



# Virginia State Agency 234

Virginia Cooperative Extension and Agricultural Research Station at Virginia State University

## Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives

Millions of Virginians have benefited from the Extension and Research work conducted by Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Agricultural Research Station at Virginia State University. Each year, Virginia legislators approve Agency 234 funding to Virginia State University that impacts Virginia's residents and businesses in many ways including recently:

Exploring ways to turn **grape pomace** (waste from winemaking) into an added revenue stream for winemakers as an antimicrobial agent in deli meat packaging and as a new ingredient to aid in salt reduction in processed meats

Engaging, energizing and motivating youth regarding **STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics)** opportunities and careers through 4-H initiatives like Kids' Tech University and 4-H Intermediate Congress

Helping to address **fresh food access and improve health** in low-income and food desert communities by establishing a mobile farmers market called the "Veggie Van" in the Suffolk, which also provides a retail outlet for local farmers who accept USDA SNAP benefits, and by developing the Harding Street Urban Agriculture Center in Petersburg, which grows fresh fruit and vegetables for local convenience stores, provides a location for local farmers to bring their produce for distribution at farmers markets, and provides classes in nutrition and food preparation

Identifying the **best hops varieties and growing methods** for Virginia's hops growers to provide locally-sourced ingredients for Virginia's craft brewers

Helping Virginia's **small, limited-resource and veteran farmers** be more successful by introducing them to USDA's programs and services, access to credit and capital, and new skills in farm business, financial planning, marketing strategies and best management production practices

Researching the **feasibility of growing and harvesting industrial hemp** in Virginia as an alternative source of income for farmers

Conducting research and education to the public on the best ways to **raise sheep and goats** in Virginia to fill a growing local market need and to provide a potentially profitable alternative for livestock producers

Improving the **productivity of Virginia's farm ponds** for added farm income and increasing locally-sourced seafood through a multi-faceted aquaculture program

Providing Virginia farmers with information and support on growing **alternative crops with market potential**, like ginger, turmeric, berries, and green papaya

Addressing **financial health and literacy** especially geared toward US military veterans through improvements to the Master Financial Education Volunteer Program

**Learn more at [agriculture.vsu.edu](http://agriculture.vsu.edu)**

Contact VSU's College of Agriculture at (804) 524-5961 or visit [agriculture.vsu.edu](http://agriculture.vsu.edu) for more information.



**Virginia Cooperative Extension**  
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

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