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We'd love to feature your article in an upcoming newsletter.

Contact [suzicroes@gmail.com](mailto:suzicroes@gmail.com)

## VICFA

Virginia Independent Consumers and Farmers Association

President, Lois Smith

Vice President, Richard Altice

Treasurer, Jay Smith

Secretary, Christine Solem

Members At Large: Joe Turner, Wayne Bolton, Suzi Croes,

Ed Ely, Susan Verbeeck

Website: [www.VICFA.org](http://www.VICFA.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/19160169000/>

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by mail to Editor, VICFA, PO Box 6838, Charlottesville VA 22906.

## 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.

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

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

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

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How did you hear about VICFA?/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo by: Kelly J Mihalcoe  
at Pitchfork Rally, York Co.  
May, 2014



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

June 2014

## In This Issue:

### Grow Oysters, Not Government

VICFA President, Lois Smith, shares her perspective from the Pitchfork Rally held last month in protest of York County's proposed rezoning of oyster farmer, Anthony Bavuso's property

### New VICFA Display

See our new VICFA display board to be presented at VICFA events across the state

### VICFA Notes: Announcements

Annual Meeting: June 8  
Agenda and information

### Pitchfork Rally in Photos

Photographer Kelly J Mihalcoe shares her photos from VICFA's participation in the May Pitchfork Rally in York County

## Grow Oysters, Not Government

By: Lois Smith

Over a hundred people showed up to protest York County's proposed zoning changes. The protest took place ironically on the very ground in which America won its freedom. York County does not have agricultural zoning but they "allow" agriculture in Rural Conservation zoning (RC). Anthony Bavuso lives in the (RC) area where he grows and harvests oysters that he sells locally to restaurants and neighbors. Anthony's oyster activity includes going to the river, collecting his pots, bagging them and placing the oysters in the back of his truck and taking them to his customers.

Anthony's neighbors think that he should not be allowed to bring the oysters to his pier, but take them to one of the commercial piers down the river. He would have pay the commercial pier owners which would drive up his costs. And why should he, since he already owns property on the river zoned for agriculture. Did I mention that there was confusion as to whether aquaculture was considered agriculture? It seems that it was if you farmed (raised) seafood in a bucket then that was considered agriculture, but not if you farmed them from the natural waters. So, to clear things up Anthony went to the General Assembly and passed HB 1089 bill sponsored by Delegate Morris that clarified the debate as to whether harvesting oysters was agriculture. I believe it is agriculture since it is food and he is farming 24 acres of oysters in the river. The great thing about oysters is that they really help clean up the waterways unlike most commercial agriculture. Since the passing of the Boneta Bill SB 51 this year, counties cannot require a farmer to have a special permit to farm. York County went to town to change their zoning laws. York County's new proposed zoning changes would "grandfather" in some residents, but somehow not Anthony.



Photo by: Julie Reichle

### Update on Anthony Bavuso, Oyster farmer:

Anthony is currently pursuing a lawsuit against his York County's decision to require a special-use permit to continue farming oysters on his property.

The case revolves around the question of whether York County's zoning ordinance, which requires those who engage in agricultural or aquaculture activities to obtain a special-use permit, is in violation of the Right to Farm Act in the Code of Virginia. The Complaint was filed on Jan. 31, 2014.

Being President of VICFA, I was asked to speak at the Protest with several VICFA members in attendance. I also spoke at the commission meeting in support of Anthony. Anthony is not breaking the law, his property allows him to do what he is doing. Why are they not "grandfathering" him in? What about the

continued on page 2

consumers that are purchasing his oysters? Do they not have a say in it? The zoning board wants you to have more land before you can farm. I am sure Anthony would love to afford more land, but how will he ever be able to when you take away his right to make a living with his oyster company? These are simple common sense questions.

The neighbors that spoke against Anthony felt that their property rights were being violated. I can only guess that they think, "Property rights" means everything you see and hear from your property you get to control. Where does it stop? Can your neighbors take you to court because they thought you dressed funny and it disturbed them when they had company over? I know that sounds bizarre, but that is where it is going, I have heard it from too many farmers. How hypocritical that the zoning that was supposed to protect Anthony's rights are trying to change to protect the character of the neighborhood. People! This is the language I have heard used from Albermerle to Fauquier to York County when justifying taking away your property rights! They think they should have a right to look on your property and let you know what they want it to look like because after all, it is their eyeballs. His neighbor said he was fine with Anthony farming oysters until it became a income generating business. I thought small businesses were a good thing. I found the arguments against Anthony very shallow.

I wish I could pinpoint the time where our values got so twisted around. Our society wants everything so visually appealing over mentally appealing AKA commonsense. We use round up ready on our lawns even though it is a poison. People move out to the country and do not want to see the neighbor's livestock even though it is still on their neighbor's land. It is mooing too much...there is a smell... there is a noise, etc. Let's use an air-fresher even though it is a poison. We want food we just do not want to know where or how we get it. I could go on and on, but you get the picture. Life is up side down and if we do not stand together it is going to just get worst. Thank you for standing together with VICFA! ■

### New VICFA Display Board



Thanks belongs to Susan Verbeeck, along with her family and Richard Altice for an Amazing job redesigning and making VICFA's new display board. The old display board was very road weary and in need of an update. The new board couples a bright new look with very concise thought provoking information on the farming issues, and will be a great tool for educating others.

## VICFA Notes

### Don't miss our Annual Meeting

The June Meeting will be held in Swoope, VA on June 8, 2014



Please plan to join us on Sunday, June 8, for our Annual Meeting at Polyface Farms in Swoope, VA. The meeting will begin at 1 PM and will be hosted by Joel and Teresa Salatin.



We are excited to announce that Delegate Ben Cline will be joining us at our annual meeting!

Please help us to maximize this opportunity by showing our strength in numbers!

*Also, please bring a covered dish to share.*

**Meeting: Sunday, June 8, 2014 at 1:00 PM**

#### DIRECTIONS from I-81

*(GPS Systems do not work near us and there is limited cell phone coverage)*

- From I-81 take Exit 220 (Puts you on 262)
- Take Middlebrook Ave/252 Exit
- Follow this to Stop sign.
- Turn LEFT onto Middlebrook Road (252)
- Turn RIGHT onto Cedar Green Road (693)
- Turn LEFT onto Hebron Road. (703)
- Go about a mile, you will see a brick church on your right.
- Turn LEFT onto Edson Creek Road (708)
- Go ½ mile
- Turn RIGHT onto Glebe School Road (708)(this appears to be a Y, stay right)
- Stay right at 2nd Y. Go about 4 miles or so total
- Turn RIGHT onto Trimble Mill Road
- Go ¼ mile to first left
- Turn LEFT onto Shuey Road (713)(this will be gravel)
- Follow for exactly 1 mile
- Turn RIGHT at Polyface Farm sign (Pure Meadows Lane)

#### June Meeting Agenda

- Fracking in Virginia—should we take a stand on it? How is it affecting farmers?
- VICFA's GMO Statement—changing the statement to clarify our position.
- Constitutional Amendment—giving consumers a legislative voice for food freedom

### Photos from Pitchfork Rally in York County, VA

All Photos by: Kelly J Mihalcoe, Photographer (used with permission)

