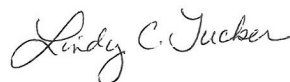


LUNENBURG AG NEWS

April Showers Bring... Area Youth Into Full Bloom

Well, we did it—we survived another April jam packed full of youth agriculture and natural resources activities! April has been officially nicknamed, “Youth Month” by many area extension agents as we have fallen into a routine of some great youth programs throughout the month of April. In case you have been trying to hunt us down, read the article below to see what we’ve been up to. Now it’s time to dive full-force into the growing season. Things are a bit behind, but still on track. Now’s the time to finish up soil samples for fields and home gardens, and get to planting. A great deal of additional timely growing season information is included, so be sure to check it out. As always, do not hesitate to call if you have any questions. We are still without a secretary so my cell is the best option: (434) 321-2009.

See you outside!



April Youth Programs

April 2—The Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research & Extension Center (SPAREC) hosted the annual Southside Youth Cattle Working Contest with seven teams competing for safety, accuracy, and efficiency of typical cattle management practices such as fly tag application, implants, dewormer, vaccine administration, and handling of three calves. Teams of three compete and we hope to have a team from Lunenburg this coming year. Encourage any high schoolers you may know!

April 13— As a celebration of the upcoming Earth and Arbor Days, all three Lunenburg agents as well as Gale Washburn with VDOF, and Julie Hamlett with Southside SWCD, put on a tree program for 5th graders at Kenbridge Elementary School. Students learned about the parts of the tree, unlikely products that come from trees, how to identify trees, and how to plant and care for a tree before each receiving their own to take home.

Continued on back...



**Virginia
Cooperative
Extension**

Virginia Tech
Virginia State University
www.ext.vt.edu

May 2015

Volume 4, Issue 2

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YOUTH

Dillon Robinson

4-H Extension Agent, Lunenburg County

(434) 696-5526

dillonr@vt.edu

4-H News



4-H Facebook Page: Keep up with all the 4-H happenings on Facebook by searching for [Lunenburg County 4-H](#) and clicking follow!

Lunenburg 4-H Camp: Mark your calendars! Lunenburg youth will be heading to 4-H Camp June 29-July 3, 2015 at Holiday Lake 4-H Center in Appomattox, VA. Please contact Dillon at the office for further information: 696-5526.

Summer Day Camps: Dillon is currently working on both topics and dates for summer day-camp events as well, so be on the lookout for information. If you are not on his listserv and wish to be, please contact the office.

Other Upcoming Youth Events

Watershed Adventure Camp: Hosted by Southside, Halifax, and Lake Country Soil & Water Conservation Districts, this week-long day camp offers area students currently enrolled in 4th and 5th grades from Lunenburg, Charlotte, Halifax, Mecklenburg, and Brunswick Counties a unique opportunity to explore Staunton River Battlefield State Park while learning about the importance of watershed environments through interactive activities including: nature hikes, seining for macroinvertebrates in the swamp and creek, crafts, snacks, an archaeological dig, and more! This year it will be held June 2-8, 2015. Application packets and additional information can be found at the Southside SWCD office at 250 LeGrande Avenue, Suite F, Charlotte Court House, VA or their local school. For details, call Julie Hamlett at Southside SWCD at (434) 542-5405.



Summer Enrichment Program & Agriculture & Environmental Science at VSU: Rising high school juniors and seniors interested in science, technology, engineering, agriculture, and math are encouraged to apply for this program to be held June 22-26 on the Virginia State University campus and at Randolph Farm. For more information at to apply visit: blogs.ext.vt.edu/ag-connection and look for the post. Applications due by May 15th!

COMMUNITY NEWS

Southside Virginia Community College Fall Agribusiness Courses Offered

Dr. Dixie Watts Dalton
(434) 949-1053

dixie.dalton@southside.edu

Pre-registration is underway for the fall semester at Southside Virginia Community College, and a number of agribusiness courses are available in either a seated or online format.

