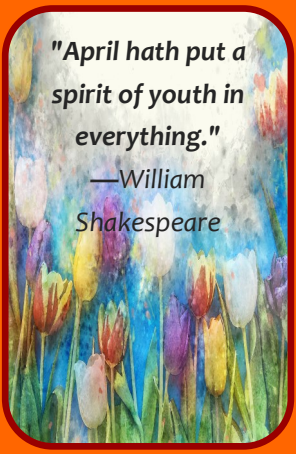




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"April hath put a  
spirit of youth in  
everything."  
—William  
Shakespeare



## From The Director

**W**e hope everyone is having a productive spring field season so far. Remember, if you need a mid-shore weather station to document rainfall, temperatures, windspeeds, etc., you can use our Eastern Shore AREC weather station using your favorite web browser or the WeatherSTEM app on your mobile phone. Access our station here: <http://vt-arec.weatherstem.com/arec81>.

Be on the lookout for freeze injury to wheat as we have had several cold nights the last week of March 2022. Thank you to our colleagues in Kansas that published this nice publication (<https://tinyurl.com/4u6ftrif>) regarding wheat growth stages and how wheat for each growth stage is impacted. In Table 1, you will notice that the greatest chance for freeze injury occurs during heading and flowering. Fortunately, our wheat is not this advanced on the Eastern Shore. If you do experience wheat injury from freezing in your field and your wheat is in the tillering to jointing growth stages, we encourage you to take a soil test in that area as there might be a stressor that facilitated the injury; i.e. low soil pH, high soil pH, a nutrient deficiency, or similar.

**Table 1. Temperatures that cause freeze injury to wheat at spring growth stages and symptoms and yield effect of spring freeze injury.**

Growth stage	Approximate injurious temperature (two hours)	Primary symptoms	Yield effect
Tillering	12 F (-11 C)	Leaf chlorosis; burning of leaf tips; silage odor; blue cast to fields	Slight to moderate
Jointing	24 F (-4 C)	Death of growing point; leaf yellowing or burning; lesions, splitting, or bending of lower stem; odor	Moderate to severe
Boot	28 F (-2 C)	Floret sterility; spike trapped in boot; damage to lower stem; leaf discoloration; odor	Moderate to severe
Heading	30 F (-1 C)	Floret sterility; white awns or white spikes; damage to lower stem; leaf discoloration	Severe
Flowering	30 F (-1 C)	Floret sterility; white awns or white spikes; damage to lower stem; leaf discoloration	Severe
Milk	28 F (-2 C)	White awns or white spikes; damage to lower stems; leaf discoloration; shrunken, roughened, or discolored kernels	Moderate to severe
Dough	28 F (-2 C)	Shriveled, discolored kernels; poor germination	Slight to moderate

Lastly, we hope some of you will venture over to the [Virginia Agriculture and Natural Resources Summit](#) on April 12-13, 2022 in Richmond, VA. Make sure you read through this newsletter to find out more about this event and your chance to shape Virginia Tech. As always, let me know if you have any questions!

— Mark



# Agents Corner

## Corn Specialist Day -

Thank you to everyone who attended the Corn Specialist Day at the Eastern Shore AREC on Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. It was a great success and we hope everyone walked away learning something valuable. Due to grower participation, this program impacted over 12,500 acres of corn grown in Northampton and Accomack Counties. During the program five different Specialists talked about fertility, irrigation management, weed management, disease considerations and insect concerns. With corn prices higher than previous years, but also input prices soaring, growers were able to fine tune their production techniques for 2022. A special thank you goes out to Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit for sponsoring the lunch that was served. Additional thank you's go out to Drs. Julie Shortridge, David Langston, and Sally Taylor for traveling to the Eastern Shore to support this event.



*Corn Specialist Day 3-31-22 sponsored by*



## Ag Literacy Week –

We are very proud that farmers and agricultural representatives from across Northampton and Accomack Counties took time out of their busy schedules to read to Elementary School students during Ag Literacy Week which was March 14 – 18, 2022. Having “real” farmers go into the classroom and read these books helps children get a real world perspective about what agriculture is like here on the Eastern Shore. This year the book that was read was “Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck’s Ice Cream Wish” by Viola Butler. This program was coordinated and supported by the Northampton and Accomack County Farm Bureau Boards.

