

Vol. 4 · June 2023

The Stalk

Accomack & Northampton County Cooperative Extension
Eastern Shore Agricultural Research & Extension Center

Accomack County Potatoes by Dublin Farms

Welcome to the New VDACS Regional Marketing Specialist!

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) has hired Ursula Tankard Deitch as their Regional Marketing Specialist serving Accomack & Northampton Counties and Virginia Beach. Ursula will be working with fruit and vegetable producers in the region to establish and nourish relationships with agricultural buyers. Her goal is to open new avenues for growers to market produce. Beyond her local duties she will attend national tradeshows to help market Virginia Grown Vegetable Crops. Additionally, Ursula will have responsibilities managing the Virginia Irish Potato Board and the Aquaculture Board.

Ursula previously worked for Virginia Cooperative Extension in Northampton County for 10 years as an Extension Agent of Agriculture and Natural Resources and 7 years for Virginia Tech at the Eastern Shore AREC as a Senior Research Specialist in the Horticulture and Soils Departments.



Ursula Deitch, Regional
Marketing Specialist

Ursula began her appointment at VDACS on May 25, 2023 and she can be contacted at ursula.deitch@vdacs.virginia.gov



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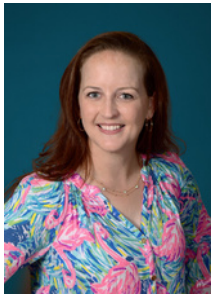
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Spray Water Testing Program

Pesticide performance can be greatly affected by the quality of the water used for mixing. Even clear water may contain dissolved minerals, alkalinity or acidity that can reduce the effectiveness of pesticides, shorten half-life time following mixing, or impact the application rate. Testing your source water can provide information about chemical stability and the need for water conditioners, adjuvants, or pH buffers. The Accomack and Northampton County VCE offices worked with vegetable growers to conduct a spray water testing program the week of May 15th. We were able to gather samples and send them to the Virginia Tech lab for testing.

Eastern Shore Sheep Shearing Program

On May 19th, the 2023 Eastern Shore Sheep Shearing Program took place in both Northampton and Accomack counties. The Eastern Shore Sheep Shearing program is an opportunity for all the sheep growers on the Shore to share the cost of having a professional shearer visit their farm. The 2023 Sheep Shearing Program helps to organize the shearing of 31 ewes, 7 rams, 3 wether and 2 goats on 9 farms. Many thanks to Emily Chamelin from Chamelin Shearing for her time and travel to the Shore.



Emily Chamelin from Chamelin Shearing for Eastern Shore sheep shearing May 19th.

VCE Ag Radio

Tune in to WESR 103.3 for a brand-new radio segment "VCE Ag Radio." Hosted by Accomack County Cooperative Extension, this short weekly segment will bring you the latest agricultural news, expert advice, and insightful interviews with farmers, researchers, and industry professionals. Whether you're a seasoned farmer, a budding gardener, or simply curious about the agricultural world, "VCE Ag Radio" is here to educate the public on a variety of subjects. To submit your requests or share your ideas for the radio show, please contact Theresa Pittman, Accomack County Extension Agent.

Eastern Shore Household Well Water Testing Program

Registration is now OPEN for the Eastern Shore Household Well Water Testing Program scheduled on August 28th & 29th. Fortunately, this program has been subsidized by a SERCAP Grant and participants will only pay \$10 per sample for testing. Please see the attached [flyer](#) for more details on how to register and spread the word to encourage participation.





SAVE THE DATE



Accomack County Farm Tour Day - September 19, 2023

Hosted by: Accomack County Cooperative Extension, Accomack County Farm Bureau and Duncan Farms in New Church

Northampton County Farm Tour Day - September 20, 2023

Hosted by: Northampton County Cooperative Extension, Northampton County Farm Bureau and Shore Breeze Farms in Cheriton





Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and Director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station Retires

Dr. Saied Mostaghimi will officially retire from Virginia Tech on May 31, 2023 after 38-years of service to the university. Dr. Mostaghimi began serving in his current role as leader of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station in 2009 and has worked tirelessly since to ensure that ARECs around the Commonwealth improve their capacity by assisting with faculty and staff hires along with equipment, facility, and connectivity improvements. Working with stakeholders and the General Assembly, Saied was integral in facilitating AREC needs; ultimately

resulting in funds to bring AREC technology and equipment into the 21st century. We sincerely thank Saied for all his assistance to the Eastern Shore AREC during his leadership tenure. We wish Dr. Mostaghimi well and hope that he will visit us soon as he continues to travel during retirement. More information surrounding Saied's life journey and impacts to Virginia Tech and Virginia agriculture can be found at: <https://news.vt.edu/articles/2023/05/saied-mostaghimi-retirement.html>



