



Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

2023 Annual Report - Richmond County

Extension Personnel Serving Richmond County:

Wendy Herdman, Unit Coordinator, Senior Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development

Tina Kemp, Administrative Fiscal Assistant

Cindy Franklin, Program Assistant (youth), Family Nutrition Program,
Retired February 2024 (Housed in Westmoreland)

Maria Murillo-Valdez, Extension Project Coordinator, Rural Opioids Technical Associate
(Housed in Lancaster)

**460 Main Street
P.O. Box 152
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804-333-3420**

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law.

If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation, please notify this Extension Office at 804-493-8924/TDD* during business hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

*TDD number is (800) 828-1120.



Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

About Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Cooperative Extension brings the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth.

Understanding that knowledge is power, we place that power in the hands of Virginians and help them learn how to use it to improve the quality of their lives. Our Extension agents and specialists form a network of educators whose classrooms are the communities, homes, and businesses of Virginia, where they bring research-based solutions to the problems facing Virginians today.

To better utilize our resources, we form collaborations with hundreds of public and private partners and volunteers, who help us reach larger and more diverse audiences and leverage the impact of our work.

We are a product of cooperation among local, state, and federal governments in partnership with tens of thousands of citizens, who, through local Extension Leadership Councils, help design, implement, and evaluate our needs-driven programs.

We are a dynamic organization that stimulates positive personal and societal change, leading to more productive lives, families, farms, and forests as well as a better environment.

Virginia Cooperative Extension is an educational outreach program of Virginia's land-grant universities: Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, and a part of the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Extension programs are delivered through a network of faculty at 2 universities, 107 county and city offices, 11 agricultural research and Extension centers, and 6 4-H educational centers. Our system incorporates the expertise of faculty in the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, College of Natural Resources, Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, and the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station; as well as the School of Agriculture at Virginia State University.

The Extension Office in Richmond County is one of twenty-five units within the Virginia Cooperative Extension Northeast District. The Northeast District office is located in Richmond and is led by:

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Virginia Cooperative Extension
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Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

Virginia Cooperative Extension enables people to improve their lives through an educational process that uses scientific knowledge focused on issues and needs.

Vision

Building on the strength of our agriculture, natural resource, family and community heritage, we enable people to shape their futures through research based educational programs. Recognizing that knowledge is power, we serve people where they live and work. Audiences are involved in designing, implementing and evaluating needs-driven programs. We are a dynamic organization that stimulates positive personal and societal change leading to more productive lives, families, farms, and forests, as well as a better environment in urban and rural communities.

Our vision is:

- To help clientele improve their lives.
- To use a systems approach to programming, with task-oriented work teams that respond to the needs of individuals, groups and organizations.
- To provide residents prompt access to information and programs through an innovative human and technological system.
- To work with the disenfranchised and underserved who need special attention by targeting our resources to programs for low-income groups, those outside the dominant culture, dysfunctional families, limited-resource farmers, at-risk youth and others.
- To fully integrate a culturally diverse paid and volunteer staff in planning, implementing and evaluating programs
- To collaborate with public and private partners to better utilize our resources, heighten our impact and reach a more diverse audience.
- To capitalize on the respective strengths of Virginia State and Virginia Tech as partners in supporting the Extension mission.
- To recruit, manage and reward faculty, support, and volunteer staff to reflect each person's uniqueness and value.
- To have an open and positive administrative environment, based on shared leadership that maintains organizational integrity while providing opportunities for all staff members to fully realize their potential.



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Program Areas

Virginia Cooperative Extension is organized around four main program areas. However, our diverse Extension faculty often delivers educational experiences that are created through collaboration and teamwork that spans organizational lines.

To find specific information about programs in your area, visit your local Virginia Cooperative Extension office.

Agriculture and Natural Resources (Vacant)

Agriculture and natural resources (ANR) programs help sustain the profitability of agricultural and forestry production and enhance and protect the quality of our land and water resources. ANR programs benefit all Virginians by helping citizens learn about maintaining a healthy home environment, create sustainable rural or urban landscapes, protect water resources, grow a garden, and properly manage pests and wildlife. Virginia Cooperative Extension strives to improve the well-being of Virginians and increase producer' profitability through programs that help put research-based knowledge to work in people's lives.

Family and Consumer Sciences (There is currently no FCS position that serves Richmond County)

Virginia Cooperative Extension views the family unit as the cornerstone of a healthy community. We strive to improve the well-being of Virginia families through programs that help participants put research-based knowledge to work in their lives.

Family Nutrition Program (Cindy Franklin, retired February 2024)

Our FNP program is part of our Family and Consumer Sciences Programs and offers education on a wide variety of topics to help you, your children, your schools, and your communities eat better, move more, and save money. We put research-based information to work.

4-H Youth Development (Wendy Herdman)

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. 4-H, the largest comprehensive youth development program in the nation, educates young people, ages 5 to 18, through a variety of experiential techniques that encourage hands-on, active learning.

Community Viability (Specialists Only)

Community viability programs are dedicated to strengthening communities and their economic viability by creating innovative programs that allow citizens and local governments to respond to local issues. Our faculty can assess community needs, design a plan of action, and determine the appropriate delivery method suitable for various programs.

