farmer's Market Rack Card, Old Town Printing	$732.58	$0.00	$732.58	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$732.58	yes	Montgomery County	Jun-15	Farmers Market Rack Cards, 10,000
Fields/Gold Strategy; Branding, Uncork-it Part 1 of 2 (half)	$2,546.92	$0.00	$2,546.92	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,546.92	no	Uncork-it	6/17/2015	Develop market brief, create logo, develop tagline
	Balance:	$5,452.00	$1,181.23	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$1,239.09	$0.00	$10,350.50				
Strategic Plan - 3804		$14,750.00	$7,250.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$1,000.00	$0.00	**$25,000.00**				
Matson Consulting, Project Initiation, Invoice # 3052	$10,000.00	$5,900.00	$2,900.00	$400.00	$400.00	$400.00	$0.00	$10,000.00	no	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan Project Initiation
Matson Consulting, Invoice # 3013, 07/17/2014	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	Matson	8/6/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3032, 9/29/2014	$7,000.00	$4,130.00	$2,030.00	$280.00	$280.00	$280.00	$0.00	$7,000.00	no	Matson	10/16/2014	Strategic Plan development
Matson Consulting, Invoice #3037, 11/17/2014	$1,000.00	$590.00	$290.00	$40.00	$40.00	$40.00	$0.00	$1,000.00	no	Matson	12/10/2014	Strategic Plan Final Invoice
	Balance:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00				
Project Management - 3805		$5,500.00	$5,500.00	$2,662.00	$2,662.00	$2,622.00	$0.00	**$18,986.00**				
NRVPDC Invoice #725	7,341.68	$2,126.79	$2,126.79	$1,029.37	$1,029.37	$1,029.37	$0.00	$7,341.68	no	NRVPDC	9/18/2014	
NRVPDC Invoice #737	$2,280.16	$660.53	$660.53	$319.70	$319.70	$319.70	$0.00	$2,280.16	no	NRVPDC	11/5/2014	
NRVPDC Invoice #758	$1,545.14	$447.61	$447.61	$216.64	$216.64	$216.64	$0.00	$1,545.14	no	NRVPDC	12/10/2014	
NRVPDC Invoice #773	$589.33	$170.72	$170.72	$82.63	$82.63	$82.63	$0.00	$589.33	no	NRVPDC	12/18/2014	
NRVPDC Invoice #788	$1,042.65	$302.04	$302.04	$146.19	$146.19	$146.19	$0.00	$1,042.65	no	NRVPDC	1/29/2015	
NRVPDC Invoice #813	$1,179.74	$341.76	$341.76	$165.41	$165.41	$165.41	$0.00	$1,179.74	no	NRVPDC	3/16/2015	
NRVPDC Invoice #834	$2,468.33	$553.56	$1,914.77	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,468.33	no	NRVPDC	4/15/2015	
NRVPDC Invoice #858	$1,361.58	$0.00	$1,361.58	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,361.58	no	NRVPDC	5/11/2015	
NRVPDC Invoice #886	$924.44	$0.00	$924.44	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$924.44	no	NRVPDC		
NRVPDC Invoice #Final Part 1 of 2	$252.95	$0.00	$252.95	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$252.95	no	NRVPDC		
	Balance:	$896.99	-$3,003.19	$702.07	$702.07	$702.07	$0.00	$0.00				

IV. Additional Information

- Project Primary Contacts
- Management Team
- NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Priorities
- Marketing Agritourism
- Steering Committee Agendas/Materials
- Management Team Agendas/Materials
- Team Agritourism Agendas/Materials

Primary Contacts

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	(804) 786-6911	Stephen.Versen@vdacs.virginia.gov
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	(804) 371-7167	Ramona.Chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
Giles County Administrator	Chris McKlarney	(540) 921-2525	cmcklarney@gilescounty.org
Montgomery County Administrator	Craig Meadows	(540) 382-6954	meadowsfc@montgomerycountyva.gov
Pulaski County Administrator	Peter Huber	(540) 980-7705	phuber@pulaskicounty.org
NRV Agritourism Project Manager	Elijah Sharp	(540) 639-9313	esharp@nrvpdc.org

Management Team

Project Role	Name	Affiliation
Chairperson	Chris McKlarney	Giles County
Project Coordination	Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Project Management, billing	Rhonda Tickle	Giles County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Cora Gnegy	Giles County
Team Research & Evaluation Co-Chair	Brea Hopkins	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Lisa Bleakley	Montgomery County
Team Marketing Co-Chair	Peggy White	Pulaski County
Strategic Plan Development	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County
Team Agritourism Facilitator	Martha Walker	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Kelly Scott	VA Cooperative Extension
Team Education & Outreach Co-Chair	Jeannie Layton-Dudding	VA Cooperative Extension
Local Food Directory	Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh
Assessment and evaluation	Kevin Byrd	NRVPDC
Grant writer	Dianne Dinger	Consultant
DHCD Fund Coordinator	Ramona Chapman	DHCD
AFID Fund Coordinator	Stephen Versen	AFID
Project management, meeting facilitation, reporting	Elijah Sharp	NRVPDC

NRV Agriculture & Tourism Initiative Priorities

State Code of Virginia defines agritourism as any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allow members of the general public for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes. In the New River Valley, agritourism is simply defined as creating on-farm experiences. A farm is more than open fields and wooded areas – a true farm should have produce growing or livestock roaming on a regular basis.

Agritourism creates opportunities for the region's farmers to diversify their income. The additional earnings help to offset losses experienced during difficult growing seasons and/or reductions in meat pricing. The Virginia Tech Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics recently explored consumer interests in agritourism venues. The main objective of the analysis was to assess consumers' interest and potential expenditure levels for varying types of agritourism operations in the region. The study found that 47% of agritourism venue users are willing to travel 30-60 minutes. In addition, 65% of travelers spend $11-$30 on average at agritourism venues.[1]

April 14, 2015, the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension completed a plan of work with Team Agritourism. The following priority objectives are established for the region:

1. Develop and enhance agritourism marketing strategies for the NRV
2. Increase the number of festivals and events held on farms
3. Create an interactive web-based tool to promote and grow agritourism in the NRV
4. Provide educational opportunities for the NRV agritourism community
5. Increase opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced and value added products

[1] Virginia Tech Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics, 2015. *Exploring Consumer Interest in Agritourism Venues Located in the New River Valley.* Retrieved from: http://news.cals.vt.edu/fbm-update/2015/04/08/exploring-consumer-interest-in-agritourism-venues-located-in-the-new-river-valley/

Marketing Agritourism

un cork-it INCORPORATED

Contract for Services | NRV Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

June 17, 2015

PROPOSED NRV Agriculture & Tourism Consortium Branding Activities

BACKGROUND

The New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium, a multiple county initiative including Montgomery, Giles, and Pulaski counties, is forming to help create a more robust and stable place in the economy for agriculturally based businesses. Through a series of printed and digital advertisements and collateral material, such as brochures, rack cards, and merchandise, the organization will encourage farmers and producers to join for the networking and collaborative opportunities, and entice consumers to become more involved in the farm experience.

At present, the organization is seeking development of a logo, and possibly a tagline, that will speak equally effectively to its two distinct audiences. The organization has an energetic strategic plan that includes a myriad of promotional activities, so the logo will need to be developed with growth in mind.

PROJECT BRIEF

Develop an informative market brief
The market brief is a comprehensive account of The New River Valley Consortium marketplace, product offerings, customer description, com objectives and strategies. Uncork-it then uses the brief to make sure any fits the market and customers. Our clients often use that brief as part o talking to banks and funders.

Create logo
Develop three logo options to marry the concepts of agriculture and to selected and employed by Client, and are appealing to all Client target market brief.

Develop tagline
Develop tagline that marries the concepts of agriculture and tourism an Client message, as defined by the market brief.

-1-

Branding Support, June 2015

NEW RIVER VALLEY
FARMERS MARKETS

Blacksburg Farmers Market
www.BlacksburgFarmersMarket.com
100 Draper Road Southwest | 540-239-8290
April through Oct. | Sat. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Weds. 2 to 7 p.m.
Nov. through Dec. | Sat. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Weds. 2 to 6 p.m.
Jan. through March | Sat. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Christiansburg Farmers Market
www.Christiansburg.org/FarmersMarket
Downtown Christiansburg - Hickok Street
May through Oct. | Thurs. 3 to 7 p.m.

Community Market of Blacksburg
www.TheCommunityFarmersMarket.com
1411 South Main Street | 540-818-1220
April through Dec. | Tues. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Floyd Farmers Market
www.FloydFarmersMarket.org
205 South Locust Street | 540-745-7333
May through Oct. | Sat. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Marketplace in Pulaski
www.PulaskiChamber.info/TheMarketPlace/event-directory
20 South Washington Avenue | 540-674-1991
May through Oct. | Tues. 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Narrows Farmers Market
www.TownOfNarrows.org
Monroe Street | 540-726-7423
April through Oct. | Thurs. 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Pearisburg Farmers Market
1410 Wenonah Avenue | 540-921-0340
May through Oct. | Sat. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Third Thurs. 4 to 8 p.m.

Radford Farmers Market
www.RadfordChamber.com
1100 Block Downtown | 540-639-2202
May through Oct. | Sat. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Shawsville Farmers Market
www.ShawsvilleFarmersMarket.webs.com
267 Alleghany Spring Road
May through Oct. | Sat. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Rack Cards, June 2015

NEW RIVER VALLEY
FARMERS MARKETS

Grown with care

The New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID) planning grant, and a grant from the Virginia Dept. of Housing and Community Development. Funding from both grants was used to prepare a strategic plan focusing on expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski.

The strategic plan addresses both agribusiness and agritourism in the Counties. Key recommendations for agribusiness includes:

Support local educational programs
Explore production infrastructure opportunities
Enhance marketing strategies
Develop and join agriculture development boards

Key recommendations for agritourism includes:

- Gain a better understanding of local agriculture assets in each community
- Develop a plan of work that will support and enhance agritourism in the region

Accomplishing the goals and strategies will preserve and promote the position impacts that agriculture and agritourism offer our community.

To learn more about this project, please contact the NRV Regional Commission at 540-639-9313.

For an interactive local foods guide to southwest Virginia, visit www.SWVAfresh.org/food-producers

Steering Committee Agendas/Materials

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Steering Committee Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM WEDNESDAY,
March 12, 2015 – 9:00 – 10:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Updates
   A. Budget & Progress Report
   B. Team Marketing
   C. Team Education & Outreach
   D. Team Research & Evaluation
   E. Team Agritourism

III. Presentation:
   A. SO Fresh Website Launch, Debbie Lineweaver
   B. Local Food Directory, Jonnell Sanciangco

IV. Roundtable Discussion:
   A. Establishing an Agriculture Development Board
   B. NRV Strategic Plan

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski
March 12th, 2015 - 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Kelli Scott	VCE	kescott1@vt.edu
2	Morgan Paulette	VCE	paulette@vt.edu
3	Jeannie Dudding	VCE	jdudding@vt.edu
4	Cora Gregory	Giles County	cgregory@gilescounty.org
5	GEORGIA HAVERTY	GILES CO.	DOECREEKFARM@GMAIL.COM
6	LISA BLEAKLEY	Mont Co Tourism	bleakley15@montgomerycounty.va.gov
7	Jim Politis	Farming	bobcatfalo@aol.com
8	Margaret Smith	Big Bit Chuckwagon	bigbitchuckwagon@gmail.com
9	Debbie Lineweaver	SO Fresh	mtn2mtn@pdnet.com
10	Dave Rundgren	Self Farming	
11	Todd King	Mont. Co.	tking4078@aol.com
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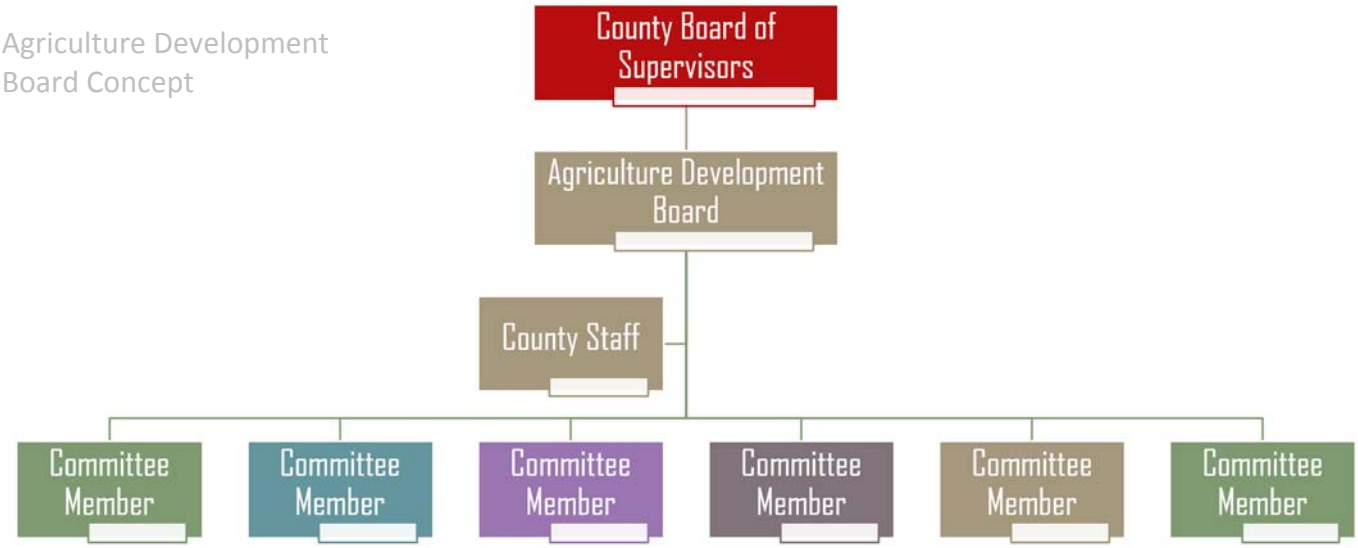
Agriculture Development Board Concept



NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Steering Committee Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
Friday, June 19, 2015 – 9:00 – 11:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Presentation:
   A. NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Strategic Plan, Elijah Sharp
   B. Local Food Directory, Jonnell Sanciangco

III. Roundtable Discussion:
   A. Comments/Suggestions for Agribusiness Plan of Work
   B. Comments/Suggestions for Agritourism Plan of Work

IV. Project Updates
   A. Budget & Progress Report
   B. Team Marketing
      i. Branding Agriculture & Agritourism in the NRV
      ii. Farmer's Market Rack Cards
   C. Team Education & Outreach
      i. VCE supported programs
   D. Team Research & Evaluation
      i. Southwest Virginia Agriculture Summit 2015
   E. Team Agritourism
      i. Developing the Plan of Work

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski
June 19th, 2015 - 9:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Jonnell Sanciangco	NRVRC	
2	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVRC	
3	Margaret Smith	Chase Kuegon	
4	Jerry Smith	"	
5	Jerry McCoy	Giles County	
6	KEVIN BYRD	NRVRC	
7	Sarah Lyon-Hill	Virginia Tech OED	sarahlh@vt.edu
8	Elli Travis	Virginia Tech OED	emtravis@vt.edu
9	Jennifer McClellan	Nolley Wood Farm	
10	Mike Burton	Prices Fork + Floyd	
11	Kelli Scott	VCE	
12	Ramona Chapman	DHCD	ramona.chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
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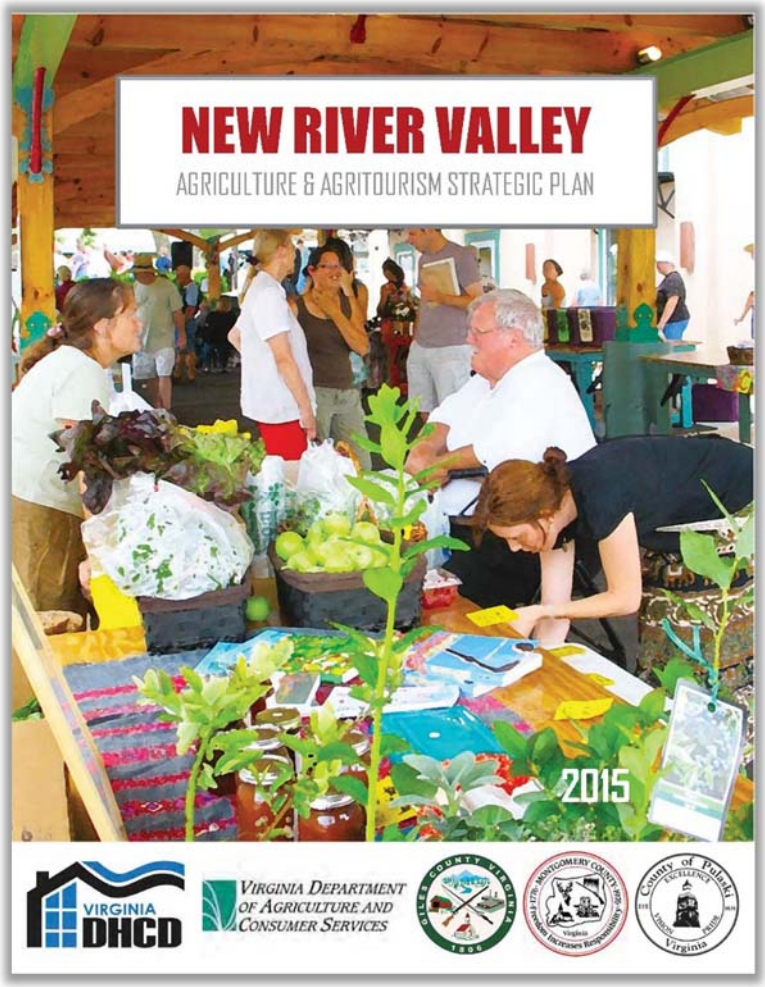

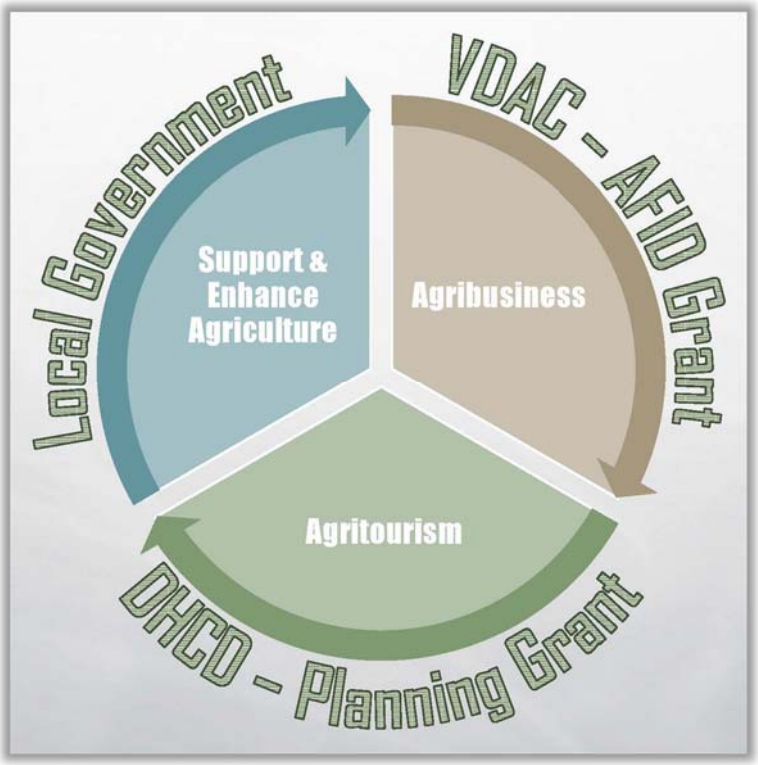

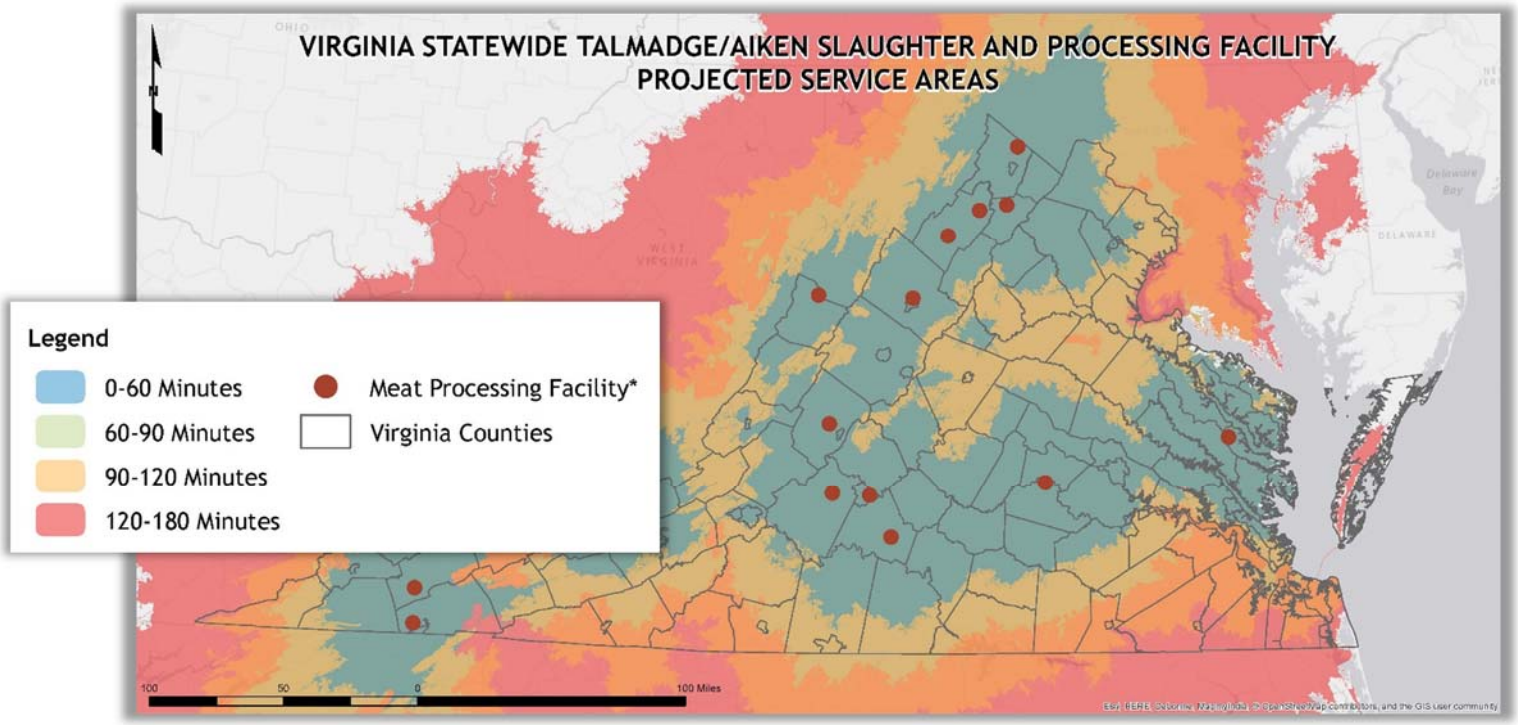

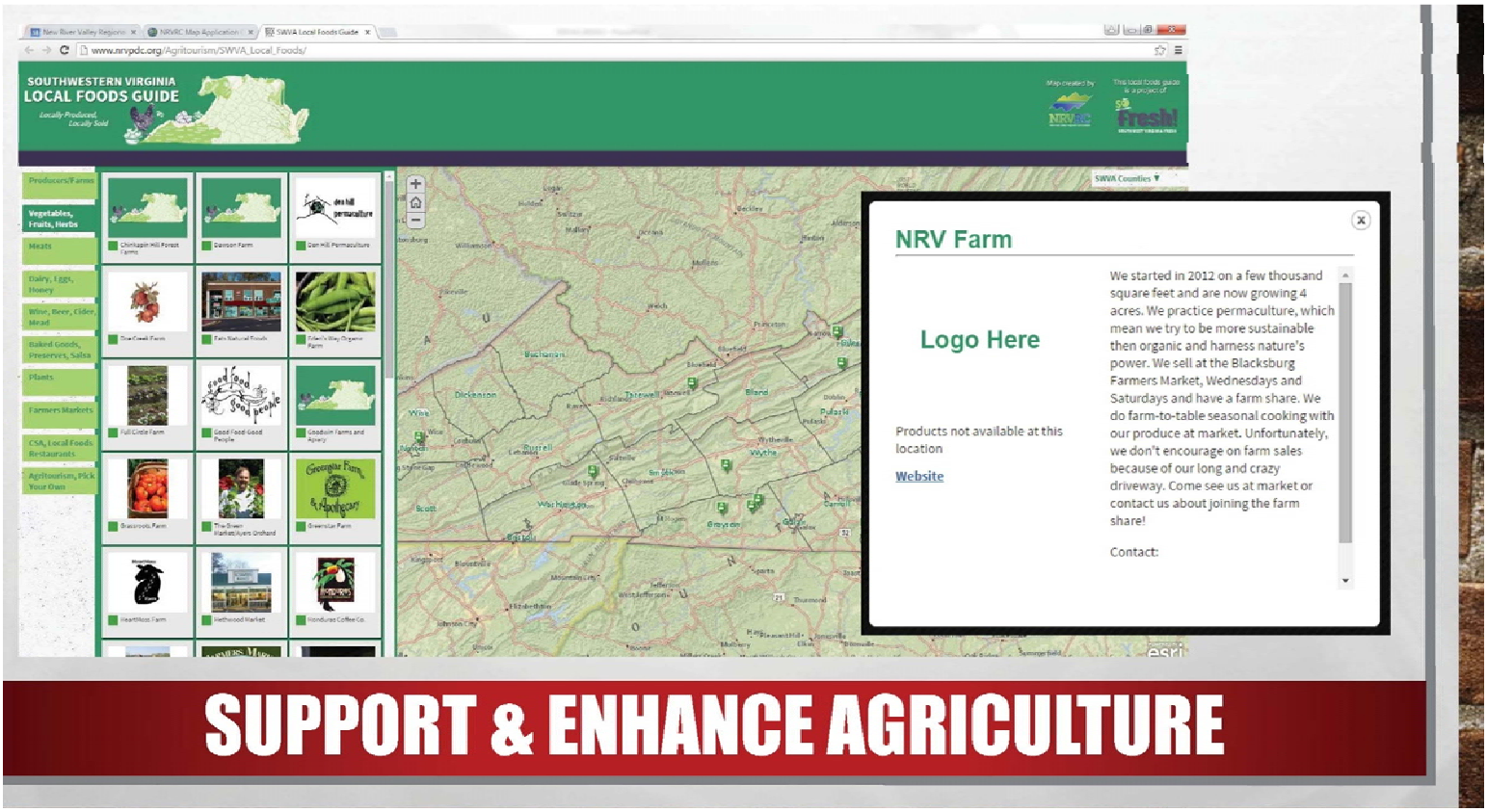

SUPPORT & ENHANCE AGRICULTURE

Management Team Agendas/Materials

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Management Team Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2015 – 10:00 – 11:00 am

