



Small Farm Outreach Program

About Us



The VSU Small Farm Outreach Program (SFOP) was established in 1986 as a pilot project with 5 staff and became a program in 1991. Since then it has grown to over 35 staff, including Program Director, Assistant Director, Field Coordinator, Regional and State Program Assistant, Hispanic Coordinator, Veteran Coordinator, Program & Grant Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, Field Tech, & Student Interns.

Our Mission:

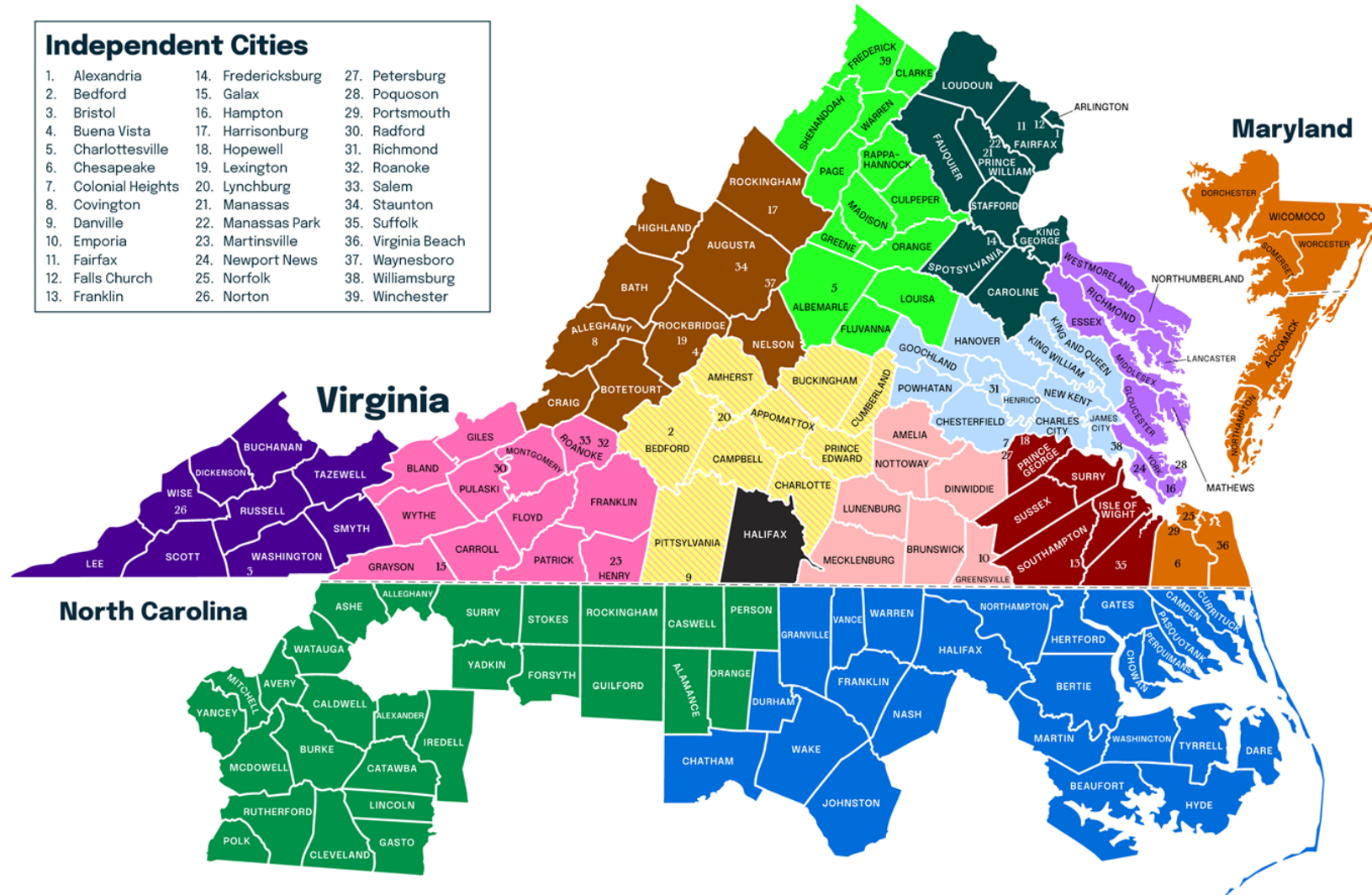
The Mission of SFOP is to provide Outreach, Training and Technical Assistance to small, limited resourced, socially disadvantaged, veteran and beginning farmers and ranchers, so they can make informed decisions about their farm operations.

