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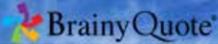
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1/4 page <i>(size - 4"x5.25")</i>	\$25	\$23.75	\$22.50
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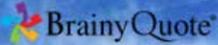
A government big enough to give you everything you want is a government big enough to take from you everything you have.

Gerald R. Ford



Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves are its only safe depositories.

Thomas Jefferson



VICFA

Virginia Independent Consumers and Farmers Association
 President, Lois Smith
 Vice President, Richard Altice
 Treasurer, Jay Smith
 Secretary, Christine Solem
 Members At Large: Richard Bean, Wayne Bolton, Suzi Croes, Ed Ely, Susan Verbeeck
 Website: www.VICFA.org
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/19160169000/>

Editorial Review: Suzi Croes
 Proof Reader: Susan Verbeeck and Shannon Sankar
 Contributing Columnists: Christine Solem 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: _____



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

March 2014

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SB 51 VICTORY!

By Suzi Croes

Hallelujah! Senate Bill 51, sponsored by Senator Stuart passed the Senate and House and back through with the amended changes like a ping pong ball. Then on Thursday, March 5, 2014 Governor Terry McAuliffe signed his approval for the bill. The bill will go into effect July 1, 2014 bestowing similar rights to farmers as the Virginia wineries have enjoyed; furthering farm to consumer trade in Virginia, and fostering a stronger local economy.

The Boneta Bill was spurred on by Fauquier County zoning harassment of Vicfa member Martha Boneta's Paris Barns farm. County officials levied fines for multiple permitting violations for activities on her farm including pumpkin carvings, and a child's birthday party. It has been a long battle for Martha as she has rallied forces for change, pulling in groups that were previously on opposite sides of the farming legislation table to work together. According to Martha:

"SB51 would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of so many and the exceptional work of VICFA that paved the path for this good legislation that is now law. SB51 has the potential to provide untold opportunities for the farming community and is good for all Virginians including consumers that value local farm fresh choices."

"I am over joyed and grateful to have had the opportunity to work with such great Virginians on reaching this compromise legislation. Today we are celebrating this enormous victory!"

Link to Full text of SB 51: <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?141+ful+SB51ER>

Full text: VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- CHAPTER: An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 15.2-2288.6, relating to local regulation of activities at agricultural operations. [S 51] - Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 15.2-2288.6 as follows: § 15.2-2288.6. Agricultural operations; local regulation of certain activities.

A. No locality shall regulate the carrying out of any of the following activities at an agricultural operation, as defined in § 3.2-300, unless there is a substantial impact on the health, safety, or general welfare of the public:

1. Agritourism activities as defined in § 3.2-6400;

2. The sale of agricultural or silvicultural products, or the sale of agricultural-related or silvicultural-related items incidental to the agricultural operation;

3. The preparation, processing, or sale of food products in compliance with subdivisions A 3, 4, and 5 of § 3.2-5130 or related state laws and regulations; or

4. Other activities or events that are usual and customary at Virginia agricultural operations.

Any local restriction placed on an activity listed in this subsection shall be reasonable and shall take into account the economic impact of the restriction on the agricultural operation and the agricultural nature of the activity.

B. No locality shall require a special exception, administrative permit not required by state law, or special use permit for any activity listed in subsection A on property that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification unless there is a substantial impact on the health, safety, or general welfare of the public.

C. Except regarding the sound generated by outdoor amplified music, no local ordinance regulating the sound generated by any activity listed in subsection A shall be more restrictive than the general noise ordinance of the locality. In permitting outdoor amplified music at an agricultural operation, the locality shall consider the effect on adjoining property owners and nearby residents.

D. The provisions of this section shall not affect any entity licensed in accordance with Chapter 2 (§ 4.1-200 et seq.) of Title 4.1. Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the provisions of Chapter 3 (§ 3.2-300 et seq.) of Title 3.2, to alter the provisions of § 15.2-2288.3, or to restrict the authority of any locality under Title 58.1.

2. That the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall continue the On-Farm Activities Working Group.

Another Year, Another VA General Assembly. Is It Getting Better?

By Christine Solem

I have been lobbying the Virginia General Assembly since 1992. That is the year a simple little Bill was introduced to allow farmers the right to sell on the farm up to 100 gallons of raw goats' milk per month to persons who wanted it for their own consumption. Numerous warning labels were to be placed on the bottles and TB and Brucellosis testing were required.

George Allen, a Republican, was the original sponsor of the Bill, but he decided to run for Congress and Mitch Van Yahres, a democrat, graciously took over. The Virginia State Dairy Goat Association was pushing the Bill and we worked hard, garnering 13,000 signatures on a Petition supporting the legislation, from every county in Virginia except for Lee—couldn't quite reach that far. And, surprise, Farm Bureau supported the Bill, at least in the House. Then all hell broke loose and the Dairy Lobby and Agribusiness put a gag on them in

the Senate. The following year Farm Bureau passed a Resolution not to support any raw milk legislation.

In 1992 the raw goats' milk Bill passed the House overwhelmingly and then got carried over to 1993 by the Senate Ag Committee and consequently killed by that same committee in that year. Put in again in 1994 by Peter Way, a Republican, and with the support of the Governor (who by the way was then George Allen), the Bill again Passed the House but lost by one vote in the Senate Ag Committee.

This little bill drew a lot of attention and much controversy. As one House member observed, "We spent 30 minutes in debate on the House floor on raw goats' milk and only 5 minutes on a Bill authorizing the expenditure of several million dollars!" The debate was saturated with truths and hyperbolic scare tactics from the opposition, not to mention intentionally instigated confusion. The Bill was constantly changing so that small as it was (1 page), most people didn't really now what the latest amended version even said. Nancy Pelosi, where were you when we needed you?

