

# The Stalk



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

## Update on Monitoring and Control Options for Slugs

This is the 5th week of monitoring slug populations in fields with shingle refuge traps. Monitored fields are no-till with cover crops and/or heavy corn debris going into full-season soybeans.

Slug numbers have increased over time since the deployment of traps in March (Fig. 1). A larger number of small slugs observed the week of 5/2 and 5/7 indicates a recent hatch. Many of the newly hatched slugs were on annual weeds or cover crops present in the field (annual bluegrass in field 2 and barley in field 3)

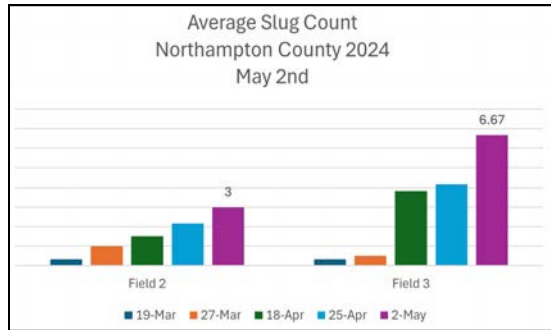


Fig 1. Average Slug Count with shingle traps May 2024



Young slugs on shingle trap

## HOW TO MONITOR FOR SLUGS

Monitoring of slugs with shingle traps can be done in fields going into field corn or soybeans if you have experienced issues or have concerns about populations in your fields. 1ft<sup>2</sup> shingle refuge traps can be cut into white colored roofing shingle material and placed in various areas of the field. Traps placed on the edge of fields will typically have more slugs than those located in the center of the field.

The traps can give a decent idea of slug pressure, in addition to general scouting, prior to planting. Traps with upwards of 10 slugs will be an indicator of slug pressure that could lead to economic damage for newly emerging plants. (continued on page 2...)



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## Update on Monitoring and Control Options for Slugs Continued....

### WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT SLUG PRESSURE

Molluscicide baits are the only efficacious pesticides for the control of slugs in crops. Baits need to be applied when there is no risk of precipitation in the 24 hours following application. Baits should also be applied as close to nighttime as possible or at nighttime, since slugs do most of their feeding then.

There is some evidence that nitrogen fertilizer applications are efficacious in causing significant slug mortality. Dr. Dively, Professor of Entomology with the University of Maryland tested this method and was able to obtain up to 81.3% control (Fig. 2). Dr. Tooker, Professor of Entomology with Penn State also observed significant mortality of slugs in fields where nitrogen applications were made. Per my conversation with him, he stated that it should be applied based on the rule of 3 (30% nitrogen at 3am, applied 3 times) for optimum efficacy.

Lastly, ground beetles and spiders are very effective predators of slugs. If you see abundant presence of those, careful attention should be made not to use unnecessary insecticides that can kill them. Based on observations from the 4 fields scouted on the Eastern Shore, slug pressure appeared to be lesser where ground beetles' activity was observed.

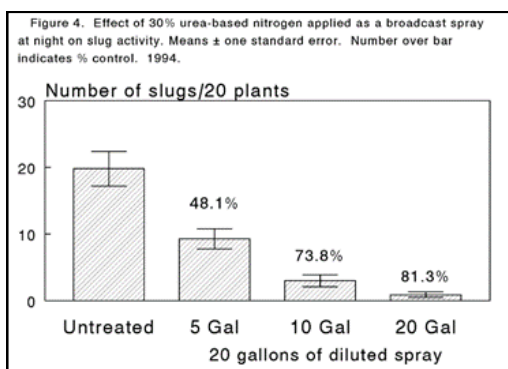


Fig. 2. Control of Slugs with Nitrogen Applications (G. Dively, U.of MD)



**Helene Doughty**  
ANR Associate Extension Agent  
Northampton County



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## Agent Question of the Month

### What is this plant and is this edible?

Can you identify this weed? It is curly dock (*Rumex Crispus* L.) and readily found in ditches and fields on the Eastern Shore. The question after identification was whether it is edible or not. There is input from online foraging, wild edible sites that curly dock can be consumed. However, it contains oxalic acid (it is in the rhubarb family) which can give it a sour taste and can be poisonous in very high amounts. It is considered toxic to horses, cattles and sheep due to its high levels of nitrates and oxalates.







