

Virginia Cooperative Extension Alexandria/Arlington April Programming Updates



Lee Center

**1108 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, VA 22314**

Lee Center

**Updated Hours:
10am-4pm**

**Monday - Thursday
Closed Friday's**

Office: (703) 746-5546

Fax: (703) 684-5285

***Arlington Office closed until
further notice**

4-H Youth Development

For more information on these programs, please contact
Arlington 4-H Extension
Agent Caitlin Verdu at
cverdu@vt.edu



Arlington 4-H and the Buckingham Youth Brigade (BYB) are teaming up to offer a Job Skills series. 4-H Agent Caitlin Verdu meets (virtually) with the BYB teens each week to practice resume writing, interview skills, and understanding your first pay check. This is just one example of the 4-H partnership with BYB—we've been happily working together to teach critical life skills for teens for several years now!

Arlington 4-H is also looking into expanding the Mars Base Camp program to serve students at APS Extended Day sites. This could potentially lead to 75 additional youth receiving hands-on STEM kits that would be facilitated by Extended Day professionals, at no-cost to the families or the schools. Developed by Google and Virginia Cooperative Extension, Mars Base Camp is a collection of activities that teaches kids ages 8-14 STEM skills like mechanical engineering, physics, computer science, and agriculture.

If you or your organization are working with underserved youth populations and are interested in delivering the Mars Base Camp or any other life skills programming with your clients, please contact **Caitlin Verdu** at cverdu@vt.edu to learn more.

A promotional graphic for Mars Base Camp. The top section has a black background with the words 'MARS' in large red letters, where the 'A' is replaced by a white robot head icon. Below this, 'BASE CAMP' is written in white, with a green four-leaf clover icon between the words. A tagline reads 'Explore a hands-on mission to Mars at home!'. The middle section has a green background and contains text about the kit and a bulleted list of features. The bottom section has a white background with a call to action and contact information. The footer includes the Virginia Cooperative Extension logo and a disclaimer.

MARS
BASE CAMP
Explore a hands-on mission to Mars at home!

Mars Base Camp is a kit that teaches kids ages 8-14 about mechanical engineering, physics and computer science, and more!

Mission to Mars

- Kit includes 4 hands-on science activities
- All supplies included
- No cost to participate
- Lots of fun!

Learn to think like a scientist!

For more information, contact
Arlington 4-H Agent Caitlin Verdu at cverdu@vt.edu.

 **Virginia Cooperative Extension**
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University
©2018 Virginia Cooperative Extension. All rights reserved. This material is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used as a substitute for professional advice. For more information, contact your local extension agent.

Family Nutrition Program

SNAP-Ed



2021 Programming Options

VCE FCS SNAP-Ed Agents are continuing to offer these exciting virtual programming options in 2021. Please see our marketing flyers below for more information:

Literacy, Eating, Activity for Preschoolers

Pick a Better Snack

Choose Health

Teen Cuisine

Physical Activity Challenge

Shop Smart, Eat Smart

The Family Nutrition Program (FNP) offers an array of **Policy, System, and Environmental (PSE) Change** initiatives, one including the *Shop Smart, Eat Smart Program*. This program allows FNP to partner with SNAP-authorized retailers in the community, assisting them with:

- *Free In-store marketing*

- *Free Technical Assistance for Store Layout*

- *Connections with professionals*

Please feel free to promote this program in the communities you serve. Should you have additional questions, or know a store partner who may be interested, please feel free to reach out to Kirsten Kelley at kirstenk19@vt.edu.

**Shop Smart
Eat Smart**



April 5-11 2021 is National Public Health Week !

The American Public Health Association advocates for the health of all people and all communities. The theme this year is "*Building Bridges to Better Health*." Throughout this week, learn how to make communities safe and healthy, and we know that COVID-19 has made this even more important. Feel free to access the link below, which includes social media resources, fact sheets, and virtual events being hosted daily throughout the week.

National Public Health Week Resources



Farmers Market Outreach

Spring is here!

VCE SNAP-Ed Agents are able to conduct SNAP-Ed Outreach at farmers markets accepting SNAP benefits. In addition, we can provide recipes and nutrition education. If your farmers market is interested, please reach out to Kirsten Kelley at kirstenk19@vt.edu.

