

# AGRICULTURE & 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 statewide. 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 2022 SUMMARY

<b>Description</b>	<b>FY20 Actual</b>	<b>FY21 Original</b>	<b>FY22 Approved</b>	<b>Change 21 to 22</b>
Personnel	\$ 130,651	\$ 135,111	\$ 142,003	5.1%
Operation	233,273	261,063	264,544	1.3%
Capital	175	0	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 364,099</b>	<b>\$ 396,174</b>	<b>\$ 406,547</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
 Personnel Complement*	 2	 2	 2	 0

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

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>Change 21 to 22</u>
<b>Workload Measures</b>				
Citizens Assisted	49,403	41,359	47,700	6,341
Programs Presented	519	291	345	54
4-H Youth Enrolled	2,332	2,000	2,500	500
Samples Analyzed and Identified	780	774	925	151
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>				
Volunteer Hours Supporting Programs	17,494	5,559	6,500	941

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Agriculture and Home Extension budget of \$406,547 for FY2021-22 increased by \$10,373, or 2.6 percent, from the FY2020-21 approved budget. The increase is driven by salary increases related to the updated compensation plan for FY2021-22. Increases in the operating component of the budget are driven primarily by the reimbursement to Virginia Tech for the four Extension Agent positions, and the sponsorship of an intern. Historically, interns have been funded utilizing vacancy savings from Virginia Tech, but these funds are no longer available. As such, \$2,600 is approved to fund half of an intern’s costs during FY2021-22.

The Extension Office is known as a cooperative program because of the partnership of local, state, and federal government. While Henrico citizens have always benefited from the cooperation, FY2020-21 saw it manifest very differently. Through technology, citizens were able to participate in programming outside of the county. Several statewide program opportunities were available including Virginia Virtual Farm to Table, Balancing Life, and 4-H at Home

Extension programs are traditionally in person with a hands-on or demonstration method. During FY2020-21, program models shifted due to COVID-19. All program areas provided virtual programming of some type during 2020. The 4-H Youth Development program led the way and conducted the majority of our virtual programs. The 4-H agents developed Head, Heart, Hands, and Health Academy to provide an option for youth away from the classroom setting. It also provided a different type of activity once students were engaged in virtual learning. With the cancellation of summer camp, youth participated in a virtual statewide camp. 4-H community clubs continued meeting and new ones were started including one with a STEM focus.

Family and Consumer Sciences programming offered virtual programs that focused on dealing with the pandemic and current concerns from various perspectives. A statewide program team developed the Balancing Life Webinar Series. This series tackled challenging issues such as communication, dealing with loss, financial, and health topics that many faced for the first time. Articles were included in the Employee Connection that stemmed from several of the webinars. Grant funds from Extension’s Family Nutrition Program allowed Extension to offer a virtual cooking program to youth during the summer of 2020. Youth were provided cooking kits and recipe ingredients. One participant commented "I like the Teen Cuisine program because I love to cook and I got to try new recipes. Also, I was able to help my mom with meals."

### *Agriculture and Home Extension*

Agriculture and Natural Resources offered virtual programs through the virtual classroom on the Extension Office's website. Master Gardener volunteers were able to assist with virtual programming including Turf Talks, Tree Talks, and a gardening series held in partnership with Henrico County Public Library. With safety protocols in place, interested Master Gardener interns were able to staff the Horticulture Helpline to gain experience in responding to citizen requests. The Extension Office continued to accept diagnostic samples with a shift from physical to virtual. Additionally, the Ask an Expert app was promoted to address citizen inquiries with 315 questions received in 2020 compared to 11 in 2019.

Extension increased its use of social media to reach over 25,000 citizens. Facebook was used most often, a YouTube channel was also created. There, many 4-H programs, including contests as well as horticulture programs, were shared. The Extension Office collaborated on Tropical Treasures; a four-week video series focuses on tropical fruit that was available on our YouTube Channel. The series included crafts, propagation education, and recipe videos.

The Agriculture and Home Extension budget for FY2021-22 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 100.0 percent of the salary and benefit costs of two Extension Agent positions, and 50.0 percent of the salary and benefit costs of the other two Extension Agent positions.