4-H Youth Development in Richmond County 2023

862 youth enrolled

23 volunteers enrolled

School Enrichment Programs – 252 youth

Literacy, Eating & Activity for Preschoolers - Pre-K @ MTLC
Watershed Ed – 6th grade science
Environmental Ed – 7th grade science
Health Rocks! – 6th & 7th grade health – grant funded
Reality Store – 7th grade



4-H Jr Camp - 14 Richmond County youth

100% had fun
100% made new friends
91% shared that they learned something new at camp
100% of parents said they would send their child again



Teen Leadership Opportunities

1 teen trained and served at 4-H Jr Camp
1 teen selected as Equity & Inclusion Ambassador
1 teen hired as 2024 summer staff at 4-H Ctr

4-H Water Wizards Day Camp – grant funded – 9 youth

100% can define watershed
100% can describe water quality
89% understand that human activity affects water quality



\$23,830 raised in External Funding

2023 Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

Enrolled **587 youth** in Richmond County Expanded Food and Nutrition Programming.

512 **students** graduated the program.

School Programming (Richmond Co. Elem School and Richmond Co. YMCA)

- Provided approximately 158 nutrition education classroom hours utilizing curriculum in compliance with Virginia's Standards of Learning for Health and Physical Education
- K-2nd grade students participated in the Pick a Better Snack curriculum presented as an in-person program.
- Students 3-5th grade participated in hands on lessons from the Choose Health: Food, Fun and Fitness curriculum
- Students gained knowledge about how to choose a healthy snack or beverage and the importance of making a healthy choice.
- Students gained the understanding of a sensible portion size
- Students understand the importance of planning their meals using the five food groups from My Plate
- Students had the opportunity to receive healthy food tasting
- Students gained understanding of the importance of physical activity

Impacts

- Students learned that it is their responsibility to make healthy choices in food safety, good food choices and physical fitness
- Students are encouraged to develop better eating habits and increase physical fitness goals
- Students are encouraged to spread their newly found information with others.

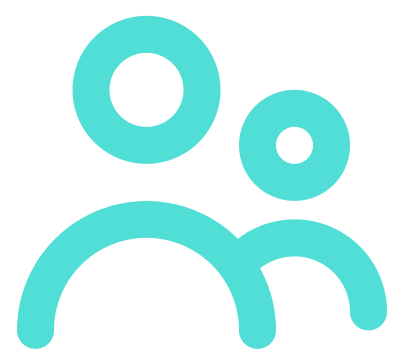
Cindy Franklin, EFNEP Program Assistant, Northern Neck, 804-493-8924 rfcynt1@vt.edu



Virginia Master Naturalists

Northern Neck Chapter

2023 in Review



73

volunteers



8,092

service hours,
valued at
\$263,718



20

sites
improved
through
stewardship



19

studies
contributed to
through citizen
science



10,292

contacts made
through
education &
outreach

Who We Are

The Virginia Master Naturalist program is a statewide corps of trained volunteers providing natural resource education, citizen science, and stewardship in their communities. The Northern Neck Chapter is active in Northumberland, Westmoreland, Lancaster, Richmond, King George, and Essex counties.

2023 Activity Highlights

In 2023, Northern Neck Master Naturalist volunteers partnered with Master Gardeners and a local African American church to restore native plant habitat and create nature trails on the church property.

Volunteers collected data on forest insect populations at Belle Isle State Park, contributing to a national citizen science project aimed at understanding patterns in the availability of insect food sources to bird populations that depend on them.



Volunteers worked together with Emmanuel Christian Fellowship members to restore habitat and build trails. Photo by Ellen Hunter

State Sponsors



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Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Program Northern Neck

WHAT IS THE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM?

Mission: Sharing Knowledge and Empowering Communities
Extension Master Gardeners (EMG) are trained volunteer educators who work within their local communities to promote sound horticultural practices. The Extension Master Gardener program delivers the horticultural resources of Virginia's land-grant universities: Virginia Tech and Virginia State University.

Northern Neck

In 2023, 83 Extension
Master Gardeners



drove
80,449 miles



and made
**45,866 educational
contacts**



CONTRIBUTING A TOTAL OF

11,426 volunteer hours

VALUED AT

\$372,373*

TO LANCASTER, NORTHUMBERLAND, RICHMOND, WESTMORELAND, AND ESSEX COUNTIES

*Based on a value of \$32.59/hour from Independent Sector 2022 Value of Volunteer Hours by State.

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Richmond County

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Community Voices

“We’ve faced many challenges with insect pressure since we started growing in 2015, but none as destructive as with russet mites these past two seasons. With the assistance of Extension, we were able to diagnose and form a plan of corrective action to minimize the economic impacts on our farm.”



Justin McKenney
Co-owner and Operator, Sion House Farm



Virginia Master Naturalist Pat McMurray takes water readings during the salamander count in Farnham.

862

Youth in 4-H school enrichment programs

Partners for Solutions

“Children often need eight to 10 attempts to embrace new foods. At Mackey-Thompson Learning Center, pre-K students showcased their adventurous eating habits by trying vegetable soup, spinach salad, strawberry-infused sparkling water, bean dip, and fruit with yogurt dip. Even if they initially grimace, persistence in offering new flavors to kids is key.”



Wendy Herdman
Agent

Sharing Knowledge

The Northern Neck chapter of Virginia Master Naturalists continues to actively contribute to Citizen Science projects throughout Richmond County. These are continuing annual projects, some of which have been in place for seven years. The projects start in February with a one-day winter waterfowl count that focuses on the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers. In March through April, Master Naturalists survey 30 vernal pools weekly for breeding spring frogs and salamanders. Late spring and fall is devoted to work on the two native plant-pollinator gardens at the headquarters of Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge. In the summer and fall, two butterfly counts are conducted. The year ends with an Audubon Christmas bird count. All data collected are shared with appropriate state and federal agencies.