Also, please feel free to access the below link for Farmers Market Resources from the Family Nutrition Program:

- *Using Your SNAP Benefits At a Farmers Market*



For more information, please reach out to:



Kirsten Kelley, M.S., CLC
FCS SNAP-Ed Extension Agent
kirstenk19@vt.edu
703-746-5542

For electronic resources, please visit our website at:
www.eatsmartmovemoreva.org

Family Nutrition Program *EFNEP*



Virtual Nutrition Education

Maintaining good eating habits is an important part of a healthy life style. Learning how to balance your meals with more nutritious foods can help you create healthy and delicious options. Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Family Nutrition Program invites our community to join the free virtual nutrition education classes offered via Zoom or one-on-one over the phone. In these classes we cover a variety of topics including:

- *How to build your own quick and healthy meals*
- *Shopping with limited options*
 - *Meal planning*
 - *Cooking basics*

After completing the program, participants receive a variety of reinforcements delivered directly to their homes so they can continue applying what they learned in class.

Below is one of the recipes that people have learned in class. **Try it at home!**

Eat Smart • Move More

Bean Enchiladas

Prep Time: 10 minutes Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 cup dried pinto beans
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 8 whole-wheat tortillas
- 1 cup reduced fat cheddar cheese, shredded

Nutrition Facts

1 serving (177.8kg)

Calories 230

Total Fat 5g	10%
Sodium 200mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	11%
Fiber 10g	20%
Protein 10g	20%

Quick Tips

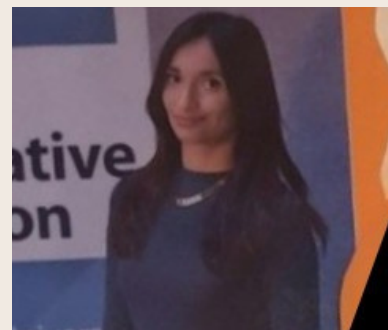
- ▶ To save time, use canned beans. Make sure to drain and rinse them. This will help remove excess sodium.
- ▶ Serve with Fresh Salsa recipe for more vegetables and an extra kick of flavor.

Follow us | Like us

www.eatasmartmovemoreva.org

Directions

- To prepare the dried beans, soak in water overnight. Drain the water and place the beans in a saucepan. Add fresh water to cover the top of beans, cover the saucepan, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook on low for 1 hour.
- Heat oven to 350°F. Spray a baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
- Place the beans in a bowl and mash. Add chili powder and mix well.
- Spread 1/2 of the bean mixture down the center of the tortilla and sprinkle with cheese. Roll tortillas and place seam side down on the baking dish.
- Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes until heated through.



Come join the Family Nutrition Program and get many of these delivered FREE after program completion...



If you or your organization are interested in joining the classes, please contact:

Milena Montoya
Adult Program Assistant - EFNEP
yira7@vt.edu
(703)-746-5546

Family & Consumer Sciences

Food, Nutrition, & Health Updates

For additional information, please contact:
Aisha P. Salazar, M.S.
Associate Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences
(serving Arlington & Alexandria through Food, Nutrition, Health; Finance; and Energy Efficiency programs)
Email: asalazar@vt.edu



Statewide Vaccination Information

As of March 17, registration is open to more people in the 1b category (grocery store workers, food and agriculture workers, and manufacturing). Some pharmacies are also vaccinating certain groups, including those aged 16-64 with high risk medical conditions. Read more [HERE](#). Please note you may have to try to access pages multiple times to schedule an appointment as they are very busy. Learn more and register at the [Virginia Department of Health](#)

Covid-19 Testing & Vaccine Information:

[Arlington County Main COVID information \(vaccine, testing, assistance etc.\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/covid-19/)

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/covid-19/>

[City of Alexandria COVID information \(vaccine, testing, assistance etc.\)](https://www.alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus)

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus>

[Fairfax County COVID information \(vaccine, testing, assistance etc.\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/)

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/>

Remember, Fairfax County has its own registration system which is separate from the state's system.

Vaccine Finder

Use this [website](#) to find a vaccine near you.



Meatless Monday

Thursday, April 1st 1-2pm. Learn the benefits of eating less red meat and more vegetables with Virginia Cooperative Extension. Free to attend but must be an Arlington 55+ member. Register [HERE](#).

Eggcellent!

Thursday, April 8 from 10-11am. Join the Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers to learn about the benefits of eggs! Free to attend but must be an Arlington 55+ member. Register [HERE](#)

P-EBT Information

Eligibility Expansion - Households with students attending public schools under a hybrid modality are now eligible to receive P-EBT benefits.

