

Virginia Cooperative Extension Alexandria/Arlington August Programming Updates



Lee Center

**1108 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, VA 22314**

Lee Center

**Updated Hours:
Monday-Friday
8:00am-5:00pm**

***Arlington Office closed until
further notice**

**Office: (703) 746-5546
Fax: (703) 684-5285**

4-H Youth Development

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



4-H Program Updates

4-H Camp was a great success! 85 campers and counselors from Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax for a five day, four-night amazing camp experience at the Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center. Our Teen Counselors really stepped up and served as amazing role models to their campers, helping everyone have fun and enjoy themselves, while following the heightened safety protocols. We'd also like to thank The Kiwanis Club of Arlington for providing several need-based camp scholarships. Thanks to those generous folks, we were able to assist several families who otherwise might not have been able to participate. Thank you!

This month we're wrapping up two other series. We've had a blast working with the young ladies at Arlington Juvenile Court Service's Girls Outreach Program. Our lessons combined high intensity interval training workouts with nutrition education activities. Together we're combating common misconceptions about what it means to eat "healthy," and giving the teens the tools they need to make good nutritious choices.

We're also nearing the end of an in-person Nature Club series with the students at AHC's Gates of Ballston facility. Every week the students work with 4-H volunteers to get outside and learn a bit more about the natural world. They've even selected a mascot for their club, the "Pink Flower Tree" and look for changes in the tree each week. It's been wonderful to return to in-person programming and see the students in person.

We look forward to seeing what the fall brings for 4-H, and are grateful to everyone who help made this summer such a success!



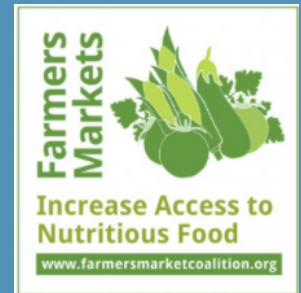
Family Nutrition Program

SNAP-Ed



August 1-7, 2021 is National Farmers Market Week!

Let's celebrate Farmers Markets! Farmers Market Week is an excellent opportunity to show the nation how important markets are to our communities. They bring healthy foods to communities, while preserving farmland and stimulating local economies.



The Farmers Market Coalition has created a 2021 National Farmers Market Week Toolkit to assist with outreach and advocacy efforts. Please take time this week to advocate for your local farmers markets!

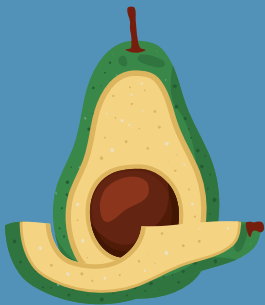


Reference: The Farmers Market Coalition

2021 Programming Options

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

Literacy, Eating, Activity for Preschoolers

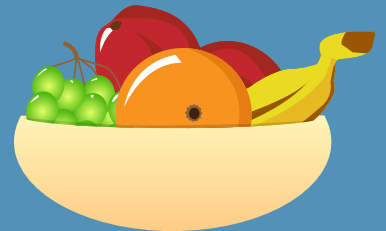


Pick a Better Snack

Choose Health

Teen Cuisine

Physical Activity Challenge



For more information, please reach out to:



Kirsten Kelley, M.S.
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



Nutrition Education

Food Storage and Safely Freezing Foods – Quick Tips

Follow these steps to keep your food safe and to prevent bacteria from growing!

- 1. Refrigerate perishable foods** (milk, cheese, meat, produce) within 2 hours of buying them from the grocery store. • Keep the temperature of your refrigerator at or below 40°F. – The danger zone is between 40°F and 140°F.
- 2. Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs** – Store raw meat, poultry, and fish on the lowest shelf of your fridge, away from other foods. – Store eggs in their carton.
- 3. Fruit** – Store apples, bananas, citrus fruits, mango, papaya, melons, pomegranate, persimmons and pineapple in a cool dry place. – Peaches, pears, avocados, kiwi, nectarines, and plums can first be ripened in the pantry, then stored in the fridge. – Apples, cherries, apricots, berries, cranberries, and grapes can be stored in the fridge. – Store all fruits in the fridge after they are cut and peeled. – Store fruits in the crisper drawer.
- 4. Vegetables** – Tomatoes, garlic, onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash, cucumbers, eggplant, and peppers can be stored in the pantry. – Store artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, corn, green beans, leafy greens, mushrooms, parsnips, radishes, rhubarb, turnips, peas, and summer squashes in the crisper drawer of your fridge.
- 5. Nonperishables** – Store canned foods in cool, dry places, Discard cans that are dented, leaking, bulging, or rusted. Always check the expirations dates. – Store grains in cool, dry places in airtight containers.
- 6. Leftovers** – Store leftovers of prepared meals in the fridge within 2 hours of being cooked. – Store leftovers in shallow, airtight containers.
- 7. Freezing Foods** – Almost any food can be frozen – except canned foods and shelled eggs. Freeze foods at 0°F in freezer wrap, freezer quality plastic bags, or airtight plastic freezer containers.