## Agents' Calendar:

*"Working for the Wellbeing of Our Communities!"*

### Metompkin Elementary Career Day

Accomack County VCE was invited to participate in the Metompkin Elementary Career Day on April 19, 2023. Theresa Pittman spoke to 500+ students in grades Pre-K through 5th grade about the farming industry, what farmers do day-to-day and how to become a farmer in the future. Special thanks to Mt. Nebo Farms for for generously volunteering their time and equipment, bringing the magic of farming to life for these young learners and making this experience possible!



### On-Going VCE Efforts in May

- May 1st: Commercial Pesticide License Recertification Class
- May 7: VSU Agent Orientation
- May 8: VESA Conference
- May 9: Paraquat Training for Agent Webinar
- May 13: Weed Science Working Lunch
- May 13: Drone Workshop Planning Meeting
- May 13: ISTRO 2024 Planning Meeting
- May 14: Farm to Table Webinar
- May 16: Registered Technician Course and Examination
- May 16: New Faculty AREC Tour at the ESAREC
- May 21-23: VAAEEA Summer Tour
- Week of 27th - Pond/Irrigation water sampling for pathogens
- Week of 27th - Pheromone trap setup for Insect Monitoring Program

Ongoing:

- Regional Shared-use kitchen Needs Assessment and Comprehensive Study
- International Soil Tillage Research Conference Project Management (2024 ISTRO, Virginia Beach Sept. 23-27)
- "Raising Quality and Large Sized Vegetables for Fair Competition" Workshop

Weekly:

- Slug trapping research to evaluate slug population density.



### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Northampton
- @vce\_northampton
- Accomack
- @vce\_accomack



# THE AGENT'S CORNER

Theresa Pittman - Accomack County ANR Agent

Hélène Doughty - Northampton County ANR Agent



## WHAT'S THAT BUG?

Hélène Doughty, Northampton ANR agent, invites you to test your entomology knowledge. Take a guess on the pest and email or DM your answer! [hdoughty@vt.edu](mailto:hdoughty@vt.edu)

**Hint: Not an insect but a mollusk!**



Our previous "What's That Bug" was a lady bug larva. Lady bug larvae are just as effective beneficial insect predators as adult lady beetles. They search and readily feed on small insects such as aphids and thrips as well as consume insect pest eggs such as Colorado potato beetle egg masses. Their presence indicates that pests may be present but that natural control is in effect.

## Agents' Statistics to Date:

Commercial Pesticide License Recertifications: 27 licenses



# UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS

**MONDAY  
MAY 13TH**

**THURSDAY  
MAY 16TH**

**VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

## WEED SCIENCE WORKING LUNCH

VCE is hosting a working lunch that focuses on post-emergence options for corn and soybean, and control of herbicide-resistant weeds.

**Time - Registration**  
11:30 am

**Location**  
ESAREC  
33446 Research Dr  
Painter, VA 23420

**Date**  
May 13th, 2024

**VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

## REGISTERED TECHNICIAN TRAINING COURSE

Come participate in a Registered Technician Training Course. Contact your local VCE office for more details on how to apply to VDACS for testing approval.

**Time - Registration**  
8:00 am

**Location**  
ESAREC  
33446 Research Dr  
Painter, VA 23420

**Date**  
May 16th, 2024

**RSVP** Helene Doughty - Northampton County - 757.678.7946 - [hdoughty@vt.edu](mailto:hdoughty@vt.edu)  
Theresa Pittman - Accomack County - 757.787.1361 - [tpittman@vt.edu](mailto:tpittman@vt.edu)

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Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

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If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation, please notify Rachel Barnes, Accomack County at 757-787-1361 during business hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

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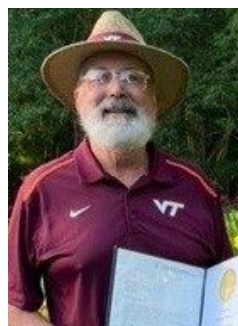
## Dean of CALS Search Update

We had a busy month in April participating in meetings and Open Forums as we continued our search for dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech. Search committee member, Mark Reiter, and College of Agriculture and Life Science Staff Association (CALSSA) large AREC representative, Belinda Sterling, participated in meetings to better understand the experience and vision of the 3 dean candidates. Now, recommendations and comments from all stakeholder groups are being fully considered by Provost's office. For latest updates and to read information regarding the 3 candidates we interviewed, please visit the Virginia Tech Senior Administrator Search Information website: <https://faculty.vt.edu/academic-personnel/recruitment/senior-search-information.html>



## Custis and Reiter Receive University Awards

On May 1, Mr. Tommy Custis and Dr. Mark Reiter received awards at the 2024 Virginia Tech Faculty and Staff Awards ceremony in Blacksburg. Each year, the university congratulates faculty and staff members for their contributions in a number of categories, from advising students to championing outreach and research. The full article featuring all Virginia Tech award winners can be found at: <https://news.vt.edu/awards/facstaff2024.html>.



