

Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

Connecting Children to Agriculture

Thank You for "Giving 100%!"

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM
AgInTheClassroom.org

A man with a grey beard, wearing a green polo shirt and blue pants, is kneeling on a grassy field. He is planting small green seedlings into a large, colorful painted tire that serves as a planter. The tire is decorated with yellow, blue, and purple paint. A young girl in a purple dress is kneeling next to him, watching him plant. Another painted tire is visible in the background.

Our Mission:

Educating Virginia's children about the importance of agriculture!

By giving 100% of yourself as a donor, sponsor, event participant, educator and/or volunteer to Virginia's Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC), you helped Connect Over 1 Million Children to Agriculture!

Message from The Chair

A year unlike any other led to support that was above all expectations. Your record-setting support set the stage for growth in our virtual programming and new projects introducing more children to agriculture. Raising over \$408,000 in contributions for the first time in our 29 years as a Foundation is exciting, so on behalf of our board of directors, let me say, “thank you!”

Giving 100% is about gaining support from everyone in the agricultural industry regardless of how much. It also ensures that every child in Virginia learns about the many fascinating processes in our food, fiber, forestry and renewable fuel production. Our theme for this report, “Giving 100%”, also recognizes the 100% support we received from all County Farm Bureaus and Farm Credit Associations in Virginia, along with the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors, our Foundation Board of Directors and more. It’s also about our programs giving 100% throughout a challenging year while sharing agriculture with children and their families wherever possible. Through it all, we are now poised to ensure 100% of school-age children have an opportunity to learn about agriculture on an annual basis.

In 2020-2021, we expanded programs online while continuing to support schools conducting in-person programming. Our online lessons, fun “chef” video contests, farmer-led virtual farm tours and other resources becoming more accessible were a key to our program successes. We also continued to offer grants to schools for agricultural learning projects and advised teachers on best use of materials and curriculum regardless of how they were able to teach their students.

Teachers were rewarded for their excellence in sharing agriculture with back-to-school gift packets and through our Teacher of the Year recognition. Our volunteers persevered by being innovative in sharing their love of agriculture without being able to visit schools the same as in the past. We thank all the teachers and volunteers who kept our programs in front of school-age children throughout the most challenging year ever.

Expanding programs to reach more children in urban areas with quality agricultural experiences is imperative going forward. The success of our Southwest Virginia Regional Program Coordinator helped us take action to fund another regional project for Northern Virginia, so we’ll need your support even more in this new school year. We have so many more children to reach with the good news about the agriculture industry, so we hope you will consider matching or growing your support of our efforts.

I am proud to pass the gavel to our vice chair, Rose Jeter with the Agriculture Technology Program at Virginia Tech, who becomes chair with our new fiscal year starting July 1, 2021. Our board also elected Diane Fowlkes, CFO of Colonial Farm Credit as our new vice chair, while I continue to support the Foundation as past chair. The Foundation Board is ready and excited to keep growing in 2021-2022 and we hope this report will get you just as excited!

More than anything, I want to thank you for your support of this Foundation and for connecting children to agriculture. With your continued support, we will meet the challenge of reaching 100% of Virginia’s school-age children annually. It’s so important for the future of our industry and the children who experience the incredible world of agriculture thanks to you!

Sincerely,



Bertsch Cox

Foundation Chair and CFO of James River Equipment Company





Celebrating Milestones...

Thanks Cargill!

For supporting our programs & helping connect Virginia's children to agriculture, **inside & outside of the classroom!**



Giving 100%! For the first time in the Foundation's 29-year history, we raised over \$400,000 in direct contributions. Additionally, we received contributions from all 88 County Farm Bureaus, all Farm Credit Associations, the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors, and our Foundation board of directors thanks to supporting campaigns led by our Board.

At the same time, growing funds from national companies and organizations helped tip the scales thanks to matching grants and new support initiated by our state partners. Starting with the Virginia Poultry Federation gaining support from the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association for a "Positively Poultry" multimedia project initiated this year, Cargill then matched monies from their Virginia offices

and new support came from Corteva Agriscience, Farm Credit Foundation and Weyerhaeuser!

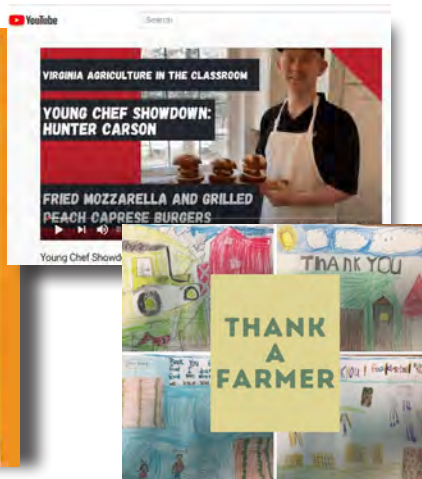
Growing Access to Farms and Agricultural Literacy

Virginia's Agriculture in the Classroom YouTube Channel offers more farm tours and special events that are paired with curriculum to create meaningful multimedia experiences and lessons. Viewers learn directly from the farmers, then take part in lessons in the classroom or at home to learn about agriculture online.