Dr. Mostaghimi receiving an Eastern Shore themed retirement gift from our Advisory Board

New AREC Advisory Board Member and Leadership

Mr. Beverly Fletcher has retired from the Eastern Shore AREC and Hampton Roads AREC Advisory Board. Mr. Fletcher was a founding member of our board and was one of the original signatories on the Memorandum of Agreement between Virginia Tech and the Virginia Truck and Ornamentals Research Station in January 1985. We thank Mr. Fletcher for his 37-years of service to Virginia Tech, for leading our board as Chairman, and for always lobbying to bring issues important to the Eastern Shore to the attention of campus administration and stakeholders.



Mr. Jackie Duer, Mr. Beverly Fletcher, Mr. Gaspare Battaglia, and Mr. Charlie Parkerson (Missing is Mr. John Tankard; April 1996)



Mr. Lynn Gayle, new Advisory Board member

During the May 2023 Advisory Board meeting, Mr. Lynn Gayle was welcomed as the newest board member to replace Mr. Fletcher. Lynn operates Mount Nebo Farms with his son, Sands, in Accomack County. They manage 2,500 acres of corn, soybean and wheat and are active participants in many research activities to further science for improving Virginia farming practices. We look forward to working with Mr. Gayle in this new role.

Mr. Steve Sturgis was elected as our new Advisory Board Chairman at the May 2023 meeting with Mr. Ed Tankard now serving as Vice-Chairman. Steve and Ed will lead our 5-member Advisory Board group that has 3 representatives from the Virginia Potato and Vegetable Growers' Association and 2-members from the Virginia Nurserymen's Association; forming a joint Advisory Board to serve both the Eastern Shore AREC and Hampton Roads AREC. All appointments are elected by the representative group and presented to the Dean of the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences for approval, currently Dean Alan Grant.

Horticulture Research Field Trials

Dr. Emmanuel Torres, Horticulturist, Eastern Shore AREC

The horticultural science lab is evaluating the performance of twenty-one potato cultivars on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. We will be collecting data regarding plant emergence, days to flower, leaf greenness, plant reflectance, plant vigor, and harvest data.



We are also evaluating nitrogen rates for potatoes ranging from 130 to 200 pounds per acre in combination with three planting dates, from early March to early April. Additionally, we are evaluating overhead and subsoil drip irrigation with regimens determined based on reference evapotranspiration and soil moisture sensors, all this in combination with five N rates. The results from all these experiments are expected to be available by early August 2023.



For our tomato trials, we are examining the potential interactions between kaolin clay, colored mulches, and planting dates for mitigation of heat stress during the summer season. Our goal is to provide practical strategies for farmers to manage heat stress and maximize yield and quality.



Pathology Research and Diagnostic Update

Dr. Doug Higgins, Plant Pathologist, Eastern Shore AREC

- Potatoes: Action thresholds for Early Blight and Late Blight forecasts were reached. Monitoring field sites for disease outbreaks. Completed foliar fungicide applications on pink trial efficacy trial (Figure 1). Diagnostic samples: herbicide spray drift damage; bacterial soft rot (2x).
- Wheat: Disease ratings taken for Fusarium head blight (scab) fungicide efficacy field trials. Diagnostic samples: barley yellow dwarf; soil compaction; leaf rust; strip rust; powdery mildew.
- Sweet Corn: Maintenance on seed treatment trials; geese protection and billbug damage.
- Tomato: Diagnostic samples: tomato spotted wilt virus; bacterial foliar disease.
- Corn: Planted grey mold fungicide efficacy trial and applied Xyway at planting treatments.
- Soybeans: Planted fungicide efficacy trials for frogeye leaf spot; Planted Soybean Board (PI: Langston) frogeye leaf spot trial.



Figure 1. Training the new plant pathology technician (Calyn Adams) to apply foliar fungicides treatments to research plots.