## Avian Influenza –

Since the Poultry Industry is vital to the Eastern Shore agricultural economy, it is important for everyone, even backyard poultry flocks, to be aware of the Avian Influenza Awareness and Action Alert. Extension Agent, Forrest Hobbs, ANR Agent in New Kent and James City County, has summarized what we need to be aware of:

*“Backyard flock owners need to be concerned with this year’s Eurasian strain of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 which is also known as bird flu or HPAI H5. **In Virginia, this bird flu has been found in multiple wild bird populations and in one backyard flock.** This disease spreads through fecal contamination of pond water, materials, equipment, crates, flies, litter, contaminated feed, and other contaminated items that have been in contact with infected birds. The virus can survive 35 days in manure, soil, and water and can survive for more than three months in cold weather.*

*The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the risk to the general public (humans) from Eurasian HPAI H5 infections to be low. No one in the United States has been infected with this current outbreak. Bird flu was first identified in 1878 and has mutated as single strand RNA viruses do ever since.*

*The bird mortality rate of this strain of bird flu is 60 to 70% within a couple of days of infection, which is much higher and quicker than previous strains. Decreased activity, lowered feed intake, decreased production, respiratory problems, diarrhea, and purple discoloration are a few of the symptoms. Do not wait to verify infection. Test for bird flu infection by contacting the state veterinary office (804-692-0601).*

## Agents Corner Continued

*As an all-out effort for everyone with birds, please take precautions and take collective preventative actions. It is time to be hypervigilant about your backyard flocks. The site below has the best resources with the most accurate backyard flock biosecurity information.*

*Keep your flock, their feed, and water inside if possible. Keep your birds away from wild birds and contaminants, especially fecal matter and surface waters. Hand washing, dedicated footwear, and clean clothing are needed before and after tending poultry. Minimize bringing items, animals, and people into your bird's environment and keep a good journal. Avoid visitors, dead birds, bird swaps, or introducing new birds at this time. If your job involves being around birds, try to stay away from other birds for at least 72 hours. If you have a neighbor, friend, or relative, please pass the word far and wide on preventing this virus. Here is the VDACS State Veterinary Office number again (804-692-0601)."*

*USDA APHIS Defend the Flock Resource Center <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/df-resources/df-resources>*

### **Pesticide Container Recycling -**

We have received numerous questions since last fall regarding the Pesticide Container Recycling Program that is run through the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). Here is the latest update regarding that program:

*"As you know 2020 and 2021 have been challenging and the Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program is no exception. We have had a few challenges getting the plastic pesticide containers offered for recycling, collected over the last 24 months or so due to COVID infected crews, changes in contractors, a flood, equipment break-downs, shortage of parts and most recently wildly sporadic, inclement weather. The newest ACRC contractor is Ag Plastic Solutions based in Orrstown PA. Ag Plastic Solutions is now covering the northeastern states (from Virginia north). As you probably surmised from the previous sentences, the issues that Virginia is experiencing are certainly not unique to us and as such the new contractor is trying to get all of the states caught up, all at the same time. We have been triaging sites from state to state to try to get the most pressing needs met.*

*Moving forward, the program will operate a little differently than in the past. Ag Plastic Solutions' collection model uses a large, rear load compactor truck (which holds ~9,000+ lbs of plastic or ~12,000 2.5 gallon containers) .....essentially a garbage truck body placed on an over-the-road chassis/truck. There will be no more grinding on site. The new crew will inspect containers, compact them in the truck and then drive the compacted material to their plant for grinding in PA. Instead of spending consecutive weeks in November visiting each of the collection sites in Virginia, routes will be established and collections will take place throughout the year. This is all still in process and we are working to get all of our sites emptied initially before establishing a route schedule...more information to come."*

**Summer of 2022 is Homeowner Well Water Testing!!** In late June, we are partnering with SERCAP to offer this service at a reduced cost to participants. Be on the lookout for program details in the coming months. Please spread the word and plan to get your well water tested!

We are looking forward to spring and the growing season. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us!

*Wanda & Theresa*



Ag Plastic Solutions' rear load compactor truck



*“To preserve beauty on the earth, beauty herself beseeches us to plant trees, and renew dead landscapes with the shadow and light of plant life flitting through the pendant limbs, the willowy boughs and the waving foliage of sturdy, yet graceful woods. Our ancestors planted orchards to fruit for us, and homes to give us shelter.”*

—Julius Sterling Morton



Arbor Day was established on April 10, 1872 by Julius Sterling Morton in Nebraska City, Nebraska where nearly one million trees were planted on this day. Morton was appointed Secretary of Agriculture by President Grover Cleveland. Over his lifetime, Morton planted thousands of trees on his property, which is now Arbor Lodge State Historical Park.

