



*Virginia Agricultural Council*

*ANNUAL REPORT*

*Fiscal Year Ending  
June 30, 2023*

## Virginia Agricultural Council Annual Report

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### **PUBLICATION YEAR 2023**

#### **Document Title**

Virginia Agricultural Council Annual Report

#### **Author**

Virginia Agricultural Council

#### **Legislative Mandate**

Va. Code § 3.2-2904

#### **Executive Summary**

Summarizes the management and expenditure of the Virginia Agricultural Foundation Fund for programs of agricultural research, education, and agricultural services to strengthen and promote the best interests of agriculture in the Commonwealth. The report contains the annual financial statements of the Agricultural Council for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

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*Tscharner D. Watkins, III*  
*Chair*

*Cecil E. Meyerhoeffer, Jr.*  
*Vice Chair*



*Jason O. Bush*  
*Secretary*

*W. Dewey Jennings*  
*Executive Director*

November 1, 2023

The Honorable Glen Youngkin  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Virginia  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Youngkin:

The Virginia Agricultural Council is pleased to present its annual report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

The members of the Council appreciate the opportunity to serve the agriculture industry in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

We trust you will find the report informative and rewarding, and we recognize the diversity of agricultural interests in the state that contribute greatly to the Commonwealth's economic prosperity.

Sincerely,  
VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL

Tscharner D. Watkins, III  
Chairman

**MEMBERS OF THE VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL**

<p>Mr. Keith M. Dunn  Oak Hill Farms  21100 Peters Bridge Road  Yale, VA 23897  Commodity: Cotton  <a href="mailto:Keith.oakhillfarms@gmail.com">Keith.oakhillfarms@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Mr. Jason O. Bush  Bush Farms  471 Brickchurch Circle  Castlewood, VA 24224  Commodity:Cattle, Tobacco  <a href="mailto:cowmanjob@yahoo.com">cowmanjob@yahoo.com</a></p>
<p>Mrs. Kathy G. Coffee  W. J. Coffee Farms  2255 Fletcher Chapel Road  Kenbridge, VA 23944  Commodity:Tobacco, Soybeans, Wheat  <a href="mailto:kgcoffee1979@yahoo.com">kgcoffee1979@yahoo.com</a></p>	<p>Mr. Travis Croxton  Rappahannock Oyster Company  4777 Wormleys Drive  Mechanicsville, VA 23116  Commodity:Aquaculture  <a href="mailto:travis@rroysters.com">travis@rroysters.com</a></p>
<p>Mr. Philip B. Glaize Jr.  Fred L. Glaize  112 Piccadilly Street  P. O. Box 2077  Winchester, VA 22604  Commodity:Apples  <a href="mailto:glzapple@visuallink.com">glzapple@visuallink.com</a></p>	<p>Mr. George G. Grattan  305 Wickham Glen Drive  Richmond, Virginia 23238  Commodity:Turf  <a href="mailto:Gil.grattan@virginiagreenlawncare.com">Gil.grattan@virginiagreenlawncare.com</a></p>
<p>Ms. Ashley E. Hardesty  Harvue Farms  1458 Longmarsh Rd.  Berryville, VA 22611  Commodity: Dairy  <a href="mailto:alelgin85@gmail.com">alelgin85@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Mr. Cecil B. "Sonny" Meyerhoeffer  7865 Kiser Rd.  Mount Crawford, VA 22841  Commodity:Poultry, Grain  <a href="mailto:sonnyebp@gmail.com">sonnyebp@gmail.com</a></p>

