

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.

ANNUAL FISCAL PLAN SUMMARY

Description	FY24 Actual	FY25 Original	FY26 Proposed	Change 25-26
Personnel	\$ 163,204	\$ 167,750	\$ 175,795	4.8%
Operation	152,814	310,076	311,152	0.3%
Capital	-	-	-	0.0%
Total	<u>\$ 316,018</u>	<u>\$ 477,826</u>	<u>\$ 486,947</u>	<u>1.9%</u>

Personnel Complement*

2

2

2

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

Agriculture and Home Extension

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY24</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>FY26</u>	<u>Change 25-26</u>
Workload Measures				
Citizens Assisted	104,200	114,706	115,000	294
Programs Presented	391	196	295	99
4-H Youth Enrolled	6,500	11,998	12,000	2
Samples Analyzed and Identified	600	549	565	16
Efficiency Measures				
Volunteer Hours Supporting Programs	12,900	12,994	13,500	94

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Agriculture and Home Extension proposed budget of \$486,947 for FY26 increased by \$9,121, or 1.9%, from the FY25 approved budget. This increase includes a \$8,045 increase, or 4.8%, to the personnel component for rising salary, healthcare, and employee benefit costs and a \$1,076 increase, or 0.3%, to the operating budget to reflect rising Virginia Tech agent and intern salaries.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Extension Office is known as a cooperative program because of its partnership between local, state and federal government. In early 2024, the Extension Office experienced a period of transition as three extension agents moved to other positions within the state. Two of those positions were filled in late May 2024. Despite this, the office still served over 104,000 citizens, and volunteers contributed almost 13,000 hours. Through the use of technology and dedicated volunteers, citizens continued to participate in a variety of program opportunities.

The 4-H Youth Development reached over 39,000 citizens and continued to see an increase through social media contacts. During the 2023-2024 4-H year, 11,998 students were reached through various school enrichment programs including “AGventure Days”, embryology, foods and nutrition, workplace readiness, and financial education. Through the collaborative “L.E.G. Up” grant, students at Northstar Academy gained valuable life skills including cooking, career exploration, wellness strategies, and home skills, and received practical items to take home. 4-H Camp brought leadership and outdoor education opportunities to 158 campers, building essential life skills and lasting memories. Additionally, Extension Office staff received the National Partnership in Agriculture Literacy Award, sponsored by the National Agriculture in the Classroom organization.

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) programming continued to focus on overall wellness. Programming increased during this time including participating in several outreach opportunities with St. Luke and Coventry Apartments. Collaborations with Henrico Public Schools Libraries and the Henrico Education Foundation offered programs on nutrition and financial wellness. Through multiple partnerships with county agencies and community groups programs reached a variety of citizens, including youth and adults. In 2024 FCS programming reached 178 young adults in school and community settings with its “Real Money Real World” simulation. Participants were actively engaged as they took on the role of adults in the workforce to make sound financial decisions.

Agriculture and Home Extension

Several key programs have been maintained through the Agriculture and Natural Resources agent transition. The “Bug Bizarre!” was held for the sixth time and welcomed over 500 members of the Henrico community to learn more about insects. In addition, the “SMART Scapes” program has remained a popular resource for homeowners that wish to address issues in their landscape. The Horticulture Help Line and Diagnostic lab also saw regular use from the community with 175 samples processed for clients within the county.

Extension Master Gardener volunteers help citizens of Henrico County learn more about native plants and the important species they support. Through their efforts at the Short Pump Pollinator Garden located within Short Pump Park they display over 50 species within a 2,000 square foot garden, demonstrating how even a small space can have a big impact for native species. Established in 2017, the garden’s new interpretive signage added in 2024 helps the community connect with the garden’s message year-round.

The Agriculture and Home Extension proposed budget for FY26 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.



**Department Operating Budget
Henrico County, Virginia
FY2025-26
AGRICULTURE & HOME EXTENSION**

Account Description		Prior Year Actual	Approved Budget	Proposed Budget	Dollar Inc/Dec	Percent Inc/Dec
50100	Full-Time Salaries and Wages - Regular	99,440	104,212	109,840	5,628	5.4%
50104	Temporary Salaries and Wages - Regular	14,603	16,235	16,235	0	0.0%
50109	Vacancy Savings	0	-3,775	-3,993	-218	-5.8%
50110	FICA	8,505	9,214	9,709	495	5.4%
50111	Retirement VRS	16,437	18,237	19,222	985	5.4%
50112	Hospital/Medical Plans	22,887	22,168	23,244	1,076	4.9%
50113	Group Insurance - Life (VRS)	1,332	1,459	1,538	79	5.4%
50209	Other Professional Services	141,856	296,221	297,297	1,076	0.4%
50220	Lease/Rent Of Equipment	2,719	3,000	3,000	0	0.0%
50240	Printing and Binding	2,057	500	500	0	0.0%
50310	Automotive/Motor Pool	39	200	200	0	0.0%
50410	Postal Services	360	0	0	0	0.0%
50412	Telecommunications	3,240	3,500	3,500	0	0.0%
50430	Mileage	0	150	150	0	0.0%
50431	Education and Training	826	1,800	1,800	0	0.0%
50450	Dues And Association Memberships	615	600	600	0	0.0%
50500	Office Supplies	1,102	3,000	3,000	0	0.0%
50501	Food Supplies and Food Service Supplies	0	150	150	0	0.0%
50502	Agricultural Supplies	0	300	300	0	0.0%
50512	Books and Subscriptions	0	50	50	0	0.0%
50513	Educational and Recreational Supplies	0	605	605	0	0.0%
Total Department		316,018	477,826	486,947	9,121	1.9%