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Project Update
   A. Project Budget
   B. Project Status

III. Top 5 Priorities
   A. Roundtable Discussion
   B. Subcommittee Strategies
      i. Marketing
      ii. Education & Outreach
      iii. Research & Evaluation
      iv. Agritourism

IV. Next Steps

V. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski
January 14th, 2015 - 10:00 am

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	KEVIN BYRD	"	
3	Jenny McCoy	Giles County	
4	Lisa Blackley	Montgomery Co Ag Tourism	
5	Jeannie Dudding	Giles Extension	jdudding@vt.edu
6	Kelli Scott	Montgomery County	kescott1@vt.edu
7	Michael Solomon	Pulaski County	msolomon@pulaskicounty.org
8	Peggy Wade	P.C.	pwade@pulaskichamber.info
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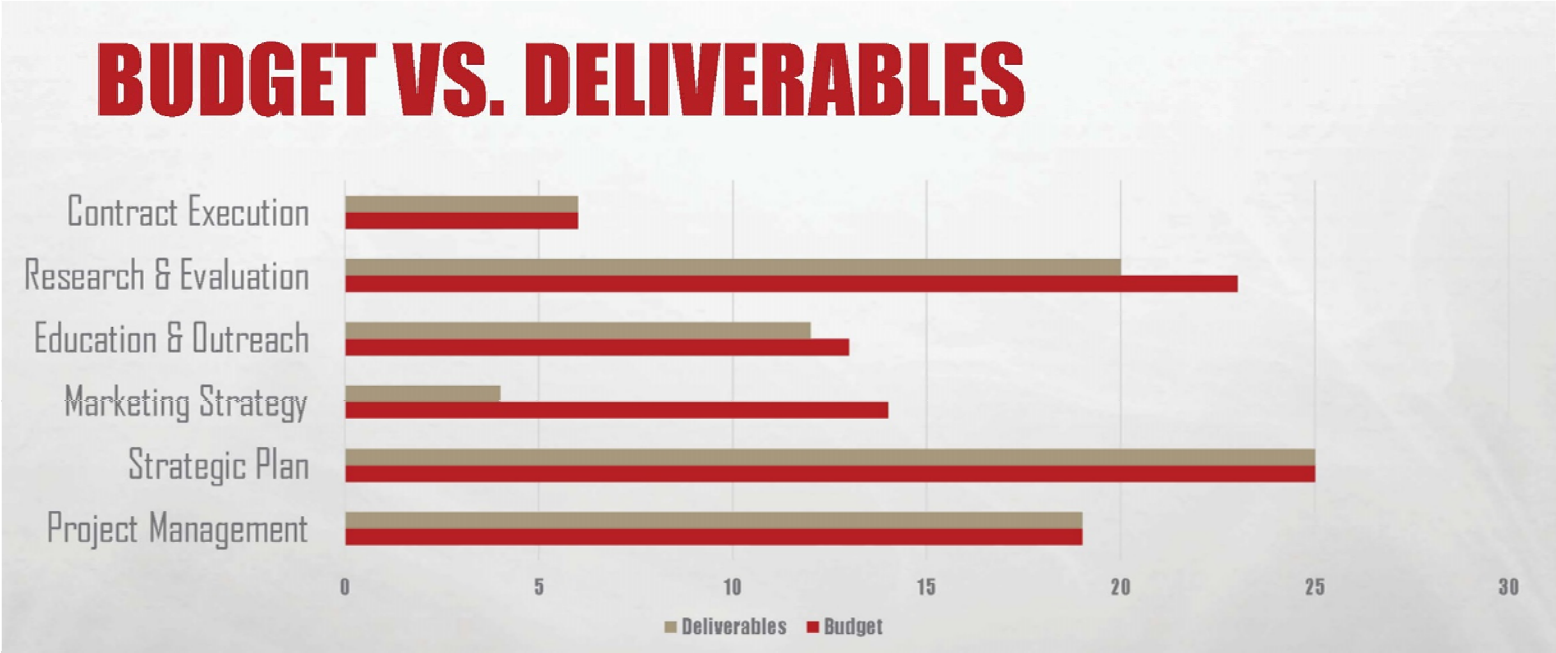

NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Management Team Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2015 – 2:00 – 4:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Roundtable Discussion: Establishing an Agriculture Development Board

III. Agritourism Workshops
   A. Completing the list
   B. Location(s)

IV. Subcommittee Reports
   A. Marketing
   B. Education & Outreach
   C. Research & Evaluation
   D. Agritourism

V. Next Steps

VI. Adjournment

Agriculture & Agritourism - Giles - Montgomery - Pulaski
February 9th, 2015 - 2:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Eli Sharp	NRVPDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	Morgan Paulette	Pulaski Co. Extension	paulette@vt.edu
3	Ramona Chapman	DHCD	ramona.chapman@dhcd.virginia.gov
4	Peggy White	PC Chamber	pgwhite@pulaskichamber.info
5	Lisa Bleakley	Mont. Co. Tourism	bleakleyts@montgomerycountyva.gov
6	Kevin Byrd		
7	Jenny McCoy	Giles County	
8	Chris McClaroy	Giles County	
9	Jannie Duddarar	Giles Extension	
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NEW RIVER VALLEY

AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM PROJECT

Management Team Meeting
NEW RIVER VALLEY BUSINESS CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015 – 1:30 – 3:00 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Strategic Plan Approach
   A. Plan vs. Assessment
   B. Approach to Agriculture Development Boards
   C. Plan of Work for Agribusiness

III. Subcommittee Reports
   A. Team Marketing
      i. Strategy Moving Forward
   B. Team Education & Outreach
      i. Recent & Upcoming Activities
   C. Team Research & Evaluation
      i. Proposed Work Session(s): 1) Working with the Health Department, 2) Zoning, and 3) Production Infrastructure
   D. Team Agritourism:

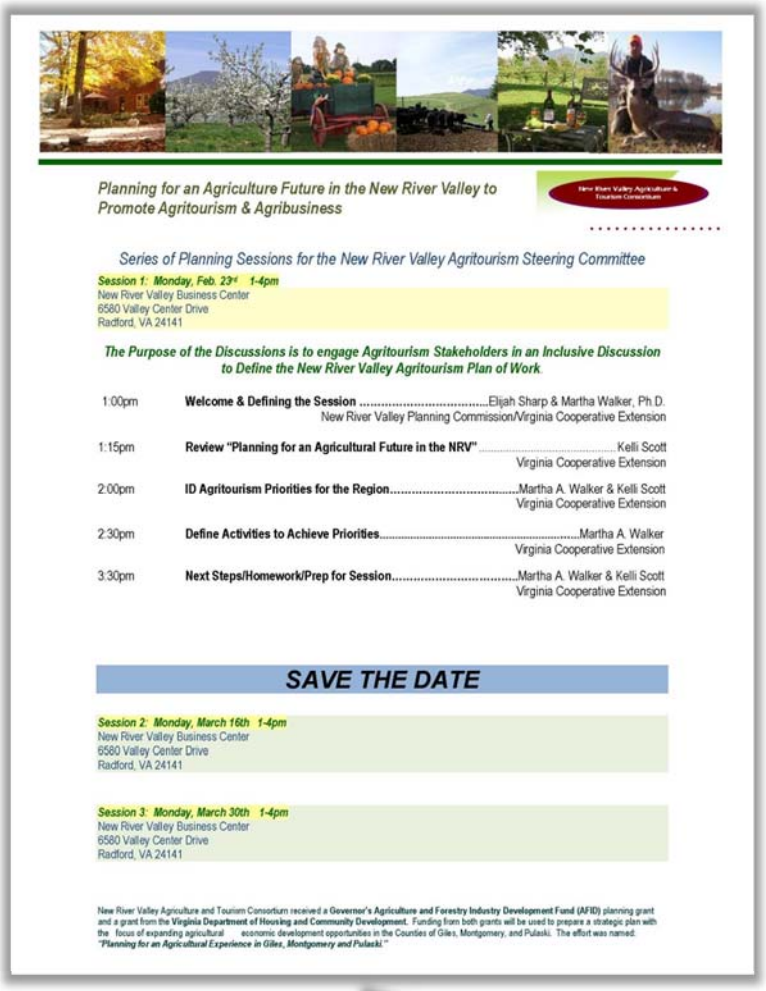
IV. Next Steps
   A. Documenting In-Kind Work

V. Adjournment

4/22 NRV Ag+AgTourism Project
Management Team Mtg

Name	Agency
Emily Gibson	Montgomery County
Jenny McCoy	Giles County
Ramona Chapman	DHCD
Morgan Paulette	Pulaski County VCE
Peggy White	P.C.C.
Kelli Scott	VCE
Lisa Bleakley	Mont. County Regional Tourism
Elijah Sharp	
Kevin Byrd	

Team Agritourism Agendas/Materials



Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Session 1: Monday, Feb. 23rd 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the Discussions is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive Discussion to Define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

1:00pm **Welcome & Defining the Session** ..... Elijah Sharp & Martha Walker, Ph.D.
New River Valley Planning Commission/Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:15pm **Review "Planning for an Agricultural Future in the NRV"** ..... Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:00pm **ID Agritourism Priorities for the Region** ..... Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:30pm **Define Activities to Achieve Priorities** ..... Martha A. Walker
Virginia Cooperative Extension

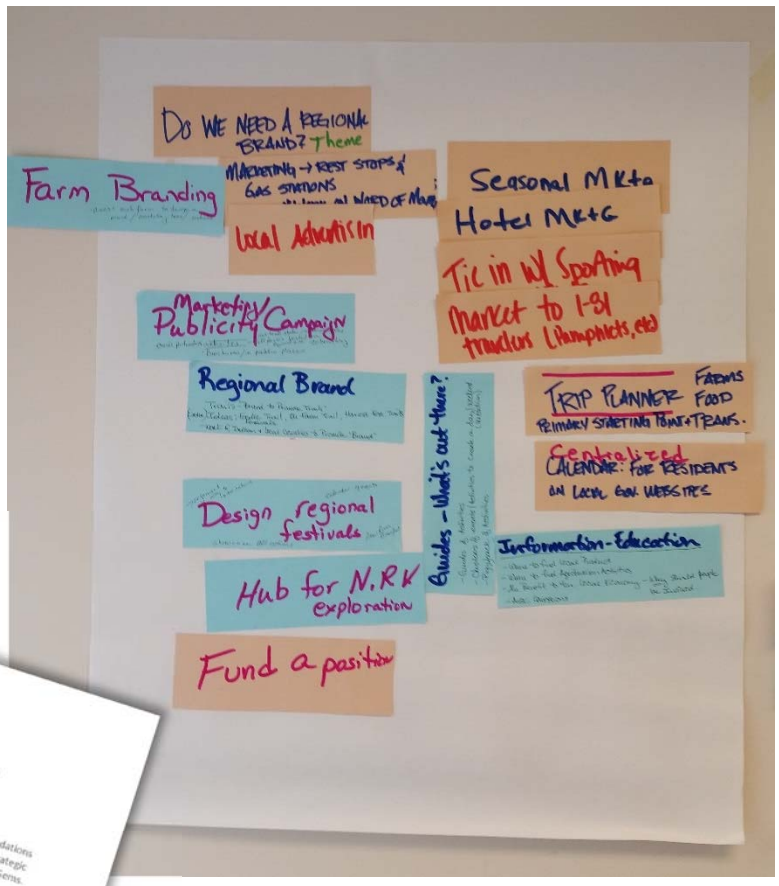
3:30pm **Next Steps/Homework/Prep for Session** ..... Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

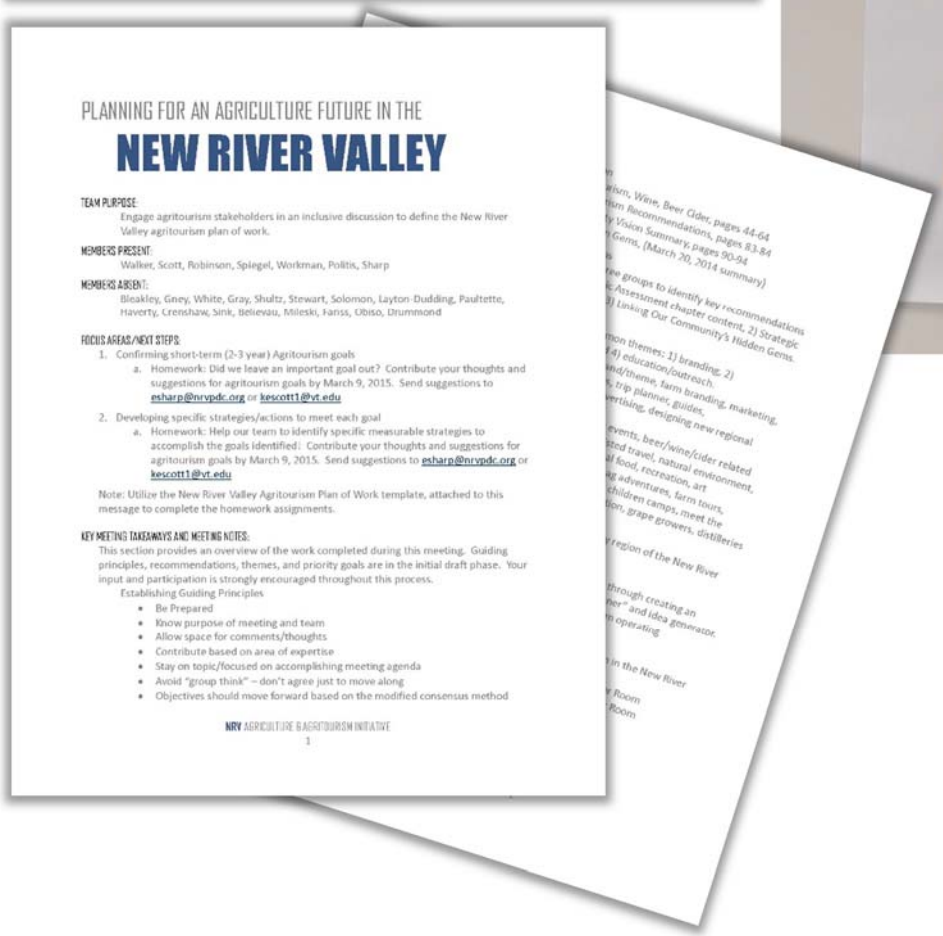
SAVE THE DATE

Session 2: Monday, March 16th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

Session 3: Monday, March 30th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development**. Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: ***"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."***





PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

TEAM PURPOSE:
Engage agritourism stakeholders in an inclusive discussion to define the New River Valley agritourism plan of work.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Walker, Scott, Robinson, Spiegel, Workman, Politis, Sharp

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Bleakley, Gney, White, Gray, Shultz, Stewart, Solomon, Layton-Dudding, Paultette, Haverty, Crenshaw, Sink, Believau, Mileski, Hanss, Obiso, Drummond

FOCUS AREAS/NEXT STEPS:
1. Confirming short-term (2-3 year) Agritourism goals
   a. Homework: Did we leave an important goal out? Contribute your thoughts and suggestions for agritourism goals by March 9, 2015. Send suggestions to esharp@nrvpdc.org or kescott1@vt.edu
2. Developing specific strategies/actions to meet each goal
   a. Homework: Help our team to identify specific measurable strategies to accomplish the goals identified: Contribute your thoughts and suggestions for agritourism goals by March 9, 2015. Send suggestions to esharp@nrvpdc.org or kescott1@vt.edu

Note: Utilize the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work template, attached to this message to complete the homework assignments.

KEY MEETING TAKEAWAYS AND MEETING NOTES:
This section provides an overview of the work completed during this meeting. Guiding principles, recommendations, themes, and priority goals are in the initial draft phase. Your input and participation is strongly encouraged throughout this process.
Establishing Guiding Principles
- Be Prepared
- Know purpose of meeting and team
- Allow space for comments/thoughts
- Contribute based on area of expertise
- Stay on topic/focused on accomplishing meeting agenda
- Avoid "group think" – don't agree just to move along
- Objectives should move forward based on the modified consensus method

NRV AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM INITIATIVE
1

Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Session 2: Monday, March 16th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the effort is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive discussion to define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

1:00pm **Welcome & Introductions**.....Elijah Sharp & Martha Walker, Ph.D.
New River Valley Planning Commission/Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:15pm **Review Agritourism Priorities & Goals**.....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:00pm **Clarify & Expand Activities for Each Priority**.....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

2:30pm **Edit Plan of Work**.....Martha A. Walker
Virginia Cooperative Extension

3:30pm **Next Steps/Homework/Prep for Session**.....Martha A. Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

SAVE THE DATE

Session 3: Monday, March 30th 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development**. Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: ***"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."***

PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

March 16th, 2015 - 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Munch Rossman	Virginia Tourism	
2	GEORGIA HAVERTY	DOE CREEK FARM	DOECREEKFARM@GMAIL.COM
3	Wendy Crenshaw	Riverstone Farm	WILHELM.SERVA.
4	Linda Robinson	Selah Springs Farm	LJR920@gmail.com
5	Frank Drummond	Rickwood Manor	Rickwoodmanor@gmail.com
6	Morgan Paulette	VCE - Pulaski	paulette@vt.edu
7	Lee Spiegel	Pulaski Grow	PulaskiGROW@gmail.com
8	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	
9	Margaret Smith	bob chuckwagon	jp@bobchuckwagon.com
10	Jeannie Dudding	Giles VCE → jdudding@vt.edu	→
11	~~[illegible]~~	~~[illegible]~~	
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Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Session 3: Monday, March 30th, 1-4pm
New River Valley Business Center
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the Discussions is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive Discussion to Define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

1:00pm **Welcome & Defining the Session**.....Elijah Sharp & Martha Walker, Ph.D.
New River Valley Planning Commission/Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:15pm **Review Agritourism Priorities & Goals**.....Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

1:45pm **Complete Agritourism Work Plan**.....Martha Walker
Virginia Cooperative Extension

3:30pm **Wrap-up/Next Steps**.....Martha Walker & Kelli Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development**. Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: ***"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."***

PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

March 30th, 2015 - 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	Kelli Scott	VCE	
2	Chris Pollitz	Franklin Island BOS	
3	Lee Spiegel	Pulaski Grow	
4	GEORGIA HAVERTY	DOE CREEK FARM	
5	Wilmus Gray	NRH RC&D Council	
6	Morgan Paulette	VCE Pulaski	
7	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	
8	Margaret Smith	bob chuckwagon	
9	Munch Rossman	Virginia Tourism	
10	Jennifer McClellan	Producer Nicky Wood Farm	
11	Linda Robinson	Selah Springs Farm	
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Planning for an Agriculture Future in the New River Valley to Promote Agritourism & Agribusiness

New River Valley Agriculture & Tourism Consortium

Series of Planning Sessions for the New River Valley Agritourism Steering Committee

Final Session: Tuesday, April 14th, 10-11:30 am
New River Valley Business Center, Conference Room
6580 Valley Center Drive
Radford, VA 24141

The Purpose of the Discussions is to engage Agritourism Stakeholders in an Inclusive Discussion to Define the New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work.

10:00 am **Welcome & Introductions** .... Kelli Scott, Virginia Cooperative Extension

10:05 am **Overview of Final Agritourism Plan of Work** .... Kelli Scott, Virginia Cooperative Extension

10:30 am **Agritourism Plan of Work Timeline** .... Elijah Sharp, NRV Planning District Commission

10:45 am **Integrating Agritourism Work in to Strategic Plan** .... Elijah Sharp, NRV Planning District Commission

11:00 am **Team Agritourism Wrap-up** .... Roundtable Discussion

New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium received a **Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development Fund (AFID)** planning grant and a grant from the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.** Funding from both grants will be used to prepare a strategic plan with the focus of expanding agricultural economic development opportunities in the Counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski. The effort was named: *"Planning for an Agricultural Experience in Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski."*

PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN THE

NEW RIVER VALLEY

April 14th, 2015 - 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

	Name	Organization/Representing	Email (if new)
1	ELIJAH SHARP	NRVPDC	esharp@nrvpdc.org
2	Jim Politis	FARMER	
3	Kelli Scott	VCE	
4	Marcus Gray	RCFD	
5	Margaret Smith	BOAB Chairman	
6	[illegible]	DOE CREEK FARM	
7	Linda LoSisso	Selah Springs	lje920@gmail.com
8	Jennifer Miller-McClellan	Valley Wood Farm	
9	Lisa Blakely	MontCo B'burg C'burg Tourism	

Agritourism - Plan of Work Timeline

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop and enhance agritourism marketing strategies for the NRV
OBJECTIVE 2: Increase the number of festivals and events held on farms.
OBJECTIVE 3: Create an interactive web-based tool to promote and grow agritourism in the NRV.
OBJECTIVE 4: Provide educational opportunities for the NRV agritourism community.
OBJECTIVE 5: Increase opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced food and value added products.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
3-1	Compile a list of local agritourism options individually and by clusters.	NRV PDC information, list from previous Agritourism event, volunteer team, detailed maps of the area counties.	NRVPDC	Jun-15	Completed list
3-3	Draft a layout for an online interactive Trip Planner.	Samples from other similar sites, compiled list of agritourism options, calendar of events, volunteer team, interactive application consultant	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVPDC, VTC	Jun-15	
4-1	Develop and deliver educational programs for agritourism farmers.	Knowledgeable speakers/farmers with expertise in the areas of scaled production infrastructure, year around production (grazing, produce), small producer networks, beginning farmers, whole farm planning, agritourism trails, marketing events, branding, festivals/event preparation, best management practices, production training resources, farm management plans, farm tax business resources, and specialty crops; meeting space for activities; and materials for packets. Grants for equipment/structures (e.g. seed drill to be shared among grazers, high tunnels for produce).	VCE, VA Tourism Corp, USDA, SO Fresh, VDACS, Dept. of Forestry, NRCS, Local Soil & Water, NRV Grape Growers Group, Food Safety Team, VA Beef Quality Assurance Training	Jun-15	Educational Plan of Work for Agritourism in the NRV Attendance at events Build on current programs, VCE offering local opportunities; VDACS and VA Tourism offering statewide resources (farm to school, VA Agritourism Conference) Building Collaborative Efforts with local and state wide groups and resources to enhance communication and outreach efforts.
2-2	Explore creative alternative ideas for on farm events & festivals	Part-time coordinator, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), SO Fresh, local agritourism operators	VCE, SO Fresh	Sep-15	Press releases submitted by coordinator and Extension agents as they work with individual producers or host workshops. So Fresh/NRVPDC website listing of farms. Extension data-base list of producers Increase in number of producers beginning their own events.
3-2	Create a detailed calendar of local agritourism events.	Chamber of Commerce information, So Fresh calendars, volunteer team, Next Three Days, Explore NRV website, VDACS Marketing Tool	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Marketing	Sep-15	Completed calendar
4-2	Foster relationships among agritourism operations. Facilitate and Enhance an Agritourism Network of producers/operators to dialog and learn from pragmatic experiences. (Operators learning from Operators – "Mentoring")	Production Association(s). Skilled farmers and Agribusiness operators to demonstrate or volunteer on-site learning experiences. (mentoring) Provide space/time for networking Potential integration into farmer panels and farm tours. Create hands-on experiences for beginning farmers and farmers interested in diversifying business.	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, Team Education and Outreach	Sep-15	Skilled farmers in meat/whole food and produce are identified. Initial demonstrations and/or on-site learning experiences are scheduled for Calendar Year 2016. Specific local needs by county are integrated into each educational opportunity. Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices.
4-3	Provide Farm Tours for Agritourism Operators to see what is possible. Highlight Season Extension (winter grazing and growing cold-season produce)	Farmers willing to share their experiences, consultants to organize and hold workshops, High Tunnel Programs, Forage & Grassland Council – Grazing programs.	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, NRCS, VA Forage & Grassland Council, other regional consultants	Sep-15	Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices Support farmers with annual production and season extension practices.
4-4	Host "Meet the Farmer" days for the Local Products Buyer and Sellers and also for direct consumers.	Survey of existing local restaurants, schools, and hospitals focusing on local produce, meat, dairy products desired, database manager to link farmers and product seekers, educational materials and local events for the consumer and farmer	Staff for each county, new VCE or SO Fresh position?	Sep-15	Planning potential round 2 AFID/DHCD grant application, funding and staffing plan complete for database manager.