<p>Ms. Sarah Jane Thomsen  39 Malvern Avenue  Apt. 6  Richmond, VA 23221  Commodity: Agricultural Education  <a href="mailto:sthomsen@statefairva.org">sthomsen@statefairva.org</a></p>	<p>Mr. Mark Newbill  Forest Lake Farm &amp; NEWBILT  Construction  105 Darlington Drive  Rocky Mount, VA 24151  Commodity: Dairy  <a href="mailto:mnewbill@embarqmail.com">mnewbill@embarqmail.com</a></p>
<p>Ms. Kimberley H. Nixon  Co-Owner, Glenmary Farm LLC and  Western View Plantation LLC  21496 River Road  Rapidan, Virginia 22733  Commodity: Cattle, Turkey and Grain  <a href="mailto:khnixon1231@gmail.com">khnixon1231@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Ms. Lynn Rush St. Clair  Swover Creek Farms  4176 Swover Creek Road  Edinburg, VA 22824  Commodity: Direct Marketing  <a href="mailto:swover@shentel.net">swover@shentel.net</a></p>
<p>Ms. Rosalea R. Potter  3673 Big Hill Road  Lexington, VA 24450  Commodity: Cattle  <a href="mailto:Riley.buffalocreekbeef@gmail.com">Riley.buffalocreekbeef@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Mr. Tscharner D. Watkins III  3907 West Franklin Street  Richmond, VA 23221  Commodity:Nursery Stock  <a href="mailto:tscharnerwatkins@comcast.net">tscharnerwatkins@comcast.net</a></p>
<p>Mr. Alan Worrell  Worrell Family Farms  879 Sunrise Drive  Austinville, VA 24312  Commodity: Vegetables  <a href="mailto:Alanworrell@ymail.com">Alanworrell@ymail.com</a></p>	

**VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL**  
**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

<p>Dr. Robert Corley III Interim Dean, College of Agriculture Virginia State University 100 Owens Hall Box 9081 Petersburg, VA 23806 <a href="mailto:rcorley@VSU.edu">rcorley@VSU.edu</a></p>	<p>Joseph Guthrie Virginia Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services 102 Governor St. Richmond, VA 23219 <a href="mailto:Joseph.guthrie@vdacs.virginia.gov">Joseph.guthrie@vdacs.virginia.gov</a></p>
<p>Dr. Alan Grant Dean, College Of Agriculture VPI &amp; SU 104 Hutcheson Hall Blacksburg, VA 24061 <a href="mailto:algrant@vt.edu">algrant@vt.edu</a></p>	

## **Purpose of the Council**

Agriculture is Virginia's largest industry, with an economic impact of \$82 billion annually, and it provides more than 380,000 jobs in the Commonwealth.

The Pennies for Progress Act (Act) was passed in 1966 by the Virginia General Assembly to establish the Virginia Agricultural Council (Council) to administer the objectives of the Act. The current Agricultural Council Law (Virginia Code § 3.2 – 2900 et seq.) permits financial assistance and support for agricultural research and other services. The Council is authorized, in part, to take all such measures as will assist in strengthening and promoting the best interests of agriculture in the Commonwealth.

The Council is directed by 18 members to be appointed by the Governor. Insofar as practical, 15 of the members shall be actively engaged in farming and shall be primarily engaged in the production of a different agricultural commodity. The Commissioner, the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and the Associate Vice President for Agriculture and Extension of Virginia State University shall serve as ex officio members.

The General Assembly specified in the initial enabling legislation that it is in the public interest that assessments be levied upon certain agricultural supplies used by farmers. Monies are received from one-half cent per gallon of the state gasoline tax refund made on motor fuel used for agricultural purposes; a five cents-per-ton levy on lime sold; a 25 cents-per-ton levy on fertilizer sold, with five cents-per-ton for Virginia Agricultural Council use; a seven cents-per-ton levy on feed; and 3/10 of one percent of gross sale receipts from lawn and turf seed, with 50 percent to the Council. In 2008, the General Assembly established the Seed Fund (Virginia Code § 3.2-4004). Monies received for this fund are administered by the Council for the exclusive funding of lawn and turf research. The Council is also authorized to accept gifts and grants.

The Council accepts requests for financial assistance from any organized group within, or serving, Virginia's agriculture industry. This includes suppliers, farmers, marketers, extension centers, colleges, and universities.

The Council's philosophy on selecting projects for support dictates that projects should exhibit the capabilities of yielding timely results that are applicable and useful. Studies should address current or foreseeable problems and interests and should have the potential to provide benefits to a reasonably broad spectrum of agricultural needs. All projects will be considered; however, projects should show promise with results that can be applied in a reasonable timeframe.

There are five basic considerations, as follows:



- a. Importance of the project to Virginia's agricultural economy.
- b. Recognition by the public or the Council of the project's importance.
- c. Availability of other funds from industry, commodity groups, governmental agencies, or private individuals in support of the project.
- d. Availability of personnel and facilities to conduct the project.
- e. Ability of the group, organization, or agency to execute the proposal.