AGR 231, Agribusiness Marketing, provides insights on the food industry once products leave the farm. Students develop a marketing plan for a business, product, or service of their choice.

AGR 233, Food Production/Safety/Biosecurity, is a particularly useful course for those interested in producing meat or vegetable products for either direct sale to the consumer or through traditional marketing channels. Students will develop a biosecurity plan for a farm of their choice.

AGR 141, Animal Science, provides students with a basic understanding of different species of animals, as well as an introduction to nutrition, genetics, and reproduction. Friday "labs" take students into the community to see agribusiness in action at local farms and other agribusiness firms. Online students are provided an alternative to the local labs.

AGR 142, Plant Science, provides students with a basic overview of plant biology and includes "lab" trips to local crop farms and agribusiness firms (with alternatives again available for online students).



Picture left: SVCC Agribusiness program class trip to a Lunenburg County tobacco farm.

Lunenburg County Farm Bureau offers an agribusiness scholarship to a qualified county resident, and a new agribusiness internship program works with students to obtain paid career-relevant internships while attending school. It is an exciting time to pursue agribusiness coursework! For more information, contact agribusiness professor and program director, Dr. Dixie Watts Dalton.

WHO NEEDS WHAT

If you have information about farm items that you are looking for or wishing to sell, please feel free to contact the extension office to be listed in the next guide.

FOR SALE: Heavy galvanized cattle hay ring in very good condition . Please call Ronnie Clark at (434) 294-0401.

Heart of Virginia Buy Fresh Buy Local

The 2015 Heart of Virginia Buy Fresh Buy Local Guides are currently being put together.

Southside Produce Auction

The Southside Produce Auction is now open Tuesdays AND Fridays for the season. Auction starts at 10:00am both days, but be sure to get there in plenty of time to browse, If you are interested in buying or selling produce or plants, please contact Bob Jones, Charlotte Co. Extension Agent at (434) 315-4366.

The auction takes place at 137 Vincent Store Road (Rt. 666) Charlotte Court House, VA (About 3 miles past the town of Cullen). We ask that you please be careful when driving on 47 from Charlotte Court House and lookout for horse and buggies. Please be respectful of the Amish and do not take pictures.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Central Virginia Produce, Livestock, & Feed Storage Systems Program Phase II Applications To Be Accepted May 18th

This grant is very similar to the Commodity Storage cost-share program held nearly five years ago, and is the same grant advertised last year. Phase II is opening soon and all producers who meet eligibility requirements are welcome to apply. If you participated in the original Commodity Storage program or other recent grants then you were not eligible to apply for Phase I last year, **but you are eligible in now in Phase II.**

This cost-share grant is open to livestock and crop producers in **Amelia, Appomattox, Bedford, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward.** You must reside in one of these 14 counties (not just farm in them), and if you farm in multiple counties, must choose the county in which you plan to build the structure and submit your application through that county extension office. Funds up to \$3,300 per producer are available for practices such as **NEW*** feed bins, grain bins, grain dryers, hay sheds, commodity sheds, bunker silos, hoop houses/greenhouse structures, and permanent livestock shade structures. **All structures must be new.*

Anyone who participated in the original Commodity Storage grant and wishes to build an additional structure, must meet the land/animal requirements again (as in you must have twice the amount required) in order to justify another structure. For example, if you built a hay shed before and wish to build another hayshed, you must have an additional 20 animals (40 total) or 25 acres (50 total) in order to be eligible.

Applications will be accepted Monday, May 18th at 8:00am at your respective extension office. Applications will be prioritized on a first-come, first-served basis. I cannot accept applications ahead of time so please make arrangements to have your **completed application** dropped off that morning. Unlike previous grants, this one will be short-lived and applications need to come in on the due date to ensure Lunenburg keeps all five of its delegated spots.