ID	*Strategies/Actions*	*Resources Needed*	*Responsible Parties*	*Timeline*	*Evaluation/Outcome*
4-5	Provide educational resources regarding regulations and best management practices on farm stays and "staycations".	Research current rules and regulations Explore where there are barriers to offering staycations. Labor laws – Liability	VCE, VTC	Sep-15	Memo prepared and submitted to County Administrators and local farmers.
3-5	Build partnerships between "cluster" event sites for marketing and trip planning purposes.	Staff person to facilitate cluster community work, website consultant, funds for print marketing for clusters CO-OP Marketing (VA Tourism)	Staff position, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Community Partners, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)	Dec-15	List of at least 3 cluster communities
5-2	Explore the feasibility of establishing a commercial kitchen.	Site, building, value-added products survey, cost analysis, funding, and technical advisors: Sustain Floyd Study; Allie Hill (Charlottesville)	Local farmers/producers	Dec-15	Location(s), building conceptual design; survey of interested producers; list equipment, and cost analysis.
1-2	Develop a regional brand for trails, farms, and festivals specific to each season. Name & Logo for the region .	Funding: VTC Marketing Leverage Program, AFID & DHCD Grants marketing/branding firm	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing	Jan-16	Economic impact through travelers spending, lodging, number of visits to trip planner, survey travelers, website visitation, social media metrics
1-3	Partner with other local and regional tourism initiatives rest stops, hotels, sporting events, gas stations, universities, and other public spaces to market agritourism	Funding for printed materials such as, rack cards, coupons, brochures Call to Action listed	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Marketing	Mar-16	Print Materials (3 types), placement of print material throughout 5 tourism businesses, placement Virginia Welcome Center, establish hub space with partners.
2-1	Provide technical assistance to farms to develop farm brands.	Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, County Tourism (DMOs), seasoned Agritourism businesses, marketing consultant. Secure funding partners	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Marketing Consultant, Team Marketing, possible agritourism position	Mar-16	Develop assistance program, create printed materials for assistance, branding toolkit/resources to share, workshop created, marketing tools including website, brochures, logo, and other materials.
2-1	Inventory the festivals currently held on the New River Valley.	Funding with grant money for part-time coordinator (first year). "Next Three Days" is a possible coordinator, information sharing from: extension databases, and tourism directors.	Events: Agricultural Development Board (ADB), Team Marketing, County Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO).	Mar-16	Revenue generated, number of festivals increased, coordinator reports to ADB(s)
2-3	Create a support team working with the local landowner to tailor resources needed for planning and executing an event or festival.	Tools for evaluating economic feasibility, a marketing strategy, one-on-one or workshops on: food safety, liability insurance, zoning ordinances, VDOT (site distance requirements, etc.); another producer and/or an extension agent with expertise in showcasing produce as an event; volunteers to assist in preparation and on day of event.	Sub-Committee of county Agricultural Development Board	Mar-16	A list of contact information for persons and organizations willing to volunteer their time and/or resources. At least 1 new successful farm event held Initiated in Montgomery County.
5-3	Showcase producers' value-added products and providing brochures with directions to each producer's farm for future sales and their own special events.	Advertising such as press releases, brochures at Virginia Tourism Centers, etc., and coordinators to plan and execute events, products. Farms willing to showcase	VCE, DMOs	Apr-16	Event well publicized and well attended
1-1	Establish regional position to serve as the coordinator for regional agritourism activities.	Find partners and funding to support position, office space. Focus early on sustainable funding (not just start-up funds)	Team Agritourism, NRVPDC, New River Highlands RC&D	Jun-16	Funding secured, position hired
1-4	Develop a digital marketing campaign.	Marketing firm, marketing funding, review by VA Tourism Corp (VTC) staff	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Marketing Consultant	Jun-16	Active marketing campaign, working website
2-2	Deliver production information & Workshops related to agritourism topics, including Grapes and Hops production for sale to wineries/breweries and Food Safety Regulations for local product producers and farmers mkt. managers.	Initial survey of local industry needs might be helpful here. Meet the farmer position could link wineries, breweries, and cideries to local producers. Enhance the safety of locally grown produce. GAP Training & Certification	Staff for each county, new VCE or SO Fresh position? VCE, Farm Safety Team, VT Food Innovations	Jun-16	Local wineries, breweries, and cideries have a single point of contact that can link them to a series of local agribusiness owners (that specifically meet their needs).
2-4	Assess county based policies affecting agritourism festivals and events.	Links to or hard copies of local ordinances and regulations	Team Research and Evaluation, Agriculture Development Board	Jun-16	
3-4	Create interactive web-based product site.	List of local agritourism venues individually and by clusters, draft calendar, draft trip planner, Volunteer team Paid or volunteer website consultant Seek funding (application for regional branding)	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVPDC, VTC	Sep-16	Interactive site is up and running
5-1	Support on-farm Farm to Fork Events.	Producers, local products, approved kitchen & staff	VCE and local partners	Sep-16	

MARKET BRIEF

NEW RIVER VALLEY AGRICULTURE & TOURISM CONSORTIUM BRANDING

A. OBJECTIVE

The New River Valley Agriculture and Tourism Consortium is interested in developing a regional brand identity for agritourism activities and farm products. While speaking to agritourists and local residents, the regional brand will encourage stakeholders to cooperate in building strong experiences and a larger agritourism economy.

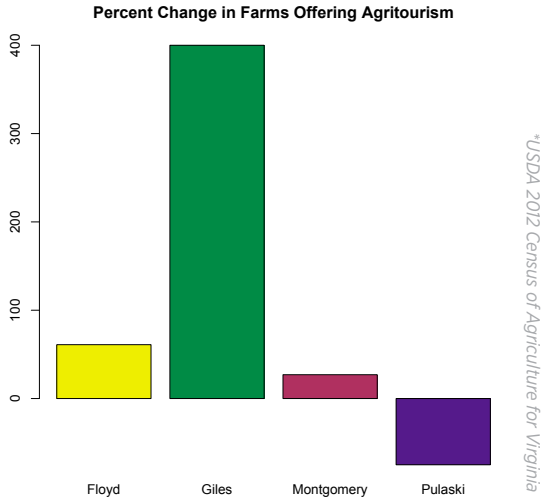
B. AGRITOURISM MARKET

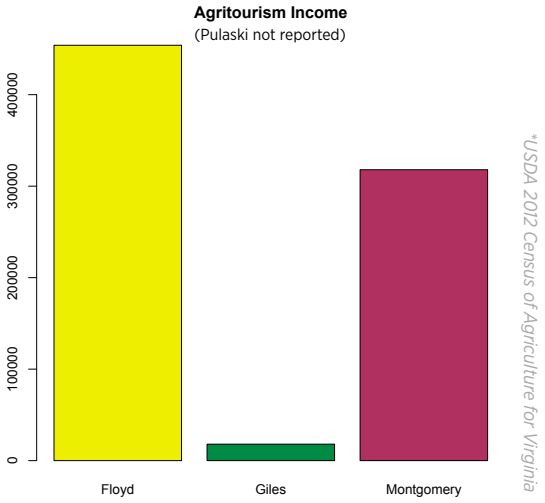
The Code of Virginia, in § 3.2-6400 defines "agritourism activity" as "any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity."

While the Code of Virginia defines agritourism by limiting it to activities on farms or ranches, agritourism for marketing purposes is expanded to include festivals and markets that might not be on farms, but where customers can interact with farmers and producers.

According to the USDA's 2012 Census of Agriculture for Virginia, the agritourism and recreational services industry is thriving in Virginia. The number of farms offering some form of agritourism activity increased by 42% from 2007 to 2012, and income increased by $2.3 million dollars over the same time period.

The counties comprising the New River Valley are largely reflective of this trend — the number of farms offering agritourism activities or services increased by 27% in Montgomery County, 400% in Giles County, and 61% in Floyd County; income earned by agritourism activities or services increased by $318,000 in Montgomery county, $18,000 in Giles County, and $454,000 in Floyd — though Pulaski County struggles (the number of farms offering agritourism activities or services fell by 75%; income was unreported in 2012).



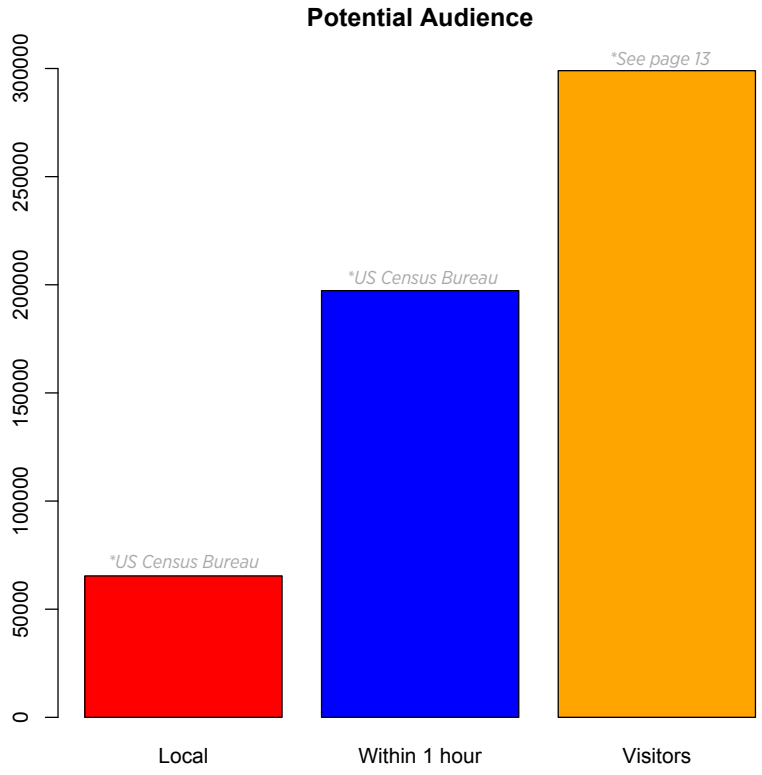


According to a study published by Iowa State University about agritourism in Iowa, agritourists tend to skew female (55%), live in non-urban areas (67.8%), are largely Caucasian/white (93.69%), and nearly 83% have a high school diploma or bachelor's degree.

The same study tells us that more than two-thirds (69%) of survey respondents are willing to drive up to 50-miles to reach an agritourism destination (30% of respondents are willing to drive 51+ miles, and 1% aren't willing to go at all).

Though Iowa certainly isn't the NRV, parallels can be drawn since the demographic make-up of Iowa is similar to that of the NRV.

Based on this assumption, we have divided the potential market into local New River Valley residents, people who live outside the four counties, but within an hour's drive, and out-of-area visitors. This brings the entire possible market size for agritourism activities to be about 560,000 (local population plus area population within a one-hour drive plus potential area visitors; see chart below), about half of whom are out-of-area visitors. The market size for the brand will be larger, as the products grown in the region can be branded and are sold beyond these borders.



We filtered the local and 1-hour-away residents by their probable interest in such activities and arrived at a permanent market group of more than 75,000.

TRENDS, FORECASTS, PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Eat local: The green trend in consumer preference to buy local and eat local is an important factor for regional agricultural enterprises. Consumers and restaurants are increasingly interested in foods with local sources.

Direct-to-consumer marketing of products has emerged as a way for producers to capitalize on the increased interest in local foods found across the United States. Farm stands, CSAs, U-Picks, Farmers Markets, Roadside Stands, Food Hubs, have all emerged as viable methods of selling directly to the consumer. These direct to consumer sales, often referred to under the umbrella of "local foods," have an impact on the greater food economy in a region as well.

Foodie: There is a growing trend of persons cooking and enjoying the subtle flavors of food. These people tend to seek out fresh and distinctive foods both at home and when dining in restaurants.

Homesteading: Millennials have been leading a movement they call homesteading, in which participants are more involved in preparing food, clothes, and furnishings themselves. This has increased people interested in canning, preserving, and growing their own food.

Continued growth of organic eating: The ranks of vegetarians and individuals interested in feeding their families organic and fresh foods provides an opportunity for local producers to engage with them.

C. AGRICULTURE OFFERINGS IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

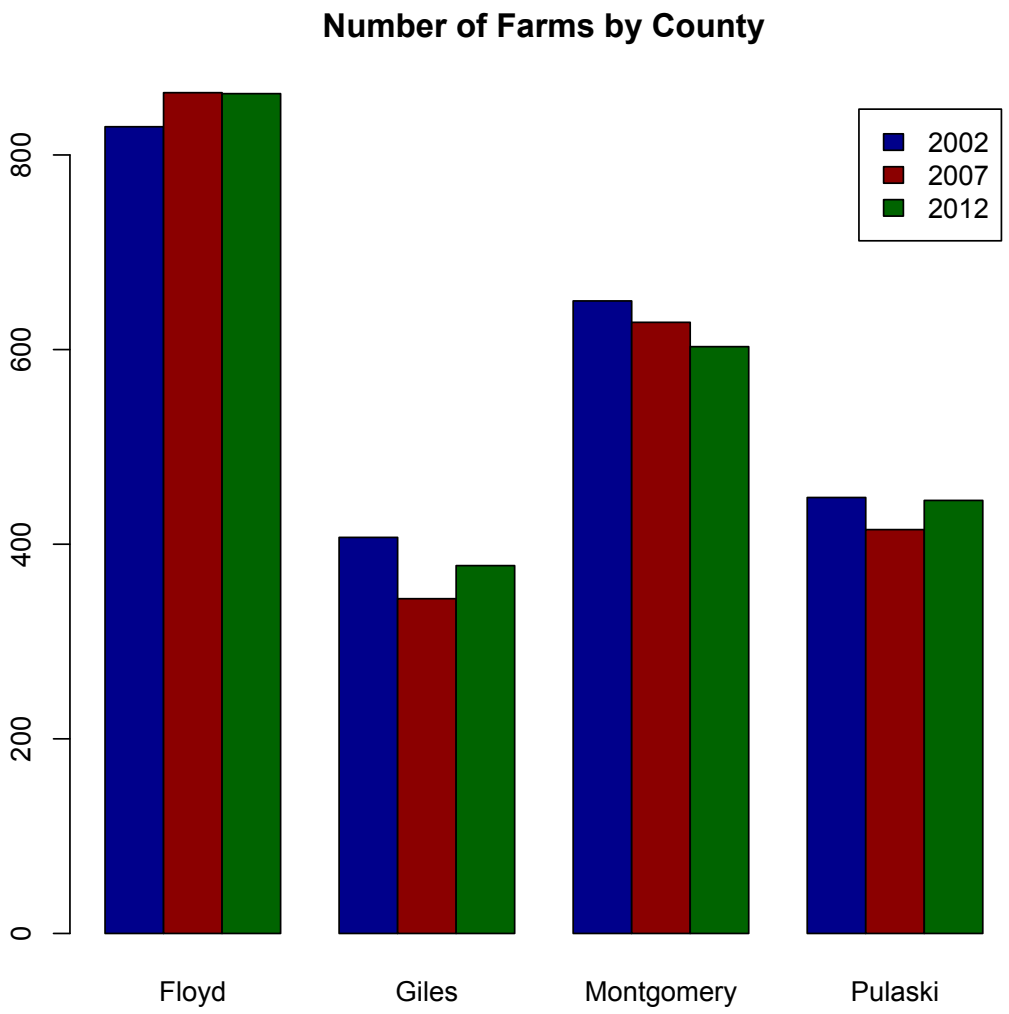
1. OVERVIEW

The New River Valley comprises 1,458 square miles in the counties of Montgomery, Giles, Pulaski, and Floyd.

These counties are located between the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountain Ranges in Southwestern Virginia. The largest town in each county are Blacksburg (Montgomery), Pulaski (Pulaski), Pearisburg (Giles), Floyd (Floyd), and the City of Radford (City of Radford). The region is serviced by two major interstate highways, I-81 connecting Knoxville, Tennessee and Roanoke, Virginia, as well as I-77 connecting Charleston, West Virginia and Charlotte, North Carolina. The region is home to two large state universities: Virginia Tech, a land-grant university, and Radford University.

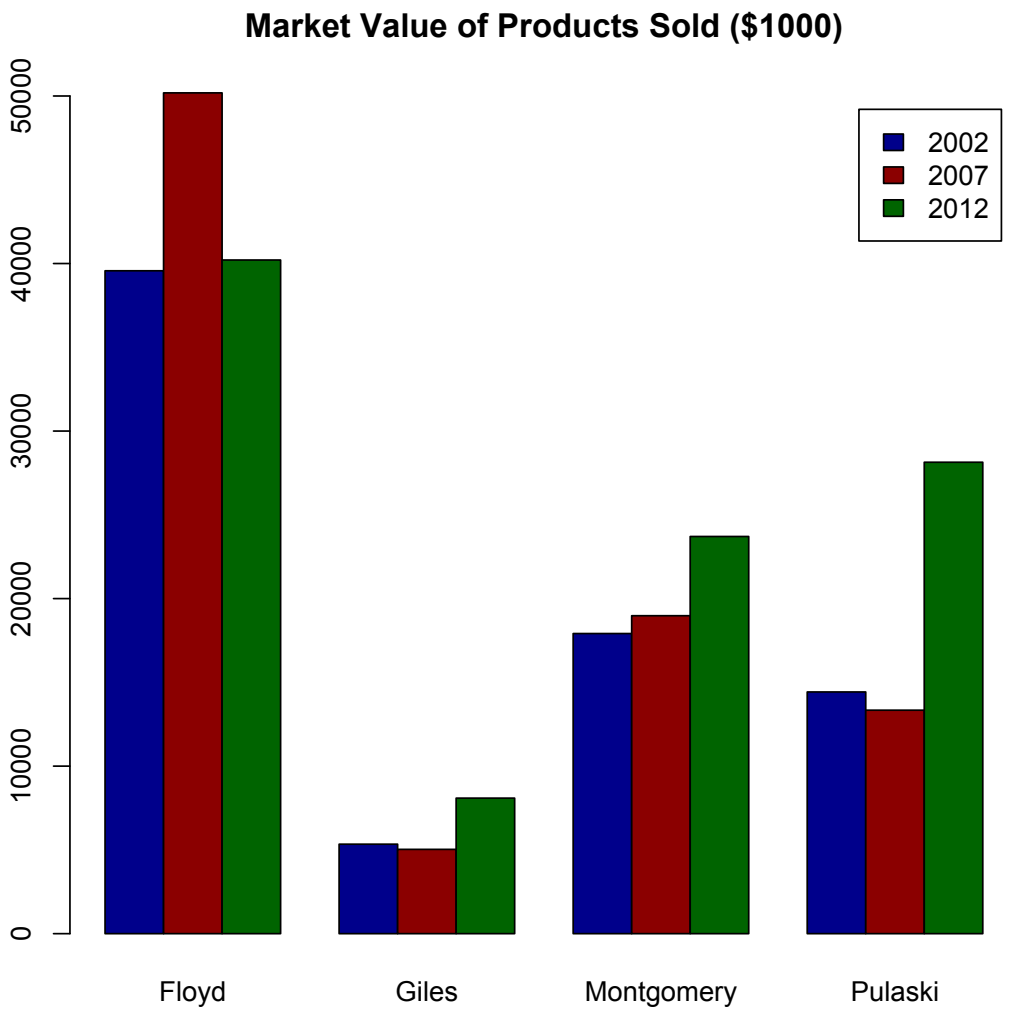
2. AGRICULTURE IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

In the mountainous New River Valley, agriculture occupies 38% of the land. The region has a total of 2,251 farms. Regionally, the agricultural population is aging and the average aged farmer is 57. In 2007, 58% of farmers relied on on an off-farm job as their primary source of income. While the agriculture landscape is dominated by grass grazing animals and steep forests, acreage in forages and forestry continue to grow. In the New River Valley, beef and forestry/timber are the largest agriculture sectors, generating more than $60 million annually.



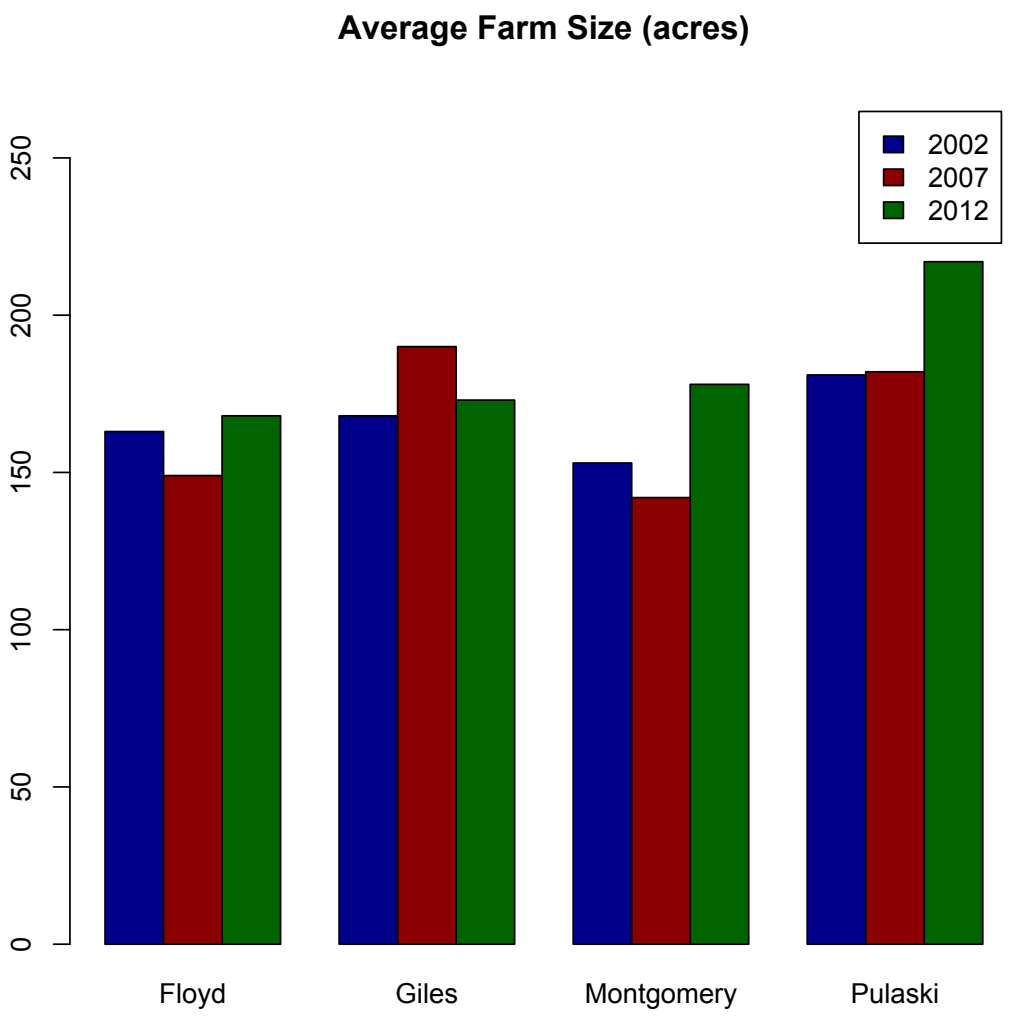
As shown in the figure, the amount of farms in each county has fluctuated slightly without major decreases or increases between 2002 and 2012. Floyd County continues to contain the most farms even after experiencing decreases over the ten-year period. Giles County contains the least amount of farms but is not far behind Pulaski County.

**USDA Agriculture Census of Virginia*



All counties experienced an increase in product value between 2007 and 2012 but the value of Pulaski County products significantly increased during this time period. Floyd County averages higher, due to its higher percentage of crop production.

**USDA Agriculture Census of Virginia*



The size of the farms within each county has only slightly changed over the past ten years. Pulaski and Montgomery counties have experienced increase in farm size during recent years. Pulaski has consistently contained the largest farms while Montgomery County's farms have only recently caught up to the size of Giles County farms.

**USDA Agriculture Census of Virginia*

3. AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

While dominated by mountains, valleys, and a hilly plateau, the New River Valley region has a variety of microclimates where a wide variety of agricultural plants and animals can thrive. The US Department of Agriculture lists a variety of hardiness zones for crops, from 5B to 7B. This enables many fruits, berries, vegetables, roots, grains, and nuts to be grown, with the exception of tropical plants, such as citrus fruits. The region is in a rain shadow created by the mountains of West Virginia and its rainfall amounts are among the lowest in the state. The region is at the edge of two very divergent climate patterns, rainfall and temperatures are inconsistent year to year, leading to frequent droughts and crop failures.

Virginia averages about 70% of its agricultural sales based in livestock and 30% based in crops; the corresponding NRV averages are 77% of NRV's agricultural sales in livestock and 23% in crops. The NRV is home to the 7th largest cattle population in Virginia. Livestock makes up the majority of market sales in every county. Currently, the only USDA certified meat processing facility is located in Giles County.

The top crops for the NRV are: forage land (for livestock), hay, corn, wheat, rye, fruits and vegetables, cut Christmas trees, sod, nursery stock, and short rotation wood crops. Floyd County averages much higher earnings per farm than the rest of the NRV due to their higher percentage of crop production.

The Virginia wine industry is growing and is in search of more grapes being grown in the state. Grape production is not a major enterprise in the New River Valley, but is considered a growth product and strongly encouraged. While land in the region is suitable for grape production, the acreage seems to be below the tracking level of official statistics at the time of this latest Census. There has been a response of the area's producers to the increased demand for locally produced wine grapes. Conversations with Extension Agents familiar with the region suggest that since the Census there has been a significant increase in vineyard plantings, with increases in vineyard plantings in throughout 2013. In 2014, when the consultant surveyed growers, Montgomery County producers planted approximately nine additional acres, Pulaski planted five, and Giles producers planted 10 acres.

4. STAKEHOLDERS

Farmers

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, there are 31,648 farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers. This number is forecast to decline nearly 30% to 22,336 by 2022. The average age of local farmers is 57 and 30% of farmers are age 65 and older. The average 2012 income per farm is $41,000. 90% of farms in Virginia are owned by families or individuals. Less than 16¢ per consumer dollar spent on food goes back to the farmer.

Agriculture-related operations

- Restaurants that use a majority of locally-grown foods
- Grocers (large scale and small/independent)/farm stands
- Food Hub/Food Innovation District (system to connect farmers, businesses, and consumers)
- Farmers Markets
- Nurseries and greenhouses
- Food and ag-related commodity producers

Government Agencies and NGOs
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Montgomery County
- Giles County
- Pulaski County

- Virginia Office of Farmland Preservation
- Floyd County
- City of Radford
- Town of Christiansburg
- Town of Blacksburg
- Virginia Tech
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- USDA
- Virginia Farm Bureau
- New River Valley Planning District Commission
- National Committee for the New River
- New River Valley Health Consortium
- Community Foundation of the New River Valley
- New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

2. AGRITOURISM ACTIVITIES IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

Agritourism opportunities have been expanding in the New River Valley. With a stronger emphasis and greater cooperation, this can continue to grow. Generally, agritourism activities fall into three core categories:

Farm-based, which includes activities like hay rides, horseback riding, bird-watching/wildlife viewing, special events, photography, painting, farm/ranch work experience (roundup, branding, haying, fencing, calving, etc.), u-pick operations for fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees, corn mazes, wagon rides, children's camps, seeing and feeding farm animals, hunting and fishing (guided or unguided), snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, off-road motorcycling, mountain-biking, school and educational tours, tour of farm or ranch operation, on farm/ranch get-a-way. Local examples include Sinkland Farms; Joe's Tree Farm; U-pick berry picking at Crow's Nest; Doe Creek apple picking; Buffalo & More; and Spikenard Farm & Bee Sanctuary.

Food-based, which includes activities like harvest and food festivals, farmers' markets, winery tours and tastings, microbrewery visits, food processing site visits (cheese, jam, cider). Local examples include the Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Pearisburgs farmers markets; area wineries, like Beliveau Estate, Attimo, and Chateau Morrissette; Bull & Bones and The River breweries; Due South BBQ; The Palisades; and Draper Mercantile Blue Door Cafe.