To learn more about food safety, the MyPlate model, and physical activity, join the Family Nutrition Program!

After completing the program, participants receive a variety of reinforcements to continue applying what they learned in class. There is no cost to join the program.

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



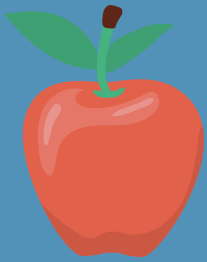
Come join the Family Nutrition Program and get many of these delivered FREE after program completion...



Family Nutrition Program



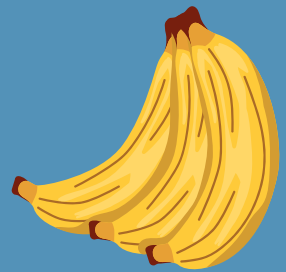
Nutrition Education



1.) Transitional Housing Community Lodgings

Curriculum: Eat Smart, Being Active

Lesson Platform: Virtual (including physical activity)



2.) Sisters Group - Ethiopian & Eritrean Families

Lesson Platform: Phone lessons or Zoom

3.) Arlington County Fair

The Family Nutrition Program will showcase at the Arlington County Fair this year, offering classes in different languages and to different age groups.

Should you be interested in classes, please
contact:

Haregowoin Tecklu
Family Nutrition Program Assistant - SNAP-Ed
Serving Alexandria & Arlington County
htecklu@vt.edu



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 June 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, August 6, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

Native Vines for the Home Garden

Vines can fill a variety of roles in the garden, either serving as ground covers or providing an attractive vertical element in the landscape as they grow on fences, trellises, or walls. In addition to offering privacy screening, shade, attractive flowers, and colorful fall foliage, native species supply critical support for local wildlife. Extension Master Gardener Elaine Mills will discuss about a dozen vines native to the Mid-Atlantic region and how they can be used as excellent substitutes for such invasive non-native vines as English ivy, Asian wisteria, Japanese honeysuckle, and porcelain berry. She will present characteristics and attributes of the native vines as well as explain maintenance tips and ideas for their landscape uses. Elaine Mills is a creative force behind the resource Tried and True Native Plant Selections for the Mid-Atlantic and serves as a co-coordinator at the Glencarlyn Library Community Garden, a Virginia Cooperative Extension Demonstration Garden in Arlington, Virginia. Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive link to participate.

Friday, August 13, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

Soil Health

Want to grow more flavorful tomatoes? Want to produce more colorful blooms? Healthy plants need healthy soil to do their best. Join Kirsten Conrad, Extension Agent for Arlington County and City of Alexandria, for the basics of how you can improve your soil 'health', improve water retention, increase your garden's ability to fight off diseases, and reduce your need for fertilizers and pesticides. Bring your questions about what a 'living' soil does, soil test interpretation, the use of compost, and the importance of good soil drainage, for a session on best practices that are part of a holistic approach to garden health. Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive link to participate.

Wednesday, August 18 through Sunday, August 22 **Arlington County Fair “Nights, Lights & Bites”**

Have you had a spectacular garden this year? Are your beans beautiful and zinnias amazing? Come to the Arlington County Fair and enter the Competitive Exhibits for Fruits and Vegetables or Flowers! Entries will be judged by Extension Master Gardeners and there are prizes galore to give you bragging rights in your neighborhood. Residents of Arlington County, Alexandria City, Falls Church City and Joint Base Myers-Henderson are eligible to enter. Kids welcome! Registration is online [HERE](#).

Friday, August 20, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

Challenges of the Summer Garden – Part II

In the July 16 session Challenges of the Summer Garden, Extension Master Gardener Beth Buffington offered tips and techniques to alleviate garden woes that bedevil us during the wilting days of summer. In a world where such a big topic deserves a Part II sequel, Beth invites you to submit specific questions on summer weeds, insects, disease or water concerns to a panel of Extension Master Gardeners with a wealth of experience. A diagnostic form to describe your specific garden problem and directions on how to take a helpful photograph so that the panel can give you an accurate diagnosis are at <https://mgnv.org/summer-gardening-questions/>. Please submit your question, diagnostic form and photo, if you have one, by August 12. Don't miss this panel discussion exploring real-world garden problems! Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive a link to participate in the August 20 session.

Friday, August 27, 10:00 – 11:30 am, ONLINE

Fall Weed ID in the Garden

Join Extension Master Gardener Joyce Hylton as she discusses some of the most common weeds in our area that flourish in the Fall. While a weed may be just a wildflower in the wrong place, learn why they may like your lawn and garden and how you can safely and effectively control them. Joyce Hylton trains and mentors Extension Master Gardeners in Arlington County and the City of Alexandria and teaches sustainable landscaping best practices to the public. For her over two decades of public service, the City of Alexandria bestowed Joyce with the 2020 Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award. Free. RSVP [HERE](#) to receive link to participate.

