



“ *When Thomas Jefferson was president of the United States, almost 90% of the population was involved in agriculture. Everyone drank raw milk and the issues regarding health freedom and food sovereignty we face today were practically unheard of back in the days before the industrial revolution.*

*As we look at the issues of food security in the 21st century, where less than 1% of our population controls what the rest of us eat, it is good to reflect back on our founding fathers’ desire to produce their own food.* ”

- *Health Impact News, 2011*

<http://healthimpactnews.com/2011/a-nation-planted-by-founding-fathers-green-thumbs/>

**VICFA**

Virginia Independent Consumers and Farmers Association  
 President, Lois Smith  
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 Website: [www.VICFA.org](http://www.VICFA.org)  
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/19160169000/>

Editorial Review: Suzi Croes  
 Proof Reader: Susan Verbeeck and Shannon Sankar  
 Contributing Columnists: Lois Smith and Suzi Croes  
 Designer: Shannon Sankar  
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**Share this newsletter with a friend - encourage others to join VICFA!**

Annual membership is \$25.00.

Please make check payable to VICFA and send to PO Box 6838, Charlottesville, VA 22906.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM (please print clearly) \* Required fields**

\*Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*First Name \_\_\_\_\_ \*Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company /Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

\*Address \_\_\_\_\_ \*City \_\_\_\_\_ \*State \_\_\_\_\_

\*Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Congressional District \_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_ Producers, please list the products that you sell: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Do you want to be listed in the Membership Directory?**  Yes  No

*Note. Your directory listing will contain all of the above information unless you indicate otherwise below.*

**How did you hear about VICFA?/Comments:**



**VICFA Voice**

**Our Mission:** *To promote and preserve unregulated direct farmer-to-consumer trade that fosters availability of locally grown or home-produced food products*

November 2013

**In This Issue:**

**Accomplishments From The On-Farm Activity Work Group**  
*Lois Smith provides an account of the educational opportunities from the On-Farm Activity Work Group*

**Non-GMO Month**  
*October sees more than 500 cities lift their voices against GMOs*

**Fracking In The Northern Neck**  
*Excerpt from Free Lance Star*

**VICFA Notes: November Meeting & Announcements**

**The VICFA Board**  
*VICFA Board Member contact information*

**Your Legislators**  
*Website address for finding your legislators*

**Working for Change, the On-Farm Activity Work Group**

*By Lois Smith*

Being asked to participate in the On-Farm Activity Work Group as VICFA’s president was an educational honor! I wanted others that participated in the work group to realize at VICFA is for all farmers: that we are trying to effect change at a state level to help all farmers make a living. I want them to know that we support consumer choices as to what food they would like to purchase. We support people’s choice to eat at McDonalds or to participate at a fundraising dinner thrown by the farmer in his hayfield. If you do not have the freedom to make a bad choice, you do not have the freedom to make a good choice. We just cannot figure out why the bureaucrats prefer to tell us that McDonalds is a better and safer choice.

One of the topics that concern the bureaucrats is the notion of a farmer being allowed to sell what he produces from his farm. It concerned them that the farmer might sell the same volume as Wal-Mart. I think that it is sickly amusing that they would rather have Wal-Mart buy the farm and put a black top on it to sell items from China rather than have a farmer and his community make the money! What a sellout of our people in the disguise of keeping us safe!

Bureaucrats found the thought of too much traffic alarming, fearing that it would hurt the character of our counties. Does anyone, but the people who are afraid of losing their control, buy this malarkey? It was really surprising that on the same day we were having our On-Farm Activity Work Group meeting, China purchased Smithfield. Hum... Every day farmers are being squeezed off their farms due to zoning restrictions. Did you realize that there are some rural counties that do not even have agricultural zoning? Did you know that there are counties trying to cut off farmers’ land tax credits? Meanwhile, as more people are moving out to the country for their piece of the American dream they are actually bringing the Wal-Marts (people have to eat). God forbid that a farmer sells his neighbor real farm fresh food. My question to this madness is-- why isn’t the government helping farmers by getting off their farms? Help them be better than Wal-Mart. What if people could walk down the chicken’s nesting box aisle and collect their own eggs and thank the hen for laying it.