Confusion is the name of the game at the Virginia General Assembly. Fast forward to 2014. The 2014 Boneta Bill had 2 Sponsors—Senator Stuart in the Senate and Delegate Orrock in the House. Although there are advantages to having a sponsor in both the Senate and the House, confusion is naturally generated because of procedural nightmares, especially when the Bills get amended (they both were). Also, the multitude of sub-committees, Committees, etc., you have to attend just to keep with the legislation is enough to drive one over the edge, especially when you have to dodge around what the Winter of 2014 threw at everyone. Does anyone at this stage know what the Bill actually says? Are there unintended consequences? Interesting.

As far as Bernadette's Food Freedom Act introduced by Delegate Rob Bell, the confusion, the untruths and the scare tactics were all there. I sat in on the House Ag Sub-Committee's hearing of the Bill, and with mouth hanging open listened to Farm Bureau and Agribusiness go on and on about the dangers of raw milk. Hello! The Bill had nothing to do with raw milk. It had to do, among other things, with food made from milk. Baked goods, fudge, etc., are made from milk.

Okay so are cheese, yogurt, etc., but no one said a word about cheese or yogurt. But of course you would be out of line if (not being able to stand it any longer) you suddenly stood up and demanded a clarification in no uncertain terms. The Delegates don't like that sort of thing and would have you thrown out. The Capital Police however would like it as it would give them something exiting to do.

So, is it getting worse down there? Yes, I think it is, mainly because it hasn't gotten any better and it needs to. Also computers make everything move so much faster—"The better to confuse you with my Dear." But then maybe I'm just getting old and bored with it all, or perhaps my well known distaste for computers is showing through.

This much I do know. If someone is not down there fighting for our rights, then those rights will be lost. Observe the language of the Code of Virginia as it appeared in 1940.

1211s Exemptions—The provisions of this act shall not be construed to prohibit the sale of milk directly to consumers by any person keeping three milch cows or less, but it shall be a violation of this act for any such person, if not possessing as unrevoked permit, as herein above provided, to sell any milk or to deliver the same to sale, to any public establishment for resale or for use in preparation of food. Any milk sold to consumers must be produced under reasonably sanitary conditions that will safeguard such consumers with a clean and safe milk. (Id.;1940, p. 446)

***Prior to the amendment of 1940 this section this section read as follows; "The provisions of this act shall not apply to any person keeping 2 milch cows or less. In this case any milk sold to the public must be produced under reasonably sanitary conditions that will safeguard the public with a clean and safe milk."**

Notice the spelling of the word milch. I love it. Observe too in the smaller print that the law used to exempt 2 milch cows. The current law had been upped to 3. Someone was down there in 1940 fighting for their rights.

In 1950 the law in Virginia was redone from one big volume to the multitudes of volumes we have now. The 3 cow exemption was merely dropped. I don't know exactly what happened as I was only 6 years old, but you can bet that there was probably no one down there watching out for their rights, otherwise we might still have an exemption in Virginia for farmers to sell small amounts of raw milk directly to consumers. ■

Update on SB48 Eastern VA Groundwater Management Area: Prohibition on Oil & Gas Drilling

Senate Bill 48 was tabled in the House Commerce and Labor Committee by voice vote, I guess the legislators didn't want to go on record for failing to consider a bill that could stall the drilling for oil and gas in the Eastern Virginia area. The bill would have required the Department of Mining, Minerals and Energy (DMME) to go through Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) review before drilling permits could be issued. The DEQ would look at the impacts of drilling on a multitude of areas including the aquifers that run under the region. Large tracts of farm land are already being leased for their minerals rights and Virginians living in Eastern Virginia are now faced with no safeguards for the possible environmental impact of shale drilling or "fracking".

Link for the full text of the bill:
<http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?141+ful+SB48ES1>

VICFA Notes

Don't miss our April Meeting

The April Meeting will be held in
Monroe VA on April 13, 2014.

**** DAYLIGHT SAVINGS HOURS ARE NOW IN EFFECT ****

VICFA would like to extend our appreciation to our host for this month's meeting. Thank you to Curt & Laura Knaup!

We will share in a potluck lunch at 1:00 pm, followed by our general business meeting from 2:00 - 4:00 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, April 13 2014 at 1:00 PM

hosted by Curt & Laura Knaup

506 Peters Hollow Rd • Monroe, VA

DIRECTIONS:

From Charlottesville Area: Take I-64 W toward Staunton. Take exit #118 onto Monacan Trail Rd (US-29 S). Go for approximately 45 miles. Take ramp onto Richmond Hwy toward Amherst/Lexington. Take 3rd exit from roundabout onto S Main St (US-29-BR). Turn right onto Kenmore Rd. After about 5 miles, Continue on Matohe Rd. After about 2 miles, Bear right onto Peters Hollow Rd. Your destination on Peters Hollow Rd is on the right.

From the Northern Virginia Area: Take James Madison Hwy (US-15 S, US-29 S). Continue for about 56 miles. Take ramp onto US-250-BYP W, US-29 S, US-29-BYP S toward I-64/Lynchburg/Staunton/Richmond. After about 49 miles, Take ramp onto Richmond Hwy (US-60) toward Amherst/Lexington. Take 3rd exit from roundabout onto S Main St (US-29-BR). Turn right onto Kenmore Rd. After about 5 miles, Continue on Matohe Rd. After about 2 miles, Bear right onto Peters Hollow Rd. Your destination on Peters Hollow Rd is on the right.



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