SFOP Territories Map

Contact Our Program Assistants

Independent Cities

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Alexandria | 14. Fredericksburg | 27. Petersburg |
| 2. Bedford | 15. Galax | 28. Poquoson |
| 3. Bristol | 16. Hampton | 29. Portsmouth |
| 4. Buena Vista | 17. Harrisonburg | 30. Radford |
| 5. Charlottesville | 18. Hopewell | 31. Richmond |
| 6. Chesapeake | 19. Lexington | 32. Roanoke |
| 7. Colonial Heights | 20. Lynchburg | 33. Salem |
| 8. Covington | 21. Manassas | 34. Staunton |
| 9. Danville | 22. Manassas Park | 35. Suffolk |
| 10. Emporia | 23. Martinsville | 36. Virginia Beach |
| 11. Fairfax | 24. Newport News | 37. Waynesboro |
| 12. Falls Church | 25. Norfolk | 38. Williamsburg |
| 13. Franklin | 26. Norton | 39. Winchester |



Regional Program Assistants*

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Military Veteran, AgrAbility

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Conservation Practices

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Community Gardens, Food Services

■ **Grace Summers** | 804-712-0093 | gsummers@vsu.edu
NRCS, SFOP High Tech Tunnel

*If you have any difficulty figuring out which region is yours, please call 804-524-3292 for clarification.

Our Sponsors

SFOP is supported by our partnering agencies through grants and Cooperative Agreements.



Alcorn.
SOCIALY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS
AND RANCHERS POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

AGUA FUND, INC.



FARM CREDIT



**JAMES RIVER
EQUIPMENT**



**SOUTHERN
EXTENSION
RISK
MANAGEMENT
EDUCATION**





Our Partners

Black Family Land Trust

Brunswick Farm To Families

Farmer Veteran Coalition

Happily Natural Day

Minority Veteran Farmers of the Piedmont

Petersburg League of Urban Growers

PlantSwitch

Southside Produce Growers Association

The Tennie Group

Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe

VA Soil Health Coalition

VT Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation

Mobile Education Unit

Highlighting various agricultural enterprises in Virginia

Contact:

Cartelius Travis—coamobileedu@vsu.edu

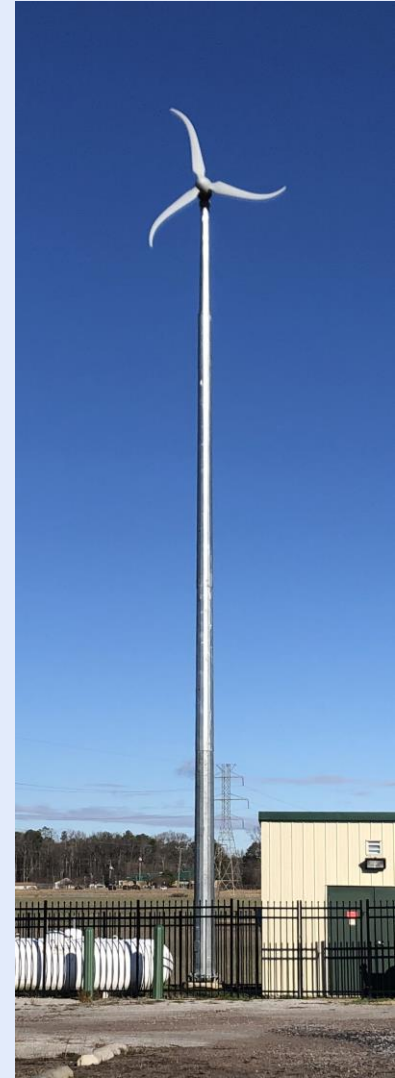
Phone: 804-524-2551



Fully Automated High Tunnel Production System



- Automated Systems for Power, Water & Ventilation
- Alternative Energy Systems & Storage
- Water Collection & Storage Solutions
- Back-Up Power Systems
- Applied Economic & Agronomic Data Research
- Potential for Scalability & Increased Efficiency
- Technology and Training Initiative