**Check out and share our YouTube Channel
@Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom!**



Sponsored Online Challenges Engage Children Through Contests



Engaging children in agriculture programs grew more creative during the pandemic. Thanks to sponsorship from Virginia's Beef Council, the **Young Chef Showdown** was promoted on social media, with video submissions of beef recipes and cooking tips from youth of all ages. The chefs were highlighted during National Beef Month in May and can be found anytime on our YouTube channel. **Thank a Farmer** at Thanksgiving and the **Virginia Pizza Challenge** kept educators, children and parents 100% connected to our social media throughout the year.



Outstanding Teacher Brings Agriculture Experiences to Students...



Phil Satolli, a first grade teacher at Lacey Springs Elementary in Rockingham Virginia is the Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom 2021 Teacher of the Year.

Phil manages a large

school garden to get his students excited about growing and all the things the soil can produce. He weaves horticulture and environmental concepts throughout his curriculum to inspire his first graders to grow their appreciation for agriculture and the world around them.

Professional Development and Teacher Resources Offered with Options...

Educator training has long been a core of our programs. To help teachers know how to effectively use our curriculum and provide professional support, our staff diversified professional development opportunities and served as consultants for use of online resources. Educational resources, professional development and educator consultation incorporated agricultural, nutrition, career and STEM for 20,825 pre-K through 12th grade educators who teach over 400,000 students.



Mini-grants for Schools Continue to Stimulate Hands-on Activities

Awarded **84 Mini-grants (up to \$500)** to **Virginia Schools** during the **2020-2021 school year!**

30,000 students gained hands-on agricultural experiences out of the classroom in garden projects or at home growing activities!



Appomattox FFA used the monies to create "Harvest Bags" where they added information about the farms behind the food, then donated to families in need during the pandemic. They included a QR code to help local elementary students link to fun agricultural activities online and learn about career opportunities for the future.



Contributions, Including...

Steward | \$50,000+



Shepherd | \$25,000-\$49,999



Cultivator | \$1,000-\$4,999

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Planter | \$500-\$999

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Sponsor Key:

CFB = County Farm Bureau
FBWC = Farm Bureau Women's Committee

Donations, Sponsorships and Grants



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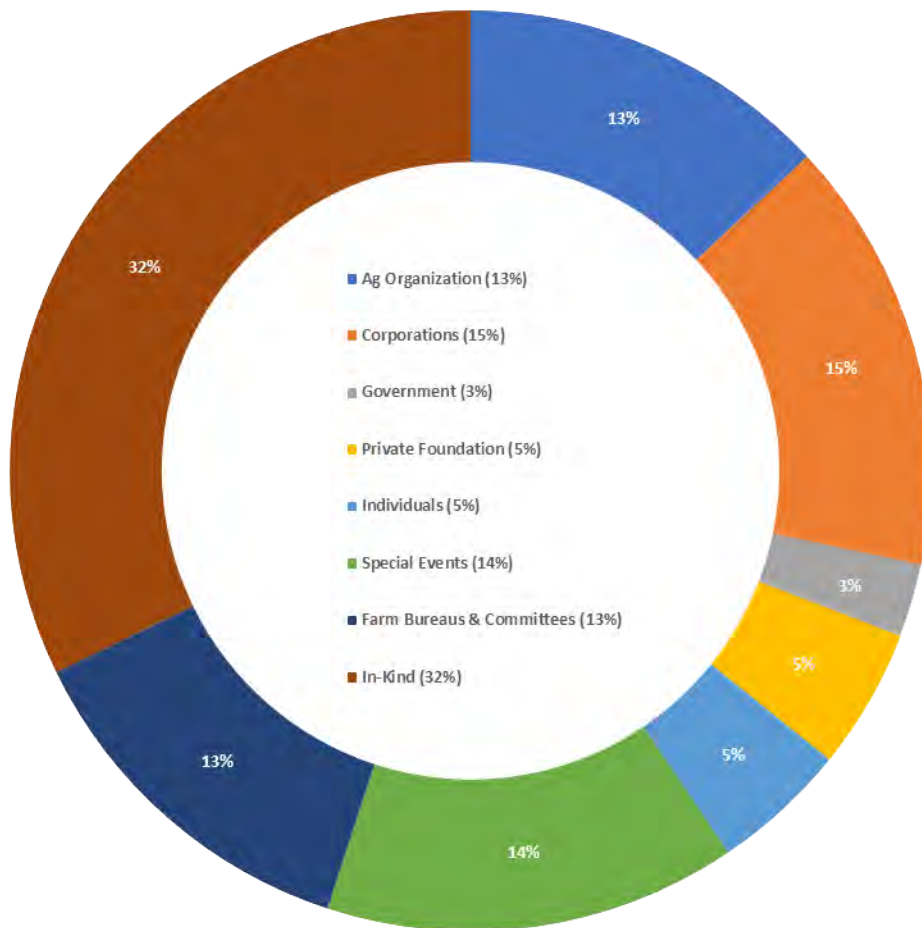
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Virginia Peanut Growers
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Conference Center