Entomology Research Field Trials

Hélène Doughty, Research Specialist Sr., Eastern Shore AREC

- Colorado potato beetle control assessment of new insecticides (experimentals, a novel RNA insecticide, and the new group 30 active ingredient broflanilide as an in-furrow and foliar application) in four separate trials.
- Wireworm control assessment of in-furrow insecticides, including the newest group 30 insecticide.
- Broflanilide treated field corn was planted in a commercial grower field to assess the potential effect of the seed treatment in reducing wireworm population ahead of potato production.
- In collaboration with the USDA, we have been looking at a combination of using Colorado potato beetles' pheromone lures in border rows with and without neonicotinoid at planting. One station study and three on-farm studies were recently conducted (all beetles were removed from the on-farm studies but left in the station study to assess differences in yield)
- Click beetle (adult beetles of wireworms) traps will be set up in early June in various farms in Accomack and Northampton counties to continue the assessment of this tool, the timing of emergence, behavior and location preferences of click beetles.
- Tomatoes were transplanted earlier in May for two studies assessing the efficacy of select insecticides for the control of thrips and stink bugs.
- Cabbage trials are currently being conducted to determine efficacy of insecticides in rotations for the control of lepidopteran larvae including the insecticide resistance developing diamondback moth larvae.
- One bell pepper trial is in progress to assess the efficacy of experimental aphicides.
- Seed treatments are evaluated, including the new group 30 broflanilide, for the control of seedcorn maggot in chickpeas.
- Novel foliar treatments in strawberries are being evaluated for the control of lygus bugs.
- Experimental seed treatments on cucumbers are being evaluated for the control of cucumber beetles
- Corn earworm pheromone traps have been deployed to monitor flights.



Entomology Research Field Trials

Dr. Lorena Lopez, Entomologist, Eastern Shore AREC



My entomology program is focused on implementing alternative pest management tactics to use in combination with chemical control with the ultimate purpose of making cropping systems more resilient and sustainable. Every year, I conduct trials in potatoes, tomatoes, cucurbits, and strawberries. In 2023, we observed a lower incidence of cyclamen mites infesting strawberries compared with 2021 and 2022 infestation levels. Also, symptoms caused by cyclamen mite feeding were observed later in the season in 2023 (May) compared to the two previous years (March). Growers planted approximately one month later than usual (November instead of October) and temperatures have fluctuated more this spring which could have contributed to the changes in infestation patterns. Later this year, my crew and I will be assessing wireworm injury to potatoes at harvest time and will identify any relationships between the levels of injury with the soil properties. Additionally, we will be assessing the levels of stink bug and thrips infestations in tomatoes when kaolin clay is applied as means to regulate soil and plant temperatures.

Weed Science Research and Updates

Dr. Vijay Singh, Assistant Professor & Weed Specialist, Eastern Shore AREC

Updates on Italian ryegrass

Wheat harvest should begin soon and we would like to provide updates on Italian ryegrass issues. Over the past two years, we have surveyed and sampled several wheat fields and screened Italian ryegrass populations. We have observed that most of the Italian ryegrass populations are either resistant to ALS-inhibitors (Group 2), or ACCase-inhibitors (Group 1) herbicides. Fortunately, we have not seen any case of Italian ryegrass resistance to glyphosate (Roundup) in Virginia. This has huge implication for ryegrass control through burndown before corn and soybean planting in no-till system. Based on these screenings, growers can rely on Roundup for controlling Italian ryegrass. However, we have learned that Italian ryegrass is still surviving in few corn fields this season, and there are cases of recent emergence also. This has been observed in neighboring states (Delaware and Maryland) as well. In Virginia, we associate this with improper spray applications and temperature fluctuations in April and early May, which favored Italian ryegrass growth. However, we are still on lookout for these scenarios, and request growers to contact us if they see any late emergence or failure to control Italian ryegrass with Roundup.



Updates on herbicide-drift

We are aware of few cases of herbicide drift where PPO-inhibitors were used. We are still investigating whether those were cases of physical drift and temperature inversion. Meanwhile, we suggest to use TTI nozzles with bigger droplet sizes, and not to spray if windspeed is >10 mph. Do not spray under temperature inversion conditions in early mornings or later evenings or cloudy and cooler days. Use of sprayer guards and higher volumes (15-20 gallons/A) will help in managing drift and reducing injury on sensitive crops. Please contact us if you have also seen some drift injuries on your crop and if you have observed similar symptoms recently.

Updates on herbicide resistance management in soybean

We have widespread distribution of common lambsquarters and Palmer amaranth resistant to ALS-inhibitors (Group 2) in eastern shore region. Choice of preemergence (PRE) herbicide is very critical in order to prevent emergence of resistant weeds. We have also observed that S-metolachlor (Dual) alone is not enough to provide excellent control of multiple weed species. If field has a history of multiple troublesome weed species, it is ideal to tank-mix herbicides with more than one group of herbicides, or use premixes with different group of herbicides. Few examples of premixes, which have shown excellent control of weeds in soybean are Tendovo, a 3-way mixture (Group 15, 5, and 2), BroadAxe/ Authority Elite, 2-way mixture (Group 15, and 14), Zidua PRO/ Fierce XLT (Group 15, 2, 14). For more information, you may refer to weed management guide link https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/456/456-016/ENTO-522E.pdf