Council members meet at least twice each year; once in the spring, and again in the summer. To be considered for funding, principal investigators complete a preproposal outlining the objectives of their proposal, and selected applicants are invited to submit full proposals. New project proposal requests are considered at the spring meeting.

The Council approves project funding for one fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). Continued financial support for the second year depends upon reports of progress, availability of funds, and priority in relation to other requests.

The Council's grant award requires the researchers to submit final reports summarizing their research and results, and more importantly, to disseminate the results to industry. Researchers will present at conferences, publish results and summaries in industry newsletters, or work with cooperative education and stakeholder groups, such as the Virginia Turfgrass Council, to share the information with Virginia's agricultural producers.

## GRANTS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

Last Name	Project Name	Amount
<b>Acimovic</b>	Evaluation of New Fungicides for Management of Apple Bitter Rot Disease in Virginia and Comparison to Synthetic Fungicides	\$ 15,000
<b>Biase</b>	Identification of Plasma Proteins That Can Be Used to Reduce the Economic Impact of Infertility in Beef Heifers	\$ 15,000
<b>Duraj-Thatte</b>	Novel Smart Materials to Capture and Recover Ammonia from Poultry Houses	\$ 22,000
<b>Ealy</b>	Improving Ovum Pickup and Embryo Yield in Cattle	\$ 15,000
<b>Ferreira</b>	Assessment of asymptomatic clinical hypocalcemia among dairy farms in the Commonwealth of Virginia	\$ 19,160
<b>Fritzlen</b>	Effects of the Combination of Betaine and Butyrate on Broiler Chickens Raised on Used Litter with Different Amounts of Moisture	\$ 20,000
<b>Maroof</b>	Identification of Perfect DNA Markers to Develop High Protein Soybean Cultivars	\$ 10,000
<b>Nita</b>	In-field Evaluation of Aerial Drone Imaging and Mapping in Vineyards for Disease Management	\$ 12,500
<b>Nix</b>	Selection of High Competence Cattle Embryos by Video Analysis	\$ 15,000
<b>Payne</b>	Evaluation of Handheld NIR Scanning Devices in Predicting Forage Quality	\$ 10,000
<b>Pilot</b>	Evaluation of the Effect of Protein Hydrolysate Biostimulants on the Growth and Yield of Corn, Strawberry and Tomato	\$ 20,000
<b>Quezada</b>	Sustainable Approaches for Heat Stress Mitigation and Pest Management to Enhance Tomato Production	\$ 16,485
<b>Rhoads</b>	Can Blood Glucose Concentrations Predict the Response to Summer Heat Stress	\$ 12,644
<b>Schram</b>	A Novel Treatment for Mastitis that Reduces Intramammary Antibiotic Use and Lessens the Concerns of Antibiotic Resistance on Virginia Dairy Farms	\$ 11,444
<b>Singh</b>	Tolerance of Edamame to Soybean Herbicides and Weed Management	\$ 21,098
<b>Tracy</b>	Evaluating Diets for the Black Soldier Fly: A Novel Composting System for Agricultural Wastes	\$ 7,022
<b>Vinatzer</b>	Metagenomics for Faster Identification of Plant Pathogens in Virginia	\$ 19,000
<b>Zeng</b>	Effect of Management Practices on Microbiome and its Impact on Soil and Plant Health on Tobacco Farms	\$ 25,024
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$286,377.00</b>