Heritage-based, which includes activities like county fairs, historical museums, agricultural history sites, pioneer settlements, rodeos, and livestock shows. Local examples include Smithfield

Plantation; the Wilderness Trail Festival; Summer Solstice Festival; the New River Valley Fair; Floyd Country Store; and Steppin' Out.

Some specific examples:
Beliveau Estate Winery
Attimo Winery
West Wind Winery (Wythe Co)
Buffalo & More (Riner)
Cut your own Christmas Tree farms
Mountain Lake Resort & Restaurant (Giles)
Newport Convenience Store (Giles)
Thornspring Farm (Pulaski)
Draper Merc. Blue Door Café (Pulaski)
Farriss' Vineyard
Floyd Eco Village
Floyd Farmers Market
Floyd Country Store
Spikenard Farm & Bee Sanctuary (Floyd)
Steele's Blueberry (Newport)
Doe Creek
Giles County Farm Bureau Coop
Grant's Grocery (Narrows)
Foggy Bottom Vineyard
Gary Midkiff (berries & fruit-Rich Creek)
Spruce Run Tree Farm (Newport)
Palisades Restaurant
Black Hen Restaurant
Ganoe's Organics (Narrows)
Sugar by Suzanne
Jean Lucas – Goat Farm

D. AGRITOURISTS IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

LOCAL

The New River Valley has a population of about 179,000. Population growth is expected to be between 7 and 8% over the next couple decades, which is smaller than Virginia's 10% and the national growth of 16%. While its residents' educational achievements (24% with a bachelor's degree or higher) is lower than in Virginia (32%) and the United States in general (26%), their English speaking skills are much higher, with less than 1% speaking less than well, compared to 2.6% in Virginia and 4.6% throughout the country.

The New River Valley has a smaller percentage of people in the working and family-rearing ages of

Age of Population in the New River Valley

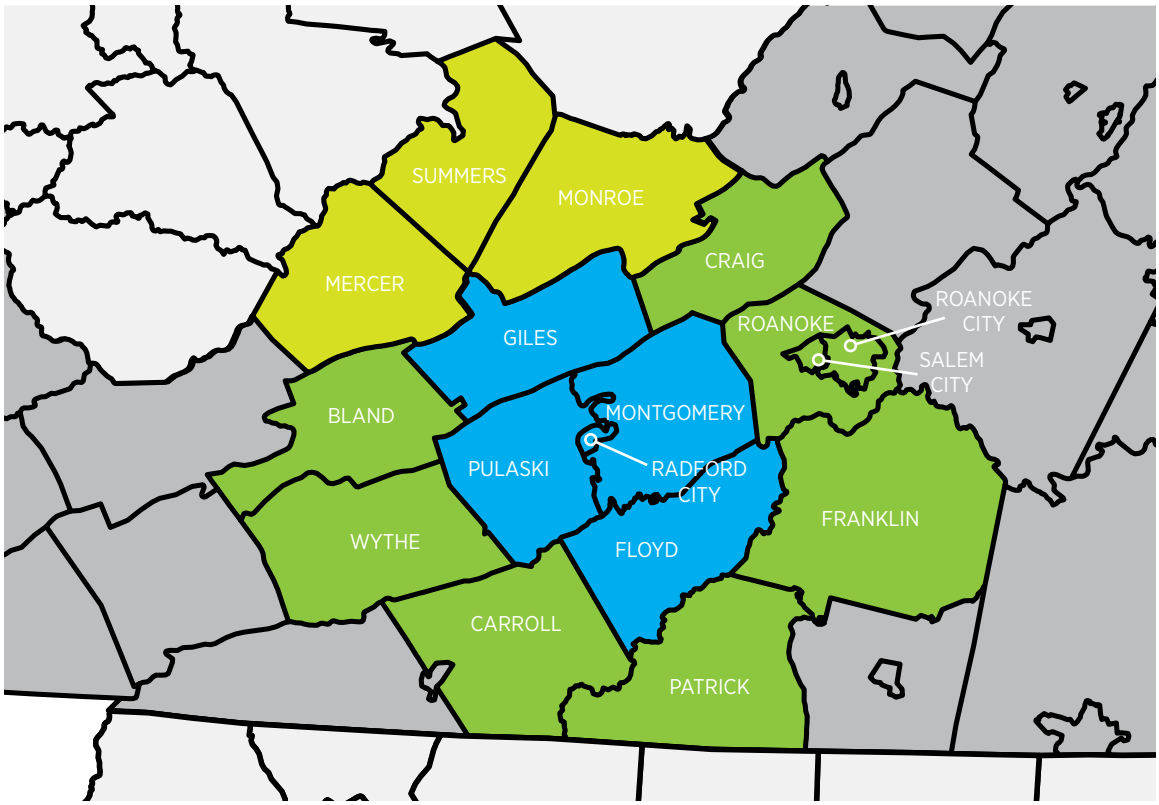
Under 5 years	8,465
5-19 years	35,160
20-24 years	29,383
25-34 years	20,867
35-44 years	20,482
45-54 years	21,278
55-64 years	19,959
65+	22,754

Age	NRV	VA	US
Under 5 years	5%	6%	7%
5 to 19 years	20%	20%	20%
20 to 24 years	16%	7%	7%
25 to 34 years	12%	14%	13%
35 to 39 years	11%	14%	13%
45 to 54 years	12%	15%	15%
55 to 64 years	11%	12%	12%
65+	13%	12%	13%

25-64 (46%), compared to the rest of Virginia (55%) and the country in general (53%). There is a significant, disproportionate percentage of college-aged population.

The Valley has a median adjusted gross household income of $56,568 (2007) and a cost-of-living index of 94.4.

According to a study published by Iowa State University about agritourism in Iowa, over two-thirds (69%) of agritourists are willing to drive up to 50-miles to reach an agritourism destination (30% of respondents are willing to drive 51+ miles, and 1% aren't willing to go at all). Though Iowa certainly isn't the NRV, parallels can be drawn since the demographic make-up of Iowa is similar to that of the NRV. Given this, we have identified 17 counties/cities within the NRV and the surrounding area that make up the Consortium's core local audience that reside either in the NRV or within a one-hour drive.



Counties/cities in the core local audience

To further define who is most likely to be interested in the Consortium's offerings, we employed a demographic, consumer behavior, and geographic audience segmentation platform that gives us insight into the likes, dislikes, lifestyles and purchase behaviors of the residents of these 17 counties. We identified 16 of the platform's 66 segments contain characteristics befitting of an agritourist. In the NRV, 25,514 residents fall into one of these 16 segments; in surrounding areas, 50,984 residents fit the bill:

Big Fish, Small Pond (Upscale Older without Kids) — 12,695
Older, upper-class, college-educated professionals, the members of Big Fish, Small Pond are often among the leading citizens of their small-town communities. These upscale, empty-nesting couples enjoy the trappings of success, including belonging to country clubs, maintaining large investment portfolios, and spending freely on computer technology.

God's Country (Upscale Older with Kids) — 2,930
When city dwellers and suburbanites began moving to the country in the 1970s, God's Country emerged as the most affluent of the nation's exurban lifestyles. Today, wealthier communities exist in the hinterlands, but God's Country remains a haven for upscale couples in spacious homes. Typically college educated Baby Boomers, these Americans try to maintain a balanced lifestyle between high-power jobs and laid-back leisure.

Upward Bound (Upscale Middle Age with Kids) — 928
More than any other segment, Upward Bound appears to be the home of those legendary Soccer Moms and Dads. In these small satellite cities, upscale families boast dual incomes, college degrees, and new split-levels and colonials. Residents of Upward Bound tend to be kid obsessed, with heavy purchases of computers, action figures, dolls, board games, bicycles, and camping equipment.

New Empty Nest (Upper Mid Mature without Kids) — 1,884
With their grown-up children recently out of the house, New Empty Nests is composed of upper-middle income older Americans who pursue active—and activist—lifestyles. Most residents are over 65 years old, but they show no interest in a rest-home retirement. This is the top-ranked segment for all-inclusive travel packages; the favorite destination is Europe.

Beltway Boomers (Upper Mid Older with Kids) — 831
The members of the postwar Baby Boom are all grown up. One segment of this huge cohort—college-educated, upper-middle-class, and home-owning—is found in Beltway Boomers. Like many of their peers who married late, these Boomers are still raising children in comfortable suburban subdivisions, and they're pursuing kid-centered lifestyles.

Kids & Cul-de-Sacs (Upper Mid Younger with Kids) — 738
Upper-middle-class, suburban, married couples with children—that's the skinny on Kids & Cul-de-Sacs, an enviable lifestyle of large families in recently built subdivisions. With a high rate of Hispanic and Asian Americans, this segment is a refuge for college-educated, white-collar professionals with administrative jobs and upper-middle-class incomes. Their nexus of education, affluence, and children translates into large outlays for child-centered products and services.

Fast Track Families (Upscale Middle Age with Kids) — 4,388
With their upscale incomes, numerous children, and spacious homes, Fast-Track Families are in their prime acquisition years. These middle-aged parents have the disposable income and educated sensibility to want the best for their children. They buy the latest technology with impunity: new computers, DVD players, home theater systems, and video games. They take advantage of their rustic locales by camping, boating, and fishing.

Greenbelt Sports (Upper Mid Older without Kids) — 4,324
A segment of upscale exurban couples, Greenbelt Sports is known for its active lifestyle. Most of these older residents are married, college-educated, and own new homes. And few segments have higher rates for pursuing outdoor activities such as skiing, canoeing, backpacking, boating, and mountain biking.

Up & Comers (Upper Mid Younger without Kids) — 3,924
Up-and-Comers is a stopover for younger, upper-midscale singles before they marry, have families, and establish more deskbound lifestyles. Found in second-tier cities, these mobile adults, mostly age 25 to 44, include a disproportionate number of recent college graduates who are into athletic activities, the latest technology, and nightlife entertainment.

Traditional Times (Upper Mid Older without Kids) — 11,521
Traditional Times is the kind of lifestyle where small-town couples nearing retirement are beginning to enjoy their first empty-nest years. Typically in their fifties and older, these upper-middle-class Americans pursue a kind of granola-and-grits lifestyle. On their coffee tables are magazines with titles like Country Living and Country Home. But they're big travelers, especially in recreational vehicles and campers.

New Homesteaders (Upper Mid Younger with Kids) — 3,177
Traditional Times is the kind of lifestyle where small-town couples nearing retirement are beginning to enjoy their first empty-nest years. Typically in their fifties and older, these upper-middle-class Americans pursue a kind of granola-and-grits lifestyle. On their coffee tables are magazines with titles like Country Living and Country Home. But they're big travelers, especially in recreational vehicles and campers.

Big Sky Families (Upper Mid Younger with Kids) — 6,921
Scattered in placid towns across the American heartland, Big Sky Families is a segment of middle-aged rural families who have turned high school educations and blue-collar jobs into busy, upper-middle-class lifestyles. Residents enjoy baseball, basketball, and volleyball, as well as fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. To entertain their sprawling families, they buy virtually every piece of sporting equipment on the market.

Boomtown Singles (Midscale Younger without Kids) — 6,716
Affordable housing, abundant entry-level jobs, and a thriving singles scene—all have given rise to the Boomtown Singles segment in fast-growing satellite cities. Single and working-class, these residents pursue active lifestyles amid sprawling apartment complexes, bars, convenience stores, and laundromats.

Blue Chip Blues (Midscale Younger with Kids) — 931
Blue-Chip Blues is known as a comfortable lifestyle for ethnically-diverse, young, sprawling families with well-paying blue-collar and service jobs. The segment's aging neighborhoods feature compact, modestly priced homes surrounded by commercial centers that cater to child-filled households.

Heartlanders (Lower Mid Older Mostly without Kids) — 10,750
America was once a land of small middle-class towns, which can still be found today among Heartlanders. This widespread segment consists of older couples with white-collar jobs living in sturdy, unpretentious homes. In these communities of small families and empty-nesting couples, Heartlanders residents pursue a rustic lifestyle where hunting and fishing remain prime leisure activities along with cooking, sewing, camping, and boating.

City Startups (Low Income Younger without Kids) — 8,064
In City Startups, young to middle-aged, multi-ethnic singles have settled in neighborhoods filled with cheap apartments and a commercial base of cafés, bars, laundromats, and clubs that cater to twentysomethings. One of the youngest segments in America—with ten times as many college students as the national average—these neighborhoods feature low incomes and high concentrations of African-American and Hispanic households.

VISITORS

Many people visit the NRV each year. They may not be here with the strict intention of partaking in agritourism activities, but they may ready and willing to participate. We estimate this audience to present nearly 300,000 (see figures below) additional prospects to the agritourism market. The largest group of these visitors is people driving through the region. Although large (180,000), this group has a smaller chance of engaging.

Virginia Tech football games: 25,000/game (Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development)
Virginia Tech and Radford parents: 82,000 (student populations x 2)
Passing-through (via I-81): 180,000
Floyd-festers: 12,000 (average of recent years' attendees)

F. COMPETITION

Nearby agritourism activities provide competition for New River Valley agritourists. However, with a large close-to-home market, the competition also includes other outdoor or active activities, and even doing nothing at all.

Other outdoor activities include sports (participating and watching), hiking, tubing, and eating out. Families looking to entertain children represent a sizable audience for agritourism. Competition for that group includes swimming, kids museums and activities, and organized sports. In addition, Roanoke and Salem beckon with their activities.

Following is a brief collection of agritourism and agricultural brands nearby:

VIRGINIA BRANDS

1. Virginia Wine
http://www.virginiawine.org

- ”Discover and Taste Virginia Wines”
- lists events, learn about info, downloadable ‘passport’ to Virginia Wineries, where to buy, scenic wine trails
- Live music hosting (this is the big one), wine bootcamp, art gallery, production tours and tastings, Food and Wine Festivals, yoga and wine outings, activities where dogs are allowed, triple threat wine, cheese, and chocolate pairing classes.

2. Virginia Peanuts
http://www.aboutpeanuts.com

- “Energy for the good (the ‘o’s are a peanut sideways) life”
- Education packet for teachers, shop, recipes, merchandising guides, nutrition facts, peanut news
- Peanut crops of Virginia and the Carolinas.

3. Virginia Grown
http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/vagrown

- ”Locally Known, Virginia Grown” “Farm. Fresh. Pledge!”
- Marketing services, Education packets for teachers, Farmers market listings, Social media, News, Trade events
- Aquaculture & Marine Products, Christmas Trees, Horticulture & Nursery Items, Dairy and Eggs, Feed, Seed, and Non-food items, Fruits and Vegetables, Meat, Poultry, and Livestock, Organic, Peanuts, Small Grains, Cotton, and Fibers, Specialty Products (Beer, Wine, Honey, Tree Nuts)

4. Southwest Virginia Fresh
http://www.swvafresh.org

- Independent community service organization in late 2012 and a 501c3 charitable nonprofit in 2014, having been launched in 2010 as Pulaski Fresh, a local foods initiative of Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce. It is operated by a Board of Directors, which serves as primary staff, and volunteers from our Advisory Board, both of which include consumers and producers from throughout southwestern Virginia.
- Serves the entire blue ridge highlands region.
- "SO Fresh!"
- Youth in agriculture initiative, workshops, plant your own workshops, producers workshops

VIRGINIA NEIGHBORS

1. Tennessee
http://www.tnvacation.com/agritourism

- "The Soundtrack of America" "Made in Tennessee" "Taste of Tennessee" "Pick Tennessee"
- Vineyards, farmers markets, pick-your-own, farm-raised meats, Museum of Appalachia, wildflowers, gardens and arboretums, wedding destinations, corn maze and hayrides, Christmas tree farms, Great Smoky Arts & Crafts Community, farm fresh fun (farm tours, petting zoo, pumpkin patch), fish farms, breweries, distilleries, plant nurseries, heritage & culture (family farms passed down for 100 years or more, living history farms, general stores, National Ornamental Metal Museum, quilting)
- Live music, farmers markets, Relay for Life, Car shows, Worlds Largest Yard Sale

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2. North Carolina
http://www.gottobenc.com

- "Got to be NC" "Goodness Grows in NC" "Grown. Raised. Caught. Made."
- Barnyard Animals, Fiber Animals, Farm Riding Trails, Walking Trails & Crafts, Camping, Bird Watching, Fishing, Hunting, Farm Bed & Breakfasts, Country Cabins, Retreats, Hay Rides, Mazes, Pumpkin Patches, Historic Farms, Quilt Barns, Reunions, Museums, Events, Holiday Farms, Christmas Trees, Crafts, Pick Your Own Farms, Farm Roadside Stands, Nurseries, Flowers, Picnics, Parties, Weddings, Honeymoons, School Field Trips, Summer Camps, Farm Vacations, Slow Food, Dining, Vineyards, Wineries, Organic, seafood.

Additional Resources for Farmers

- Resources for farmers, classes in agritourism for farmers, networking association, Agritourism liability insurance directory, Agricultural tourism highway signs program and application process resources

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3. Kentucky

- "Farms are Fun" "Kentucky Proud" " The Land of Unbridled Adventure"
- Distilleries and Breweries, Farmers Markets, Museums and historic farms, Wineries, Bed and Breakfasts, Trail Rides (horse), Christmas tree farms, Horse Farms and Racing, Gardens and Nurseries, greenhouses and horticulture farms, Restaurants (local produce sourced), Orchards, Mazes, hayrides, U-pick, Livestock expos and shows, Walking trails with sculpture, amphitheaters, lakes, special theme gardens, butterfly gardens, animal topiaries, moon gardens, and other thematic features, farm attractions (food and fiber), roadside markets, Archery and Guns, Horsedrawn carriage, master crafts, botanical gardens.

4. West Virginia

- Orr's Farm Market
- "Family Owned, Family Grown." "Happiness Grows Here!"
- Berries, fruit, asparagus, rhubarb, spring onions, lettuces, pumpkins, grapes, other locally sourced produce, bison, wholesale
- Birthday parties, pick-your-own, bakery, farm market, school tours, live music, outdoor festivals, holiday open house, bon-fires, hayrides.

Overview

The following defines the guidelines that should apply to all materials directed to an external audience. In order to build a consistent image and brand for Blue to New, the guidelines must be followed when presenting the brand image to the media and in any other communication forms.

If for any reason an exception to these guidelines are requires, please contact the Marketing Director.

Please be advised that the Marketing Director must review and approve any materials released for public consumption regarding Blue to New.

LOGO STANDARDS 2

COLOR PALETTE 6

TYPOGRAPHY 7

MINIMUM SIZE, SCALING, AND CONTROL AREA

The logo is given in 3 variations: with and without the tagline as well as text only.

Use the text version only if there is extremely limited space. This logo version is to be used rarely. Each logo is scaled here to it's minimum size, please do not allow the logo to be scaled smaller than indicated here.

MINIMUM SIZE

1"

.75"

.75"

.75"

1"

1"

1"

1"

1"

1"

SCALING / RESIZING

The Blue to New logotype may only be resized proportionally. It is not to be skewed, squeezed, lengthened, shortened, or distorted from its original format and proportion.

CREATION / RECREATION

Logos have been provided in multiple file formats. It may not be reproduced, recreated, or altered from its original format unless approved.

CONTROL AREA

The Blue to New logo must be set in an area clear of imagery and typography. This area should surround the Blue to New logo and be no smaller than 2x the cap height of the "R" in RIDGE and RIVER. Violation of this space impairs the visibility and impact of the logo. The rule is a minimum requirement, increased clear space around the logo is always desirable.

LOGO USAGE

The logo is given in 3 color versions: full color, black, and white.

FULL COLOR

Use only the color version supplied on this page. The full color logo will be the most used. Most printed jobs will be 4-color and will require the CMYK logo. See color breakdowns on page 6.

BLACK AND WHITE VERSION

When no color (black only) is available, use the gray-scale logo provided. The logo may be printed reversed on dark backgrounds as shown below.

TEXT ONLY VERSION

A text only version has been provided if there is limited space.

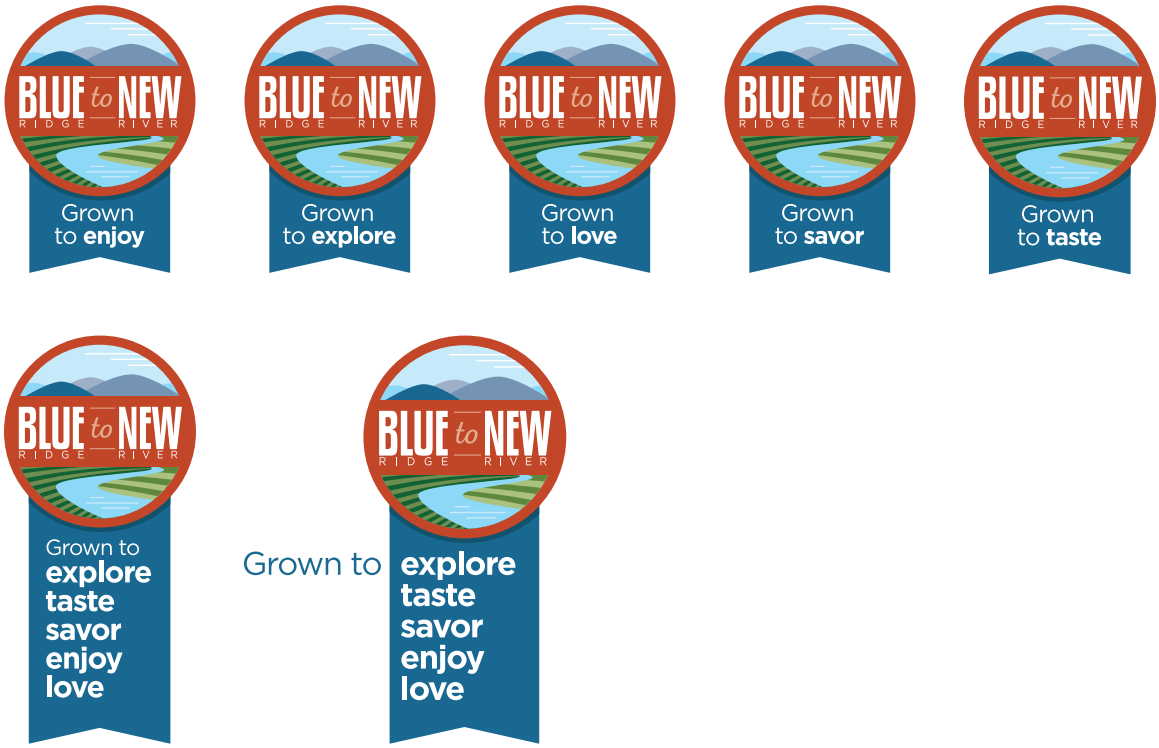
TAGLINE

The tagline for Blue to New has 6 variations. These taglines are versatile as to encompass the multitude of products and activities that Blue to New has to offer.

Grown to enjoy
Grown to explore
Grown to love
Grown to savor
Grown to taste

The tagline will vary as appropriate.

It is at marketing's discretion to determine the inclusion or exclusion of the tagline on various materials. All 5 words may be used simultaneously if deemed appropriate.



LOGO LEGIBILITY

It is preferred that the logo always be placed on a white background and used in full color.

If the logo needs to be on a photograph, please use the guidelines here.

ON PHOTOGRAPH

The logo may be placed on a photograph, however the preferred placement is on a white background. A gradient of black multiplied at 22% – 30% may be placed over the photograph.

Color Palette

Colors used for the approved Blue to New palette are as follows:

PRIMARY COLOR

The primary color for Blue to New is orange. The color builds are below.

CMYK 18-86-100-7
RGB 178-64-28
HEX B2401C

SECONDARY COLORS

This set of colors is for supplemental design elements and can be used sparingly.

CMYK 92-55-25-5
RGB 32-90-126
HEX 205A7E

CMYK 60-28-83-9
RGB 100-126-72
HEX 647E48

EXTENDED COLOR PALETTE

This set of colors includes the primary and secondary colors.

CMYK 95-61-40-21
RGB 26-70-92
HEX 1A465C

CMYK 100-0-0-0
RGB 0-163-230
HEX 00A3E6

CMYK 89-36-100-30
RGB 25-85-38
HEX 195526

CMYK 67-27-100-10
RGB 85-122-48
HEX 557A30

CMYK 36-11-62-0
RGB 156-179-114
HEX 9CB372

Typography

The typefaces used in the logo are Kenyan Coffee and Gotham. Kenyan Coffee may be used sparingly for headings. The preferred font is Gotham.

KENYAN COFFEE REGULAR
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

KENYAN COFFEE ITALIC
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

KENYAN COFFEE BOLD
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

KENYAN COFFEE BOLD ITALIC
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

GOTHAM BOOK
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

GOTHAM ITALIC
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

GOTHAM BOLD
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

GOTHAM BOLD ITALIC
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia

Day 1 (September 21st)

9:00 am	Registration opens
10:00 am	Dr. Martha Walker, VCE Specialist will officially kick-off
11:00 am	Fields of Gold – Shenandoah Valley's Farm Trail; Tracey Coltrain, Agritourism Coordinator
11:30 am	NRV Strategic Plan for Agriculture & Agritourism: Kelli Scott, Montgomery County, Virginia Cooperative Extension Lisa Bleakley, Executive Director of Tourism, Montgomery County Elijah Sharp, Director of Planning & Programs, New River Valley Regional Commission
12:00 pm	Lunch (Special Guest: Virginia Secretary of Agriculture, Todd Haymore)
1:00 pm	Break
1:30 pm	Farm Tours (Shuttles provided – VCE agents lead) *Giles County Tour: Doe Creek Farm* *Montgomery County Tour: Sinkland Farm and Attimo Winery* *Pulaski County Tour: Hillside Farm and Rockwood Manor*
5:00 pm	Return to Skelton Center
6:00 pm	Reception, Sinkland Farm; Entertainment by the Black Twig Pickers
8:00 pm	Return to Skelton Center

Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia

Day 2 (September 22nd)

9:00 am	On-farm local food sales Featuring: Joell Eifert, VT Food Innovations Program
11:00 am	Planning for Agritourism, Local Permitting for Farm Enterprises (Part I): Emily Gibson, Planning Director, Montgomery County James Cornwell, Jr., Attorney, Sands Anderson
12:00 pm	Lunch (Guest Speaker)
1:00 pm	Planning for Agritourism, Local Permitting for Farm Enterprises (Part II) Emily Gibson, Planning Director, Montgomery County Fred Wydner, Agriculture Development Director, Pittsylvania County
2:00 pm	Production Infrastructure Featuring: Danny Neel, VDAC Marketing Specialist Fred Wydner, Agriculture Development Director for Pittsylvania County Mike Burton, Sustain Floyd Specialty Foods Program Coordinator Rosalea Riley Potter, Manager for Buffalo Creek Beef and Donalds Meat Processing
4:00 pm	Conference close

Agritourism in a Creative Economy

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

Agricultural Entrepreneurs: Agritourism

- The Issues
- The Goal
- The Response/Options
- The Impact
  - Financial
  - Community
- The Options: New River Valley
- The Questions . . .