Are you crazy? Why, yes I am. I am just crazy enough to rethink the “happy meals” to really be happy meals! Farmers need to be able to sell directly to the consumer without government intrusion! Consumers need to be able to go to the farm and if the government feels they need to earn their keep they could help make that happen and protect them from corporate advantage .

Getting back to the On-Farm Activity Work Group, I feel that we are being heard down at the General Assembly. After the meeting, Delegate Pogge offered to help us meet with Farm Bureau and Agribusiness to talk about coming up with legislation that could help farmers. What a monumental moment! Christine Solem and I, of VICFA, Martha Boneta, organizer of the pitchfork rebellion and the Boneta Bill, Pete Kennedy of Farmer to Consumer legal Defense, Trey Davis of Farm Bureau, Katie Frazier of Agribusiness Council, and Delegate Pogge were sitting together - agreeing on legislation! Farm Bureau will be pushing this bill that will give farmers the same rights as wineries have! We will be sending out Action Alerts on this information as we get closer to lobby season and as always, your voice counts.

*continued on page 2*

This year, VICFA is especially encouraged because there will be quite a number of bills introduced to help farmers from all over the state! VICFA's own personal bill is going to be introduced and will give the buyer the right to buy food of their choice in Virginia. People want local foods. And we are being taken serious. The numbers are growing, so keep up the good work of informing people about the safety of direct farmer to consumer local foods! ■

### Non-GMO Month

By Suzi Croes



October was Non-GMO Month and was celebrated in over 500 cities worldwide. Thousands of protesters calling for the permanent boycott of Genetically Modified Organisms and "other harmful agrochemicals" gathered in Berlin, Strasbourg, Chicago, London, Sydney and Mumbai, to name a few. The numbers of citizens outraged over the GMO issue continues to increase as people become more aware.

GMOs are labeled or banned in 64 other countries, but here in the U.S. GMO ingredients are present in approximately 75 percent of conventional processed foods. Getting to know your farmer and grocer for that matter is as important as ever in procuring Non-GMO foods. It's not enough anymore to simply avoid pesticides since they are engineered right into the genes of the food!

GMOs are required to undergo few experiments, few endpoints are examined and the tests conducted on the safety of GMO's have been done by the very companies that manufacture the biotech foods.

Independent studies get downplayed and misreported by the media. The Rat Study led by French molecular biologist Gilles-Eric Seralini is just such a study. A 4.1 million dollar study took a longer closer look at the effects on NK603 maize (corn) on rats than Monsanto's previous 90 day study, found unfavorably large tumors possibly resulting from the GMO maize. In efforts to disclaim the results the breed of rat was to blame.

Here in Virginia a disturbing article published in the November 1, 2013 edition of the Winchester Daily Monitor reported that a group of Italian Scientists in an effort to categorize much of the published research on GMOs chose to "summarize" 1,783 studies on the safety and environmental impacts of GM foods. Now the definition of summarize is "to condense to the main points", After the Reader's Digest condensed books style of scientific cataloging the team concluded that "They couldn't find a single credible example demonstrating that GM foods pose any harm to humans or animals." Wonder who got to decide what the main points were in 1,783 studies? Based on the scientists statements the article went on to quote Lindsay Reames, assistant director of governmental relations for the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation as saying, "Anti-GMO proponents claim that genetically modified crops have not been tested or that the research has been done only by the companies that produce the seeds. But this review of scientific research proves that GMO crops have been analyzed numerous times and ways," WOW! That's really digging in deep to take a close look at the data on the safety. Buyers...beware of the governmental safety net! ■

#### More information:

- <http://www.winchester.daily-monitor.com/farm-bureau-says-gmo-foods-are-safe/16177/>
- <http://www.nature.com/news/rat-study-sparks-gm-furore-1.11471>



### Fracking In The Northern Neck

"A Texas company has been leasing mineral rights on land east of Fredericksburg--some 80,000 acres so far in the Taylorsville Basin. The basin, which runs under

the Northern Neck and northward into Maryland, is the repository of as much as 1 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Shore Exploration and Production Corp. of Dallas would like to begin operations there in 18 months."