**SECOND YEAR PROJECTS FY 2022**

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Acimovic</b>	Identification of Colletotrichum Species Causing Apple Bitter Rot Disease in Virginia and Development of DNA-based Rapid Diagnostic Method	\$ 15,299
<b>Cockrum</b>	Use of Precision Technology to Predict Pathogenic Diarrhea in Pre-weaned Dairy Heifers	\$ 11,750
<b>Collakova</b>	Development of Soybean Cultivars and Germplasm with High $\omega$ -3 and $\omega$ -6 Fatty Acids for the Growing Aquafeed Market	\$ 7,496
<b>Derr</b>	Selective postemergence control of grass and sedge weeds in turfgrass	\$ 15,080
<b>Fike</b>	Shortening the time to convert toxic fescue fields to novel fescue	\$ 15,339
<b>Frame</b>	Cover crop species and variety evaluation to maximize agronomic and economic returns in Virginia's row crop agroecosystems	\$ 15,000
<b>Helm</b>	How cannabidiol affects pig intestinal inflammation during weaning	\$ 6,880
<b>Chandel</b>	Innovations in Controlled Traffic Farming: Building Resilient, Sustainable and Smart Cropping Systems	\$ 16,160
<b>Salom</b>	Testing a naturally occurring bioherbicide host for spotted lanternfly against the invasive tree-of-heaven	\$ 9,560
<b>Yang</b>	Combining chemical and biological (virus) controls to increase the sustainability of fire ant management on Virginia turf farms	\$ 15,000
<b>Zhang</b>	Developing Public, XtendFlex® Soybean Varieties	\$ 12,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$139,564.00</b>

**SEED FUND PROJECTS FY 2023**

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Askew</b>	Measuring Ultraviolet Radiation Reflectance from Turf Weeds	\$ 5,000
<b>Del-Pozo</b>	Assessing the Contribution of Golf Course Out-of-play Areas to Pollinator Recruitment by Remote Sensing	\$ 15,000
<b>Goatley</b>	The Use of a Nurse Grass and Selective Herbicides in Accelerating the Establishment and Use of Zoysiagrass	\$ 6,000
<b>Hensler</b>	Improving Residential Blue Grama Establishment as a Low-input Lawn Option Using Pre- and Post-emergent Weed Control	\$ 10,000
<b>McCall</b>	Assess the Role of Turfgrass Diseases on Field Uniformity and Athlete Safety	\$ 19,300

<b>Zhang</b>	Optimizing Combinations of Bioproducts and Wetting Agent for Improving Summer Stress Tolerance and Quality for Creeping Bentgrass Putting Greens	\$ 25,500
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$80,800.00</b>

## PROJECTS COMPLETED FY 2023

Project Number	Title
754	Assessing the Growing-degree-days to Optimize Harvesting Time of Small Grains and to Maximize Digestibility of Silage to Feed Dairy and Beef Cattle
755	Control of New Invasive Weed Species in Cool- and Warm-season Turfgrass
761	Exploring Genetic Markers for Estrus Behavior and increased Fertility in Beef Females
765	Improving Water and Nutrient Use Efficiency in Virginia Cropping Systems
770	Should Virginia Vineyards Bulldoze their Topsoil?
772	Determine the Growth Promoting Potential of Previously Undescribed Bacterial and Fungal Helpers to Support Soybean Yield; & Resilience to Environmental Variation
779	Characterization of Targeted Weed Control Technologies in Managed Turf
782	Using Ethylene Inhibitor and Polyamine to Prolong Tall Fescue Sod Shelf Life
783	Exploring Vaginal Microbiome and pH Fertility Markers for Beef Cattle
784	Mitigating the Negative Effects of Heat Stress on Reproductive and Lactation Performance in Sows
785	Comparing the Nutritional Effects When Feeding Virginia-Grown Grass Hay or Alfalfa Hay within the Rumen of Dairy Cattle
786	The Hunt for a Bull Fertility Marker: Characterization of Phosphatidylserine (PS) in Bovine Sperm and its Role on Fertilization
787	Developing GreenTram, a Low-Cost, Autonomous Device for Monitoring Crop Health in the Greenhouse
788	Development of High protein with Desirable Oil Soybean Cultivars
791	Improved Method to Determine Red Anthocyanin Pigments in Strawberry
792	Enhancing Soybean Meal Demand and Market by Developing Soy Meal Based Aquafeeds
795	Development of a Novel Technique to Synchronize and Breed Ewes Using Ram Seminal Plasma