Previously, P-EBT benefits were only available to students who were learning remotely for five consecutive days. The P-EBT program will now issue benefits to students whose schools are open and operating under both approved modalities (hybrid and remote). School districts have communicated information directly to eligible households. If you are unsure if your child is eligible for P-EBT benefits, please review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Benefits Expansion - The P-EBT program has been extended through the end of 2020-2021 academic school year. Retroactive benefits for October through January will be issued to eligible remote and hybrid students. Backdated P-EBT benefits covering the months of October and November have been issued to P-EBT and SNAP EBT cards. Eligible households should now see those benefits reflected in their accounts. Directions for how to PIN your card can be found on our [P-EBT FAQ page](#)

Información de P-EBT

Expansión de Beneficios de P-EBT - El programa de P-EBT esta extendido hasta el fin del año escolar de 2020-2021. Beneficios retroactivos para octubre hasta enero van a ser otorgado a estudiantes elegibles que estudian remoto e híbrido.

Retroactivo beneficios P-EBT que cubren los meses de octubre y noviembre se han emitido a las tarjetas P-EBT y SNAP EBT. Los hogares elegibles ahora deberían ver esos beneficios reflejados en sus cuentas. En nuestra página de preguntas frecuentes sobre P-EBT, puede encontrar instrucciones sobre cómo ingresar el PIN de su tarjeta:

<https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/pebt/faq-sp.cgi>

Donate Blood!

There is a severe blood shortage for blood types O+, O-, A+, B+ and B- nationwide, and it is impacting us locally. If you are an eligible donor, please make time to donate in the days ahead at Inova Blood Donor Services to help ensure a steady supply of blood is available for the patients we serve. Make your appointment today at inovablood.org or call 1-866-BLOODSAVES. Your hour spent donating the gift of life will make a difference for a patient in need.

**VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
IS AN ARLINGTON CVC PARTNER**



For additional information, please contact:

Aisha P. Salazar, M.S.

Associate Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences

(serving Arlington & Alexandria through Food, Nutrition, Health; Finance; and Energy Efficiency programs)

Email: asalazar@vt.edu



Stephanie Tsao- Energy Masters Program

Coordinator (serving Arlington & Alexandria)

Email: stephaniet@vt.edu



Family & Consumer Sciences

Energy Updates

Explicando las Facturas de Electricidad

24 de marzo 6-7pm EST y 26 de mayo 6-7pm

Únase a un evento gratuito para aprender cómo entender sus facturas y conozca sobre ciertos programas de asistencia financiera. Registrarse aquí:

<https://tinyurl.com/utilitybills spanish>

Consejos para Refrescar su Casa

29 de abril 6:30-7:30pm ET

En el verano, un sistema de aire acondicionado puede contribuir a facturas más altas de electricidad. Esta clase enseña los consejos para ahorrar energía y reducir las facturas de electricidad. Registrarse aquí:

<https://tinyurl.com/coolhomespanish>

Energy Bingo: Thursdays via Zoom from

5 to 6 pm on 4/15, 5/20, 6/17.

Join us for free, fun bingo events suitable for the whole family and get tips to make your home more comfortable, information on how to reduce your energy/water bills, and ideas to protect our environment. Prizes include \$25 Visa gift cards and LED light bulbs. Each bingo session will be conducted in English and Spanish. Register [HERE](#)

Bingo de Energía

15 de abril, 20 de mayo y 17 de junio 5-6pm

Únase a nosotros para jugar Bingo y aprender sobre como conserva la energía de su casa. Los premios incluyen una tarjeta de regalo Visa de \$ 25 y una bombilla LED. Todos los jugadores están limitados a ganar una tarjeta de regalo de \$ 25 cada dos meses.

Registrarse aquí:

<https://tinyurl.com/energymastersbingo>

Indoor Air Quality

Thurs, April 22 6:30-7:30pm

Be a smarter renter or homeowner and learn about mold and common indoor pollutants. Register [HERE](#)

How to Cool Your Home

Tuesday, April 20 6:30-7:30pm

Are your cooling bills high? Learn cheaper alternatives and tips to save on cooling costs. Register [HERE](#)

Demystifying Utility Bills

Tuesday April 13 and Tuesday, May 11 from 7:30-8:30pm

Learn how to read your utility bills, get some energy savings tips, and learn about some local financial assistance programs for utility bills. The presentation will be given in different languages. Register [HERE](#)

Demystifying Utility Bills

6-7pm on Wednesday, April 28

የአገልግሎት ክፍያ መጠየቂያ (ቢል) ንባብ ለመረዳት ተቸግረው ያውቁ ይሆን? የኢነርጂ ማስተር የበጎ ፍቃደኛ ሰራተኞች የመብራት(የኤሌክትሪክ) ክፍያ መጠየቂያ ናሙና እያሳዩ ጠቃሚ የሆኑትን እያብራሩ ትኛው ክፍያዎን ላይ የበለጠ ድርሻ እንዳለው ይገነዘቡበታል። በተጨማሪም ከማብራሪያው እንዴት እድርገው

