



A Look at *Virginia* Agriculture

Capital: Richmond

Population: 8,684,000

Founded: June 25, 1788 (10th)

State Bird: Cardinal

State Flower: American Dogwood

State Tree: Flowering Dogwood

Number of Counties: 95

Largest City: Virginia Beach- 449,974

Largest County: Fairfax - 1,150,309

Nickname: Old Dominion

Number of Farms: 38,995

Average Farm Size: 187 acres

Total Farmland: 7.3 million acres



www.agclassroom.org/va

Climate & Soil

- Virginia is organized into 5 different regions, which vary widely by climate, soil, and topography. From east to west the regions are Coastal Plain, Piedmont, Blue Ridge Mountain, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian Plateau.
- Winters in the western part of the state can be bitterly cold while other parts of the state have longer growing seasons and temperatures that rarely drop below 0°F.
- Similarly, annual rainfall totals can vary from 33" in the Shenandoah Valley to more than 60" in the mountains of southwestern Virginia.
- Pamunkey soil is the state soil of Virginia. Pamunkey soils were first identified on a farm near Jamestown, Virginia which is known as the oldest tilled farm in the United States.
- The soil in the Coastal Plain region has the highest concentration of sand. West of the Virginia fall line the soils are clay based, with the Valley and Ridge and Appalachian Plateau regions having darker clay because of the higher mineral content.

Crops & Livestock

- Virginia's agricultural production is one of the most diverse in the nation due to its varying geography and climate.
- The top agricultural commodities in Virginia include poultry, grains, cattle, nursery products, and dairy.
- Many Virginia commodities and products rank in the top 10 nationally. These commodities include: leaf tobacco, seafood, apples, pumpkins, turkeys, peanuts, and broilers.
- Virginia has a strong equine industry. In fact, famed Triple Crown winner Secretariat was born in Doswell, VA.
- The cultivation of tobacco as a cash crop was a major contributing factor to the success of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in the new world.

General

- Agriculture is Virginia's largest private industry by far! The industry has an economic impact of over \$82 billion annually and provides over 381,800 jobs in the Commonwealth.
- The top export market for Virginia agriculture is China. Soybeans are the top exported commodity.
- 97% percent of Virginia farms are owned and operated by individuals or families.
- Rockingham County is the top agricultural county in the state in terms of both sales and number of farms.