For more information or a copy of the guidelines, please contact me or visit the following link on the electronic version: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1xvwHy4pZ1vT213bGdZaTB2bjg/view?usp=sharing> The final informational meeting (which is required for application) will be held Monday, May 11th at 7:30am at Mildred's Meals in Kenbridge. If you cannot make this or have other questions, please contact me at (434) 321-2009.



LAST MEETING TO BE HELD:

Monday, May 11th, 2015
7:30am—8:30am
Mildred's Meals* in Kenbridge

**Breakfast will be on your own*

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

May 2015

jasonf@vt.edu or (434) 476- 2147.

5 Southside Agritourism Conference, 10-2, Sans Soucy Vineyards, Brookneal. Call Halifax Extension at (434) 476-2147.

6 Ag Roundtable with Congressman Hurt: 8:00am at Mildred's Meals in Kenbridge. Please contact Lauren Andrews if you plan to attend: 434-395-0120

7 Extension Town Hall Meeting: 6:30pm at the Robert Russa Moton Museum in Prince Edward. Please see Page 7 for details.

8 Pond Workshop, 9-12 Powhatan Extension Office. Topics include weed management, water quality, and fish populations. Bring a weed or water sample to get analyzed. \$5. Call Powhatan Extension at (804) 598-5640.

14 Farmer's Market Vendor Tune-Up - Located at the Amelia County Extension Office 16360 Dunn Street – Suite 202, Amelia Court House, VA 23002. 9-12. Marketing, customer service, booth enhancement, regulations, food sample handling guidelines, and SNAP/EBT use at the farmer's market.

15 On-Farm Strawberry Field Day. 21604 Westover Drive, McKenney, VA. 9-11, Free. Contact your extension office for details.

15 Landowner Venture Outdoors Program. 9am—4pm Halifax County Extension Office. Contact Jason Fisher

18 Growing Hops in VA workshop, Central Library, Chesterfield. Call Chesterfield (804) 751-4401.

18 Turn-in Grant Applications! Details on Page 4.

19 VA Small Grain Field Day near Jamestown Visitor's Center. [Wwww.viriniagrains.com/adfd/](http://www.viriniagrains.com/adfd/)

19 Website Building for Ag Businesses, 1-4, Workforce Development Center South Boston. Call Halifax at (434) 476-2147

21 Sheep and Goat Integrated Parasite Management, VSU Randolph Farm, 9-2:30. \$15; limited space. (804) 524-5960.

June 2015

4 Early Season Crop Field Tour, Tidewater AREC in Suffolk. (757) 657-6450

15 (Tentative) Summer Orchard Pruning Class, Prince Edward. Call (434) 392-4246

16 VSU Vegetable & Berry Field Day, Randolph Farm. For details go to <http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/calendar/events/commercial-berry.php>

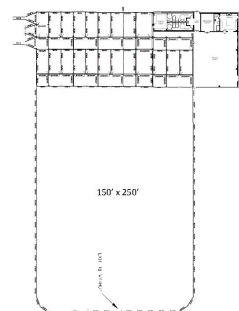
16-18 Registered Technician Pesticide Applicator Certification Prep. Course, Southern Piedmont AREC in Blackstone. Call (434) 848-2151.

18 Opportunities in Local Pork Production, 10-2, Amelia Extension Office, lunch provided. Mr. Filippo Gambassi, Chief Executive Officer of Terra di Siena Traditional Tuscan Charcuterie, will be present to discuss and answer questions pertaining to his plans to expand his business in VA and the opportunities this presents for local pig farmers. Please RSVP to Dr. Mark J. Estienne, VT-Tidewater AREC (mestienn@vt.edu; 757-657-6450, ext. 408) or Laura Siegle (laurab08@vt.edu; 804-561-2481).

23 Pondside Workshop, 9-12 at John Manning Farm South Hill. Call Brunswick Extension at (434) 848-2151

24-25 AI Clinic at the B.A.R.N. in Buckingham. Call (434) 969-4261 for details.