የመብራት (ኤሌክትሪክ) ሃይል እንደሚቆጥቡ ዘዴውን ይገዛሃሉ።

Register for Amharic class [HERE](#)

Family & Consumer Sciences *Finance Updates*

For additional information, please contact:

Aisha P. Salazar, M.S.
Associate Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences
(serving Arlington & Alexandria
through Food, Nutrition, Health; Finance; and Energy
Efficiency programs)
Email: asalazar@vt.edu



Tax Assistance:

AARP Tax-Aide (formerly at Central Library)

March 2 to April 29. Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. – noon
Drop off by appointment only at Bozman Government Center,
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201
Call 703-829-6192 or visit [Tax-Aide](#) for details

AARP Tax-Aide at Columbia Pike Library

(Asistencia en español podría estar disponible en este lugar)

March 9 to May 14: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:30 am – 4 pm.

Drop off by appointment only at 901 South Highland Street,
Arlington, VA 22204
Call 703-829-6192 or visit [Tax-Aide](#) for details

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Enterprise Development Group (EDG) at 901 South Highland
Street, Arlington, VA 22204

From February 12 through May 15

Language(s): English

Appointment Required. For an appointment call 571-321-6976
<https://publicassistance.arlingtonva.us/tax/>

Community Tax Aid at Falls Church Episcopal (115 E. Fairfax St)

February 16 to April 6, Each Tuesday, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Drop off by appointment only: For an appointment call (703) 831-2918

Income limit: \$55,000 for a person or family

En Español- Asistencia de taxes en Iglesia Episcopal de Falls Church

Solo por cita: Todos los martes desde el 16 de febrero hasta el 6 de abril, 6:00pm-8:00pm.

Ingreso máximo: \$55,00

Para una cita: Llama a (703) 831-2918

Community Tax Aid in Alexandria

Wednesdays from 6:30pm – 8pm and Saturdays from 9am-12pm from Feb 13 through April 10.

Taxpayers are eligible if income is below \$55K for individuals and families.

Call 703.831.2918 to make an appointment. A mask and temperature check will be required.

VCE will provide free financial counseling and assist with accessing credit reports.

For more details, click [HERE](#)

Money Smarts Pay

Mondays April 5, April 12, April 19 from 6-8pm

A series of 3 classes where we cover topics such as needs and wants, budgeting, goals, credit scores and banking. These classes are great for anyone needing financial assistance in reducing credit card debt, saving and planning for emergencies, understanding your credit report and credit score, and managing your finances. Register [HERE](#)

The **Treasury Department** and **IRS** announced that the federal income tax filing due date for individuals for the 2020 tax year will be automatically extended from **April 15, 2021, to May 17, 2021.**

Virginia has also extended the date to May 17, 2021. Filing electronically is the fastest way to submit your taxes and get your refund and any remaining stimulus funds. Visit [HERE](#) for more information.

Retirement Planning: Tuesday, April 6 from 6-8pm

Learn about setting goals, spending realities during retirement, and types of retirement income. Register [HERE](#)

Investing Basics: Tuesday, April 13 from 6-8pm

Learn about setting financial goals, the benefits of saving and investing, and types of investments. Register [HERE](#)

Small Steps to Health & Wealth: Thursday, April 8 from 12-1pm

This class offers 25 strategies for improving both your physical & financial health. Register [HERE](#)

Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate: Tuesday, April 6 from 11am-12pm

This presentation discusses inheritance of family heirlooms & addresses preplanning to designate recipients of personal belongings. Register [HERE](#)

Avoid COVID Scams!

Learn more from the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) & [Fairfax County](#)

Money Smarts Pay in Spanish (Vale la Pena Ser Money Smart)

Lunes 5 de abril, 12 de abril, y 19 de abril desde las 6-8pm

En estas clases virtuales aprenderá: consejos para administrar su dinero, cómo reducir la deuda de la tarjeta de crédito, ahorrar y planificar para emergencias, entender su informe de crédito y puntuación de crédito y más. Estas clases son patrocinadas por voluntarios de finanzas de Virginia Cooperative Extension de Arlington y Alexandria. Una vez que se registre, le enviaremos un enlace para la clase, que va ser enseñada por Zoom. [Enrolla aqui](#)

Agriculture & Natural Resources

Master Gardener Updates

For additional information, please contact:

Kirsten Ann Conrad
Agriculture Natural Resource Extension Agent
Virginia Cooperative Extension
Email: kbuhls@vt.edu



VCE-MGNV Virtual Classroom public education events for April 2021 are online and open to all. RSVP online [HERE](#) to receive the link to participate. Click on the event titles to RSVP for each event. If you can't join us for a live online presentation, video recordings of the sessions will be posted [HERE](#).

