



Items of Interest

Dr. Gina Eubanks Inducted into NIFA Hall of Fame

Dr. Gina Eubanks, Associate Vice Chancellor and Program Leader for Nutrition and Food Sciences at Louisiana State University, has been inducted into the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Hall of Fame. This award recognizes individuals whose exceptional contributions to NIFA's mission at the local, regional, national, or international level have made a positive impact on the lives of citizens.



Eubanks previously served as the Vice Chancellor for Extension at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center. While at the SU Ag Center, Eubanks was an active member and chairperson of the Association of Extension Administrators. She also was elected as an administrative representative to the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities Board on Agricultural Assembly. Eubanks attended Southern University and Oklahoma State University and later held teaching roles at Alcorn State University, Oklahoma State University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and State University.

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Southern CRD Webinar: Community Food Systems: A Space for Ecology, Justice, and Markets

May 30, 2019 @ 1:00pm CT/2:00pm ET

In this webinar, Eric Bendfeldt, Extension Specialist for Community Viability with Virginia Cooperative Extension highlights ongoing work with Local, Regional, and Community Food Systems, which includes an emphasis on soil health, justice, and facilitating farm to table connections and conversations.

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Webinars:

Southern CRD Webinar:

Community Food Systems: A Space for Ecology, Justice, and Markets

May 30th @ 1pm CT/2pm ET

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NC Cooperative Extension Offers Local Food Systems Training

Deadline to apply: June 15, 2019

N.C. Cooperative Extension Local Food Program's Overview of Local Food Systems Online Professional Development Training, consists of three courses:

1. Foundations in Local Food Systems Development
2. Farm to Fork: Foundations in Local Food Supply & Value Chains
3. The Bottom Line: Economic Realities and Other Opportunities in Local Food System

This program is designed for those who are just getting started in their local food systems career, or for those who have experience but want to gain a broader or more complete perspective. The training program will provide participants with an overview of local food systems research, activities based on North Carolina specific project examples, as well as resources to support translation of research into practice. After taking this training, participants will understand the structure and components of local food systems and will have developed knowledge crucial to collaborating successfully across disciplines to support local food system expansion.

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Regional Spotlight

Partnering to Prevent Opioid Misuse and Addiction in Virginia, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia families and communities are grappling with the impact of opioid and other substance misuse on newborns, children, adults, seniors, schools, health and social service systems, the workforce, and communities as a whole. On November 21, 2016, the Virginia State Health Commissioner declared the opioid addiction crisis a public health emergency. Youth themselves are not immune to the epidemic, as 13% of high school students in Virginia report having misused a prescription medication. Moreover, stakeholders consistently express that employers have difficulty recruiting a sufficient workforce because prospective employees cannot pass drug screens. This affects ability to recruit new employers to the area. Other concerns related to opioids include the burden placed on social services agencies, particularly the foster care system.

To address this concern, VCE is leveraging partnerships in communities across Virginia. In May 2018, VCE and the Virginia Tech Center for Public Health Practice and Research co-hosted a statewide "higher education conversation on opioid misuse and addiction." The 71 participants included representatives from 23 colleges and universities across Virginia along with community stakeholders from health departments, community services boards and law enforcement. Themes from these discussions included:

- Identify ways to reduce stigma
- Involve communities in identifying/testing new evidence-based research
- The community, including those in recovery, businesses, faith-based organizations, providers, peer support, etc. has a crucial role in helping to solve the epidemic
- Identify ways to translate research to practice quickly and efficiently
- Keep social determinants of health/trauma informed care in mind (e.g. adverse childhood experiences)
- Increase collaboration across and within disciplines and institutions
- More treatment options are needed; focus on long term, chronic care that is holistic

Recognizing that Virginia Cooperative Extension is well-positioned to address some of these needs through its network of local offices throughout the state, there is a focus on bringing evidence-based information to local communities and strong existing relationships in rural communities. Extension agents are well-known and credible sources of information in their communities. Leveraging relationships and convening partners, a core team of VCE faculty and staff are currently leading several projects related to opioid misuse and addiction.

These include:

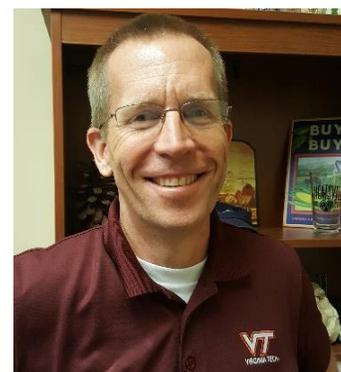
- Two USDA-funded projects related to prevention of opioid misuse and addiction (Rural Health and Safety Education project in two rural Southwest Virginia counties, and Children, Youth and Families At-Risk in four additional counties)
- SAMSHA funding to foster capacity building, technical assistance and program implementation in rural communities to address opioid misuse and addiction prevention
- Assessing how rural (Pulaski County) and urban (city of Roanoke) communities are affected by the opioid epidemic across family and community systems
- A community-engaged project funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service to identify research priorities and develop action plans and interventions to address the opioid crisis in the rural Virginia city of Martinsville.
- A hospital patient education program, essentially a train the trainer model, where health care staff are trained to deliver one on one information while a patient is in care if they are identified as being high risk of opioid misuse

The work continues to expand, and as such, we continue to build capacity within communities and our Extension system to respond.