30 The B.A.R.N Grand Opening, 1:00. Come see the new Buckingham Agricultural Resource Network (BARN) project, an ag hub and ag education center for agricultural producers. The BARN project consists of an 80' x 200' metal building with a large meeting room, kitchen, and cattle working facilities.



Call (434) 969-4261 for details.

For further information on any of these events, contact Lindy at (434) 321-2009 or tucker07@vt.edu.

If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation, please notify Lindy Tucker on her cell phone at (434) 321-2009 during business hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

AG SERVICE ORGANIZATION UPDATES

SWCD

Julie Hamlett

*Education/Administration Coordinator
434-542-5405 ext. 1*

Stream Monitoring Program for Randolph-Henry High School Ecology Classes

Ecology and Biology students traveled to a local stream in Drakes Branch to experience hands on research to compliment classroom instruction. The stream monitored is a tributary of Twitty's Creek which is on the list of streams currently being evaluated for TDML (total maximum daily load) in Virginia. This field trip is part of an ongoing semester program between Randolph- Henry High School, the Southside Soil and Water Conservation District, as well as the Charlotte County Extension office.

Students were given the opportunity to visually, chemically, and biologically monitor the stream to determine its overall health. The history of the stream was explained by Bob Jones, Extension Agent from Charlotte County and Lindy Tucker, Extension Agent from Lunenburg County, and chemical tests discussed by Patricia Mays and Julie Hamlett, representatives of Southside Soil and Water Conservation District.



Students caught dragonfly nymphs (immature dragonflies) like these pictured among many other macroinvertebrates.



An array of macro invertebrates and other organisms were caught by ambitious students. Possible pollution sources were discussed including factors that would affect the pH, turbidity, phosphorus levels, nitrogen levels, and dissolved oxygen levels. Vocabulary words and lecture notes came to life as the tests were performed in a real world situation and at a local stream where neighboring students lived.

NRCS

Martha Powers

*District Conservationist
434-542-5442 ext.3*

Stuart Ward ext. 116

Since the 2014 Farm Bill was signed last year, we have been challenged to implement the changes to policies which are a part of the new bill.

Some of the changes included in the 2014 Farm Bill are: 23 programs consolidated to 13 to streamline program delivery; funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) continued to address water quality issues, soil erosion and other natural resource concerns; links conservation compliance to crop insurance subsidies on highly erodible land; additional funding for agricultural research; eliminates direct payments and continues crop insurance; restores livestock disaster assistance for losses dating back to 2011; and establishes a permanent livestock disaster program.

One highlight which might be of most interest to Southside Virginia producers is the provision which links conservation compliance to crop insurance subsidies on highly

erodible land. To maintain eligibility for federal crop insurance premium support, producers need to file an erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (AD-1026) form with FSA. Producers need to have this certification complete by June 1, 2015 to be eligible for premium subsidy during the 2016 reinsurance year, which begins July 1, 2015. Producers who do not comply with the provisions can still purchase crop insurance, but they will no longer be eligible to receive the government paid premium subsidies.

VDOF



*Gale Washburn
Lunenburg Forester
(434) 696-2759*

Cost Share Assistance Available for Pine Reforestation

Cutover timberland can be converted to a fast growing, productive pine stand by planting loblolly pine seedlings. For best results and optimum growth the project should be carefully planned and site preparation should be done to remove logging debris and competing growth before planting. Site preparation includes burning, spraying with herbicides, and dozing. Contact your local forester for a recommendation on what type of site preparation is needed and for information on cost sharing.

AG SERVICE ORGANIZATION UPDATES

The Department of Forestry has a state cost share program that will reimburse part of the cost of site preparation and planting. If cost-share assistance is desired, the landowner must sign an application for assistance and receive approval before the project begins. The Virginia Department of Forestry will accept applications for Reforestation of Timberland

(RT) assistance starting May 1st. Changes to the 2015-2016 program include a 100 acre maximum per landowner/ownership. For details on this program contact your local Virginia Department of Forestry Office. In Lunenburg, the area office is in Victoria: 434-696-2759.