Friday, April 2, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

Composting and No Till Gardening: Create a Garden That Thrives

Learn the basic composting tools and techniques to turn your yard and kitchen waste into black gold for your garden. Extension Master Gardener Beth Buffington will explain how you can combine these skills with no till gardening to develop rich organic soil throughout your garden while reducing water runoff and soil erosion. Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive link to participate.

Friday, April 16, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

Best Bets: Native Plants for Wet Conditions

Homeowners often wonder which plants will be best suited to the soil conditions in their landscapes. In this class, Extension Master Gardener Elaine Mills will describe the factors that lead to wet conditions in a garden and the adaptations plants have made to do well in moist sites, tolerate intermittent flooding, or grow in standing water. She will introduce native trees, shrubs, perennials, ferns, grasses, and rushes that have been found to thrive in these conditions, explain the benefits they provide to wildlife, and offer tips for growing and maintaining them. Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive link to participate.

Friday, April 23, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

Contained Excitement: Outdoor Container Garden Basics & What's Trending!

Join Extension Master Gardener Anne Reed to learn the basics of growing flowers and vegetables in containers, including bio-containers, growing medium, moisture, fertilizer, plant selection and care, and overwintering your potted garden. Trending topics will include container gardening with roses, citrus, and other fruits, shade plantings, porch pots, and more! Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive link to participate.

Friday, April 30, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

The Kitchen Herb Garden

Bring flavor, health, beauty, and convenience to your family's mealtime with your own kitchen herb garden. Susan Wilhelm and Kathryn Kellam will present information on selecting, growing, harvesting, and using your favorite superfoods, plus options for simple herb garden designs for small urban spaces. Join Extension Master Gardeners Kathryn Kellam and Susan Wilhelm. Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive link to participate.

April 1 – 30, 2021

Alexandria Earth Day 2021 (Virtual)

The City of Alexandria and Alex Renew will celebrate Earth Day 2021 with a number of virtual activities, including announcing the winner of the Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award on April 22. Other topics to be posted on the website will engage the community in projects for restoring different facets of the Earth, such as Water Quality, Air Quality and the Climate. Free. For more information go to alexandriava.gov/EarthDay.

Note to All:

OPERATING! – The Extension Master Gardener Help Desk is still answering emails!

We welcome your garden-related questions, including those related to plant and insect identification. Please include photos to assist us with identification. The Help Desk is open weekdays from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm (noon). Contact us at mgarlalex@gmail.com.

Also check out the resources on our website, mgny.org. You'll find Gardening Basics for *Arlington & Alexandria, VA* listing our hardiness zone and frost dates, a list of problem plants and better alternatives, and an extensive compilation of Tried and True Native Plants for the Mid-Atlantic Area, complete with great color pictures and descriptions. Our schedule of gardening programs is posted on this website, so be sure to check it often!

*If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services, or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Arlington County Cooperative Extension five days prior to the event at 703-228-6400 or *TDD (800) 828-1120 during business hours (8:00 am–5:00 pm) to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event.*

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. VCE is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnis, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

General Updates

VCE Alexandria is Hiring!

The City of Alexandria Virginia Cooperative Extension is hiring for their next 4-H Extension Agent! Please find the link below to the job description, and pass along to those who may be interested.

[4-H Extension Agent, City of Alexandria Cooperative Extension](#)

Arlington VCE Budget Update

We have some tough news to share: the Arlington County Manager's proposed budget calls for a **50% cut in county funding** for Arlington's Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE). VCE administers 4-H as well as our Agriculture and Natural Resources and Family and Consumer Sciences programs.

While this only amounts to \$64,000, this cut would be *devastating* for VCE. We would lose 60% of our programmatic staff (2 full-time Agents and two part-time people).

If as an individual and a member of our community you are interested in supporting Extension, please reach out to Caitlin Verdu, 4-H Extension Agent, directly, using her contact information below. She would be happy to share some easy ways that you could show your support.

Most importantly, thank you for all that you do. Partnerships like yours make our work possible, and we are beyond grateful for all that we've accomplished together. Let's continue to make a difference in young people's lives for years to come!

To learn additional ways to assist, please reach out to:

Caitlin Verdu
Arlington 4-H Extension Agent
everdu@vt.edu