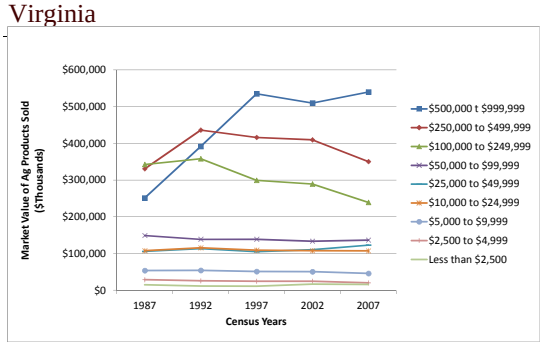
The Issue: Agriculture in Virginia

- Economic Impact: $52 billion
- Employment
  - 357,000 jobs
  - Value-added industries employ another 76,000 individuals
- Issues/concerns
  - Inability of small and medium size farms to capture scale efficiencies
  - Decreasing farm totals
  - Unstable market value of production

Outlook of Farms in Virginia

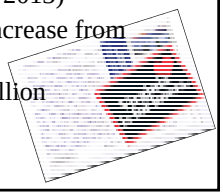
Year	No. of farms	Land in farms (acres)	Total crop land (acres)	Avg. age of principal operator
1997	49,366	8,753,625	43,124	55.8
2002	47,606	8,624,829	41,047	56.7
2007	47,383	8,103,925	35,954	58.2
2011	46,400	7,950,000	unreported	unreported
2012	46,200	8,050,000	unreported	unreported

Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold in Virginia



Virginia Tourism Sector:
5th Largest Private Employer

- Increase in visitors from 1.4 million in 2007 to over 2.3 million in 2012
- 2014- $22.4 billion generated by the tourism industry (4.1% increase over 2013)
- Employment (2010-2014): increase from 204,000 to 216,900
- Tax Revenue (2014): $1.5 billion
  - State and local combined

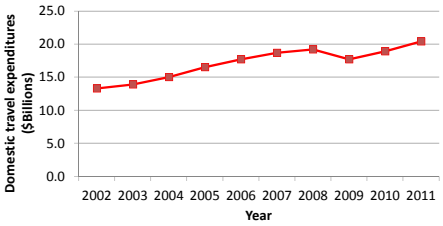


Slide 5

MW1 Martha Walker, 9/19/2014

Virginia Tourism Sector

- Steady increase in domestic travel expenditures from about $14 billion in 2002 to $22 billion in 2014



The Goal

- Increase net profit.
- Keep farmland in use.
- Sustain the operation.

The Response/Options

- Explore innovative enterprises.
  - Direct Marketing
  - Agritourism
  - On-farm stays
  - Wineries / Farm Breweries
  - Weddings
  - Events
  - Farm dining

Agritourism activity . . .

Code of Virginia§ 3.2-6400. (Effective October 1, 2008) Definitions.

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

http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+3.2-6400

Direct Marketing

- On-farm sales
- Farmers' Markets
- Web-based sales
- Farm stands
- Roadside markets
- Value added Products

With the increasing urbanization of the U.S. combined with social movements celebrating local and natural experiences, the future of the Agritourism industry looks good.

National Survey on Recreation and the Environment

Agritourism: Economic Boost for Many Farmers

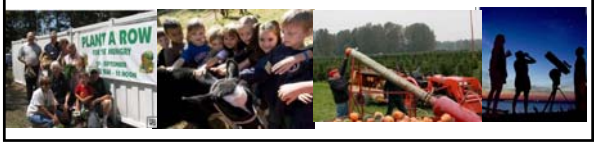
California is among the leaders in agritourism with nearly 700 farms averaging more than $50,000 in agritourism income.

Source: USDA Census of Ag

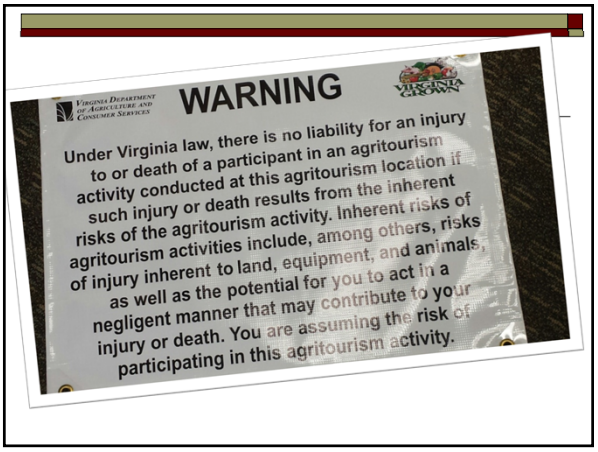
- Agritourism has tended to **develop on smaller farms** near urban centers.
- More recent trends show that **thriving agritourism sectors have been flourishing in remote areas** away from cities.

Adding Value to Your Farm: The Lure of the Land

- Day Camps
- Farm Vacations
- Camping
- Equestrian B&B's with Riding Trails
- Animal Parks
- Herb/Flower Farms
- Rent a Row of Veggies
- Horseshoeing
- Star Gazing
- Shooting Range/Skeets
- Swimming Areas
- Photography/Painting
- Hunting Dog Competitions
- Farm/Ranch Work Vacations



Agritourism in Virginia



The Impact

2013-2014 Study:
The Virginia Agribusiness Industry: A Geographic and Profitability Analysis of Agritourism

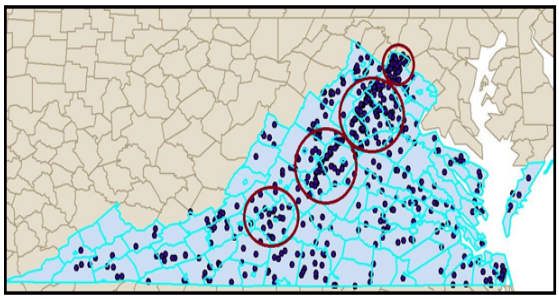
Gustavo Ferreira, Ph.D., Instructor & Extension Economist

Martha A. Walker, Ph.D., Community Viability Specialist

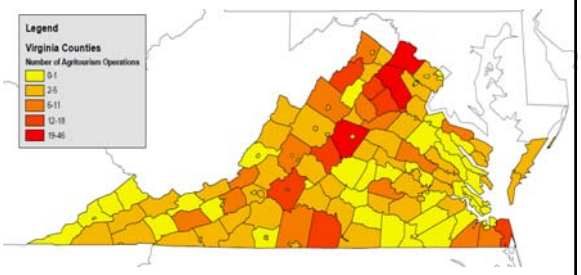
Chris Lucha, Master's student

Virginia Tech, CALS
Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics

Geographical Analysis of Agritourism in Virginia



Density of Agritourism Operations in Virginia



Conclusion/Policy Implications

- **Four focus areas** for Virginia agritourism:
  - consumer base and proximity,
  - transportation infrastructure and accessibility,
  - population trends, and
  - the possible importance of natural amenities

http://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/AAEC/AAEC-62/AAEC-62.html

MW2

Benefits of Agritourism

- Generates additional net farm income
- Creates loyal consumer base for branded farm products
- Allows for diversification of income sources to limit market risk exposure
- Strategy to cope with bad crop years, disasters, and droughts

Benefits of Agritourism

- Preservation of agricultural heritage
- Maximization of productivity and resources
- Improvements to the economic situation of the community

Successful Example of Agritourism: **Virginia Wine Industry**

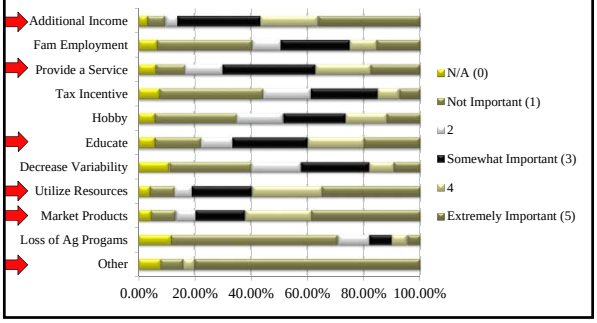
- 1979 to 2013: the number of wineries have increased from 6 to 250
- **Economic Impact:**
  - Doubled revenue between 2005 to 2010
    - $750 million
  - Tourists increased by 620,000 over that time period

Slide 25

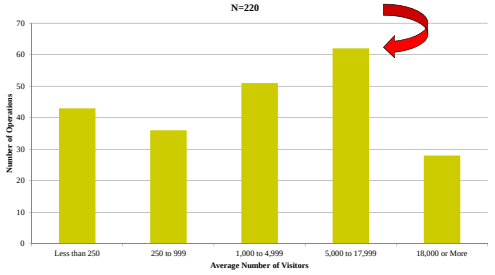
MW2 Martha Walker, 9/19/2014

Agritourism Motivations

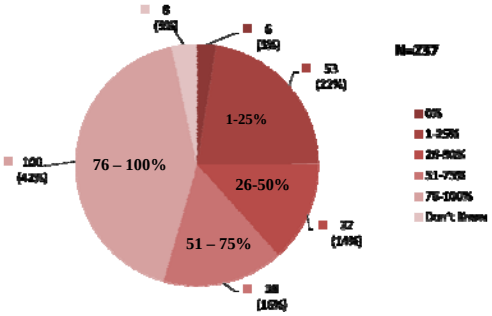
N= 240



Number of Visitors



Percentage of Farm Income Attributed to Agritourism



Top Events by Study/State

- Schilling et al (2006)-**New Jersey**
  - Farm Stands, school trips, pick-your-own, corn mazes, pumpkin picking, and floral products
- Tew and Barbieri (2010)-**Missouri**
  - Educational tours, leisure tours, U-pick, observation, and classes/workshops
- Bruch and Holland (2004)-**Tennessee**
  - On-farm retail market, on-farm tours, and pick-your-own
- McGehee and Kim (2004)-**Virginia**
  - Working farms, pick-your-own, and on-farm markets

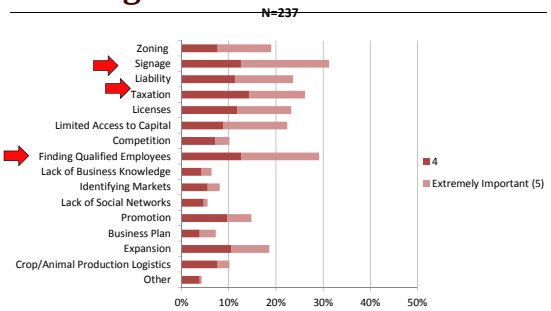
2013 Events by Percentage of Respondents

Event	Percentage of Respondents
Tours	60.9%
Tastings	52.6%
Picnics	45.6%
Pick-Your-Own	39.1%
Special Events	37.6%
On Farm Stand	32.8%
Fall/Harvest Festival	30.0%

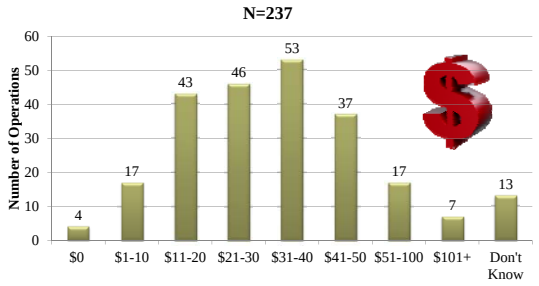
Most Challenging Obstacles by Study/State

- Rilla et al. (2011)-California
  - Legal constraints, zoning, and liability
- Bruch and Holland (2004)-Tennessee
  - Finding quality employees and liability insurance
- Schilling et al. (2006)-New Jersey
  - Regulatory constraints, taxation, availability of technical assistance, and transportation access
- Galinato et al. (2011)-Washington
  - State laws/regulations, land use and zoning, lack of time, and liability

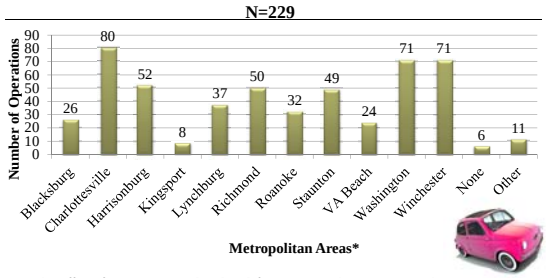
2013 Agritourism Obstacles



Dollars Spent Per Visitor (Revenue)

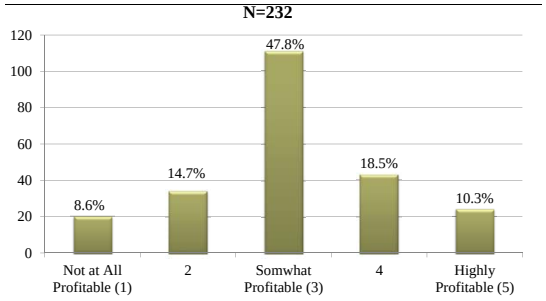


Proximity of Operations to Metropolitan Areas



- The Office of Management and Budget defines a *metropolitan area* as one that "contains a core urban area of 50,000 or more population"
- For the purpose of this study, proximity is defined as within a one hour drive from a metropolitan area.

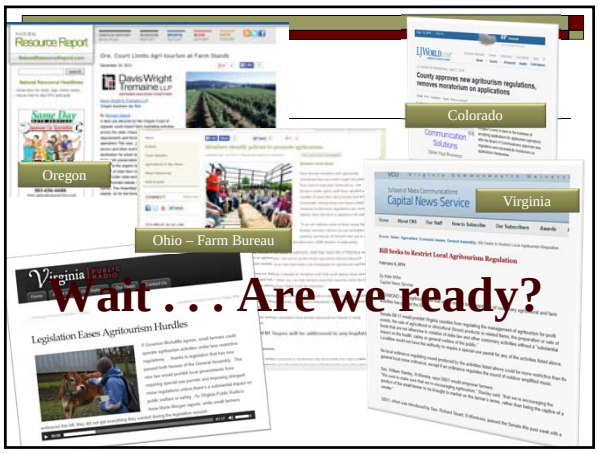
Agritourism Profitability



Conclusions/Policy Implications

Data gathered provided current statistics of Virginia agritourism and the factors that influence success

- **Findings**
  - 23% of operators have less than 10 years of agricultural experience
  - 16% have less than 10 years of business/management experience
  - Most stated signage as the largest obstacle to success
    - Outside of road signage, most used promotional strategies are the easiest to implement: websites, word of mouth, and social media
  - The closer an operation is to Virginia's interstates, the more likely to be profitable
    - Increasing observations could show more significant results for region variables
  - Larger agritourism operations are more likely to be profitable
  - Wineries are less likely to be profitable in Virginia, likely because they are young and haven't reaped the benefits from their investment
  - For those with a significant share of income from agritourism, a balance between natural and proximity is important



Regions Respond

Regions Respond

- Talk about the ideas
- Inventory your resources
- Explore the options
- Establish a network
- Build a plan
- Remain persistent
- Invite partners

Regions Respond

Cast Down Your Bucket

Next Steps

References & Forms

- Richardson, J. ***Managing Liability: Legal Liability in Agritourism and Direct Marketing Operations.*** Virginia Cooperation Extension.

Martha A. Walker, Ph.D.
Community Viability Specialist
Virginia Cooperative Extension
walker53@vt.edu

FIELDS OF GOLD
DISCOVER SHENANDOAH VALLEY'S FARM TRAIL

See you on the Farm Trail!

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
Shenandoah Valley Partnership

The Place Where Agriculture and Tourism Meet

Ready for an adventure? On the Fields of Gold Farm Trail, you'll discover the home-grown side of Virginia in the Shenandoah Valley.

Whether you are planning a day-trip with your family, a week-long excursion with friends or just a spur-of-the-moment getaway, adventure awaits you on the Fields of Gold Farm Trail.

Member Business Categories

Ag Venue (18)	Facilities for meetings, weddings, educational tours, festivals, or agritainment activities.
Christmas Trees/Nursery (9)	Local producers of non-edible agricultural products (e.g. nurseries, green houses, Christmas trees)
On-Farm Lodging (16)	Cottages, Bed & Breakfast, Inns, and other rentals located in an agricultural setting.
Grocery/Retail (19)	Retail location that specializes in or sell locally raised/grown products.
Experience the Farm (36)	A farm that offers an on the farm experience, such as tours, a petting zoo, horseback riding, or hay rides.
Farm-To-Table Restaurants (17)	Restaurants with an emphasis on serving locally produced dishes.
Farm Stand (37)	Retail location that specializes in or sell locally raised/grown products.
Farmers' Markets (12)	A location for vendors of local produce and value added goods.
Pick-Your-Own (10)	A farm to pick your own fruit, berries, vegetables, corn, pumpkins, and Christmas trees.
Trout Farming & Fishing (8)	Fish hatcheries and farms which sell to the public, including for fishing.
Winery or Brewery (18)	Local producers of alcoholic beverages, primarily using locally grown ingredients.

Our Region

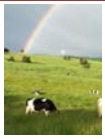
8 counties:

Shenandoah
Page
Augusta
Rockingham
Rockbridge
Bath
Highland
Botetourt

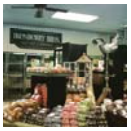
5 cities:

Staunton
Waynesboro
Lexington
Harrisonburg
Buena Vista

Meet the Locals



Currently have approximately 202 members along the Trail!



Events, Farmer's Markets & Conferences

- **Promote** the Farm Trail and our members through information & education
- Collect emails for our e-newsletter list serve
- Recruit new members and new fans
- Networking & partnership development

www.fieldsofgold.org

- Explore the Map
- Meet the Locals
- Find Events & Activities
- Discover the Area
- Check out What's Fresh
- Member Portal /Member Login
- List your Agri-business with the Fields of Gold

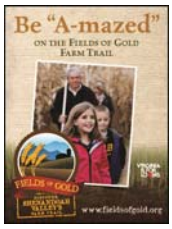
Member Portal

- Agritourism Resources
- Upcoming Trainings & Workshops
- Marketing & Promotional Materials
- Resource Partners
- Member Contact

Brochures & Rack Cards

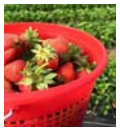
* Displayed in all member business locations and at member events, festivals, conferences and farmers markets.
- In several B&B, Inn, and Hotel establishments in each sub-region.
- In all of the tourist and visitors centers in the region.
- Displayed at various partner and stakeholder localities.

Fall Ad Campaign



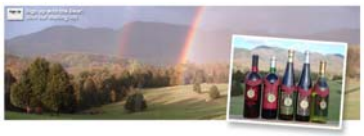
- This ad went out in the September 2015 Recreation News (hard copy, on-line version, e-blast)
- We have posted it to our FB page and plan to do so regularly throughout the campaign period.
- We have asked members to post it to their FB pages and/or to print it out and put it up in their businesses.
- This ad is displayed on our table at all conferences, festivals, markets and events.

Social Media



Vehicle by which we drive more potential Farm Trail visitors to:

* Our member events and businesses
* Our website
* Our Facebook page
* Instagram (Fieldsofgold_Farmtrail)
#shenvalleyfarmtrail



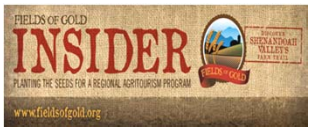
See you on the Farm Trail!

Press Releases

Insider Newsletter

- Quarterly, "members only" benefit
- Included:

Signature Events
Grow Your Agribusiness
Fields of Gold Toolkit
What's Fresh
Meet the Locals
Did You know?



Welcome to the Fields of Gold Insider!

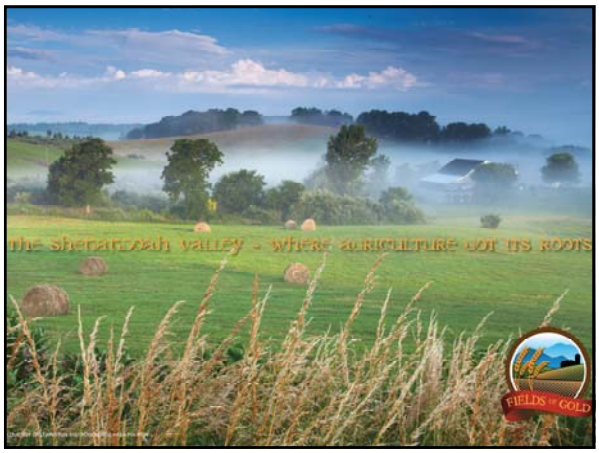
Fields of Gold Insider is a quarterly newsletter filled with information, opportunities and tips for growing your agritourism business.

Visitors Newsletter

- Monthly e-newsletter
- Aimed at potential tourists and visitors to the Trail
- Highlights 8 events or activities happening on the Trail that month
- Features a business and a Farmers Market

Volunteers

- Assist with booths at events and farmers markets
- Help out with social media
- Have helped us collect member photos for the "Meet the Locals" page on our website

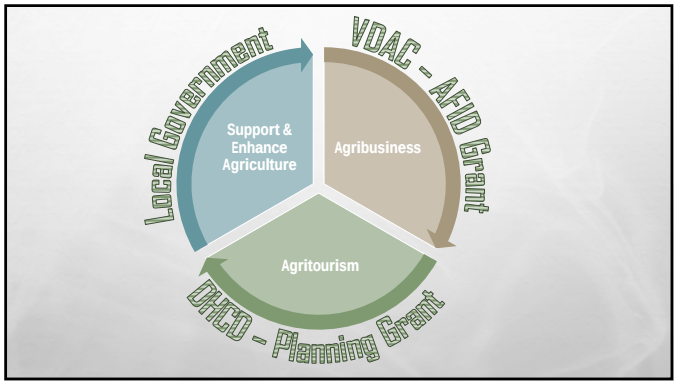

The Shenandoah Valley - Where Agriculture Got Its Roots
FIELDS OF GOLD

Any Questions?
Tracey Coltrain
tracey@cspdc.org
CSPDC
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
www.cspdc.org
www.fieldsofgold.org

NEW RIVER VALLEY
AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM
PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

NEW RIVER VALLEY
AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN

Elijah Sharp
NRV Regional Commission
esharp@nrvrc.org
540.639.9313



COLLABORATION – PRIMARY FUNDING

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Virginia DHCD	Giles County Virginia 1806	Montgomery County Virginia 1776	County of Pulaski Virginia
$35,000	$30,000	$11,667	$11,667	$11,667

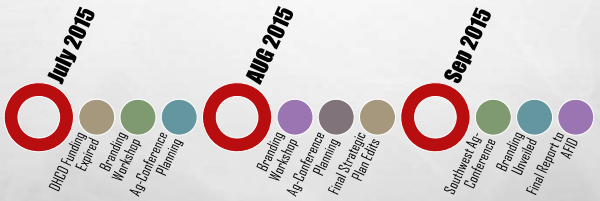
PROJECT TIMELINE

PROJECT TIMELINE
September 2014
Draft Strategic Plan
Management Team Review
November 2014
Draft Regional Assessment
Local Foods Directory
Steering Committee Input
December 2014
Regional Assessment
Top 5 Priorities
New Teams
SDI Fresh/ RDC MOU

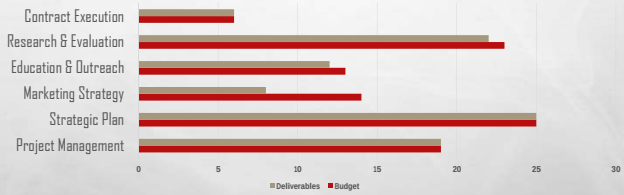
PROJECT TIMELINE
Jan. 2015
Management Team Meeting
Reimbursement #2
Feb. 2015
Management Team Meeting
Livability in Action
Team Marketing
Team Agritourism
Local Food Directory
March 2015
Steering Committee
Team Agritourism #2
Whole Farm Planning 1 & 2

PROJECT TIMELINE
Apr. 2015
State Ag Conference #4
Management Team Meeting
Farm Agritourism Plan of Work
Livestock Risk Management 3
May 2015
Draft Agritourism Plan of Work
Farm Management 1
NRV Practice Safety 4
NRV Meat Cooperative
June 2015
Draft Strategic Plan
4-H Livestock #2
Steering Committee
DRCD Final Report

PROJECT TIMELINE



BUDGET VS. GRANT DELIVERABLES



NRV MANAGEMENT TEAM STRATEGY

- IDENTIFY AGRICULTURE ASSETS IN COMMUNITY
- DEVELOP A PLAN OF WORK FOR AGRIBUSINESS
- DEVELOP A PLAN OF WORK FOR AGRITOURISM
- DEVELOP A BRAND/IDENTITY

AGRICULTURE IN VIRGINIA

- VIRGINIA'S LARGEST & OLDEST INDUSTRY
- $52 BILLION (ANNUALLY)
- 357,000 JOBS
- FACING A DECLINE OF MARKET VALUE

NOTE: DATA COURTESY OF VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, 2014.

AGRICULTURE IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

- BEEF AND FORESTRY/TIMBER = LARGEST SECTORS
- $60 MILLION (ANNUALLY)
- 1,426 FARMS
- 269,442 ACRES OF FARMLAND
- AVERAGE FARMER AGE = 57

NOTE: DATA COURTESY OF VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, 2014.

AGRIBUSINESS – PLAN OF WORK

- AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD(S)
- PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MEATS & PRODUCE
- SMALL PRODUCER NETWORK(S)
- OPPORTUNITIES FOR BEGINNING FARMERS
- WHOLE FARM PLANNING TEAMS

AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

WHAT: COUNTY-LEVEL, LINKED TO B.O.S.

OUTCOME: LINK LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO AG-COMMUNITY

TIMELINE: JUNE 2016

WHO: COUNTY ADMINISTRATION, B.O.S.