Mr. Tommy Custis received the Staff Career Achievement Award. Created in 2011 to recognize retiring staff members, the Staff Career Achievement Award is presented annually to individuals who retired the previous year and who distinguished themselves through exemplary performance and service during their university career. Nominees must have worked a minimum of 10 years at Virginia Tech.



Dr. Mark Reiter won the Extension Specialist/Administrator category within the Alumni Awards for Excellence. Sponsored by the Virginia Tech Alumni Association, the Alumni Awards for Excellence are awarded annually to faculty and staff who exhibit excellence and dedication in their respective fields.

Mr. Tommy Custis

Dr. Mark Reiter



## Applied Entomologist Search Update

We continue our search process for our Applied Entomology position to be based at the Eastern Shore AREC. The incumbent will focus on crops significant to Virginia's agricultural economy and important to the Eastern Shore and Coastal Plain regions of Virginia (potato, tomato, snap bean, broccoli, corn, soybean, wheat, and others).

In April we interviewed 3 candidates in-person in both Blacksburg and throughout the Eastern Shore. Thank you to all that participated in the interview process. The search committee (Dr. Vijay Singh, Dr. Doug Higgins, Ms. Helene Doughty, Mr. John Mason, and Dr. Mark Reiter, Chair) are now considering all feedback given by each stakeholder group that participated. Stay tuned as we continue to navigate the hiring process for this critical position!



## Research Needs Assessment for CALS

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech has launched a comprehensive research needs assessment survey, aimed at steering the future direction of its agricultural research initiatives. This strategic effort is currently underway, and the survey is open until fall.

The survey, open to faculty, students, industry partners, and stakeholders, seeks to identify the most pressing research needs within the agricultural sector. It covers a range of topics, including sustainable farming practices, crop science, animal husbandry, agricultural echnology, and the life sciences.



Mary Burrows, associate dean of research and director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, emphasized the importance of this endeavor.

"In a rapidly evolving world, it's crucial that our research stays ahead of the curve," Burrows said. "This survey will help us align our resources with the most urgent and impactful areas of agricultural research."

Participants have until fall to complete the survey, which can be accessed online at [bit.ly/VAES Survey](https://bit.ly/VAES_Survey). The college anticipates releasing the findings in late 2024 with the goal of implementing new research projects that reflect the community's needs and priorities.



<https://virginiatech.questionpro.com/VAESSurvey>



### Italian Ryegrass

Do you see weed escapes in wheat this year? Are you not getting desired control levels of Italian ryegrass even after using the best herbicides options?

If you are not sure about the status of herbicide resistance, please collect Italian ryegrass seeds from a few plants when they mature, and send to the weed science group at: Eastern Shore AREC, 33446 Research Dr, Painter, VA, 23420.

You may email Dr. Vijay Singh ([v.singh@vt.edu](mailto:v.singh@vt.edu)) for questions and to communicate location of herbicide-resistant weeds. Our team can also assist you in sample collection during the summer. Once herbicide-resistance is determined, we will provide alternate management options.





### **Sterling Represents AREC Staff at CALS**

Belinda Sterling joined the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Staff Association (CALSSA) in April as a representative for the 5 large ARECs. The purpose of CALSSA is to serve as a forum for staff to express their views and communicate issues and information between staff, administration, faculty, and students. Staff participation is also encouraged in college activities, shared governance, as well as community outreach programs and events. Belinda represents Alson H Smith AREC, Hampton Roads AREC, Southern Piedmont AREC, Tidewater AREC, Seafood AREC, and Eastern Shore AREC at monthly meetings. More information can be found [HERE](#)



### **Forest Stewardship Plan**

You will notice a slight change to the landscape as you drive past and through the Eastern Shore AREC. We are currently working towards fulfillment of our Forest Stewardship Plan. Each state land with trees has both a Nutrient Management Plan and a Forest Stewardship Plan to ensure we are being good stewards of state resources. Just as you manage any other crop, you need to manage your forests to ensure optimal growth and wood production efficiency. All wood was either utilized as logs for saw timber or chipped for use throughout the wood product industry. All harvested lands will be replanted. We will continue this process as we commercial thin additional acreage to encourage tree health and growth.