DGIF

Katie Martin
Regional Wildlife Biologist
Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries
(434) 392-9645

The DGIF is currently taking comments on proposed hunting and trapping regulations as part of our regulation cycle. To view regulations being proposed by the Board and submit comments please visit the following webpage: <https://www3.dgif.virginia.gov/web/comment-2015/display.asp> Comments will be accepted until May 22, 2015.

It's that time of year when we receive numerous calls and complaints about black bears on the prowl! For information on being

Bear Aware please read the following DGIF press release: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/news/release.asp?id=421> . Lunenburg is certainly "bear country" so please be diligent in keeping all trash in locked containers or buildings, removing birdfeeders (including hummingbird feeders) if a bear becomes a visitor, cleaning up all outdoor pet food, keeping grills clean and using electric fence to protect beehives and fruit trees. For more information on Black Bears in Virginia, please visit: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/bear/>



For more DGIF information and updates sign up for the Outdoor Report, a bi-monthly email publication filled with news, hunting and fishing stories and information on upcoming DGIF and partner events: <http://enews.vi.virginia.gov/dgif/eoptinform.cfm>

Public Invited to Extension Town Hall Meeting:

Residents, producers, and county officials of **Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward Counties** are invited to a town hall meeting with Dr. Ed Jones, Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension and your county extension agents.

This meeting is designed to be an open forum to discuss local needs and how Virginia Cooperative Extension can help meet those needs. The meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2015 at 6:30pm at the Robert Russa Moton Museum at 900 Griffin Boulevard in Farmville, VA.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would contact the Prince Edward Extension Office at (434) 392-4246 or sheldae@vt.edu if you are planning to attend.

We welcome your feedback, and we hope to see you there!



Sugarcane Aphid: A New Invasive Pest of Sorghum

*Ames Herbert
Entomology Specialist
Virginia Tech
Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center*

The sugarcane aphid (SCA), *Melanaphis sacchari*, has been a historic pest of sugarcane in China, Japan, India, Southern Africa, South America, and Mexico. It was first recorded in the US in Hawaii in the late 1800s, Florida in 1977, and Louisiana in 1999. In 2013 the species underwent a host shift to sorghum, first detected near Beaumont in east Texas. This new 'biotype' has a host range that includes sorghum spp. (grain, sweet and forage) and Johnsongrass. It does not feed on sugarcane, corn, millet, barley, or rye. Since its first detection in 2013 in east Texas, the new SCA biotype has rapidly spread through the south and by the end of the 2014 season was documented in much of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, western North Carolina—and as close to us as northeast South Carolina.

SCA feeds only in the summer and the females do not need males for fertilization and give live birth to more females. Females develop through 4 instars, can be adults in about 2-12 days, and live for 28 days. This results in the 'perfect storm' for rapid population build-up. It is not known to overwinter in freezing areas and appears to prefer dry areas or periods. There are several other aphid species that can infest sorghum but SCA can be differentiated from the others being smooth, cream yellow, with two, short dark cornicles ("tailpipes") on the hind end (Figure 2).

SCA feeds mostly on the undersides of leaves and stems. Feeding causes reddening, purpling and necrosis of plant tissue. If populations build up early in the season, they can cause heavy damage, stunting, and can even kill seedlings (Figure 3). Boot stage feeding may prevent heading or may result in sterile grain heads. Later season infestations that occur after the grain is filled do not result in direct yield loss. Severe infestations have been documented to cause 20-

80% grain losses, and sometimes a complete loss.

Research by Mike Brewer, Texas AgriLife, and David Kerns, LSU, has provided the most up-to-date Economic Threshold (when the insecticide needs to be applied) of 25 – 30% infested plants with 50 aphids per leaf.