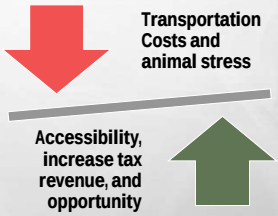
PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE

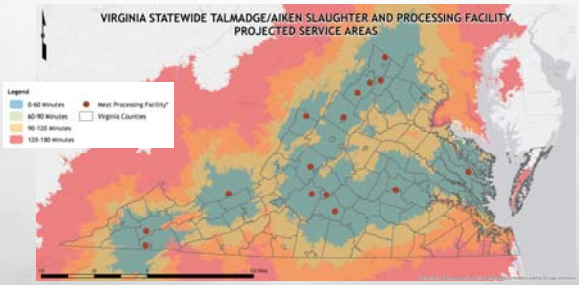
WHAT: PROCESSING FACILITY

OUTCOME: FACILITY PLAN, COST ANALYSIS, BUSINESS PLAN, & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

TIMELINE: JUNE 2018

WHO: ADB, VDACS, NRHRC&D, NRV MEAT COALITION, & DATA FROM LOCAL PARTNERS





PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE

Kelli H. Scott
Virginia Cooperative Extension – Montgomery County
Agriculture & Natural Resources
kescott1@vt.edu
540.382.5790

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

VIRGINIA Beginning Farmer & Rancher COALITION PROGRAM

Fresh!

AGRITOURISM IN VIRGINIA

DEFINED BY VIRGINIA CODE SECTION 3.2-6400: ANY ACTIVITY ON A FARM THAT ALLOWS MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC ON PROPERTY.

- GENERATED OVER $21.2 BILLION IN 2012
- TOURISM VISITORS:
  - 1.4 MILLION IN 2007
  - 2.3 MILLION IN 2012

NOTE: DATA COURTESY OF VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, 2014.

AGRITOURISM IN THE NRV

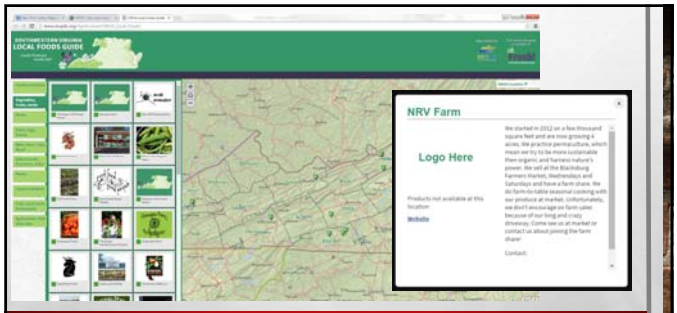
- CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARMS TO DIVERSIFY INCOME
  - ADDITIONAL EARNINGS HELP OFFSET LOSSES IN DIFFICULT GROWING SEASONS
- 47% OF VENUE USERS WILLING TO TRAVEL 30-60 MINUTES
- 65% SPEND $11-$30 AT EACH VENUE

NOTE: DATA COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TECH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED ECONOMICS, 2015. *EXPLORING CONSUMER INTEREST IN AGRITOURISM VENUES LOCATED IN THE NEW RIVER VALLEY.*

AGRITOURISM – PLAN OF WORK

- PLAN OF WORK
  - DEVELOP AND ENHANCE MARKETING STRATEGIES
  - INCREASE NUMBER OF FESTIVALS/EVENTS
  - CREATE AN INTERACTIVE WEB-BASED TOOL TO PROMOTE & GROW AGRITOURISM
  - PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
  - INCREASE ON-FARM DIRECT SALES OF LOCAL PRODUCTS

SOUTHWESTERN VIRGINIA
LOCAL FOODS GUIDE



INTERACTIVE WEB-BASED TOOLS

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT: EDUCATION PROGRAMS, NETWORKING, MARKETING, & SHARING RESOURCES

OUTCOME: PROGRAMS, SKILLED FARMERS, LOCAL FOOD BUYERS, & REFERENCE MATERIALS

TIMELINE: FEBRUARY 2016

WHO: VCE, VA BEGINNING FARMER, NRHRC&D, VDAC, SO FRESH, & LOCAL FARM COMMUNITY

Lisa Bleakley
Montgomery County Tourism Director
bleakleyts@montgomerycountyva.gov
540.394.2120

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- WHILE SPEAKING TO AGRITOURISTS AND LOCAL RESIDENTS, THE REGIONAL BRAND WILL ENCOURAGE STAKEHOLDERS TO COOPERATE IN BUILDING STRONG EXPERIENCES AND A LARGER AGRITOURISM ECONOMY.
- IDENTIFYING CONSUMER SEGMENTS & STRATEGIES

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- AGRITOURISM IS THRIVING IN VIRGINIA
  - NUMBER OF FARMS OFFERING SOME FORM OF AGRITOURISM HAS INCREASED 42% FROM 2007-2012
  - INCOME INCREASED $2.3M OVER SAME PERIOD
- NRV ACTIVITIES INCREASED 27%-400% (BY COUNTY)

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- CONSUMER SEGMENTS
  - 55% FEMALE
  - 67.8% LIVE IN NON-URBAN AREAS
  - 83% HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR BACHELOR'S DEGREE
  - 69% WILLING TO DRIVE 50 MILES EACH WAY

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- CONSUMER: "EAT LOCAL"
  - GREEN TREND
  - INTERESTED IN FOODS WITH LOCAL SOURCES
- CONSUMER: "DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER MARKETING"
  - CSA, U-PICK, FARMERS MARKET, ROADSIDE STANDS

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- CONSUMER: "FOODLE"
  - PEOPLE WHO ENJOY COOKING AND ENJOYING SUBTLE FLAVORS OF FOOD.
  - SEEK OUT FRESH AND DISTINCTIVE FOODS BOTH AT HOME AND WHEN DINING IN RESTAURANTS

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- CONSUMER: "HOMESTEADING"
  - MILLENNIAL LED
  - PREPARING FOOD, CLOTHES, AND FURNISHINGS THEMSELVES
- CONSUMER: "ORGANIC EATING"
  - VEGETARIANS AND OTHER SELECTIVE INDIVIDUALS

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- CONSUMER PROFILES, WHO'S INTERESTED:
  - UPSCALE OLDER/MIDDLE AGE WITH OR WITHOUT KIDS
  - COLLEGE EDUCATED
  - DUAL INCOMES
  - BUY LATEST TECHNOLOGY
  - ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

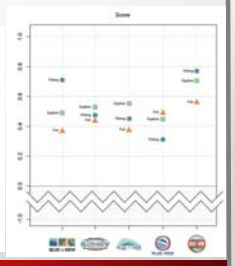
DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- NRV POPULATION: 179,000 RESIDENTS
- NRV MARKET: 50,984 MATCH WELL/TARGET CONSUMER
- VIRGINIA TECH/RADFORD UNIVERSITY VISITORS
- PASSING THROUGH I-81
- FLOYD-FESTERS: 12,000

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY

- COMMUNICATING EFFORTS OF THIS PROJECT WITH RACK CARD.

DEVELOPING OUR BRAND/IDENTITY



QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

VA AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY SECRETARIAT STRATEGIC FOCUS:

"BUILDING DOMESTIC CAPACITY, GROWING GLOBAL EXPORTS"

PLANNING FOR AN AGRICULTURE FUTURE IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY
TODD P. HAYMORE
SEPTEMBER 21, 2015

DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

- Economic Power of VA's Agricultural & Forestry Industries
- What We Did & Why We Did It
- Successes Achieved From Initiatives
- Where We Go From Here

STATEWIDE IMPACT OF FORESTRY & AG

- Two of Virginia's Largest Private Industries
- Economic Impact: $70b Revenue Annually
  - >$52b from Agriculture; >$17b from Forestry
- Provide >400k Jobs Via Production, Value-Added & Ripple Effect Industries
- More Than 10% of all VA Jobs; Every Industry Job Supports 1.5 Jobs Elsewhere

McDonnell 2010 Decision

- Full Integration of Ag, Forestry Industries into Economic Development, Jobs Creation Agenda
- First Governor in Modern VA History to Create Strategic Plan for State's Largest Industries
- VA Ranked "Best for Business" Already: Make State the Most Pro-Ag & Forestry in U.S.

McAuliffe Mandate

- "Do Everything Better Than You Did Before"
- "Break Every Record You Set Before"
- "This Is Just An Appetizer For What's To Come"
- "Make Virginia The Most Pro-Agribusiness and Forestry Industry State In U.S."
- "Make Virginia the East Coast Capital For Ag, Forestry Exports"
- "…You Can Sleep When You're Dead"

Secretariat Top Priorities

- Enhance Domestic Economic Development
  - Expand Existing Operations
  - Recruit New Businesses to Virginia
  - Build Domestic Capacity for New Exports
- Increase International Marketing & Exports
  - Expand Virginia's Global Footprint
  - Increase Exports to Key Growth Markets
  - New Exports Build Domestic Capacity

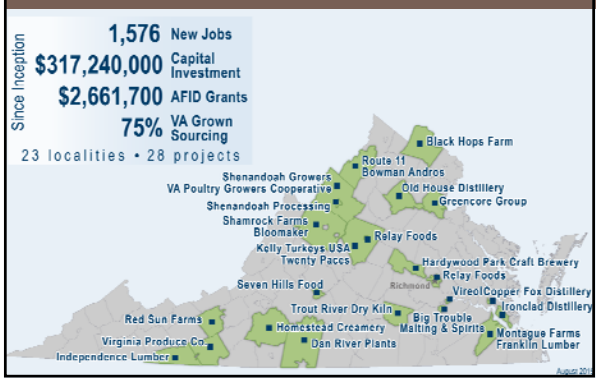
Domestic Development: New Capacity

- Governor's Agriculture & Forest Industries Development Fund (AFID)
  - Why? Ag, Forestry Were 'Falling Through Cracks'
  - Incentive Fund for Econ. Development, Planning
  - Use for Recruitment, Expansion of Businesses
  - Focus on Processing & Value-Added Projects
  - 30% 'VA Grown' Mandate Key for Ag Growth
  - No Export Directive, But Connections Are There

Domestic Development: New Capacity

- AFID Development Grants Launched in Late '12
  - 28 Projects To Date: 25 Agricultural, 3 Forestry
  - Private Investment: >$317 million
  - Jobs Announced: 1,576 Across 23 Localities
  - Average Use of Virginia Grown Products: 75%
  - AFID Facility Investment to Date: >$2.66m
- Current Economic Development 4 Mo. Pipeline
  - >$500k Allocated
  - 8 Projects, >$27m CapEx, >108 Jobs

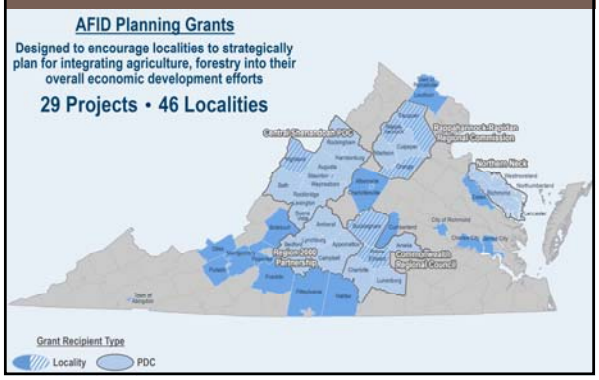
AFID Facility Grants



Domestic Development: New Capacity

- AFID Planning Grants Launched Spring '13
  - Assist Planning, Study, Local Initiative to Grow, Support Ag, Forestry-based Businesses
  - 29 Projects Covering 46 Localities
  - AFID Planning Investment to Date: >$590k
- Current Planning Grant 4 Month Pipeline
  - $100k Allocated
  - 5 Projects Covering10 Localities

AFID Planning Grants



Importance Of Ag, Forestry Exports

- Globalized Economy: Jobs, Opportunities Here
- USDA: Exports Now Generate Nearly 30% of Annual Farm, Forest Cash Receipts
- USDA: Every $1.00 From Exports Returns ~$1.30 To In-State Support Activities: Processing, Packaging, Financing, Shipping, Storing, etc.
- Export Related Jobs Pay ≥15% Than Other Jobs
- >80% of World's Customers Outside of U.S.

Growing Export Markets

- Launch VA Ag/Forestry Export Initiative in 2010
- New State Funds for Trade Reps in Key Markets
  - >$3m in International Marketing Since '10
  - New Marketing Offices: China, India, UK, Russia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Canada; Support Existing HK Post
- Gubernatorial, Secretariat Trade Missions, Alone or Coordinated w/VEDP
- VDACS Trade Missions/Hosted Reverse Missions
  - Fill Gaps Where Governor, Secretary Can't Visit
  - Reverse Missions: "Invaluable" For Producers, Exporters

Growing Export Markets

- More Than $750m in VA Facilitated Export Deals Since Initiative Launched in 2010
- Solid Growth in Strategic Focus Regions
  - China: >125%; India: >90%; Mexico, Latin America: >250%; EU, CHE, Russia: >100%; Canada: >25%
- Battling Artificial International Trade Barriers
  - China: Hardwood Logs, Poultry*
  - India: Lumber, Leaf Tobacco
  - EU: Wood Pellets
  - Morocco: Soybean Oil
- Creating Governor's Conference on Ag Trade

Growing Export Markets

- McAuliffe '14 SOTC Address: "Make VA the East Coast Capital for Ag, Forestry Exports"
  - '15 SOTC: Record $3.35 Billion Exports in 2014
  - ≥49% Growth in Ag, Forestry Export Value Since '10
    - From $2.25b in 2010 to $3.35b in 2014
- Advocating Fair/Open Trade Practices
  - Trans-Pacific Partnership; Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership
- Facilitate New Export Opportunities
  - Expand Existing Markets, Target Growth Regions: SE Asia; Mediterranean/Middle East; Cuba

Virginia's Top A/F Export Markets

- China, $691m
- Canada, $279m
- Switzerland, $174m
- Mexico, $150m
- Russia, $123m
- Japan, $114m
- United Kingdom, $110m
- Venezuela, $103m
- Morocco, $98m
- Indonesia, $94m
- Vietnam, $88m
- Tunisia, $84m
- Saudi Arabia, $83m
- Taiwan, $80m
- Dom. Rep., $67m
- Turkey, $58m
- Hong Kong, $52m
- Netherlands, $47m
- Thailand, $46m
- Jamaica, $45m

Virginia's Top A/F Exports

- Soybeans, $794m
- Wood, $326m
- Soy Meal, $305m
- Pork, $258m
- Leaf Tobacco, $204m
- Poultry, $195m
- Processed Food & Beverages, $169m
- Soy Oil, $150m
- Corn, $146m
- Wheat, $123m
- Animal Feed, $118m
- Wood Fuel, $114m
- Seafood, $35m
- Raw Peanuts, $30m
- Cotton, $24m
- Animal Fats, $22m

Secretariat 2015 & Beyond Emphasis

- Meet Governor's East Coast Capital for Ag, Forestry Exports Goal; Build "New VA Economy"
- Facilitate New Export Opportunities
  - Move from "Building to Utilizing" Global Network; Add to Existing Infrastructure?
  - Trade Missions, Reverse Trade Missions
  - Examine Targeted Growth Regions, Commodities
- Promote Domestic Development = New Capacity
- Increase Port Utilization, Development Efforts

2015 Trade Missions

- Gubernatorial Missions
  - Europe – United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Others?
  - Asia – India, China?
  - Middle East – Kuwait?, Qatar?, Oman?, UAE?
  - Latin America – Cuba, Others?
  - Canada
- Secretariat, VDACS Lead Missions
  - China, Japan, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Philippines, France, Spain, Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Others?
- Reverse Trade Missions
  - Delegations from China, Japan, Canada, Europe, Others?

Future Targeted Growth Regions

- Southeast Asia
  - Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand
  - Fast Growing, Reasonably Stable Markets
  - $305m in VA Ag, Forestry Exports in 2014
  - Up >15% Over Last Two Years; Region Led by Indonesia, Vietnam
  - Lumber, Logs, Peanuts, Containerized Soy, Other Feed Products Fueling Growth

Future Targeted Growth Regions

- Mediterranean, North Africa, Middle East
  - Turkey, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Oman
  - Lucrative, Volatile, Politically Sensitive Markets
  - >$340m in VA Ag Exports in 2014
  - Region Up 30% in 2014 vs. 2013
  - Soy Oil Exports Fueling Growth; Up 60% '14 v. '13
  - Corn, Other Grains, Poultry Gaining Status

Building Domestic Capacity

- Continue Growing AFID Facilities, Planning Grant Program: $500k in New Resources
- Increased Exports: Building Domestic Capacity
- Other Emerging Opportunities:
  - Craft Beer, Distilled Spirits, Cider
  - Industrial Hemp Production
  - Agri-tourism: Wineries, Pick-Your-Own, etc.
  - Agricultural Biotechnology

Port Utilization, Development

- Partner w/Transportation Secretary, VPA to Promote "State's Top Asset" Here, Abroad
- Support Existing Agribusiness Growth Efforts
- Recruit New A/F Businesses, Related Industries
- Turn Non, Under-Utilized Port Terminals, Facilities into Working Assets
- New Investments in Working Assets
  - VA, Agri-biz, Railroads, Related Support Companies

Conclusion

- Infrastructure for Continued Growth, Successes In Place for Virginia Agriculture, Forestry Sectors:
  - Top Quality Producers, Products, A/F Businesses
  - Ag, Forestry Industries Integrated Into Commonwealth's Overall Economic Development, Strategic Planning: New Virginia Economy
  - Governor Fully Committed to Building on Existing Network, Successes of Previous Administration

Conclusion

- *Infrastructure for Continued Growth, Successes In Place for Virginia Agriculture, Forestry Sectors:*
  - *Global Trade Office Network; Add New Regions?*
  - *World-Class Port System; Potentially Expanding?*
  - *Governor's AFID Fund Building Capacity*
  - *Commitment to New Production, Sustainability*
  - *Virginia "Best for Business" Rankings, Reputation*

Conclusion

Questions?

Todd P. Haymore
Secretary of Agriculture & Forestry
(804) 692-2511

On-Farm Local Food Sales: The Basics

Joell Eifert
Director, Food Innovations Program
Department of Food Science and Technology
Virginia Tech
Virginia Cooperative Extension

Before You Get Started

- Check your zoning laws
- Plan for your business
- Understand your market and food you want to produce for that market
- Get familiar with the correct regulations and exemptions
- Get inspected if required

Check Your Zoning Laws

- May not be able to conduct business as you wish
- Make sure you are zoned for business activities
- Some towns/cities/counties do not allow home-based businesses even if allowed by state regulation

Plan for Your Business

- Develop a business plan
  - Needed for funding
- Write a marketing plan
- Where to sell
- How to advertise
- Who to target
- Check on your competition
- Consider the current trends

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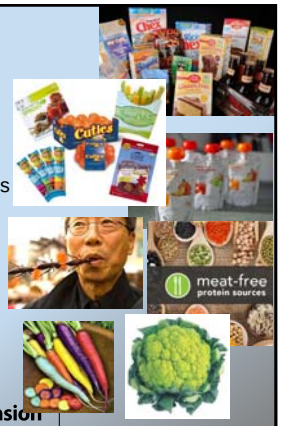
2015 Trends



- Going local/artisanal
- Green/Eco-friendly
- Alternate Proteins
- Gluten-free
- Fermented/Brined/Pickled Foods
- Healthy Definition Change
  - Low Calorie/Heart Healthy
  - Fresh
  - Simple Ingredients
  - Humane/Sustainable
- On-the-go Healthy
- Produce hybrids

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Who Regulates What?

- U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) - Production and distribution of meat (2% or greater), poultry (2% or greater) and whole eggs
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) - Production and distribution of all other non-meat packaged food
- States/local governments
  - Virginia Department of Agriculture (VDACS)
    - Inspection program considered “at least equal to” USDA (meat) and FDA (non-meat) inspection programs
  - Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
    - Operates under FDA Food Code (Currently 2009 version)
    - Local jurisdictions may have more stringent codes

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Who Regulates What: VA Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)

- Food Manufacturers
- Commercial
- Home
- Food Warehouses
- Supermarkets and Convenience Stores
- Seafood markets
- Bakeries
- Farmer's Markets Vendors (Overseen by local and state government)

Who Regulates What: VA Department of Health (VDH)

- **Restaurants**
- **Catering Operation**
  - **Trucks and mobile units**
- **Carts and mobile units**
- **Bed and Breakfasts**
- **Delis (Not attached to Store)**
- **Convenience Store Delis**
  - **Greater than 15 seats**
  - **Associated with a national chain**
- **Private Farmer's Markets (Usually only inspect mobile units and foods needing temperature control for safety)**

Home-based Kitchens or Separate Commercial Kitchen?

- VDACS
  - Allows home-based businesses
    - **Pets must be excluded by doors on kitchen and storage areas (Keeping pets in closed rooms will not satisfy requirement)**
  - Does not allow home kitchens to be used for dairy product or meat products manufacturing
    - Facility must be separate facility from home kitchen
- VDH
  - Does not allow home-based businesses
  - Must be separate facility from homeowner's kitchen

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
www.vdacs.virginia.gov

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VDACS Resources

- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)

  www.vdacs.virginia.gov
  - Office of Food Safety and Inspection
    - Assists in facility planning and layout
    - Authorizes facility for food processing
    - Enforces food regulations
    - Divisions include:
      - Dairy and Foods (FDA-regulated products)
      - Meat and Poultry (USDA- regulated products) Officer
      - Consumer Affairs
  - Office of Plant Industry Services-Agricultural Commodity Inspection – Animal Feeds and Treats

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VDACS Resources

- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
  - Office of Marketing Services
    - Virginia's Finest Trademark Program
      - Contact Olivia Wilson at olivia.wilson@vdacs.virginia.gov or call toll-free 800.284.9452
      - VDACS
        Virginia's Finest Trademark Program
        102 Governor Street
        Richmond, VA 23219
    - Virginia Grown Program – direct marketing program for growers
    - Marketing Board News
    - Trade Event Notification
    - Grading Services
    - Connecting with Food Distributors

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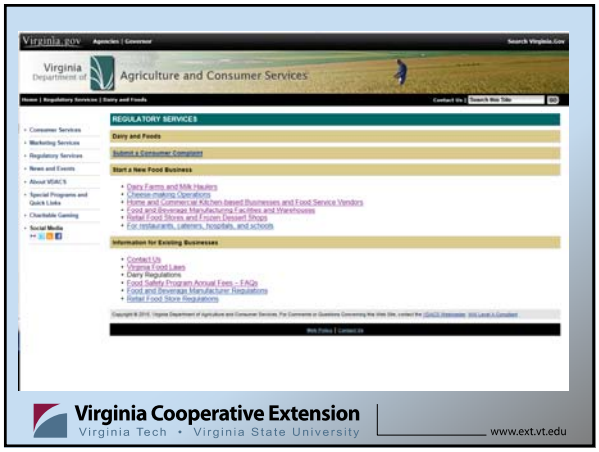

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Office of Dairy and Foods Inspection Exemption

- Private home where resident is processing specific food products (no meat, poultry or dairy)
  - Sold to individuals for their own consumption and **not for resale**
  - Sold at the private home or at farmer's markets
  - Labeled "NOT FOR RESALE – PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION"
  - Cannot be sold to other establishments (wholesale or retail) or on internet

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Office of Meat and Poultry Exemptions

- Custom Exemption
  - Owner of the livestock or poultry slaughter for own use or for use by members of his household or nonpaying guests
  - Cannot be sold
  - Must be marked "NOT FOR SALE"
  - Custom Permit – custom slaughtering animals owned by others
  - Cannot cross state lines
- No meat (only poultry) can be sold without inspection!

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Office of Meat and Poultry Exemptions

- Poultry Exemption
  - Poultry can be sold wholesale
    - ***FDA Food Code requires poultry sold at retail stores and prepared in restaurants to come from an approved source***
  - Basic sanitary requirements must be met
  - Selling direct to consumer:
    - 1,000 birds up to 20,000 birds/year must apply for Poultry Permit of Exemption
    - Less than 1,000 birds permit may not be needed
    - Must maintain records
  - Selling to restaurants, hotels, or boarding houses
    - Must apply for Poultry Permit of Exemption
    - No more than 20,000 birds/year
    - Must maintain records
  - Cannot cross state lines

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Office of Meat and Poultry Exemptions

- Retail Store Exemption
  - Meat and poultry products can be further processed in retail stores for sale to household consumers, hotels, or restaurants, or similar institutions
    - *All meat processed for sale in a retail store must have been passed by either federal (USDA/FSIS) or Virginia state inspection (VDACS OMPS)*
      - ***Process limited to cut-up of already slaughtered product under inspection***
    - *Poultry sold in a retail store must have been passed by either federal (USDA/FSIS), Virginia state inspection (VDACS OMPS), or been received from a business that has a Virginia Poultry Permit of Exemption*

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Office of Meat and Poultry Exemptions

- Restaurant Exemption
  - Meat and poultry products can be prepared in restaurants for sale or service in meals or as entrees directly sold to individual consumers at the establishment.
  - Applies to caterer which delivers or serves product in meals or as entrees only to individual consumers.
    - *All meat prepared at the restaurant/caterer must have been passed by either federal (USDA/FSIS) or Virginia state inspection (VDACS OMPS).*
    - *Poultry prepared at the restaurant/caterer must have been passed by either federal (USDA/FSIS), Virginia state inspection (VDACS OMPS), or been received from a business that has a Virginia Poultry Permit of Exemption.*

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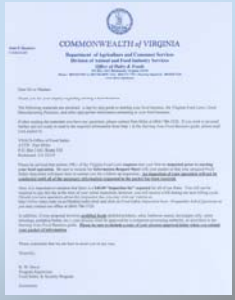
Starting Your Food Business: Submitting Business and Food Information to VDACS

- Information on website under:
  - Regulatory Services/Office of Dairy and Foods
  - Home and Commercial Kitchen-based Businesses and Food Service Vendors
- Provides name (Lisa Ramsey – Roanoke) and contact information of person responsible for reviewing packets
- Fee: $40


COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Starting Your Food Business Packet Instructions

- Step-by-step guide on how to complete packet
- Send in two complete copies of your packet for review

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Coming into Compliance

- After completed packet is received, a Food Safety Specialist will arrange a visit to your establishment.
- The Food Safety Specialist for your area will check to ensure that you are meeting the requirements.
- Review the information you submitted before the Food Safety Specialist visits your establishment.