Employee Feature – Eric Bendfeldt, Virginia Tech

Eric Bendfeldt works as a Specialist for Community Viability with Virginia Cooperative Extension and the School for Plant and Environmental Sciences. He completed a B.A. in history from James Madison University in 1987. Eric and his wife, Mary, worked with Mennonite Central Committee in Tanzania, East Africa for seven years. Eric received a B.S. degree in Crops and Soil Environmental Sciences in 1997 and an M.S. in Forestry in 1999 from Virginia Tech. His programmatic focus areas are community-focused and regional food systems, soil health, food security, and farm-to-table and value chain connections.

Eric is considered a go-to expert in food systems. Over a decade ago, Eric responded to emerging needs around community food systems and led the charge to form the Virginia Food Systems Council. Soon after, requests emerged for a state-level plan and once again, Eric rose to the occasion. He convened a team of community and university partners and garnered resources for public input and engagement in the process. Under Eric's direction, Healthy Farms and Healthy Food for the Common Wealth and Common Good: A Strategic Plan for Strengthening Virginia's Food System and Economic Future was published in 2011. This seminal work in Virginia has been the catalyst for a plethora of related efforts, including a study on Food Deserts in Virginia commissioned by Virginia General Assembly. Eric also continues to coordinate and host a large Farm to Table conference, with the 8th annual event scheduled for December 2019. Eric and Mary have three grown children, Freeman, Hannah, and Amanda; and Feebe, their two-year-old Springer Poodle. Eric enjoys reading, biking hiking, golf and time with family and friends.



Grant Connections

Recreation Economy for Rural Communities Program

Deadline to apply: May 31, 2019

EPA's Office of Community Revitalization, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Northern Border Regional Commission are offering planning assistance through the new Recreation Economy for Rural Communities program. Partner communities will work with a planning team to foster environmentally friendly community development and Main Street revitalization through the sustainable use of forests or other natural resources.

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Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program

Deadline to apply: June 3, 2019

The two types of grants are entitled (1) Community Food Projects (CFP) and (2) Planning Projects (PP). The primary goals of the CFP are to: Meet the food needs of low-income individuals through food distribution, community outreach to assist in participation in Federally assisted nutrition programs, or improving access to food as part of a comprehensive service; Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for the food needs of the communities; Promote comprehensive responses to local food access, farm, and nutrition issues; and Meet specific state, local or neighborhood food and agricultural needs including needs relating to: Equipment necessary for the efficient operation of a project; Planning for long-term solutions; or The creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

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USDA Agricultural Workforce Training Grants Program

Letter of Intent due: June 11, 2019

USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture invites applications from community, junior, and technical colleges, workforce development organizations, and partners to apply for up to \$500,000 for curriculum development for workforce training in the agricultural sciences. Applications must target one of six priority areas: plant health and production and plant products; animal health and production and animal products; food safety, nutrition, and health; bioenergy, natural resources, and environment; agriculture systems and technology; and agriculture economics and rural communities.

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Conferences, Workshops, Trainings

Northeast Agricultural and Resource Economics Association Annual Meeting: Portsmouth, NH

June 9-11, 2019

The Northeast Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA) will hold its 2019 Annual Meeting from Sunday, June 9, 2019 through Tuesday, June 11, 2019, with a post-conference workshop to be held June 11-12, 2019. This year's conference will feature selected paper sessions, a poster session, discussion symposia, and workshop sessions.

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National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals 2019 Conference: Asheville, NC

June 9-12, 2019

Homegrown to New Heights in Asheville, North Carolina June 9 - 12, 2019. The National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals invites you to participate in a few days of learning, networking, great food, inspiring and thought-provoking sessions in the beautiful city of Asheville. The conference hotel is Renaissance Asheville, in the heart of downtown and the excitement of this eclectic community.

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Community Development Society 50th Anniversary Conference: Columbia, MO

July 14-17, 2019

The 50th anniversary of the international Community Development Society (CDS) is a golden opportunity to express and explore the extreme relevance and responsibility of the community development field and CDS to be proactive change agents, to help create conditions for and help foster shared and welcoming communities, and to cultivate a future in which community is the pathway through rising chaos and insularity across our world.

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2019 National Direct Agricultural Marketing Summit: Rosemont, IL

October 7-9, 2019

The Summit provides a unique networking opportunity for direct agricultural market practitioners to form new partnerships and learn new business strategies that can improve the performance of their farms and businesses. The Summit features resources to assist market managers, direct marketing farmers, and agribusinesses as well as practitioners or technical assistance providers in understanding and enhancing direct marketing efforts. The Summit focus on "Entrepreneurship Opportunities Across the Food Value Chain" focusing on direct to consumer markets, local food systems and value added technical assistance.

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Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Conference: Astoria, OR

October 8-10, 2019

Join colleagues including University Extension and Sea Grant professionals, other faculty, agency, students and industry representatives working on tourism and outdoor recreation. Present and learn about research, case studies, sustainability and funding modes, educational program materials etc. Open to all interested individuals. Mobile presentations will visit coastal community projects and environments.

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