



Winter 2025



Virginia  
Cooperative  
Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

## BATH-HIGHLAND NEWS



### FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE TOPICS

Becky Gartner, Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Science—rebes13@vt.edu—540 564 3080

**New year, new resolutions.** Many of us have decided to get healthier or lose weight in 2025. Sometimes it's not what we eat, but how much we eat.

#### **Portion vs. Serving**

A portion is how much food you choose to eat at one time, whether in a restaurant, from a package or at home. A serving or serving size is the amount of food on a product's Nutrition Facts label or food label. Often our portion does not match the serving size and we can easily consume extra calories which can lead to weight gain.

Understanding portions and portion control is a simple way to start a healthy lifestyle journey.

We eat with our eyes so if our plate looks empty, we will fill the empty space with more food. Use a smaller plate to trick yourself into having a fuller plate.

Use simple objects for portion control. Measuring food with measuring cups and spoons is not an easy task, especially when away from home. Try these ideas:

Tennis ball equals 1 serving of fruit or 1 oz. of cereal (1 cup)

Baseball equals 1 serving of vegetables (1/2 cup)

Deck of cards equals 1 serving of a starch (rice, pasta) or 1 serving of protein (meat or beans)

Pair of dice equals 1 serving of cheese or peanut butter or salad dressing

Read the Nutrition Facts label on food products to find out the serving size and number of servings per container. The serving size may not be what you are accustomed to eating. Remember that if you eat more than the suggested serving size, you need to increase the calorie amount as well.

As we start 2025, keep in mind that small changes can give big results. Keeping an eye on your portions is a small step to getting you on the way to a healthier life.

Source: Mayo Clinic

#### **Upcoming classes:**

**SERV Safe Manager Certification Class -**  
\$160 per person (includes class, book, exam)

**Feb. 18, 9 am -5 pm,**  
Rockingham Extension Office,  
Harrisonburg

**March 24, 9 am – 5 pm,**  
Rockbridge County Administrative  
Offices, Lexington

**Register here -**

<http://tinyurl.com/SSMGR-RH-25-PU>



#### **Feeding the Farmer –**

Learn some tips for making better food choices when you are on the go and working the farm. Good information for those with pre-diabetes or high blood pressure

**Feb. 20 – 5:30 – 6 pm**  
Zoom link or in person at Highland  
Extension Office

#### **ADDITIONAL PAGES INCLUDE**

**AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES TOPICS**

**4-H UPDATES & EVENTS**

**EXTENSION STAFF SERVING YOU**

If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodations to participate in programs listed in this newsletter, please contact the VCE Bath or Highland Unit Office at (540) 839-7261 or (540) 468-2225 during business hours to discuss accommodations. (TDD 800-828-1120)

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## 4-H HAPPENINGS

Ben Hindman, Extension Agent, 4-H Bath/Highland—benjaminh@vt.edu—540 839 7261



### Recent Highlights

- The "Celebration of Highland 4-H" program, held in Monterey on November 10, brought together youth members and adult volunteers from Highland County's 4-H clubs. The event highlighted the achievements of 4-H members and leaders over the past year. Chad Proudfoot, State Organizational Specialist from the Virginia 4-H State Office, was a guest presenter and shared his perspective on the program's impact. Following the recognition ceremony, attendees shared a meal, reflecting on the successes of the year.

- December was a busy month for Bath and Highland 4-H! The Highland County Livestock Club hosted Kimberly Radcliffe, who shared her expertise on fiber production, giving youth a hands-on learning experience



about wool and other fibers. In schools, 3rd-grade students participated in a special enrichment program where they created Christmas cards. These thoughtful cards were shared with elderly residents through the Valley Program for Aging Services, spreading holiday cheer and fostering community connections. Both activities showcased the diverse learning opportunities 4-H provides, from agriculture education to community service, helping youth develop skills and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

- In November, Bath and Highland 4-H Agent Ben Hindman attended the White House turkey pardoning ceremony alongside Virginia 4-H Cabinet members. This memorable event showcased 4-H's strong connection to agriculture and leadership while providing youth leaders with a unique opportunity to witness national traditions and represent Virginia 4-H on a prominent stage.