See article in the *Free Lance Star* for more information:

<http://www.fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2013/112013/11012013/801336>

### ————— Matt Lohr, to resign as VDACS Commissioner in early December

Beginning December 16, Mr. Lohr will be starting a new page at Farm Credit of the Virginias as director of the Farm Credit Knowledge Center. According to Mr. Lohr the Knowledge Center's mission is to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and resources for the betterment of all farmers through customer-focused programs that increase and advance the knowledge base of the agricultural community.



“YOU KNOW, FARMING LOOKS MIGHTY EASY WHEN YOUR PLOW IS A PENCIL, AND YOU'RE A THOUSAND MILES FROM THE CORN FIELD.”

~ DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER, SEPT. 25, 1956

# VICFA



VIRGINIA INDEPENDENT CONSUMERS

## VICFA Notes

### November Meeting

Our next meeting will be held in **Beaverdam, VA on November 10, 2013.**

**\*\* Standard Time Hours \*\***

We will share in a potluck lunch at 12:00 pm, followed by our general business meeting from 12:00 - 3:00 pm. VICFA membership meetings are open to the public. Please bring a dish and a big helping of enthusiasm to share. Broaden our reach - invite a friend or neighbor to join you.

**Sunday, November 10, 2013 at 12:00 pm**

*Hosted by Susan Verbeeck*

17145 Katy Lane

Beaverdam, VA, 23015

**(804) 347-8827**

**DIRECTIONS: From the Richmond Area:** 1. Start at I-95 N toward I-64 W/Charlottesville/Washington. (go 22.58 miles). Take the VA-30 W exit, EXIT 98, toward Doswell/US-1. (go 0.22 miles) Turn left onto VA-30 W/Kings Dominion Blvd. (go 0.76 miles). Turn right onto US-1. (go 1.02 miles). Turn left onto Doswell Rd. (go 3.43 miles). Turn slight right onto Old Ridge Rd. (go 4.24 miles) Turn left onto Katy Ln. (go 0.87 miles). 17145 KATY LN is on the right.

**From Charlottesville Area:** Merge onto I-64 E via the ramp on the left toward Richmond. (go 34.78 miles). Take the US-522 exit, EXIT 159, toward Gum Spring/Goochland. (go 0.3 miles). Turn left onto US-522/Cross County Rd. (go 2.54 miles). Turn sharp right onto Owens Creek Rd. (go 1.63 miles). Turn left onto Holly Grove Dr. (go 4.66 miles). Holly Grove Dr becomes Taylors Creek Rd. (go 2.28 miles). Turn left onto Clazemont Rd. (go 3.58 miles). Turn right onto US-33/Mountain Rd. Stay straight to go onto VA-54/W Patrick Henry Rd. (go 3.72 miles). Turn left onto Scotchtown Rd. (go 0.21 miles) Turn slight left onto Coatesville Rd. (go 3.8 miles). Turn right onto Old Ridge Rd. (go 2.4 miles) Turn right onto Katy Ln. (go 0.87 miles).

### VICFA Board Members

President: **Lois Smith** - (804) 366-6051

Vice President: **Richard Altice** - (434) 2234204

Secretary: **Christine Solem** - (434) 973-6505

Treasurer: **Jay Smith** - (804) 366-6051

Board Member: **Suzi Croes** - (540) 582-3219

Board Member: **Ed Ely** - (434) 277-8866

Board Member: **Susan Verbeeck** - (804) 347-8827

### Keep Up With Important Bills & Information:

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<http://lis.virginia.gov/>



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