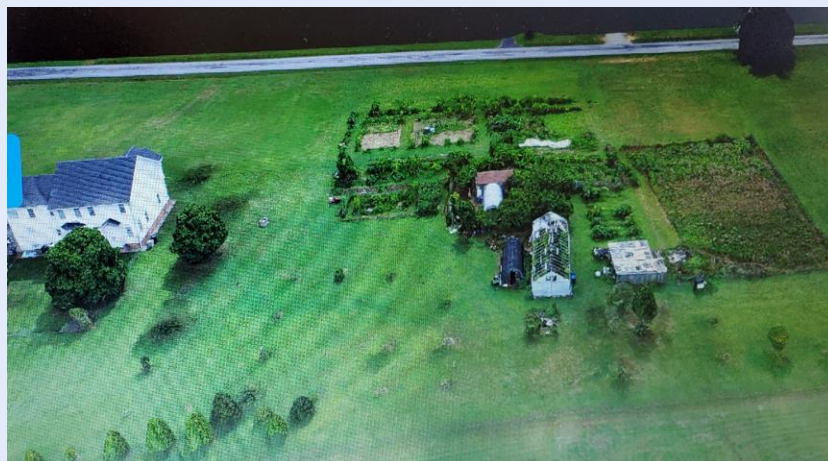
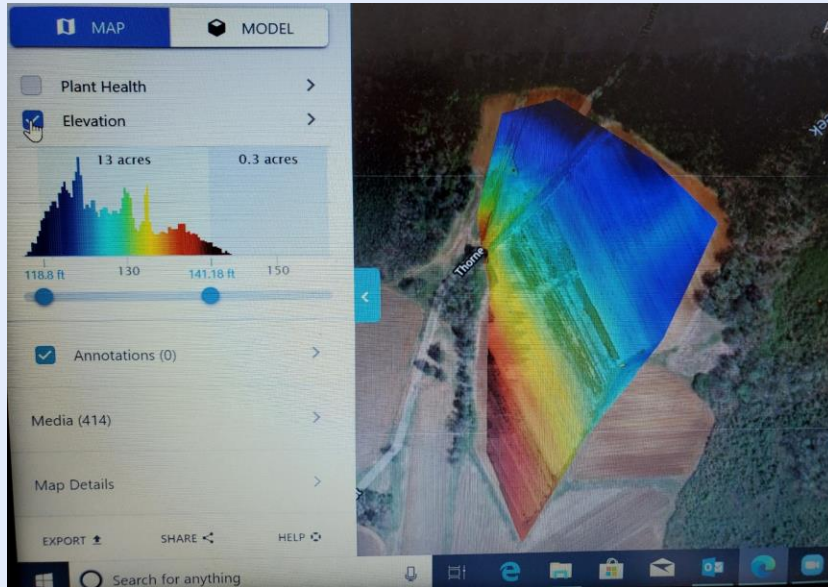


Drone Technology

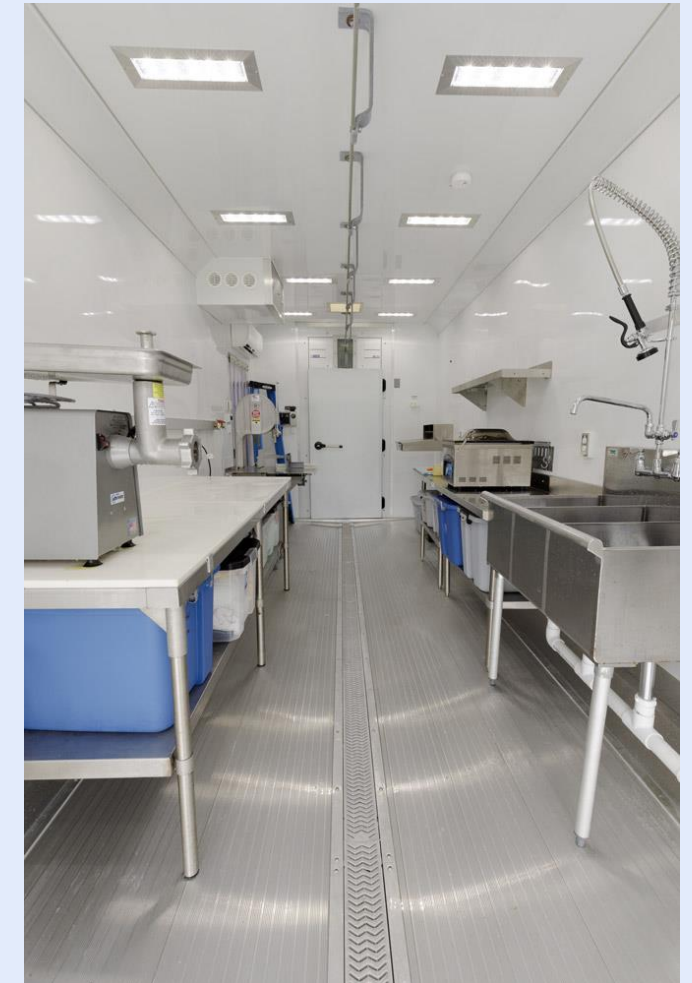
We train farmers on the benefits of using drones to take aerial photos that detects problems areas on the land, and use findings for spot applications or targeted actions.

Contact:

Tim Sexton—tsexton@vsu.edu, 804-524-1028



Mobile Processing Unit



Contact:

Dahlia O'Brien—dobrien@vsu.edu, 804-524-6963

The Cattle Project



Contact:

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Farmers Markets



Contact:

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SFOP Quarterly NEWSLETTER

small farm educational outreach program

WINTER 2024

Is Tilapia a “Franken-Fish,” and is it Unhealthy?