According to [Virginia Big Tree Program](#), Northampton County is home to two Virginia National Champion trees. The first is a willow oak (*Quercus phellos*), which is estimated to be over 200 years old. It is 105ft tall with a circumference of just over 27ft (328 inches to be exact). The second is a Hercules’ Club (*Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*), which lives on Fishermans Island atop an old WWII bunker. It is 20ft tall with a circumference of 48in.

A Virginia State Champion tree is also located in Northampton County: a loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*).

There are two Virginia State Champion trees in Accomack County: a Yoshino cherry (*Prunus xyedoensis*) and a Japanese zelkova (*Zelkova serrata*).

Arbor Day occurs on the last Friday in April—Celebrate by planting a tree on April 29th! Use the guides below for selecting Eastern Shore native trees.

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Native Plants & Trees

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/criticalarea/Documents/chesapeakenatives.pdf>

Virginia Eastern Shore Native Plant Guide

<https://www.plantvirginiannatives.org/native-plants-for-virginias-eastern-shore>



The first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970 and was organized by Senator Gaylord Nelson and graduate student Denis Hayes. It is now celebrated internationally to raise awareness for environmental concerns, climate impacts and more.

Small choices, big impacts:

- Grow plants that attract pollinators to your yard
- Reduce plastic waste and choose biodegradable or reusable packaging
- Pick up litter in your area

## Ukrainian Eggs

Ukrainian eggs, or Pysanka, are intricately decorated eggs using dyes and beeswax that were an early form of



writing predating Christianity. Pysanka comes from the Ukrainian word Pysaty, which means “to write.” The eggs were gifted at times of celebration or mourning. Each color and symbol has a meaning.

Archaeologists have discovered ceramic pysanky in Ukraine that date back to 1,300 BC, which were most likely created in honor of the spring equinox.

## History of the Easter Basket



Origins of the Easter basket point to Germany where the “Easter Hare” would leave brightly colored eggs. Children would create nests of leaves and grasses for the hare to leave the eggs.

Egg hunts were made popular in the Victorian era when Queen Victoria’s mother, German-born Duchess of Kent, would paint and hide eggs for the children. Victoria and Albert kept up the tradition with their own children.

However, it’s also believed that another tradition began much earlier with Middle Eastern cultures when farmers would carry seedlings in a basket to be blessed for a bountiful harvest.

## Moon of the Month



The full pink moon occurs on April 16th, which is the first full moon of the spring season and is also the Paschal moon. Pink moon gets its name from creeping phlox, which generally blooms around this time.

*Each month has a full moon theme and name, which is historically derived from Native Americans, Colonial or European sources, and used in the Old Farmer's Almanac.*



# AGRITOURISM IN VIRGINIA'S NEW ECONOMY



**Wednesday, April 13th**  
**10:00am - 4:00pm**  
**Eastern Shore Community College**

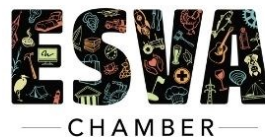
**29316 Lankford Hwy, Melfa, VA 23410**

The Accomack and Northampton Virginia Cooperative Extensions are proud to partner with Eastern Shore of Virginia Chamber of Commerce to bring you this comprehensive workshop. Hear from several speakers on topics of Agritourism operations, safety, ordinances and more. There is no cost for this event and lunch is provided.

**Please RSVP to:**

Ursula Deitch  
Northampton County ANR Agent  
ursula@vt.edu  
757-678-7946 ext. 25

Theresa Pittman  
Accomack County ANR Agent  
tpittman@vt.edu  
757-787-1361 ext. 10



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*If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Ursula Deitch at the Northampton County Extension 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.*

# 4-H Embryology



## Northampton 4-H is Eggs-pecting!

EGGS TO BE SET AT BROADWATER  
ACADEMY, KIPTOPEKE ELEMENTARY,  
AND SHORE CHRISTIAN

**Baby Chicks arriving first of May!**

*A Special Thanks to Lauren Seltzer of Triple S Farms for continually providing  
fertilized eggs to the Northampton County 4H Embryology Program*

# Use these basic tips to keep your birds healthy and prevent the spread of serious diseases like avian influenza and virulent Newcastle disease.