DelMarVa Weed Science Field Day

We are organizing DelMarVa weed science field day at ESAREC, Painter on June 27, 2023 (as a first stop), and then on June 28, 2023 at Georgetown, DE, and Queenstown, MD. Herbicide efficacy studies in corn, soybean, and edamame will be demonstrated. Updates on general weed management issues and Drone-based herbicide applications will be provided. Please register here: https://www.arec.vaes.vt.edu/arec/eastern-shore/Field_Days/2023-weed-science-field-day-delmarva-weed-tour.html

WHAT'S THAT BUG?

Hélène Doughty, Research Specialist Sr., invites you to test your entomology knowledge. Take a guess on the pest and email her your answer!

hdoughty@vt.edu



May's Answer: A praying mantis egg sac. Praying mantis are ferocious predators that can be very useful in taking down insect pests. Females lay egg sacs containing approximately 300 eggs, of which only one fifth survive to adulthood. Eggs are laid before the first frost and the adult female dies shortly after ovipositing (laying eggs). When laid, eggs are enveloped in a frothy foam with will harden into the sac casing. Sacs are about 1 inch long, tan to white in color.



Research Specialist, Sr. (Job no. 521473)

Come work with us at the Eastern Shore AREC, Virginia Tech in Painter, VA! We are looking for someone with dedication to the agricultural profession to help our weed science team combat pressing issues related to herbicide resistant weeds, new herbicides, UAVs, and precision agriculture. A B.S. in a weed science related discipline is desired, but not required (agronomy, horticulture, etc.). Operation of farm equipment is also desired. Candidates with a high school education with significant practical field experience will also be considered. Shortlisting of candidates will start after May 30, 2023 and continue until the position is filled. For questions, call Vijay Singh at 479-713-0094 or email vijaysingh@vt.edu. Interested candidates, please visit this link and apply online: <https://careers.pageuppeople.com/968/cw/en-us/job/521473/research-specialist-sr>



Communications Associate (Job no. 525797)

The Communications Associate is responsible for telling the story of the Eastern Shore (ESAREC) and Hampton Roads AREC (HRAREC) to a local, state, and international audience by assisting with in-person Extension events, writing articles, and contributing to the VT news, social media, websites, CALS and VT publications, and other outlets. Working collaboratively with ESAREC and HRAREC faculty, staff, and graduate students in conjunction with the Virginia Tech communications and marketing team, this person will produce and supply content to be used through multiple media channels. The successful candidate will spend approximately half their time on ESAREC activities and half of their time on HRAREC activities and will report directly to the Eastern Shore and Hampton Roads AREC Directors. The position will be housed at the closest AREC after the person is hired (Eastern Shore or Virginia Beach, VA). Shortlisting of candidates will start after July 3, 2023 and continue until the position is filled. For questions, call Mark Reiter at 757-807-6586 or email mreiter@vt.edu. Interested candidates, please visit this link and apply online: <https://careers.pageuppeople.com/968/cw/en-us/job/525797/communications-associate-esarecharec>

Registration Now Open!

2023 VA AG EXPO



Thursday August 3, 2023 7:30AM - 3:00PM

3169 Land of Promise Road

Virginia Beach, VA 23457



Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University



Vendor & Exhibitor Registration Open: <https://vasoybean.com/ag-expo/>

Save the Date



2024 EASTERN SHORE

**AGRICULTURAL CONFERENCE
& TRADE SHOW**

JANUARY 24 & 25, 2024

2023 EASTERN SHORE Household Water Quality Clinic

Does your water come from a well, spring, or cistern?

Do you want to learn more about the quality of your water and how to care for your water system?

How does it work?

1. Pick up a sample kit from your local County Extension office and get instructions on how to collect your household water sample.
2. Collect a sample from your tap at home and complete a short questionnaire.
3. Drop off sample at your local County Extension office.
4. About 4 weeks later, receive your confidential test results, an explanation of what the numbers mean, and information about how to handle any problems that are present. For more information, visit: <http://www.wellwater.bse.vt.edu/clinics.php>



What does the water test include?

Limited kits available • sign up today!!!

Iron	Manganese	Sulfate	Hardness	pH	Total Dissolved Solids	Fluoride
Sodium	Copper	Nitrate	Arsenic	Lead	<i>E. coli</i> bacteria	Coliform bacteria

How much does it cost?

Scholarships are available from a partnership with SERCAP through the Eastern Shore Water Quality Improvement Project grant (Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Justice Program). Sample kits are \$65 each or with scholarship, \$10 each, limit one \$10 kit per household.