By: Nicholas Romano, Ph.D., associate professor/ Extension specialist & coordinator

Tilapia is currently the fourth most-consumed fish in the United States with tuna, salmon and Alaskan pollock taking the first, second and third spots. However, unlike these fish, memes emerged on social media around 2017 that tilapia is artificial and is as unhealthy as eating bacon. Some even claimed tilapia is full of cancer-causing toxins and lacks nutrients.

Is tilapia a franken-fish?

No, tilapia is not a franken-fish. It is a freshwater fish that belongs to a group of cichlids that have hundreds of different species. The most commonly farmed and sold include Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*), blue tilapia (*O. aureus*) and Mozambique tilapia

—continued on page 2



GIFT tilapia hybrid

Dear Small-Scale Farmers, Ranchers and Veterans,

Soil health and maintenance are essential to good quality produce, healthy forage and livestock. To meet the needs of small, socially disadvantaged, limited-resourced, beginning and veteran farmers and ranchers, VSU has entered into several climate-smart partnerships with you in mind. We have partnered with Virginia Tech, the University of Tennessee, West Virginia University, and Plant Switch. Be alert and check our calendar of events at <https://www.ext.vsu.edu/sfop-events> for upcoming workshops, where you can learn more about climate-smart practices that you could implement on your farm operation.



If you are an urban ag producer, we also have great news. We are partnering with Virginia Tech on an FSA Urban and Innovative Agriculture Community-Based Project. We want to connect with you. Look at our territory Map on page 11 and find the State Program Assistant (PA) who covers your area. Reach out and schedule a meeting for them to visit your operation.

VSU is also a licensed vendor for the FSA Borrowers training. This training is one of the prerequisites when applying for an FSA loan. Upon successfully completing the Agribusiness Production and Financial Management online course, you will have met this requirement and will receive a certificate to include in your application packet.

Check out the Ag Tips and upcoming workshops section of this newsletter. You can find additional resources online at <https://www.ext.vsu.edu/small-farm-outreach-program> or on our Small Farm Resource Center at vsusmallfarms.com. Sign up for our text alerts at <https://vsusmallfarms.com/sfop-text>, or email us at smallfarms@vsu.edu.

William Crutchfield, SFOP Director

Our Quarterly Newsletter reaches over 5500 people.

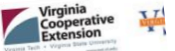
Small Farm Orientation



October 13, 2022 · 9–11 am · **FREE!**
Space is limited to 30 participants
Join us on Zoom

This two-hour Zoom event offers years of experience from the VSU Small Farm Outreach Program. Walk with attendees to a profitable farm.

Register at ext.vsu.edu/



Visit ext.vsu.edu for information on upcoming events.

If you are a person with a disability, please contact us at (804) 524-3292 / TDD (800) 828-6287. Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partner site for people with disabilities, including those with visual, hearing, or physical disabilities.

Farm Equipment Safety



Small Ruminants: Preparing for Winter



October 25, 2022 · 7:30–9 pm · **FREE**
Join Us on Zoom!

Fall is often a time of rest for sheep and goat producers. The ewe and doe flock is in varying stages of pregnancy and does not require as much attention. But sound management at this time is extremely important. Proper vaccination programs, mineral supplementation, and other nutritional factors can directly affect success at lambing. Join us for an evening of learning and a Q & A session with Dr. Sherry Greiner, Extension Sheep Specialist with Virginia Tech.

Register at ext.vsu.edu/calendar

For more information, contact...

DCR Information Session



The 3 Baby Steps to Building Risk-Ready Markets



1 Building to Last **2 Counting the Cost** **3 Choosing Carefully**
VSU Small Farm Outreach Program's Dr. Theresa Nartea and Program Assistant Dr. ... you how to build a risk-ready market in three important baby steps for ... and beginning farmers and includes activities ... to create a successful farm business.



A sample of the types of workshops offered by the Small Farm Outreach Program.



We provide ongoing training, technical assistance and farm demonstrations.



Annual Conference and Bus Tours

Small Farm Resource Center

vsusmallfarms.com



With special funding from the Virginia Department of Health and Community Development, VSU Small Farm Outreach Program has developed the Small Farm Resource Center (SFRC). It is a website designed to provide Virginia's small and beginning farmers with a single place for comprehensive information about resource development that may help make their businesses more profitable and successful. The SFRC is intended to serve as a hub for all information pertaining to small farm agriculture in the commonwealth.

Contact:

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Learn more about us at: www.ext.vsu.edu · vsusmallfarms.com