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 mgaralex@gmail.com.

Check out our Plant Clinic! The Del Ray Farmers Market Plant Clinic, located at 203 E. Oxford Ave, Alexandria will operate on Saturdays from July 10 through September 25, and be open from 8:30–11:15 am. See you there!

Also check out the resources on our website, mgnv.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.

Family & Consumer Sciences

Energy 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



Stephanie Tsao -

*Energy Masters Program Coordinator
(serving Arlington & Alexandria)*

Email:

stephaniet@vt.edu



Energy Masters volunteers present FREE virtual community events on energy and water conservation in your home that can help save money and the environment. If you have any questions, please email energy@ecoactionarlington.org.

For full details visit arlington.ext.vt.edu/programs/energy-masters-volunteers.html

Energy Masters Outdoor Information Desk Monday, August 9 from 3-5 pm EST

Energy Masters will show short energy efficiency demonstrations outside the Francis C. Hammond Middle School on 4646 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Come join and meet our volunteers. Registration is not required.

Happy Hour: What does it mean to be an Energy Masters volunteer Tuesday, August 10 from 6-8 pm EST

Are you interested in becoming an Energy Masters volunteer? Are you a current volunteer and would like to help answer questions about the program and time commitment for interested applicants? Past, current, and new volunteers are welcome to Energy Masters' upcoming happy hour at Rocklands BBQ and Grill located at 3471 Washington Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201. If weather permits, we plan to be on their patio space. Please read Rockland's COVID-19 safety practices prior to this event: <https://rocklands.com/keeping-things-safe/>. To join, please register [HERE](#).

Demystifying Your Utility Bill Wednesday, August 11, 11 am - noon EST

Learn different ways to manage and plan ahead for high energy bills. Energy Masters volunteers will go over bill assistance programs offered in the Northern Virginia area, different types of payment plans offered by utilities to help make your bills manageable, and tips to lower your energy use. Register by 8/10 [HERE](#).

Energy Masters school supply distribution at the Hammond Middle School Welcome Fair Saturday, Aug. 14, 2021-10am-2pm

Energy Masters volunteers will table at the Welcome Fair scheduled to take place indoors in the cafeteria at Francis C. Hammond Middle School at 4646 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Unlike other tabling events, this event will be part of the school's fair to welcome parents and students ahead of the new school year. Volunteers will be manning a table with energy efficiency information, giving out energy-themed school supplies, and possibly doing some simple energy-themed demonstrations. Registration is not required.

Energy Masters at the Arlington County Fair Saturday, Aug. 21, 2021- 10-9pm & Sunday, Aug. 22, 2021- 11-7pm

The Arlington County Fair is taking place indoors and in person at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center at 3501 2nd St S, Arlington, VA 22204. Drop by the Energy Masters booth for some family friendly activities, free giveaways, and an information booth where you can ask heating and cooling questions and learn about our volunteer program. Stop by for some energy-themed fun! Registration is not required. To find out more information about the event, please visit: <https://arlingtoncountyfair.us/visit#schedule> or reach out to energy@ecoactionarlington.org.

Family & Consumer Sciences 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



Alexandria's Community Health Improvement Plan 2025 (CHIP) is here!

VCE is proud to have participated in Alexandria's CHIP Work Group during the past 17 months. As a member of the steering committee for the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, VCE is involved in two specific strategies as tactic co-owners:

- Poverty Priority Area: Strategy G- Expand opportunities for community-centered financial resources. (page 56)
 - Tactic 1: Expand the Virginia Cooperative Extension's Master Education Financial program to include people who are not fluent in English.
- Housing Priority Area: Strategy E- Support healthy, high-quality, energy-efficient housing. (page 24)
 - Tactic 1: Promote energy efficiency policies.

VCE is Recruiting Volunteers!

We are currently recruiting for Master Food Volunteers and Energy Masters. Please see the ads on the GENERAL UPDATES page for more information.

If your organization or group is interested in virtual or in-person programs in nutrition/cooking, energy efficiency, or finance, please email me or Stephanie Tsao (Energy Masters).

A Round-Up of Nutrition Updates through HCAT Arlington. Thank you to *Mary Sanders, HCAT Coordinator*, for providing the below updates.

1.) Capital Area Food Bank is offering three monthly food distributions at sites in Arlington. Please share this FLYER widely to anyone who may be in need of additional food assistance.

2.) APS is serving free meals to all students this summer. Breakfast and lunch is available at all summer school locations for students attending in person summer school. Meal pick up locations will be open for food distribution from 11 a.m.-Noon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, through August 20.

