

# AGRICULTURE AND HOME EXTENSION

## DESCRIPTION

The Henrico Extension Office is the local arm of the national Cooperative Extension system that began with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914. The Cooperative Extension is a partnership between the USDA, the 106 land-grant colleges and universities across the nation, and state and local governments. In Virginia, Cooperative Extension is administered through Virginia Tech and Virginia State University.

The Cooperative Extension system employs tens of thousands of community-based educators and campus-based faculty and staff nationwide. It has a remarkably broad scope of work centered on program areas that include the following: agriculture and natural resources; 4-H youth development; family and consumer sciences; leadership development; and community and economic development. Cooperative Extension provides research-based information through an informal educational process that is designed to address specific issues and needs relevant to the communities each local office serves.

## OBJECTIVES

- To assess local issues and needs through a periodic situational analysis process conducted in cooperation with the Henrico Extension Leadership Council.
- To provide timely, research-based recommendations to citizens in response to their inquiries.
- To develop the subject matter expertise and leadership skills of a dedicated cadre of volunteers who, in turn, multiply the educational reach of the professional staff far beyond their capacity alone.
- To design educational programs by employing a variety of delivery methods that provide citizens with needed information to make life-enhancing decisions.
- To make appropriate use of technology to provide more efficient, cost-effective means of communication and service to citizens.

## FISCAL YEAR 2024 SUMMARY

### Annual Fiscal Plan

<u>Description</u>	<u>FY22 Actual</u>	<u>FY23 Original</u>	<u>FY24 Approved</u>	<u>Change 23 to 24</u>
Personnel	\$ 143,404	\$ 149,611	\$ 159,288	6.5%
Operation	263,958	271,176	284,076	4.8%
Capital	0	0	0	0.0%
Total	<u>\$ 407,362</u>	<u>\$ 420,787</u>	<u>\$ 443,364</u>	<u>5.4%</u>
Personnel Complement*	2	2	2	0

\*Does not include Extension Agents who are paid directly by Virginia Tech.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	<u>Change 23 to 24</u>
<b>Workload Measures</b>				
Citizens Assisted	90,200	139,918	112,000	(27,918)
Programs Presented	360	404	410	6
4-H Youth Enrolled	2,500	6,533	6,500	(33)
Samples Analyzed and Identified	925	855	1,025	170
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>				
Volunteer Hours Supporting Programs	13,600	13,705	15,100	1,395

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Agriculture and Home Extension budget of \$443,364 for FY24 increased by \$22,577, or 5.4%, from the FY23 approved budget. This increase includes a \$9,677 increase to the personnel component for rising salary, healthcare, and employee benefit costs, plus a \$12,900 increase to the department’s operating budget, which reflects a State raise of 5% and covers rising costs for professional services budgeted under the office’s operating component.

## DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The Extension Office is known as a cooperative program because of its partnership between local, state and federal government. During FY23, Extension returned toward more traditional programming, which included an increase in face-to-face programs. Through the use of technology and dedicated volunteers, citizens were still able to participate in a variety of program opportunities. Extension continues to increase its use of social media to reach citizens. While Facebook was used most often, Instagram and YouTube are also outlets to share our educational resources.

The 4-H Youth Development program saw an almost 300% increase in 4-H youth participation. This is due in large part to an increase in school programming. Through a partnership with Title-I programs and Agriculture in the Classroom, a statewide educational program, in-school programming increased to include embryology and agriculture literacy offerings. New Special Interest Clubs include cake decorating and youth led art initiatives. 4-H camping programs continued with summer day camps and overnight camp at the Jamestown 4-H Center.

Family and Consumer Sciences programming continued to focus on overall wellness. In partnership with Henrico County Public Schools and the Henrico Education Foundation, Teen Cuisine, a youth nutrition program, was offered at Fairfield Elementary after school. In addition, a nutrition series was held at St. Luke’s apartments. Both programs taught how to make healthy food choices and include hands on food preparation. Through the same partnership, the Strengthening Families 10-14 Program, a comprehensive family skill building series, was offered as a pilot to three families.

Agriculture and Natural Resources offered virtual programs through the virtual classroom on the Extension Office’s website. Henrico’s traditional Master Gardener training returned in 2022, training 14 new Master Gardener volunteers. With the help of Master Gardener volunteers, the Agriculture and Natural Resources program reached

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over 70,000 citizens. This includes assisting homeowners meet their lawn-care needs through the SMART Lawns and Smart Scapes programs. In addition, the successful Bug Bizarre continued with over 500 in-person attendees.

The Agriculture and Home Extension budget for FY24 continues to reflect only Henrico County's contribution to the Department's annual expenses. The personnel complement includes two support staff positions. A total of four Extension Agent positions, whose funding is located in the operating portion of the Department's budget, are paid directly by Virginia Tech. Henrico County reimburses Virginia Tech for 100% of the salary and benefit costs of two Extension Agent positions, and 50% of the salary and benefit costs of the other two Extension Agent positions.