### Looking Ahead

- Exciting opportunities are available for Bath and Highland teens in 4-H this year! The application period is now open for youth to apply as Teen Counselors or Counselors in Training for Junior 4-H Camp, which will be held July 7-11. This is a fantastic chance for teens to build leadership skills, meet new friends, and make lasting memories. Teens can also apply for the Virginia 4-H Service Trip to the Dominican Republic in July. Over the past two years, seven Highland youth have participated, and we encourage more to join this rewarding experience. Additionally, teens can attend the Virginia 4-H Congress at Virginia Tech, June 24-27. This event brings together teens from across the state for leadership workshops, activities, and a chance to experience campus life. These opportunities offer teens valuable experiences to grow personally and professionally while connecting with other youth from across Virginia.
- Mark your calendars for the Highland 4-H and FFA Agriculture and Natural Resources Field Day on Friday, April 11th! Held at Highland County Public School and the adjacent fairgrounds, this event will provide hands-on learning experiences for students in grades PreK-12. Participants will explore agriculture and natural resources through interactive stations facilitated by event partners, including the Frontier Culture Museum, Hayfields State Park, Coursey Springs Fish Hatchery, the Virginia Department of Forestry, and more. These engaging activities will help students connect with the natural world and understand the importance of agriculture. Classes from Bath County will also join the event, offering an opportunity for students to engage with peers from neighboring communities. The field day will be a valuable educational experience for all attendees, highlighting the importance of agriculture and natural resources in our everyday lives.



**Contact Ben Hindman if you or someone you know is interested in any 4-H opportunity**

# AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Kari Sponaugle, Extension Agent, ANR Highland/Bath— karis@vt.edu—Cell: 540 679 9664



## VCE Winter Wisdom:

### Strategies for Land, Livestock, & Life

Learn a few new topics and tricks for your Ag "toolkit" from the comfort of home this winter! Join VCE on Zoom for four educational segments, each at 5:30pm, delivered by a great lineup of speakers:

**January 2**

**Kimberly Radcliffe**

Learn about the fine art of wool spinning from "The Natural Spinner". Sheep and wool producers will also gain tips and tricks on how to grade and skirt fleeces for more value-added marketing and farm income.

**January 16**

**Adam Downing**

Got Woods? Wonder what you can do with them? Join this session for an introduction to forested systems, woodlot management and a smattering of Agroforestry opportunities & funding.

**February 13**

**Jeremy Daubert, Paige Riddle**

Join Jeremy and Paige to learn about services available to farmers through the AgrAbility program as well as topics on mental health and stress management on the farm.

**February 27**

**Dr. Rodrigo Marques**

Keeping our cows happy and healthy during gestation and lactation with a newborn calf through weaning is essential to farm profitability and herd health. Join Dr. Marques from VT as he discusses cow/calf nutrition and proper mineral supplementation.

All programs are 1 hour. No Internet? NO Problem! "Watch Party" option in person at the Highland Modular - **Watch Party RSVP required 2 days before segment.**



Scan QR Code to Register or contact Kari Sponaugle, Extension Agent at 540 468 2225 or email [karis@vt.edu](mailto:karis@vt.edu)



\*The first 25 folks to register by Dec 29, including their mailing address, will be mailed a cozy care package to enjoy during the Zoom sessions.\*

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# DONT GUESS, SOIL TEST!

Find out what your hay field or garden needs before next season with a soil analysis from the VT Soils Lab.

**VCE BATH & HIGHLAND SHIP SOIL SAMPLES THE 10TH OF EACH MONTH FOR FREE!**

**Crop Samples (field corn, hay, pasture, etc.) = FREE routine**  
**Home Lawn & Garden Samples = \$10 each**



### WHAT WILL THE TEST TELL ME?

SOILS ARE ANALYZED FOR PLANT-AVAILABLE NUTRIENTS TO DETERMINE APPLICATION RATES OF FERTILIZER AND LIME FOR OPTIMUM PLANT GROWTH.