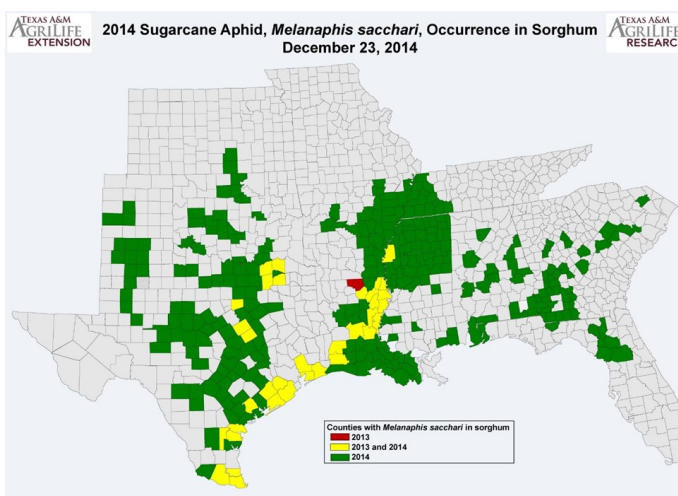
There are data from several sources in different states on the effectiveness of insecticides for controlling SCA. All are consistent in saying that pyrethroids are NOT effective, and may even flare populations. Please contact your extension agent for products and rates.

We may or may not see SCA in Virginia sorghum fields this year and much depends on how fast they build up in states to the south of us, and on the weather. But, as fast as this pest has spread since discovery, to be on the safe side, fields should be scouted from seedling stage to full grain.

Aphids on Sorghum:
Sugarcane aphid, identification,
Melanaphis sacchari (= *M. sorghi*)



Photos: Pat Porter, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



Small Grain Updates



*Dr. Hillary Mehl
Plant Pathologist
Virginia Tech
Tidewater Research
Station*

General

As the wheat crop approaches flag leaf emergence and heading growth stages, it is time to start thinking about disease management. When conditions are conducive to disease development (e.g. high humidity, warm temperatures) foliar fungicide applications may be necessary to protect wheat yield and quality.

Wheat diseases observed in Virginia so far in 2015 have included viruses (which cannot be managed with fungicides), powdery mildew, and leaf blotch. Disease severity thus far has been relatively low in most areas but an increase in disease can be expected with warm, humid weather. Leaf blotch, for example, has been observed on the lower leaves where it is unlikely to impact yield, but once the flag leaf emerges, this leaf surface, which feeds the developing grain, should be protected from disease if symptoms are observed on the lower leaves and conditions are conducive to disease development. Once heading and flowering occur, the developing grain need to be protected from infection by the Fusarium head blight (scab) fungus if scab risk is high. Factors contributing to scab development and proper timing of fungicides for scab management will be discussed in a later post.

Fusarium Head Blight (Scab)

Wheat will start flowering soon if it has not already. It is susceptible to scab (Fusarium head blight) from early flowering until approx. 10 days after first flower.

No wheat varieties have complete resistance (immunity) to scab, but commercially available varieties vary in their susceptibility. Current variety rankings for scab resistance can be found online: [Wheat variety rankings for scab resistance](#)

Currently, the predicted scab risk for **wheat that is flowering** in Virginia is low for all but the most susceptible varieties. Keep in mind the best management tactic for minimizing yield and quality losses to scab and DON is to plant resistant varieties and to make a properly timed fungicide application when wheat is in the susceptible growth stage (flowering) and weather conditions favor dispersal of the scab fungus.

If a fungicide is applied for scab, **strobilurins should NOT be used** as they may increase DON (vomitoxin) contamination of the grain if applied after flag leaf. Fungicides recommended for scab also provide very good to excellent control of common foliar diseases of wheat, so a scab fungicide application may provide the added benefit of controlling leaf spots and rusts. The triazole fungicides Prosaro, Proline, and Caramba are the most effective fungicides for scab and should be applied at early to mid-flowering and up to one week later. For

Kudzu Bug Update:

Kudzu bugs have been detected in Lunenburg County. The first adults emerging from overwintering were trapped at the KV Bridge in kudzu on April 8. We had no major problems in the 2014 growing season, but please keep an eye out for 2015, espe-



maximum efficacy, fungicides for scab and DON control should be applied with nozzles angled at a 30 degree angle from the horizontal using both front and back facing nozzles. This will ensure that the product is applied to the grain head rather than the leaves or the ground.