## 1. Always practice good biosecurity.

Review the 14 National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) Biosecurity Principles ([www.poultryimprovement.org/documents/StandardE-BiosecurityPrinciples.pdf](http://www.poultryimprovement.org/documents/StandardE-BiosecurityPrinciples.pdf)) and create a biosecurity plan for your premises.

## 2. Remember to wash your hands before and after coming into contact with poultry.

If you don't have soap and water, use hand sanitizer.

## 3. Protect yourself.

Don't kiss or snuggle with your birds.

## 4. Protect your poultry.

Put control programs in place for wild birds (including their feces and their feathers), rodents, and insects. Clean and disinfect any poultry equipment before and after use.

## 5. Monitor your flock's health.

Know the signs of disease and check your flock daily for any signs of illness. Quarantine sick birds right away.

## 6. Report sick birds!

Call USDA toll-free at **1.866.536.7593** to reach our veterinarians. USDA can test your birds free of charge to make sure they don't have a serious poultry disease.



For free resources and to learn more about good biosecurity, visit: [www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock)

*Let's Keep Our Poultry Healthy Together*

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.  
Program Aid No. 2248 | Issued September 2019



# JOIN US!

## 2022 VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES SUMMIT: FARM, FORESTRY, FOOD, AND FIBER OF THE FUTURE

TUESDAY, APRIL 12 - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022  
RICHMOND MARRIOTT | SHORT PUMP

*Expanding the economy and security of Virginia's agriculture, natural resources, and food systems*

**YOU ARE INVITED:** Virginia Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Summit

**DATE:** April 12-13, 2022 in Richmond, Virginia.

**WHY YOU?** Your involvement and leadership in the key sectors of agriculture, forestry, natural resources are influential. These sectors are all critically intertwined across the Commonwealth and influence every person in the Commonwealth. Your voice is important. We recognize that this initiative will only be successful with active support and participation of our private sector, producers, and agricultural and natural resources organizations. We encourage you or a designee from your organization to participate in this important conference.

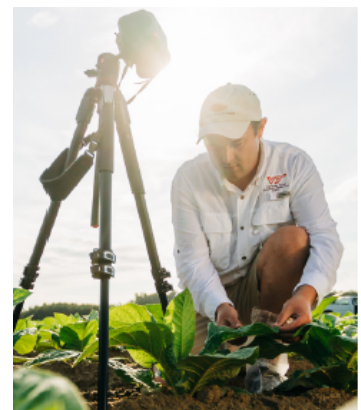
**PURPOSE:** As the largest industries in Virginia, agriculture and forestry, combined with natural resources, do collective good across the state, providing economic contribution, supporting workforce and engaging in research. As a participant, you will discuss and envision opportunities for enhancing partnerships between Virginia Tech and the private agricultural, forestry and natural resources industries, producers, and commodity groups.

**WHAT?** Through interactive sessions, networking events, and small breakouts, you can help identify opportunities for dynamic engagement in private-public partnerships to ensure that Virginia's ANR industries continue to prosper. As leaders from the agriculture, forestry, and natural resource sectors, you will gain perspective on Virginia Tech's expertise and potential for enhancing partnerships. Your ideas will help shape a future for Virginia Tech's ANR research and extension programs that will yield benefits for your enterprise.

**HOSTS:** The Summit is hosted by Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Tech Center for Advanced Innovation in Agriculture, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources and Environment, and Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** We have set aside a block of rooms for conference attendees at the Richmond Marriott Short Pump, located at 4240 Dominion Boulevard, Glen Allen, VA 23060. Reservations must be made no later than March 15.

**INTERESTED IN SPONSORING?** Click here to review sponsorship opportunities and register.



**CLICK HERE OR SCAN FOR  
EVENT DETAILS**



# Ag Literacy Week March 14 - 18



Steve Sturgis  
Northampton County Farm  
Bureau Board



Matt Hickman  
President of Accomack County  
Farm Bureau



Ursula Deitch  
Northampton ANR Agent  
Virginia Cooperative Extension



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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757-678-7946

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757-787-1361

*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.*

Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center

33446 Research Dr  
Painter, VA 23420  
757-807-6586



<https://www.ares.vaes.vt.edu/ares/eastern-shore.html>

*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 Lauren Seltzer at 757-807-6586\* (\*TDD number is (800) 828-1120) during business hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations.*



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