<b>Current Financial Statement for VAC</b>					
<b>July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023</b>					
<b>Revenue and Expenditures</b>					
<b>Cash balance - June 30, 2022</b>					<b>\$ 560,491.36</b>
<b>Add: Revenues</b>					
	Feed Tonnage		\$ 280,742.86		
	Seed		\$ 67,960.51		
	Fertilizer Tonnage		\$ 41,392.23		
	Lime Tonnage		\$ 28,674.23		
	Motor Fuel		\$ -		
	Interest		\$ 9,820.46		
	Miscellaneous (VT refund)		\$ 5,123.32		
			\$ 433,713.61		
<b>Total Balance and Receipts</b>					<b>\$ 994,204.97</b>
<b>Less - Expenses</b>					
	Administration		\$ 15,000.00		
	Miscellaneous		\$ 3,198.17		
	Travel		\$ 17,926.27		
	Grant Expenditures		\$ 279,383.72		
			\$ 315,508.16		
<b>Total Cash Balance - June 30, 2023</b>					<b>\$ 678,696.81</b>

REVENUE SUMMARY 2018 - 2023							
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	5 YR AVERAGE	Difference
Feed Tonnage	271,020.90	278,111.79	230,385.22	253,463.82	280,742.86	262,744.92	27,279.04
Fertilizer Tonnage	42,673.69	41,031.55	45,020.48	43,647.87	41,392.23	42,753.16	(2,255.64)
Lime Tonnage	21,876.07	15,300.50	21,258.75	20,785.14	28,674.23	21,578.94	7,889.09
Motor Fuel/Interest/Misc.	14,709.32	7,895.44	2,197.22	1,513.42	9,820.46	7,227.17	8,307.04
<b>NON SEED TOTAL</b>	<b>350,279.98</b>	<b>342,339.28</b>	<b>298,861.67</b>	<b>319,410.25</b>	<b>360,629.78</b>	<b>334,304.19</b>	<b>41,219.53</b>
Seed	60,646.62	67,342.72	30,395.70	66,454.66	67,960.51	58,560.04	1,505.85
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>410,926.60</b>	<b>409,682.00</b>	<b>329,257.37</b>	<b>385,864.91</b>	<b>428,590.29</b>	<b>392,864.23</b>	<b>42,725.38</b>

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
Department of Accounts  
General Accounting  
Certification of Agency Reconciliation to Cardinal

Agency : 307 - Agricultural Council

To the Comptroller:

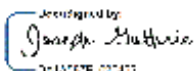
Our agency's management accepts responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the financial transactions provided to the State Comptroller. We believe the data provided are accurate in all material respects. The basis for these conclusions relates to our assessment of the internal controls operating within our Agency. The establishment of such internal controls requires estimates and judgments from management so that, in attaining reasonable assurance as to the adequacy of such controls, the cost of controls should not exceed the benefits obtained. I believe the Agency's internal controls adequately safeguard its assets and provide reasonable assurance as to the proper recording of financial transactions.

Additionally, I certify that, for the agency listed above, the accounting records represented in Cardinal, the official record of the Commonwealth, are accurate in all material respects.

Our agency accounting records for the year ended June 30, 2023, have been verified and reconciled to Cardinal, and when any submitted General Ledger Journals have posted to Cardinal, and/or items shown below (if any) are processed, our internal records will be in agreement with those reported in Cardinal for each of the following:

Yes	All cash balances (by Fund)	No	<b>PLEASE INDICATE IF THERE ARE ITEMS NOTED ON THE EXCEPTION REGISTER.</b>
Yes	All appropriations (by Fund, Program)		
Yes	All allotments (by Fund, Program)		
Yes	Total expenditures (by Fund, Program, Account)		
Yes	Net revenues (by Fund, Account)		
Yes	Capital assets (by Fund)		

\*Note that agencies must adhere to the reconciliation requirements outlined in CAPP Topic No 30905, Reconciliation & Error Correction, for capital asset accounts, including Construction in Progress.

Signature :  \_\_\_\_\_

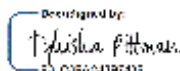
Email : joseph.guthrie@vdacs.virginia.gov

Printed Name : Joseph Guthrie

Title : Commissioner

Role : Agency Head

Date : 7/16/2023

Signature :  \_\_\_\_\_

Email : tyhisha.pittman@vdacs.virginia.gov

Printed Name : Tyhisha Pittman

Title : Finance Director

Role : Fiscal Officer

Date : 7/14/2023

Fiscal Officer's

Telephone No : 804-371-2292