New Laws:

Starting July 1, several new laws in the Commonwealth took effect which will benefit hundreds of thousands of low-income Virginians. A larger summary of the new laws is available HERE, but some relevant ones of interest to HCAT Members include:

- SNAP Expansion: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has been expanded to make 25,000 more Virginia families eligible for food assistance.

- Medicaid Expansion: Virginia has expanded Medicaid to cover dental benefits for all new and current enrollees and added new coverage for pregnant women regardless of immigration status.

- Increased TANF Cash Assistance Benefits: Cash assistance benefits for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program will increase by 10% for all TANF participants.

- Families Can No Longer Be Sued Over School Meal Debt: Every school board in Virginia must adopt a policy that prohibits the board from filing a lawsuit against a student's parent because the student cannot pay for a meal at school or owes a school meal debt.

- Families Have More Time to Pay Rent and Stay Housed: Until July 1, 2022, all landlords must provide tenants who fail to pay rent on time a 14-day "pay or quit" notice, increased from 5 days previously.

Below are ways to receive Financial Coaching with VCE!

1) Free 1x1 Financial Coaching:

VCE One on One Financial Coaching is free and confidential and is brought to you by our Master Financial Education Volunteers. Coaching sessions are based on one's needs; coaches help with budgets, answer financial questions, and provide helpful resources. Register [HERE](#). Coaches will contact you by email, Zoom, or phone.

2) Virtual Financial Help Desk!

Try out our 1 on 1 coaching virtually or by calling in. Bring your financial questions and learn about a different topic each week! In each session Master Financial Education Volunteers will go over different financial topics for about 20-30 minutes but will answer any and all questions you have about finances. Learn something new and get your questions answered by our financial coaches! Register [HERE](#) to stay informed for the next series.

Once you register, you will receive the Zoom link to join the Help Desk either through Wi-Fi or by phone. Please note, Zoom is free if you use Wi-Fi and call with unlimited minutes; the number is not toll-free. For more information, please visit <https://arlington.ext.vt.edu/>

3) NEW! Financial Help Desk by Email!

Send your financial questions to VCE-FinancialHelpDesk-g@vt.edu and a volunteer will get back to you. Ask any of your questions. This is great for anyone just wanting quick tips or short-term concerns.

4) Virtual Financial Simulations for Teens!

If you are interested in a Virtual Reality Store, let us know by filling out this [form](#)! These classes can be taught through Zoom or Microsoft Teams (or other platforms as needed) and are a great supplement to lessons on finance and money

5) Advance Child Tax Credit

For information on the [2021 Advance Child Tax Credits](#), please visit [HERE](#), [Frequently Asked Questions](#), and [Which Online Tool Should You Use?](#)

For Eviction Prevention Information in Alexandria [CLICK HERE](#)

For Eviction Prevention Information in Arlington [CLICK HERE](#)

Also- reminder for people to donate produce:

Volunteer with Plot Against Hunger!

To donate produce or volunteer to bag produce for local food pantries, please visit [HERE](#). *You do not have to be a VCE volunteer to volunteer or grow produce.*

General Updates

Master Food Volunteer Program



Love to cook? Interested in nutrition & helping others?

Become a Master Food Volunteer!

Training begins in September
Scholarships available

Virginia Cooperative Extension
MASTER FOOD VOLUNTEER

Seeking Amharic, Arabic, & Spanish speakers.

Questions? Email
MasterFoodVolunteer-g@vt.edu

Apply by August 6
<https://bit.ly/vcemfvtraining>

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

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. 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. Jensen, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia State University; Administrator, 1610 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

Master Food Volunteers help with cooking demonstrations, nutrition classes, health fairs, farmers markets, and more. 8 Virtual training sessions via Zoom on Fridays, Sep 10 to Oct 29.

Apply here: <https://bit.ly/vcemfvtraining>
Questions? MasterFoodVolunteer-g@vt.edu


Energy Masters Training



**ENERGY
MASTERS
TRAINING
BEGINS
OCTOBER
2021.**

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

**EARLY-BIRD DEADLINE IS AUGUST 15.
ADULTS & STUDENTS 16 YEARS & OLDER MAY APPLY.
SEEKING AMHARIC, ARABIC, SPANISH SPEAKERS
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE.**


Virginia Tech • Virginia State University



[HTTPS://BIT.LY/2WC5MZ5](https://bit.ly/2WC5MZ5)

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. 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 Holliman, Administrator, 1800 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

Energy Masters Volunteers help our community's neediest families reduce their utility expenses by delivering hands-on conservation upgrades and education.

To learn more, please visit our website at:
[https://www.ecoactionarlington.org/community-
programs/energy-masters/](https://www.ecoactionarlington.org/community-programs/energy-masters/)