2020-2021 Financial Success



Direct Revenue:

Contributions & Grants	\$408,864
Gross Profit from Sales	\$4,264
Investment Income	\$14,382

Total: \$427,510

Direct Expenses:

Educator Programs & Resources	\$200,998
Classroom Grants	\$30,290
Student & Community Initiatives	\$26,400
Direct Development	\$55,707

Total: \$313,395

In-Kind:

Virginia Farm Bureau Federation	\$178,335
Other In-Kind Gifts	\$10,691

Total: \$189,026

Partnerships and Social Media Raise AITC Program Awareness

Growing partnerships with Virginia's Department of Education Farm-to-School Program and Cooperative Living Magazine led to an enormous boost in program awareness across the state.



Weekly Curriculum in Farm-to-School Nutrition Programs

In 133 School Divisions 🍎

Reached 📚

600,000 pre-K through 5th grade students

And new features in the electric cooperative's magazine were distributed to 515,000 homes and businesses with an estimated readership of over 1 million people. Young chef recipes were used to catch attention in the magazine, while a feature about virtual learning also highlighted our programs.

AITC Events & Activities on



YouTube



Connected approximately 200,000 children and adults

Engaging over 15,000 in activities online





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"Fun"-raising Events Many Thanks to Sponsors and Participants



Clays Across the Commonwealth was a Fun Way to Celebrate Agriculture...

The Flying Rabbit in Mt. Crawford and Kettlefoot Rod and Gun Club in Bristol continued to be the featured venues for the 5th Annual Clays Across the Commonwealth. Shooters enjoyed sporting clays, trap, skeet and five stand options at the venues and everyone went home a little happier that day. The events combined for nearly \$20,000 in support thanks to title sponsor Cargill and so many other local sponsors included in this report.

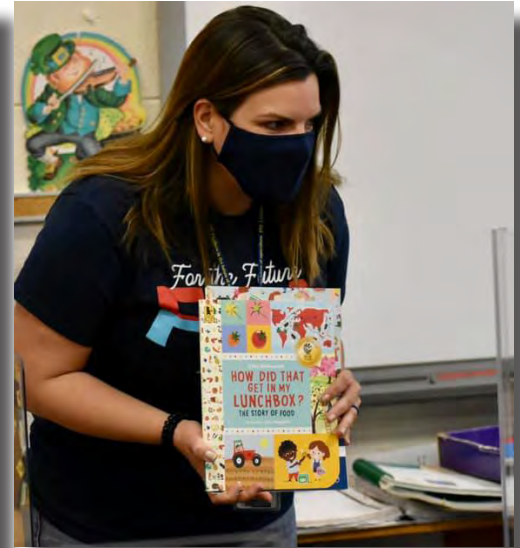
The Most Successful Golf Event Thanks to Sponsors...

Finys President & CEO, Kurt Diederich, again was the title sponsor for our golf event, which increased support and set a record at \$61,100 in gross income. Many sponsors supported the event despite not yet being cleared to attend, but those who did play were treated to a wonderful day! The beautiful Dominion Golf Course near Richmond was available thanks to Jerry Canada being our member-host. Thanks also to the many volunteers and golfers who made it our biggest day for the Foundation!



Agriculture Literacy Week Goes On Virtually and In-Person

Masks and virtual reading didn't slow down our incredible volunteers from across the state as they delivered and read over 2,200 copies of our Book of the Year – "How did that get in my lunchbox?" by Christine Butterworth! Readers included the First Lady of Virginia, the Secretary of Agriculture, Virginia Farm Bureau Leaders, Farm Credit Staff and FFA Members.



Supporting Volunteers with Resources



Holding 41 events that connected over 13,000 children to agriculture when in-person activities were restricted was no small feat. Volunteers were outfitted with posters, banners, Farm Life 360 - 3-D goggles, farm stickers, pencils, and much more to make their outreach efforts successful.

As agriculturalists, we all know how important it is to reach out and help others learn about the industry. Our volunteers did this with a passion in so many ways this year. We thank all of you for your efforts and diligence in creating effective events during the pandemic.

Tribute Donations For

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Search for Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom and you'll quickly see how much we have to offer:

- *Virtually, through YouTube and other social media*
- *Multimedia applications and curriculum offered at no cost*
- *In-person events with passionate agriculturalists*
- *Professional development for educators*
- *Mini-grants for schools*

To ensure children gain a meaningful, hands-on experience in agriculture!

Contact Us

P.O. Box 27552, Richmond, VA 23261

12580 West Creek Parkway, Richmond, VA 23238

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