Growers, agents, and consultants can subscribe to the U.S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative's (USWBSI) FHB Alert system at http://www.scabusa.org/fhb_alerts. Region-specific scab alerts that provide growers with updates during critical times are sent as emails and/or text messages.

The Virginia Small Grain Field Day will be held **Tuesday, May 19**, just up the road from the Jamestown visitor's center. For more information, please visit: <http://www.viriniagrains.com/sgfd/>

LIVESTOCK



*Dr. Chris Teutsch
Forage Specialist
Virginia Tech
Southern Piedmont
Agricultural Re-
search & Extension
Center*

Managing Spring Pastures

Spring can often be one of the most challenging times of the year for graziers. Grass growth goes from 0 to full speed in a matter of weeks and in many cases grazing livestock have a hard time keeping up with it. This results in lower quality forage that is less palatable, and in the case of tall fescue contains higher levels of the toxins that reduce animal performance. The growth of new forage is also delayed by not removing the growing point of our cool-season grasses. The presence of the growing point suppresses tiller formation at the base of the grass plant. The following suggestions can help you to control spring growth and get the most out of your pastures when the grazing is good!

Implement rotational grazing. In order to fully utilize the spring flush of pasture growth YOU must be in control of grazing. In a continuous grazing system the cows are in charge.



Start grazing before you think the pastures are quite ready.

One of the most common mistakes that graziers make is waiting too long to start grazing in the spring. If you wait until the first paddock is ready to graze, by the time you reach the last paddock it will be out of control.

Rotate animals rapidly. The general rule is that if grass is growing rapidly then your rotation should be rapid. This will allow you stay ahead of the grass by topping it off and keeping it in a vegetative state.

Do not apply spring nitrogen.

Applying nitrogen in the spring will actually make the problem of too much grass at once even worse. In many cases you are better off to save your nitrogen for stockpiling in the fall.

Remove most productive paddocks from rotation and harvest for hay. Graze all paddocks until the pasture growth is just about to get away from you and then remove those productive paddocks from your rotation and allow them to accumulate growth for hay harvest.

Increase stocking density in the spring. If it is possible, a good option for utilizing spring growth is to increase your stocking density. This will allow you to harvest more of the available forage and convert it into a saleable product. This can be done by adding some stockers or thin cull cows to your rotation and then selling them when pasture growth slows.

Even out seasonal distribution of

forage by adding a warm-season grass. Adding a well adapted warm-season grass that produces the majority of its growth in July and August would allow you to increase your season long stocking density to better utilize the spring flush of pasture growth.

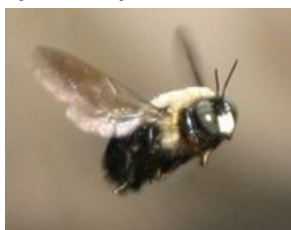
Bush-hog out of control pastures. The benefits of clipping include maintaining pastures in a vegetative state, encouraging regrowth, and controlling weeds. Clipping pastures costs money, so make sure that the primary reason for bush-hogging is pasture management, not aesthetics.

There is not a one-size fits all when it comes to grazing. One of the most important features to build into your grazing system is flexibility. This will allow you to adapt as situation changes. Grazing systems are not static entities, but rather dynamic works of art that evolve as your skill level increases.

Forage more information on grazing management contact your local extension agent or visit <http://www.ext.vt.edu/> and <https://www.youtube.com/user/VTForages>.

Presentations from the 2015 Virginia Stocker Summit held in Weyers Cave on February 25, 2015 were recorded. There are several short videos on fescue toxicosis and management that you may find of interest. All of the videos are included in the playlist entitled "Virginia Stocker Cattle Summit" found online at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrq6psn95pUzIHMIziaKxLou2noe01ua> or by searching "VA Stocker Cattle Summit" on the YouTube homepage.