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Current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP's)

- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR - Title 21; Part 110)
- **Fundamental to food safety**
- Topics
  - Personnel
  - Plant and Grounds
  - Sanitary operations
  - Equipment and Utensils
  - Processes and Controls
  - Warehousing and Distribution

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Regulations for Retail Food Products

- Low Acid Canned Foods
  - 21 CFR Part 113
- Acidified Canned Foods
  - 21 CFR Part 114
  - Emergency Permit Control (21 CFR 108.25)
- Meat and Poultry
  - 9 CFR Parts 300-592

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Other Regulation and Laws

- Virginia Food Law – 2013 Edition
- HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) Safety Plan
  - Meat – mandatory for wholesale
  - Juice – mandatory for wholesale
  - Seafood – mandatory for wholesale
  - Dairy - voluntary
  - Retail – may be required to produce foods that require a variance

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Preparation Practices That Have Special Requirements

- You need a variance if prepping food in these ways:
  - Packaging fresh juice on-site for sale at a later time, unless the juice has a warning label
  - Smoking food to preserve it but not to enhance flavor
  - Using food additives or components to preserve or alter food so it no longer needs time and temperature control for safety
  - Curing food
  - Fermenting Food

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Preparation Practices That Have Special Requirements

You need a variance if prepping food in these ways:

- Packaging food using a reduced-oxygen packaging (ROP) method
- Sprouting seeds or beans
- Offering live shellfish from a display tank
- Custom-processing animals for personal use (i.e. dressing a deer)

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Produce Safety Course for Direct Marketers

Offered by Extension Agents Across the Commonwealth

Considerations for Marketing Food

- Low-risk foods
  - Baked goods without fillings, custards, creams, etc.
  - Candies
  - Jams and jellies made without low-acid ingredients
  - Dry mixes
  - Naturally acidic foods

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Understanding Your Food

- Food
- Acidity
- Time
- Temperature
- Oxygen
- ❖**Moisture**

Water Activity (Aw)
The amount of water available to microorganisms to use for growth and survival.

If water activity is used to control microbial growth, the value should be 0.85 or lower.

Common ways to lower water activity:
- **Salt**
- **Sugar**
- **Dehydration**
- **Boiling off water**

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Considerations for Food Product and Regulation Implication

- **Canned foods**
  - Acid foods
    - Ingredients are high-acid foods with pH less than 4.6
    - Not as many regulations as acidified foods
    - Considered low risk foods
    - If not processed correctly, product will spoil but will not be a safety issue

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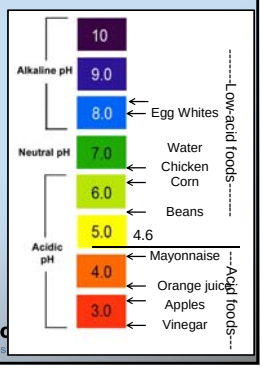
Safety Considerations

- Food
- ❖**Acidity**

  pH= amount of acid
  Low acid foods = pH > 4.6
- Time
- Temperature
- Oxygen
- Moisture



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Why Acidity is the most important factor when it comes to canning?

- ***Clostridium botulinum***
  - Spore-former: spores in the environment
    - Can't make you sick
    - Infant botulism
  - ONLY under anaerobic conditions (commonly created during preservation), spores germinate (grow) into vegetative cells
  - Vegetative cells produce toxin that cause illness
  - Spores will not germinate in acid environment with pH below 4.6

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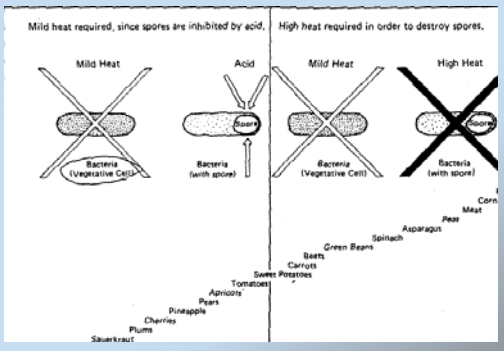

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Considerations for Food Product and Regulation Implication

- **Acidified foods**
  - Low acid foods + acid foods = pH $\leq$ 4.6
  - pH is decreased to $\leq$ 4.6 through the addition of acidity

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Considerations for Food Product and Regulation Implication

- **I want to sell low-acid foods!**
  - **Cannot sell low-acid canned foods.**
  - **Can sell frozen or refrigerated low-acid foods.**
  - **Can sell acidified foods**

NO!

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Considerations for Food Product and Regulation Implication

- Acidified Foods - Wholesale
  - ✓ Food Tested by Process Authority, Obtain Scheduled Process
  - ✓ Better Process Control School
  - ✓ Register Business with FDA (Form 2541)
  - ✓ Register Scheduled Process with FDA (Form 2541a)
  - ✓ Must Pass State Inspection Before Selling Product Wholesale
  - ✓ Must Keep Written Records

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Understanding Your Food

- How are you supposed to know? Get your food tested
  - pH
  - Water activity
  - Classification and regulations
  - Scheduled process

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A Word About the Incredible Edible Egg….

- Virginia Egg Laws and Rules
  - *The term "fresh eggs," or any legend, symbol, picture, representation or device declaring or tending to convey the impression that the eggs are fresh may be applied only to eggs meeting the requirements of grade A quality or better as established by the Board for fresh eggs.*
  - Grades have nothing to do with food safety, this is a marketing service
  - Certain heirloom breed chicken eggs, duck and quail eggs do not grade well

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A Word About the Incredible Edible Egg….

- When Selling Eggs:
  - Inside carton air must be 45° F or below
    - Recommend using cooler with white lid
    - Recommend using thermometer and keep records
  - Can re-use cartons – must obliterate grading information if eggs are not graded
  - Label must include:
    - ✓Egg Type
    - ✓Count
    - ✓Producer and producer address
    - ✓Pack Date
    - ✓Safe handling instructions (can keep from re-used carton)

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Virginia Department of Health (VDH) www.vdh.virginia.gov

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VDH Responsibilities

- **Issue Permit to Operate at State/Local Level**
- **As condition of holding permit:**
  - **Must submit to regular evaluations by issuer**
  - **Must comply with local/state regulations**
  - **Report to health dept. if suspect outbreak**
- **Provide education or direct to resources**
- **Notify if conditions arise that could affect operation**
- **Initiate enforcement**

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How to Apply for a Foodservice Permit and Ready for Inspection

- Fill out an application form
- Pay a $40 permit application
  - $40 plan review fee
  - $425 for septic review
  - $300 for well inspection
- Learn about food safety
- Plan Review : At least 2 weeks prior to construction start up-submit to scale drawings, equipment specification sheets and menu

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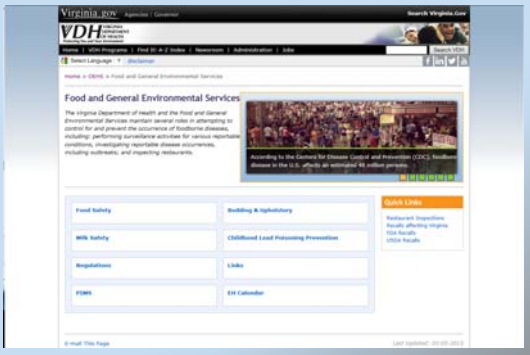

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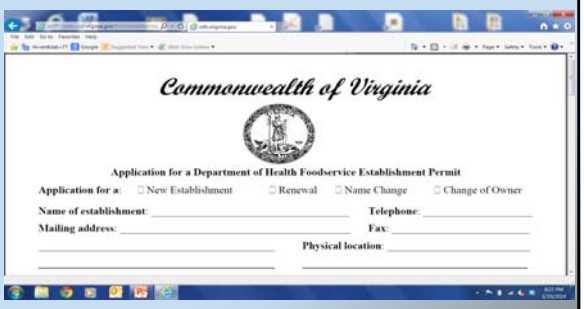

Commonwealth of Virginia

Application for a Department of Health Foodservice Establishment Permit

Application for a: ☐ New Establishment ☐ Renewal ☐ Name Change ☐ Change of Owner

Name of establishment: _____ Telephone: _____

Mailing address: _____ Fax: _____

Physical location: _____

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Who needs to apply for a permit to operate?

- Any person who owns, establishes, conducts, maintains, manages, or operates any food establishment being regulated by VDH in this commonwealth.
- All permits shall be in the name of the owner or lessee.
- Permits shall not be issued to newly constructed or extensively remodeled facilities until a CO is issued by the local building official
- Permits are not transferable from one person or location to another (exception possible for mobile units attached to fixed location)

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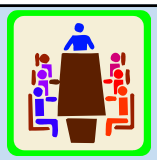

Person In Charge (PIC)

Must demonstrate food safety knowledge through:

- Complying with Code by having no violations of priority items during the current inspection
- Being a certified food protection manager who has shown proficiency of required information through passing a test that is part of an accredited program; or
- Responding correctly to the inspector's questions as they relate to the specific food operation.

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VDH Basic Requirements

- Hand washing sinks
- 3 compartment sink
- Utility sink
- Cold holding (refrigerators/freezers)
- Cooking equipment
- Ventilation
- Hot Holding Equipment
- Smooth & Cleanable Surfaces
- Dish machines **(optional: must be commercial grade)**
- Knowledge of Food Safety (ServSafe for example)

Food Sources

Food Code States:

- Food shall be obtained from sources that comply with law.
- Food prepared in a private home may not be used or offered for human consumption in a food establishment.
- Packaged food shall be labeled as specified in law.

ServSafe
National Restaurant Association

- Learn about foodborne illness and how to prevent it through best food safety practices
- Offered throughout commonwealth by Virginia Cooperative Extension Agents
- Offered on-line

Let's Talk about a Few Definitions….

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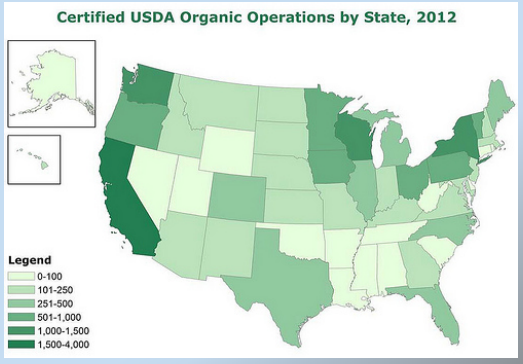

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Organic Definitions

- USDA certified organic products have strict production and labeling requirements
  - 100% Organic
    - All ingredients must be certified organic
    - Process must be certified organic
    - Product label must name certifying agency
  - Organic
    - All agricultural ingredients must be certified organic
    - Non-organic ingredient allowed per National list (no more than 5% excluding water and salt)
    - Product label must name certifying agency

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Organic Definitions

- "Made with" Organic
  - Certified organic ingredients must make up at least 70% product (must specifically state on label which ingredients or ingredient categories are organic)
    - Example: "Made with organic fruit and cinnamon"
  - Cannot use "Made with Organic Ingredients"
  - All other agricultural products must be produce by acceptable methods
  - All non-agricultural products must be allowed by National List
  - Cannot use USDA organic seal

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Organic Definitions

- "Made with" Specific Organic Ingredients
  - Certified organic ingredients make up at less than 70% product
  - Specific ingredients are certified organic (must specifically state on label which ingredients are organic)
    - Example: "Made with organic blueberries"
  - Remaining ingredients are not required to follow organic regulations
  - Cannot use USDA organic seal

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Jane's Muffin Mix

Made with organic wheat flour and sugar!

Ingredients: Organic enriched wheat flour (wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), organic cane sugar, blueberries, baking soda, salt, cream of tartar, cinnamon.
Distributed by Jane's Foods, Inc.
Certified Organic By John Doe Certification, Inc.

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Organic Small Business Exemption

- Gross agricultural income from organic sales cannot exceed $5000/year
- Do not need to be certified in order to sell, label or represent your product as organic
  - Do not need a written plan but must follow all other requirements of USDA organic regulation
  - Maintain records for at least three years to show organic practices
  - May not use the USDA organic seal on your products or refer to them as certified organic
  - Must meet other USDA organic labeling requirements
  - May not sell your products as ingredients for use in someone else's certified organic product.

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Natural Definition

- FDA has "declined" to define natural as a term
  - FDA has issued a non-binding guidance defining "Natural" to mean "nothing artificial or synthetic (including all color additives regardless of source)
  - Courts have held that determining whether foods containing GMOs can make "Natural" claims is an issue best determined by FDA expertise (FDA has declined to make determination)
  - No federal law, regulation or other requirement requires special labeling of bioengineered ingredients as not "natural."

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Local Definition

- No consensus on "local" definition
- Less agreement on defining on geographical terms
  - 2008 Farm Act Definition: end-point purchase is within 400 miles from its origin
  - Others groups narrow distance
- More agreement on marketing arrangement terms
  - Farmers selling directly to consumers at regional farmers' markets or to schools
  - Minimizing distance between producer and consumer

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Food Innovations Program

www.fst.vt.edu

www.ext.vt.edu/topics/food-health/food-innovations

- Provide testing of food products for safety and quality
- Act as process authority for acidified foods (accepted by FDA, USDA, VDH and VDACS)
- Conduct Better Process Control School workshops required for acidified food producers
- Provide guidance on reformulation and product design
- Provide technical guidance on safety and regulatory issues governing food products
- Assist with compliance with regulatory agencies
- Nutritional Label Services

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Process Authority

- Based on regulations, a person or institution with expert knowledge and experience to make determinations about the safety of a food process and formulation.
- Required to maintain product confidentiality
- Determines safety of processing parameters based on food product characteristics

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Questions?

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Planning For Agritourism, Local Permitting for Farm Enterprises (Part 1)

Presented by
James E. Cornwell, Jr., Esq.
Sands Anderson PC
P.O. Box 2009
Christiansburg, VA 24068
Phone 540-260-9011

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 64. Agritourism Activity Liability

- **§ 3.2-6400. Definitions.**
- As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:
- "Agricultural products" means any livestock, aquaculture, poultry, horticultural, floricultural, viticulture, silvicultural, or other farm crops.
- "Agritourism activity" means any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity.
- "Agritourism professional" means any person who is engaged in the business of providing one or more agritourism activities, whether or not for compensation.
- "Farm or ranch" means one or more areas of land used for the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting or processing of agricultural products.
- "Inherent risks of agritourism activity" mean those dangers or conditions that are an integral part of an agritourism activity including certain hazards, including surface and subsurface conditions; natural conditions of land, vegetation, and waters; the behavior of wild or domestic animals; and ordinary dangers of structures or equipment ordinarily used in farming and ranching operations. Inherent risks of agritourism activity also include the potential of a participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to the participant or others, including failing to follow instructions given by the agritourism professional or failing to exercise reasonable caution while engaging in the agritourism activity.
- "Participant" means any person, other than an agritourism professional, who engages in an agritourism activity.

Permits Which May Be Needed For The Establishment or Operation of A Business

- Building Permit
- Business License
- Sales Tax
- Health Regulation
- Zoning
- Environmental Regulation
- E & S Permit
- Liability Issues

NOT ALL INCLUSIVE

COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE
Department of Community Development
401 McIntire Road, Room 237
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596

Phone (434) 296-5832 Fax (434) 972-4126

Parcel # _____

EXEMPTION OF FARM BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES FROM THE VIRGINIA UNIFORM STATEWIDE BUILDING CODE

In accordance with Section 101.4 of the September 15, 2000 amendment to the 1996 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (Va. USBC), farm buildings or structures are exempt from regulation by the Va. USBC. As such, the Building Code Office requires no inspections, and none will be performed. Also, issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy is not required, and none will be issued.

Farm Building Structure:

A farm building or structure is any structure, not used for residential purposes, located on a farm, which is utilized primarily for a) the storage, handling, production, display, sampling, or sale or agricultural, horticultural, floricultural, or silvicultural products produced on the farm, or b) slaughtering, raising, handling, processing or sale of agricultural animals or agricultural animal products; or c) business or office uses related to the farm operations, or d) use of farm machinery or equipment, or maintenance or storage of vehicles, machinery equipment of the farm; or e) storage or use of supplies and materials used on the farm; or f) implementation of the best management practices associated with farm operations.

A building or a portion of a building located on a farm is operated as a restaurant as defined in Section 35.1-1 of the Code of Virginia and licensed as such by the Board of Health under Chapter 2 (Section 35.1-11 et seq.) of the Title 35.1 of the Code of Virginia is not exempt from regulation by the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.

Farm:

A farm is a tract, or plot, of land devoted to agricultural purposes, or to the raising of animals or livestock; or a tract of water devoted to the artificial cultivation of aquatic life.

I/We have read and understand the above, and affirm that the structure proposed to be built qualifies as a farm building or structure.

Owner: _____ Date: _____

Co-Owner: _____ Date: _____

Updated 12/15/05

Code of Virginia
Title 58.1. Taxation
Chapter 37. License Taxes

- **§ 58.1-3703. Counties, cities and towns may impose local license taxes and fees; limitation of authority.**
- C. No county, city, or town shall impose a license fee or levy any license tax:
  - 2. For selling farm or domestic products or nursery products, ornamental or otherwise, or for the planting of nursery products, as an incident to the sale thereof, outside of the regular market houses and sheds of such county, city or town, provided such products are grown or produced by the person offering them for sale;
  - 5. On a person engaged in the business of severing minerals from the earth for the privilege of selling the severed mineral at wholesale at the place of severance, except as provided in §§ 58.1-3712 and 58.1-3713.

Code of Virginia
Title 58.1. Taxation
Chapter 6. Retail Sales and Use Tax

- **§ 58.1-609.2. Agricultural exemptions.**
- The tax imposed by this chapter or pursuant to the authority granted in §§ 58.1-605 and 58.1-606 shall not apply to the following:
- 1. Commercial feeds; seeds; plants; fertilizers; liming materials; breeding and other livestock; semen; breeding fees; baby chicks; turkey poults; rabbits; quail; llamas; bees; agricultural chemicals; fuel for drying or curing crops; baler twine; containers for fruit and vegetables; farm machinery; medicines and drugs sold to a veterinarian provided they are used or consumed directly in the care, medication, and treatment of agricultural production animals or for resale to a farmer for direct use in producing an agricultural product for market; tangible personal property, except for structural construction materials to be affixed to real property owned or leased by a farmer, necessary for use in agricultural production for market and sold to or purchased by a farmer or contractor; and agricultural supplies provided the same are sold to and purchased by farmers for use in agricultural production, which also includes beekeeping and fish, quail, rabbit and worm farming for market.
- 2. Every agricultural commodity or kind of seafood sold or distributed by any person to any other person who purchases not for direct consumption but for the purpose of acquiring raw products for use or consumption in the process of preparing, finishing, or manufacturing such agricultural or seafood commodity for the ultimate retail consumer trade, except when such agricultural or seafood commodity is actually sold or distributed as a marketable or finished product to the ultimate consumer. "Agricultural commodity," for the purposes of this subdivision, means horticultural, poultry, and farm products, livestock and livestock products, and products derived from bees and beekeeping.
- 3. Livestock and livestock products, poultry and poultry products, and farm and agricultural products, when produced by the farmer and used or consumed by him and the members of his family.

Code of Virginia
Title 58.1. Taxation
Chapter 6. Retail Sales and Use Tax *(Continued)*

- 4. Machinery, tools, equipment, materials or repair parts therefor or replacement thereof; fuel or supplies; and fishing boats, marine engines installed thereon or outboard motors used thereon, and all replacement or repair parts in connection therewith; provided the same are sold to and purchased by watermen for use by them in extracting fish, bivalves or crustaceans from waters for commercial purposes.
- 5. Machinery or tools or repair parts therefor or replacements thereof, fuel, power, energy or supplies, and cereal grains and other feed ingredients, including, but not limited to, drugs, vitamins, minerals, nonprotein nitrogen, and other supplements or additives, used directly in making feed for sale or resale. Making of feed shall include the mixing of liquid ingredients.
- 6. Machinery or tools and repair parts therefor or replacements thereof, fuel, power, energy or supplies, used directly in the harvesting of forest products for sale or for use as a component part of a product to be sold. Harvesting of forest products shall include all operations prior to the transport of the harvested product used for (i) removing timber or other forest products from the harvesting site, (ii) complying with environmental protection and safety requirements applicable to the harvesting of forest products, (iii) obtaining access to the harvesting site, and (iv) loading cut timber or other forest products onto highway vehicles for transportation to storage or processing facilities.
- 7. Agricultural produce, as defined in § 3.2-4738, and eggs, as described in § 3.2-5305, raised and sold by an individual at local farmers markets and roadside stands, when such individual's annual income from such sales does not exceed $1,000.

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 51. Food and Drink

- **§ 3.2-5130. Inspections required to operate food establishment.**
- A. It is unlawful to operate a food manufacturing plant, food storage warehouse, or retail food store until it has been inspected by the Commissioner. This section shall not apply to:
- 1. Food manufacturing plants operating under a grant of inspection from the Office of Meat and Poultry Services or a permit from the Office of Dairy and Foods in the Department; and Grade A fluid milk manufacturing plants and shellfish and crustacea processing plants operating under a permit from the Virginia Department of Health;
- 2. Nonprofit organizations holding one-day food sales;
- 3. Private homes where the resident processes and prepares candies, jams, and jellies not considered to be low-acid or acidified low-acid food products, dried fruits, dry herbs, dry seasonings, dry mixtures, coated and uncoated nuts, vinegars and flavored vinegars, popcorn, popcorn balls, cotton candy, dried pasta, dry baking mixes, roasted coffee, dried tea, cereals, trail mixes, granola, and baked goods that do not require time or temperature control after preparation if such products are: (i) sold to an individual for his own consumption and not for resale; (ii) sold at the private home or at farmers markets; (iii) not offered for sale to be used in or offered for consumption in retail food establishments; (iv) not offered for sale over the Internet or in interstate commerce; and (v) affixed with a label displaying the name, physical address, and telephone number of the person preparing the food product, the date the food product was processed, and the statement "NOT FOR RESALE -- PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION" shall be placed on the principal display panel. Nothing in this subdivision shall create or diminish the authority of the Commissioner under § 3.2-5102;

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- 4. Private homes where the resident processes and prepares pickles and other acidified vegetables that have an equilibrium pH value of 4.6 or lower if such products are (i) sold to an individual for his own consumption and not for resale; (ii) sold at the private home or at farmers markets; (iii) not offered for sale to be used in or offered for consumption in retail food establishments; (iv) not offered for sale over the Internet or in interstate commerce; (v) affixed with a label displaying the name, physical address, and telephone number of the person preparing the food product, the date the food product was processed, and the statement "NOT FOR RESALE -- PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION" shall be placed on the principal display panel; and (vi) not exceeding $3,000 in gross sales in a calendar year. Nothing in this subdivision shall create or diminish the authority of the Commissioner under § 3.2-5102;
- 5. Private homes where the resident processes and prepares honey produced by his own hives, if: (i) the resident sells less than 250 gallons of honey annually; (ii) the resident does not process and sell other food products in addition to honey, except as allowed by subdivisions 3 and 4; (iii) the product complies with the other provisions of this chapter; and (iv) the product is labeled "PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION. WARNING: Do Not Feed Honey to Infants Under One Year Old." Nothing in this subdivision shall increase or diminish the authority of the Commissioner under § 3.2-5102; and
- 6. Retail establishments that (i) do not prepare or serve food; (ii) sell only food or beverages that are sealed in packaging by the manufacturer and have been officially inspected in the manufacturing process; (iii) do not sell infant formulas; (iv) do not sell salvaged foods; and (v) certify to the Department that they meet the provisions of this subdivision.
- B. Nonprofit organizations, private homes, and retail establishments that qualify for an exception under subsection A shall be exempt from inspection and the inspection fees. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Department from inspecting any nonprofit organization, private home, or retail establishment if a consumer complaint is received.
- C. Any person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 47. Sale of Farm Produce

- **§ 3.2-4738. Definitions.**
- As used in this article, unless the context requires a different meaning:
- "Agricultural produce" means fruits and vegetables.
- "Bond" means a bond executed by a surety company licensed to do business in the Commonwealth.
- "Buying brokerage transaction" means a transaction in which the dealer acts as agent for the grower in the purchase of agricultural produce at the day's price for the agricultural produce purchased in the transaction.
- "Cash buyer" means any person who obtains from the producer, or his representative, title, possession or control of any agricultural produce or contracts for the title, possession or control of any agricultural produce, and who buys any agricultural produce by paying to the producer at the time of obtaining possession or control, or at the time of contracting for the title, possession or control of any agricultural produce, the agreed price of such agricultural produce in coin or currency, certified checks, cashier's checks or drafts issued by a bank.
- "Consignment" means any transfer of agricultural produce by the seller to the custody of another person who acts as the agent for the seller for the purpose of selling such agricultural produce.
- "Day's price" means the market price of any agricultural produce on a given day as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and published by the Division.

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 47. Sale of Farm Produce *(Continued)*

- "Dealer" means any person who buys, sells, solicits for sale, processes for sale or resale, resells, exchanges, negotiates, purchases or contracts for processing or transfers any agricultural produce of a producer. The term shall exclude: (i) any person operating solely on a commission basis in Virginia as a licensed commission merchant under the provisions of Article 2 of this chapter; (ii) farmers or groups of farmers selling agricultural produce grown by them; (iii) any person who operates strictly as a cash buyer; (iv) any processor who processes agricultural produce within Virginia; and (v) any person who buys agricultural produce for wholesale or retail in Virginia.
- "Grower's agent transaction" means a transaction or series of transactions in which the dealer agrees to sell the entire crop produced by one grower during one season, at a price to be agreed upon between the dealer and the grower.
- "Joint account transactions" means a transaction between a dealer and grower in which the dealer pays the grower based on the price for which the agricultural produce sells in relation to the price agreed upon between the dealer and grower.
- "Processor" means any person operating any plant in the Commonwealth that freezes, dehydrates, cans, or otherwise changes the physical form or characteristics of agricultural produce.
- "Producer" means any person who produces agricultural produce in Virginia.

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 47. Sale of Farm Produce

- **§ 3.2-4739. License required; application for license and license fee; license renewals; list of dealers.**
- A. Every dealer shall obtain a license to operate and conduct business.
- B. Such persons shall on or before May 1 of each year file a written application for a license with the Commissioner for the licensing year of May 1 to April 30. Each dealer shall pay a license fee of $50 per licensing year. Each license shall expire on April 30 of the licensing year for which the license was issued. The license shall be valid through May 31 of the next licensing year or until issuance of the renewal license, whichever occurs first, if the holder shall have filed a renewal application and a new bond or a continuation certificate continuing his current bond with the Commissioner on or before April 30 of the licensing year for which the Commissioner issued the license Any dealer proposing to transact business within the Commonwealth who fails to file such written application for a license and pay the licensing fee on or before May 1 shall pay a $50 late fee in addition to the license fee. Any person who engages in business as a dealer before obtaining a license shall be subject to a $250 penalty, in addition to the license fee and the late fee.
- C. The application for a license shall be on a form furnished or approved by the Commissioner and shall contain the following information along with such other information as the Commissioner shall require on the form:
- 1. The name and address of the applicant and that of its local agent, if any, and the location of its principal place of business within the Commonwealth;
- 2. The kinds of agricultural produce the applicant proposes to handle; and
- 3. The type of produce business proposed to be conducted.
- D. Each licensee shall renew his licenses on or before May 1 of each year for the licensing year May 1 to April 30. The licensee shall make application to the Commissioner on a form furnished or approved by the Commissioner and the licensee is subject to the provisions of subsection B.
- E. The Commissioner may publish a list of dealers licensed under this article.