# ANNOUNCEMENTS



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

## FOLLOW US

on social media for more details and updates!

## SAVE THE DATE

### PUMPKIN GROWING WORKSHOP

Learn how to grow a prize giant pumpkin to compete in the 2024 Eastern Shore Agricultural Fair!

In this workshop, participants will learn tips and techniques to grow Atlantic Giant pumpkins from seed, including fertility, disease, pest control AND showing a prize large pumpkin at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Fair on October 5th. Participants will receive packets of Atlantic Giant Pumpkin seeds free of charge!

FREE

Workshops in each county coming soon Adult and Youth

Windsor, VA 23405



For more information, please contact Northampton County ANR Agent Héline Doughty at [hdoughty@vt.edu](mailto:hdoughty@vt.edu) or 757-999-0780

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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 Héline Doughty at (phone number/TDD) 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.



### EASTERN SHORE AGRICULTURAL FAIR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH 2024



### NEW COMPETITIONS!

STAY TUNED FOR INFORMATION ON OUR NEW NORTHAMPTON & ACCOMACK COUNTY VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION VEGETABLE DISPLAY, ROW CROPS DISPLAY AND LARGEST PUMPKIN COMPETITIONS!



### Eastern Shore Chapter - 2023

60  
Volunteers  
4,413  
Hours Volunteered  
\$143,819  
Value of Volunteers



## National Volunteer Week April 14 - 20, 2024

The contribution of volunteers is often unseen and unrecognized by many, visible only through the incredible impact of their volunteering, so we're taking the time during National Volunteer Week and throughout the year to thank them and celebrate all they contribute to our local communities.



## THANK YOU to the Eastern Shore Master Gardeners



# Work at Virginia Tech!

*Join our team at the Virginia Tech Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Painter, VA! We are currently looking to fill two positions to help us out with our applied research and Extension activities.*

## **Mechanic (Job posting #529483)**

The mechanic position supports the Agricultural Farm Manager in the maintenance, repairs, and upkeep of agricultural machinery, fleet vehicles, buildings, and performs fieldwork that includes driving tractors, combines, planting, irrigation, and similar at the Virginia Tech Eastern Shore AREC. A high school diploma or equivalent is required. The candidate must have knowledge regarding agricultural systems, farm or experiment station experience, or education in repair and maintenance of agricultural equipment and vehicles, or relevant experience in repairs and maintenance. The candidate should have a working knowledge of farming practices, grounds maintenance, and the ability to work outside in varying types of weather.

To apply, please visit: <https://careers.pageuppeople.com/968/cw/en-us/job/529483/mechanic>.

## **Hourly Wage Intern**

Working with us during summer months is a great way to learn more about scientific research while earning some cash! Interns work with faculty, staff, and graduate students stationed on the Eastern Shore of Virginia to conduct research experiments and Extension outreach that benefit the local Eastern Shore community. A desire and interest in the environment, agriculture, biology, and related disciplines is desired. Disciplines include weed science, plant pathology, soils, and nutrient management. These positions are flexible and are a perfect first-time summer job, ideal for current students enrolled locally (i.e., Eastern Shore Community College), or for students home during summer break. To learn more or to apply, please email [ESAREC@vt.edu](mailto:ESAREC@vt.edu).



## VCE & ESAREC Contact Information

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	Erin Morgan	4-H Agent	emorgan2@vt.edu	757/678-7946
	Amanda Hurley	Unit Support Staff	amandalh@vt.edu	757/678-7946
	Faculty/Staff	Title	Email	Work/Cell Phone
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	VACANT	4-H Agent		
	Rachel Barnes	Unit Support Staff	mrbarnes@vt.edu	757/787-1361
	Faculty/Staff	Title	Email	Work/Cell Phone
<b>Eastern Shore Agricultural Research &amp; Extension Center</b> 33446 Research Dr. Painter, VA 23420 <a href="https://www.ares.vaes.vt.edu/ares/eastern-shore.html">https://www.ares.vaes.vt.edu/ares/eastern-shore.html</a>	Mark Reiter	Director/Professor, Soils & Nutrient Management	mreiter@vt.edu	W 757/807-6576 C 757/693-2556
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	VACANT	Assistant Professor, Horticulture		
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	VACANT	Assistant Farm Manager		
	VACANT	Mechanic		
	Belinda Sterling	Administrative & Office Specialist	belindas@vt.edu	W 757/807-6596
Alana Kirsch	Communications Associate	alanak@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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