Registration is required – Please visit <https://tinyurl.com/VCE-EasternShore-VAHWQP>, to pre-pay for your sample kit with a credit card. A registration receipt will be required for pick-up of your sample kit on Monday, August 28th. If you would like to purchase your sample kit via check, please visit your local Extension Office.

	Date	Location (Accomack County)	Location (Northampton County)
Pick up sample kit	August 28th	Accomack Cooperative Extension 23185 Front St Accomack, VA 23301 8:30am – 4:00pm	Northampton Cooperative Extension 16392 Courthouse Rd Eastville, VA 23347 8:00am – 4:30pm
Instructions for Sampling	View on your own	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2wqzuzvbK4	
Drop off samples	August 29th	Accomack Cooperative Extension 23185 Front St Accomack, VA 23301 8:30am – 4:00pm	Northampton Cooperative Extension 16392 Courthouse Rd Eastville, VA 23347 8:00am – 4:30pm
Receive Results via mail/email	A few weeks after testing	ONLINE	ONLINE

Contact: Northampton County Extension Office: 757-678-7946 or

Accomack County Extension Office: 757-787-1361

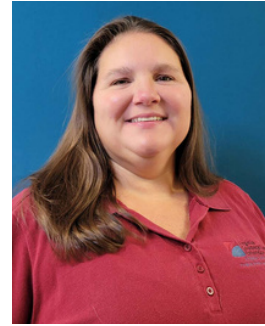
If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Amanda Hurley at 757-678-7946 during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. *TDD number is (800) 828-1120.



Northampton 4-H Summer Camps



Northampton 4-H is preparing for SAGEN (Suffolk, Accomack, Greensville, Emporia, Northampton) summer camp July 17-21 in Wakefield, VA.



For any campers who wish to attend, there is still time to register and scholarships are available! See [flyer](#) for details.

Eastern Shore Soil & Water and 4-H will partner to hold two-day ag camps at the Barrier Islands Center (BIC) in Machipongo.

The first camp is for ages 5-7 on July 27-28 from 9:00am-12:00pm each day.

The second camp, which is already sold out, is for ages 8-12 on August 1-2 from 9:00am-3:00pm each day.

Register at BIC website: <https://barrierislandscenter.org/programs>



More workshops will be offered this summer! Please follow the [Northampton VCE Facebook page](#) for updates!



Register now for Northampton 4-H Camp July 17-21 in Wakefield, VA!

See [flyer](#) for details!

NORTHAMPTON 4-H CAMP

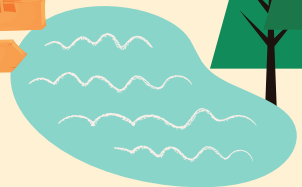


18 USC 707

**REGISTER
NOW!**

JULY 17 – 21, 2023

Suffolk/Greensville/Emporia/Accomack/Northampton
AIRFIELD 4-H CENTER
WAKEFIELD, VA



For all youth, ages 9-13
(as of September 30, 2023)

\$400

- Registration form and \$150 deposit due by June 1
- Final payment due by July 1
- Scholarships may be available

For registration form and more info:
<https://northampton.ext.vt.edu/>

Erin Morgan, 4-H Agent
Northampton County
emorgan2@vt.edu
757-678-7946 x15



If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Erin Morgan in the Northampton office at 757-678-7946 during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. *TDD number is (800) 828-1120.



Virginia Cooperative Extension
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VCE & ESAREC Contact Information

	Faculty/Staff	Title	Email	Work/Cell Phone
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	VACANT	4-H Agent		757/787-1361
	Rachel Barnes	Unit Support Staff	mrbarnes@vt.edu	757/787-1361
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	VACANT	Farm Manager		W 757/807-6596
	Andrew Fletcher	Asst. Farm Manager	alf20007@vt.edu	W 757/807-6596
Belinda Sterling	Administrative & Office Specialist	belindas@vt.edu	W 757/807-6586	



VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
 EASTERN SHORE AGRICULTURAL
 RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER
 VIRGINIA TECH.

Virginia Cooperative Extension brings the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth. VCE provides education through programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H Youth Development and Community Viability.

The Virginia Tech, Eastern Shore AREC is committed to supporting commercial vegetable, grain, oilseed, and fiber production throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Centrally located on Virginia's Eastern Shore, the center conducts basic and applied research on more than 25 agricultural crops.

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 If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in any activity, please contact Amanda Hurley at 757-678-7946* (*TDD number is (800) 828-1120) during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to discuss accommodations.