Carpenter Bees— The carpenter bees have certainly been out in recent weeks and you may have noticed them drilling into your deck, wooden siding, or your barn. There is a lot of fuss that generally surrounds carpenter bees, especially as they seem to enjoy provoking you and flying in your face, but I want-



ed to clarify some facts about carpenter bees in hopes of dispelling some of the misconceptions.

- ♦ They look similar to bumble bees, but typically have a white/yellow patch on their foreheads and a shinier black abdomen (Bumble bees have fuzzy butts).
- ♦ The male cannot sting, and luckily the male bees are the ones we see most often darting around us if we come near to where they are drilling.
- ♦ The female bee is able to sting, but is not going to come after you. She must be held or handled in order to be provoked to sting.
- ♦ The bees drill into the wood for two reasons: as a place to take shelter for the winter and a place to lay eggs. They do not eat the wood which is evident by their sawdust piles.
- ♦ The tunnels are generally L-shaped, first drilling against the grain for about an inch, and then turning at a 90 degree angle and drilling with the grain for the remainder of the tunnel. This keeps you from sticking a stick in there and smooshing them as well as protects them from the elements and predators.
- ♦ They generally return to the same places of unpainted wood., so painting may deter future holes.
- ♦ Although annoying, these bees are generally harmless and rarely cause any real structural damage.



The Garden — We are a little behind as far as warmth, but here are a few ideas of what is good to plant now:

Seed—Pole, bush, and wax beans, finish up chard, cucumbers, muskmelons (cantaloupe), okra, pumpkins, squash, corn, sweet potatoes, and watermelons.

Transplants— Finish up broccoli and brussels transplants, eggplant,

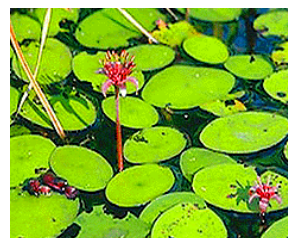
onion sets, peppers, and tomatoes.

Pond weeds—I get many calls about pond weeds this time of the year, which is good, because you will be much better off trying to control them as they pop up than you will trying to treat them in the fall as they are going dormant for winter.

Please give me a call if you need a pond weed identified or need recommendations for treatment.

Here are a few examples of common weeds I see in Lunenburg:

- ♦ **Watershield**—miniature lily pads with very slimy red stems, rooted in the soil



- ♦ **Duckweed**—teeny tiny free-floating leaves with tiny white roots



- ♦ **Filamentous algae**—aka “Pond Scum” - fibrous, green wool-like material floats on the surface



...April Youth Programs Continued

April 14, 15—3rd Grade Ag Awareness Days are held every year at SPAREC in Blackstone,



where area 3rd graders experience a field day of fun science experiments and activities centered on agriculture and natural

resources and based in their SOLs. Lunenburg 3rd graders attended on April 14th and learned about cows and dairy products, field crops, soil critters, sheep, predators and prey, and the water cycle as well as making paper! KES and VES students were excellent and excited learners!

April 20—The Arbor Day program was held again on April 20th, but this time with Victoria Elementary School 4th graders, where photosynthesis was emphasized. Students from both schools were very responsive and enthusiastic about applying their knowledge of science to trees. We all thoroughly enjoyed it!

April 21-23—5th Grade Ag Awareness Days are held the following week in April and feature a whole new array of activities for area 5th graders including (but only scratching the surface) the phases of matter with oobleck, fractions and the tiny percent of usable soil on the earth with apples, and parts of the plant cell by extracting DNA from strawberries! Lunenburg 5th graders from both KES and VES did an excellent job and were well-behaved attentive listeners.

A BIG THANK YOU to the many, many AREC staff, agents, foresters, soil and water personnel, and everyone else involved in these events!



We could not have done it without you!



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