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 3. Right to Farm

- **§ 3.2-300. Definitions.**
- As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:
- "Agricultural operation" means any operation devoted to the bona fide production of crops, or animals, or fowl including the production of fruits and vegetables of all kinds; meat, dairy, and poultry products; nuts, tobacco, nursery, and floral products; and the production and harvest of products from silviculture activity.
- "Production agriculture and silviculture" means the bona fide production or harvesting of agricultural or silvicultural products but shall not include the processing of agricultural or silvicultural products or the above ground application or storage of sewage sludge.

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 3. Right to Farm

- **§ 3.2-301. Right to farm; restrictive ordinances.**
- In order to limit the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed to be a nuisance, especially when nonagricultural land uses are initiated near existing agricultural operations, no locality shall adopt any ordinance that requires that a special exception or special use permit be obtained for any production agriculture or silviculture activity in an area that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification. Localities may adopt setback requirements, minimum area requirements, and other requirements that apply to land on which agriculture and silviculture activity is occurring within the locality that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification. No locality shall enact zoning ordinances that would unreasonably restrict or regulate farm structures or farming and forestry practices in an agricultural district or classification unless such restrictions bear a relationship to the health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens. This section shall become effective on April 1, 1995, and from and after that date all land zoned to an agricultural district or classification shall be in conformity with this section.

Code of Virginia
Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 3. Right to Farm

- **§ 3.2-302. When agricultural operations do not constitute nuisance.**
- A. No agricultural operation or any of its appurtenances shall be or become a nuisance, private or public, if such operations are conducted in accordance with existing best management practices and comply with existing laws and regulations of the Commonwealth. The provisions of this section shall not apply whenever a nuisance results from the negligent or improper operation of any such agricultural operation or its appurtenances.
- B. The provisions of subsection A shall not affect or defeat the right of any person to recover damages for any injuries or damages sustained by them on account of any pollution of, or change in condition of, the waters of any stream or on the account of any overflow of lands of any such person.
- C. Any and all ordinances of any unit of local government now in effect or hereafter adopted that would make the operation of any such agricultural operation or its appurtenances a nuisance or providing for abatement thereof as a nuisance in the circumstance set forth in this section are and shall be null and void. The provisions of this section shall not apply whenever a nuisance results from the negligent or improper operation of any such agricultural operation or any of its appurtenances.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning

- **§ 15.2-2283. Purpose of zoning ordinances.**
- Zoning ordinances shall be for the general purpose of promoting the health, safety or general welfare of the public and of further accomplishing the objectives of § 15.2-2200. To these ends, such ordinances shall be designed to give reasonable consideration to each of the following purposes, where applicable: (i) to provide for adequate light, air, convenience of access, and safety from fire, flood, impounding structure failure, crime and other dangers; (ii) to reduce or prevent congestion in the public streets; (iii) to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community; (iv) to facilitate the provision of adequate police and fire protection, disaster evacuation, civil defense, transportation, water, sewerage, flood protection, schools, parks, forests, playgrounds, recreational facilities, airports and other public requirements; (v) to protect against destruction of or encroachment upon historic areas; (vi) to protect against one or more of the following: overcrowding of land, undue density of population in relation to the community facilities existing or available, obstruction of light and air, danger and congestion in travel and transportation, or loss of life, health, or property from fire, flood, impounding structure failure, panic or other dangers; (vii) to encourage economic development activities that provide desirable employment and enlarge the tax base; (viii) to provide for the preservation of agricultural and forestal lands and other lands of significance for the protection of the natural environment; (ix) to protect approach slopes and other safety areas of licensed airports, including United States government and military air facilities;

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning *(Continued)*

- (x) to promote the creation and preservation of affordable housing suitable for meeting the current and future needs of the locality as well as a reasonable proportion of the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated; and (xi) to provide reasonable protection against encroachment upon military bases, military installations, and military airports and their adjacent safety areas, excluding armories operated by the Virginia National Guard. Such ordinance may also include reasonable provisions, not inconsistent with applicable state water quality standards, to protect surface water and ground water as defined in § 62.1-255.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning

- **§ 15.2-2284. Matters to be considered in drawing and applying zoning ordinances and districts.**
- Zoning ordinances and districts shall be drawn and applied with reasonable consideration for the existing use and character of property, the comprehensive plan, the suitability of property for various uses, the trends of growth or change, the current and future requirements of the community as to land for various purposes as determined by population and economic studies and other studies, the transportation requirements of the community, the requirements for airports, housing, schools, parks, playgrounds, recreation areas and other public services, the conservation of natural resources, the preservation of flood plains, the protection of life and property from impounding structure failures, the preservation of agricultural and forestal land, the conservation of properties and their values and the encouragement of the most appropriate use of land throughout the locality.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning

- **§ 15.2-2288. Localities may not require a special use permit for certain agricultural activities.**
- A zoning ordinance shall not require that a special exception or special use permit be obtained for any production agriculture or silviculture activity in an area that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification. For the purposes of this section, production agriculture and silviculture is the bona fide production or harvesting of agricultural products as defined in § 3.2-6400, including silviculture products, but shall not include the processing of agricultural or silviculture products, the above ground application or storage of sewage sludge, or the storage or disposal of nonagricultural excavation material, waste and debris if the excavation material, waste and debris are not generated on the farm, subject to the provisions of the Virginia Waste Management Act. However, localities may adopt setback requirements, minimum area requirements and other requirements that apply to land used for agriculture or silviculture activity within the locality that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification. Nothing herein shall require agencies of the Commonwealth or its contractors to obtain a special exception or a special use permit under this section.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning

- **§ 15.2-2288.6. Agricultural operations; local regulation of certain activities.**
- A. No locality shall regulate the carrying out of any of the following activities at an agricultural operation, as defined in § 3.2-300, unless there is a substantial impact on the health, safety, or general welfare of the public:
- 1. Agritourism activities as defined in § 3.2-6400;
- 2. The sale of agricultural or silvicultural products, or the sale of agricultural-related or silvicultural-related items incidental to the agricultural operation;
- 3. The preparation, processing, or sale of food products in compliance with subdivisions A 3, 4, and 5 of § 3.2-5130 or related state laws and regulations; or
- 4. Other activities or events that are usual and customary at Virginia agricultural operations.
- Any local restriction placed on an activity listed in this subsection shall be reasonable and shall take into account the economic impact of the restriction on the agricultural operation and the agricultural nature of the activity.
- B. No locality shall require a special exception, administrative permit not required by state law, or special use permit for any activity listed in subsection A on property that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification unless there is a substantial impact on the health, safety, or general welfare of the public.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning *(Continued)*

- C. Except regarding the sound generated by outdoor amplified music, no local ordinance regulating the sound generated by any activity listed in subsection A shall be more restrictive than the general noise ordinance of the locality. In permitting outdoor amplified music at an agricultural operation, the locality shall consider the effect on adjoining property owners and nearby residents.
- D. The provisions of this section shall not affect any entity licensed in accordance with Chapter 2 (§ 4.1-200 et seq.) of Title 4.1. Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the provisions of Chapter 3 (§ 3.2-300 et seq.) of Title 3.2, to alter the provisions of § 15.2-2288.3, or to restrict the authority of any locality under Title 58.1.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning

- **§ 15.2-2307.1. Protection of established commercial fishing operations.**
- Registered commercial fishermen and seafood buyers who operate their businesses from their waterfront residences shall not be prohibited by a locality from continuing their businesses, notwithstanding the provisions of any local zoning ordinance. This section shall only apply to businesses that have been in operation by the current owner, or a family member of the current owner, for at least 20 years at the location in question. The protection granted by this section shall continue so long as the property is owned by the current owner or a family member of the owner.

Code of Virginia
Title 10.1. Conservation
Chapter 11. Forest Resources and the Department of Forestry

- **§ 10.1-1126.1. Silvicultural practices; local government authority limited.**
- A. Forestry, when practiced in accordance with accepted silvicultural best management practices as determined by the State Forester pursuant to § 10.1-1105, constitutes a beneficial and desirable use of the Commonwealth's forest resources.
- B. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, silvicultural activity, as defined in § 10.1-1181.1, that (i) is conducted in accordance with the silvicultural best management practices developed and enforced by the State Forester pursuant to § 10.1-1105 and (ii) is located on property defined as real estate devoted to forest use under § 58.1-3230 or in a district established pursuant to Chapter 43 (§ 15.2-4300 et seq.) or Chapter 44 (§ 15.2-4400 et seq.) of Title 15.2, shall not be prohibited or unreasonably limited by a local government's use of its police, planning and zoning powers. Local ordinances and regulations shall not require a permit or impose a fee for such silvicultural activity. Local ordinances and regulations pertaining to such silvicultural activity shall be reasonable and necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of citizens residing in the locality, and shall not be in conflict with the purposes of promoting the growth, continuation and beneficial use of the Commonwealth's privately owned forest resources. Prior to the adoption of any ordinance or regulation pertaining to silvicultural activity, a locality may consult with, and request a determination from, the State Forester as to whether the ordinance or regulation conflicts with the purposes of this section. Nothing in this section shall preclude a locality from requiring a review by the zoning administrator, which shall not exceed ten working days, to determine whether a proposed silvicultural activity complies with applicable local zoning requirements.

Code of Virginia
Title 10.1. Conservation *(Continued)*
Chapter 11. Forest Resources and the Department of Forestry

- C. The provisions of this section shall apply to the harvesting of timber, provided that the area on which such harvesting occurs is reforested artificially or naturally in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 11 (§ 10.1-1100 et seq.) of Title 10.1 or is converted to bona fide agricultural or improved pasture use as described in subsection B of § 10.1-1163.
- The provisions of this section shall not apply to land that has been rezoned or converted at the request of the owner or previous owner from an agricultural or rural to a residential, commercial or industrial zone or use.
- Nothing in this section shall affect any requirement imposed pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) or imposed by a locality pursuant to the designation of a scenic highway or Virginia byway in accordance with §§ 33.2-405 through 33.2-408.

DEQ
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

- **Agriculture**
- There are several programs within the DEQ that involve the agricultural community. In addition, DEQ partners with other state and federal agencies to deliver ag-related programs. These agencies include the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service (VCES), the VA Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Environmental protection related to Virginia's agricultural activities is achieved through a combination of regulatory and voluntary programs.
- **Animal Feeding Operations/ Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations**
- DEQ Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) Programs
- EPA CAFO Rule
- **Animal Mortality**
- DEQ On-Site Composting of Routine Animal Mortality
- DEQ On-Site Burial of Routine Animal Mortality
- VCES On Farm Mortality Disposal Options for Livestock Producers
- VCES Composting for Mortality Disposal on Hog Farms
- **Biosolids**
- Biosolids Land Application Program
- **Water Reuse**
- Water Reclamation and Reuse Program
- **Clean Water Financing & Assistance**
- Low Interest Loans for Agricultural Best Management Practices
- **Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)**
- TMDL Program

  Guidance Manual for TMDL Implementation Plans
- **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**
- VA NRCS Programs
- NRCS Available Technical Resources
- **Virginia Cooperative Extension Service (VCES)**
- On-Farm Composting
- **Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)**
- Agricultural Stewardship Program (ASA)
- **Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)**
- Nutrient Management Program (NMP)

  Agricultural BMP Cost Share and Tax Credit Programs (BMP)

LINK:
Http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/LandApplicationBeneficialReuse/Agriculture.aspx

Code of Virginia
Title 58.1. Taxation
Chapter 32. Real Property Tax

- **§ 58.1-3230. Special classifications of real estate established and defined.**
- For the purposes of this article the following special classifications of real estate are established and defined:
- "Real estate devoted to agricultural use" shall mean real estate devoted to the bona fide production for sale of plants and animals useful to man under uniform standards prescribed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), or devoted to and meeting the requirements and qualifications for payments or other compensation pursuant to a soil conservation program under an agreement with an agency of the federal government. Prior, discontinued use of property shall not be considered in determining its current use. Real estate upon which recreational activities are conducted for a profit or otherwise shall be considered real estate devoted to agricultural use as long as the recreational activities conducted on such real estate do not change the character of the real estate so that it does not meet the uniform standards prescribed by the Commissioner. Real property that has been designated as devoted to agricultural use shall not lose such designation solely because a portion of the property is being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or otherwise allowed by zoning, provided that the property, excluding such portion, otherwise meets all the requirements for such designation. The portion of the property being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or otherwise allowed by zoning shall be deemed a separate piece of property from the remaining property for purposes of assessment. The presence of utility lines on real property shall not be considered in determining whether the property, including the portion where the utility lines are located, is devoted to agricultural use. In determining whether real property is devoted to agricultural use, zoning designations and special use permits for the property shall not be the sole considerations.

Code of Virginia
Title 58.1. Taxation
Chapter 32. Real Property Tax *(Continued)*

- "Real estate devoted to horticultural use" shall mean real estate devoted to the bona fide production for sale of fruits of all kinds, including grapes, nuts, and berries; vegetables; and nursery and floral products under uniform standards prescribed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), or real estate devoted to and meeting the requirements and qualifications for payments or other compensation pursuant to a soil conservation program under an agreement with an agency of the federal government. Prior, discontinued use of property shall not be considered in determining its current use. Real estate upon which recreational activities are conducted for profit or otherwise shall be considered real estate devoted to horticultural use as long as the recreational activities conducted on such real estate do not change the character of the real estate so that it does not meet the uniform standards prescribed by the Commissioner. Real property that has been designated as devoted to horticultural use shall not lose such designation solely because a portion of the property is being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or otherwise allowed by zoning, provided that the property, excluding such portion, otherwise meets all the requirements for such designation. The portion of the property being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or otherwise allowed by zoning shall be deemed a separate piece of property from the remaining property for purposes of assessment. The presence of utility lines on real property shall not be considered in determining whether the property, including the portion where the utility lines are located, is devoted to horticultural use. In determining whether real property is devoted to horticultural use, zoning designations and special use permits for the property shall not be the sole considerations.

Code of Virginia
Title 58.1. Taxation
Chapter 32. Real Property Tax *(Continued)*

- "Real estate devoted to forest use" shall mean land, including the standing timber and trees thereon, devoted to tree growth in such quantity and so spaced and maintained as to constitute a forest area under standards prescribed by the State Forester pursuant to the authority set out in § 58.1-3240 and in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.). Prior, discontinued use of property shall not be considered in determining its current use. Real estate upon which recreational activities are conducted for profit, or otherwise, shall still be considered real estate devoted to forest use as long as the recreational activities conducted on such real estate do not change the character of the real estate so that it no longer constitutes a forest area under standards prescribed by the State Forester pursuant to the authority set out in § 58.1-3240. Real property that has been designated as devoted to forest use shall not lose such designation solely because a portion of the property is being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or is otherwise allowed by zoning, provided that the property, excluding such portion, otherwise meets all the requirements for such designation. The portion of the property being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or otherwise allowed by zoning shall be deemed a separate piece of property from the remaining property for purposes of assessment. The presence of utility lines on real property shall not be considered in determining whether the property, including the portion where the utility lines are located, is devoted to forest use. In determining whether real property is devoted to forest use, zoning designations and special use permits for the property shall not be the sole considerations.

Code of Virginia
Title 58.1. Taxation
Chapter 32. Real Property Tax *(Continued)*

- "Real estate devoted to open-space use" shall mean real estate used as, or preserved for, (i) park or recreational purposes, including public or private golf courses, (ii) conservation of land or other natural resources, (iii) floodways, (iv) wetlands as defined in § 58.1-3666, (v) riparian buffers as defined in § 58.1-3666, (vi) historic or scenic purposes, or (vii) assisting in the shaping of the character, direction, and timing of community development or for the public interest and consistent with the local land-use plan under uniform standards prescribed by the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation pursuant to the authority set out in § 58.1-3240 and in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) and the local ordinance. Prior, discontinued use of property shall not be considered in determining its current use. Real property that has been designated as devoted to open-space use shall not lose such designation solely because a portion of the property is being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or is otherwise allowed by zoning, provided that the property, excluding such portion, otherwise meets all the requirements for such designation. The portion of the property being used for a different purpose pursuant to a special use permit or otherwise allowed by zoning shall be deemed a separate piece of property from the remaining property for purposes of assessment. The presence of utility lines on real property shall not be considered in determining whether the property, including the portion where the utility lines are located, is devoted to open-space use. In determining whether real property is devoted to open-space use, zoning designations and special use permits for the property shall not be the sole considerations.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 43. Agricultural and Forestal Districts Act

- **§ 15.2-4312. Effects of districts.**
- A. Land lying within a district and used in agricultural or forestal production shall automatically qualify for an agricultural or forestal use-value assessment pursuant to Article 4 (§ 58.1-3229 et seq.) of Chapter 32 of Title 58.1, if the requirements for such assessment contained therein are satisfied. Any ordinance adopted pursuant to § 15.2-4303 shall extend such use-value assessment and taxation to eligible real property within such district whether or not a local ordinance pursuant to § 58.1-3231 has been adopted.
- B. No local government shall exercise any of its powers to enact local laws or ordinances within a district in a manner which would unreasonably restrict or regulate farm structures or farming and forestry practices in contravention of the purposes of this chapter unless such restrictions or regulations bear a direct relationship to public health and safety. The comprehensive plan and zoning and subdivision ordinances shall be applicable within said districts, to the extent that such ordinances are not in conflict with the conditions to creation or continuation of the district set forth in the ordinance creating or continuing the district or the purposes of this chapter. Nothing in this chapter shall affect the authority of the locality to regulate the processing or retail sales of agricultural or forestal products, or structures therefor, in accordance with the local comprehensive plan or any local ordinances. Local ordinances, comprehensive plans, land use planning decisions, administrative decisions and procedures affecting parcels of land adjacent to any district shall take into account the existence of such district and the purposes of this chapter.

Code of Virginia
Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
Chapter 43. Agricultural and Forestal Districts Act *(Continued)*

- C. It shall be the policy of all agencies of the Commonwealth to encourage the maintenance of farming and forestry in districts and all administrative regulations and procedures of such agencies shall be modified to this end insofar as is consistent with the promotion of public health and safety and with the provisions of any federal statutes, standards, criteria, rules, regulations, or policies, and any other requirements of federal agencies, including provisions applicable only to obtaining federal grants, loans or other funding.
- D. No special district for sewer, water or electricity or for nonfarm or nonforest drainage may impose benefit assessments or special tax levies on the basis of frontage, acreage or value on land used for primarily agricultural or forestal production within a district, except a lot not exceeding one-half acre surrounding any dwelling or nonfarm structure located on such land. However, such benefit assessment or special ad valorem levies may continue if imposed prior to the formation of the district.

Code of Virginia
Title 62.1. Waters of the State, Ports and Harbors
Chapter 3.1. State Water Control Law

- **§ 62.1-44.15:51. Definitions.**
- "Land-disturbing activity" means any man-made change to the land surface that may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediments into state waters or onto lands in the Commonwealth, including, but not limited to, clearing, grading, excavating, transporting, and filling of land, except that the term shall not include:
- 1. Minor land-disturbing activities such as home gardens and individual home landscaping, repairs, and maintenance work;
- 2. Individual service connections;
- 3. Installation, maintenance, or repair of any underground public utility lines when such activity occurs on an existing hard surfaced road, street, or sidewalk, provided the land-disturbing activity is confined to the area of the road, street, or sidewalk that is hard surfaced;
- 4. Septic tank lines or drainage fields unless included in an overall plan for land-disturbing activity relating to construction of the building to be served by the septic tank system;
- 5. Permitted surface or deep mining operations and projects, or oil and gas operations and projects conducted pursuant to Title 45.1;
- 6. Tilling, planting, or harvesting of agricultural, horticultural, or forest crops, livestock feedlot operations, or as additionally set forth by the Board in regulation, including engineering operations as follows: construction of terraces, terrace outlets, check dams, desilting basins, dikes, ponds, ditches, strip cropping, lister furrowing, contour cultivating, contour furrowing, land drainage, and land irrigation; however, this exception shall not apply to harvesting of forest crops unless the area on which harvesting occurs is reforested artificially or naturally in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 11 (§ 10.1-1100 et seq.) of Title 10.1 or is converted to bona fide agricultural or improved pasture use as described in subsection B of § 10.1-1163;

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- 7. Repair or rebuilding of the tracks, rights-of-way, bridges, communication facilities, and other related structures and facilities of a railroad company;
- 8. Agricultural engineering operations, including but not limited to the construction of terraces, terrace outlets, check dams, desilting basins, dikes, ponds not required to comply with the provisions of the Dam Safety Act (§ 10.1-604 et seq.), ditches, strip cropping, lister furrowing, contour cultivating, contour furrowing, land drainage, and land irrigation;
- 9. Disturbed land areas of less than 10,000 square feet in size or 2,500 square feet in all areas of the jurisdictions designated as subject to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations; however, the governing body of the program authority may reduce this exception to a smaller area of disturbed land or qualify the conditions under which this exception shall apply;
- 10. Installation of fence and sign posts or telephone and electric poles and other kinds of posts or poles;
- 11. Shoreline erosion control projects on tidal waters when all of the land-disturbing activities are within the regulatory authority of and approved by local wetlands boards, the Marine Resources Commission, or the United States Army Corps of Engineers; however, any associated land that is disturbed outside of this exempted area shall remain subject to this article and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto; and
- 12. Emergency work to protect life, limb, or property, and emergency repairs; however, if the land-disturbing activity would have required an approved erosion and sediment control plan, if the activity were not an emergency, then the land area disturbed shall be shaped and stabilized in accordance with the requirements of the VESCP authority.

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Title 3.2. Agriculture, Animal Care, and Food
Chapter 64. Agritourism Activity Liability

- **§ 3.2-6400. Definitions.**
- As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:
- "Agricultural products" means any livestock, aquaculture, poultry, horticultural, floricultural, viticulture, silvicultural, or other farm crops.
- "Agritourism activity" means any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity.
- "Agritourism professional" means any person who is engaged in the business of providing one or more agritourism activities, whether or not for compensation.
- "Farm or ranch" means one or more areas of land used for the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting or processing of agricultural products.
- "Inherent risks of agritourism activity" mean those dangers or conditions that are an integral part of an agritourism activity including certain hazards, including surface and subsurface conditions; natural conditions of land, vegetation, and waters; the behavior of wild or domestic animals; and ordinary dangers of structures or equipment ordinarily used in farming and ranching operations. Inherent risks of agritourism activity also include the potential of a participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to the participant or others, including failing to follow instructions given by the agritourism professional or failing to exercise reasonable caution while engaging in the agritourism activity.
- "Participant" means any person, other than an agritourism professional, who engages in an agritourism activity.

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- **§ 3.2-6401. Liability limited; liability actions prohibited.**
- A. Except as provided in subsection B, an agritourism professional is not liable for injury to or death of a participant resulting from the inherent risks of agritourism activities, so long as the warning contained in § 3.2-6402 is posted as required and, except as provided in subsection B, no participant or participant's representative is authorized to maintain an action against or recover from an agritourism professional for injury, loss, damage, or death of the participant resulting exclusively from any of the inherent risks of agritourism activities; provided that in any action for damages against an agritourism professional for agritourism activity, the agritourism professional shall plead the affirmative defense of assumption of the risk of agritourism activity by the participant.
- B. Nothing in subsection A shall prevent or limit the liability of an agritourism professional if the agritourism professional does any one or more of the following:
- 1. Commits an act or omission that constitutes negligence or willful or wanton disregard for the safety of the participant, and that act or omission proximately causes injury, damage, or death to the participant;
- 2. Has actual knowledge or reasonably should have known of a dangerous condition on the land or in the facilities or equipment used in the activity, or the dangerous propensity of a particular animal used in such activity and does not make the danger known to the participant, and the danger proximately causes injury, damage, or death to the participant; or
- 3. Intentionally injures the participant.
- C. Any limitation on legal liability afforded by this section to an agritourism professional is in addition to any other limitations of legal liability otherwise provided by law.

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- **§ 3.2-6402. Warning required.**
- A. Every agritourism professional shall post and maintain signs that contain the warning notice specified in subsection B. The sign shall be placed in a clearly visible location at the entrance to the agritourism location and at the site of the agritourism activity. The warning notice shall consist of a sign in black letters, with each letter to be a minimum of one inch in height. Every written contract entered into by an agritourism professional for the providing of professional services, instruction, or the rental of equipment to a participant, whether or not the contract involves agritourism activities on or off the location or at the site of the agritourism activity, shall contain in clearly readable print the warning notice specified in subsection B.
- B. The signs and contracts described in subsection A shall contain the following notice of warning:
- "WARNING: Under Virginia law, there is no liability for an injury to or death of a participant in an agritourism activity conducted at this agritourism location if such injury or death results from the inherent risks of the agritourism activity. Inherent risks of agritourism activities include, among others, risks of injury inherent to land, equipment, and animals, as well as the potential for you to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to your injury or death. You are assuming the risk of participating in this agritourism activity."
- C. Failure to comply with the requirements concerning warning signs and notices provided in this section shall prevent an agritourism professional from invoking the privileges of immunity provided by this chapter.

AGRITOURISM

- AS WE DISCUSSED, AGRICULTURE AND AGRITOURISM IS PROTECTED AND ENCOURAGED BY THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF EXCEPTIONS AND PROHIBITIONS TO LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS THAT WOULD NORMALLY APPLY TO OTHER BUSINESSES.
- WHEN CONSIDERING THE BEGINNING, CONTINUATION OR EXPANSION OF ANY ACTIVITY OF A BUSINESS NATURE, CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN TO WHETHER THE ACTIVITY QUALIFIES UNDER THE APPLICABLE DEFINITIONS ESTABLISHED IN THE CODE OF VIRGINIA AS AN EXEMPT OR PROTECTED ACTIVITY.
- GUIDANCE ON THOSE ISSUES CAN BE OBTAINED THROUGH LOCAL OFFICIALS, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, OR, IF ALL ELSE FAILS, CALL AN ATTORNEY. ☺

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