ROUTINE ANALYSIS INCLUDES:

**SOIL PH, P, K, CA, MG, ZN, MN, CU, FE, & B.**

SOLUBLE SALTS AND ORGANIC MATTER (OM) RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ADDITIONAL FEES. RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ARE EMAILED TO THE CLIENT. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THE VT SOILS LAB WEBSITE AT



[HTTPS://WWW.SOILTEST.VT.EDU/](https://www.soiltest.vt.edu/)

BOXES AND FORMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR FREE AT YOUR LOCAL VCE OFFICE.

**Coming Soon—Registration information for Feed the Farmer. Watch for emails later in January for those details.**



## Feed the Farmer

Join VCE for a quick 30-minute program on healthy snack and meal ideas and food shopping tips for a happier healthier you this farming season.

**February 20th**

**5:30-6:00 pm**

Highland Modular or on Zoom

Sign-up info coming soon!

## Bees: Beyond the Basics

**Feb 17 & 24 - 6:30-7:30pm**

Join Virginia Cooperative Extension on Zoom for two in depth educational sessions on beekeeping. Program presenter will be Mr. Bill Gartner of Shenandoah Bee Supply LLC.

Participants of the February Zoom sessions will be invited to a local, in-person apiary field day in April when the weather warms up. We'll take a peak into bee boxes and apiary management while learning alongside fellow beekeepers. Date for field day TBD.

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/BeesBeyondBasics>

Questions, contact: Kari Sponaugle Extension Agent Ag & Natural Resources [karis@vt.edu](mailto:karis@vt.edu)

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# 4-H & ANR PROGRAM EDUCATOR

Jordan Alexander, Bath/Highland—jordan98@vt.edu—540 839 7261

Bath and Highland 4-H in partnership with Millboro and Valley Elementary Schools and Highland High School are working with 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade science teachers for the return of the science fair! Science Fair Presentation & Display 4-H Contest provides youth with the opportunity to communicate scientific experiments by using the scientific method. 4-H and science fair go great together because they both value learning through experience as youth can discover new things and apply their knowledge. Students will start with a question, create a hypothesis, and conduct their experiments at home then bring their completed project boards to school. Project ideas vary from “Does the shape of an ice cube affect how quickly it melts?” to “What is the best shape for a paper airplane to achieve maximum distance?”. Next month, they will present their findings in front of their classmates and a panel of community judges, describing their project step by step and if their results proved their hypothesis was correct or not. Projects will result in a grade for science class as well as a blue, red, or white 4-H ribbon. Blue ribbon winners will be eligible to compete at the Northwest 4-H District Contest Day in the spring. We look forward to having friends, family, and teachers come out to see the students’ projects and hard work at the Science Fair Showcases on the following evenings:

**Valley Elementary School: Thursday, February 27**  
**Highland County 4-H Contest Day: Friday, February 28**  
**Millboro Elementary School: Tuesday, March 11**

<p><b>Bath County Office</b> PO Box 357 Warm Springs, VA 24484 540-839-7261</p> <p><b>Highland County Office</b> PO Box 528 Monterey, VA 24465 540-468-2225 Online: <a href="http://www.ext.vt.edu">www.ext.vt.edu</a></p>	<p><b>Your Area Extension Agents and Staff include:</b></p> <p>Kari Sponaugle, Agriculture &amp; Natural Resources, Bath &amp; Highland County and Unit Coordinator Ben Hindman, 4-H Youth Development, Bath &amp; Highland County Becky Gartner, Family &amp; Consumer Sciences, Rockingham County Vacant, Crops &amp; Soils, Rockingham County Jason Cooper, Horticulture, Rockingham County Tom Stanley, Farm Business Management, Rockbridge County Adam Downing, Forestry, Madison County Rebecca Wilder, SNAP-Ed Agent, Rockbridge County Jordan Alexander, Program Educator 4-H/ANR, Bath &amp; Highland County Deseray Chaplin, Administrative Fiscal Assistant, Bath County Kathy Beverage, Administrative Fiscal Assistant, Highland County</p> 
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## Virginia Cooperative Extension

**Bath County Office**  
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**Warm Springs VA 24484**

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

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