

VICFA Board Members

Questions or comments about VICFA?
We want to hear from you!
Get in contact with a board member!

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Write For VICFA!

We'd love to feature your article in an upcoming newsletter.
Contact suzicroes@gmail.com

VICFA

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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

August 2015

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Atlantic Coast Pipeline
VICFA member, Ann Buteau, shares an update on this important, highly controversial topic for all Virginia residents - particularly those throughout the Shenandoah Valley

Distillery Freedom
Regulations within the local distillery industries throughout Virginia

Update on H.R. 1599
Virginia Representatives are voting for the DARK act, threatening state freedom for GMO labeling. Learn why it's important to contact your Senators!

VICFA at the 2015 Food Freedom Fest
We're hosting a booth at this year's event, happening August 14 - 16

VICFA Notes: Announcements
- VICFA Lifetime Membership Opportunity
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Atlantic Coast Pipeline Update

By Ann Buteau

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline is a proposed 556 mile, 42 inch diameter high pressure natural gas transmission line which would run from south of Clarksburg, WV and carry fracked gas through VA, to NC, with a lateral branch to Chesapeake.

It is ostensibly to power new gas powered electricity generation plants, and encourage new industrial development. We were told initially that the gas would not be for export and that 92% of it was already spoken for domestically in the South Atlantic Region (Staunton News Leader 11/4/14). But then, at the 2015 Annual Shareholders Meeting, Tom Farrell CEO of Dominion Resources, told shareholders that there were export contracts for gas with India? How does this benefit Virginians sufficiently to take their land by eminent domain, which is what would have to happen as there is serious resistance to this project especially in Nelson, Augusta, Buckingham, & Highland counties.

The Statute in the Code of Va Section 56-49.01 enables natural gas companies to gain access to survey landowners property without permission. A group of Nelson landowners challenged the constitutionality of this statute in Federal court last year (with no judgement) and now it is going to be reheard in Federal Court in Charlottesville on August 4 at 11am. There is a similar case in Buckingham Courthouse on August 5 at 12.30pm. Respectful spectators welcome!

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) publicly stated that it would not be asking Dominion Resources for Site Specific Erosion and Sedimentation Control, and Stormwater Management Plans for the construction of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, as they did not have the manpower to monitor for compliance!?? Maybe staff should be increased so we can hope for clear streams and rivers if this project should transpire.

On 7/14/15 Nelson County Supervisors passed a resolution requesting that DEQ will require project-specific Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management Plans for the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline project that meet all Virginia standards, and that these plans will be made available to the public prior to project approval and construction; and

1. Localities will have the right to review plans, conduct inspections and enforce their local Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinances; and

2. Prior to project approval and construction, Dominion Transmission, Inc. officials and third-party inspectors will be required to meet with local officials to discuss the implementation of the project-specific Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management Plans and adaptive management plans.

Hopefully other counties will follow the lead of Nelson County Supervisors.

New Report Questions Dominion Claims: The claimed economic benefits of the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) are overstated say Synapse Energy Economics of Cambridge, MA. who recently

released a report stating that the jobs forecast may be overstated, costs to communities were not included, energy savings claims may be inflated, and there was no “audit-able” information, meaning that underlying data/assumptions were missing sufficient supporting data. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline Benefits Review was commissioned by the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) and on July 8, 2015, was released jointly with the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, a coalition of 43 organizations in Virginia and West Virginia that are concerned about the impact of the ACP on affected communities and citizens. SELC is a member of the coalition. ■

Distillery Freedom Would Be...Neat

By: Alyssa and Josiah Tillett

The past few years have seen tremendous growth in the local beer and wine industries in Virginia. The regulatory atmosphere has largely given way to the growing consumer demand for these local craft products. This progress in itself is a positive gain for local food freedom and opportunity. Expanded demand for Virginia-grown grains and grapes is an economic boon.

Unfortunately, this progress has not applied so much to Virginia’s local craft distilleries. The production and distribution of distilled spirits is tightly regulated by Virginia ABC, and has been since 1934. The over 350 government-run ABC stores in Virginia are an example of the state doing what private industry could handle better. Local craft distilleries are forced to act as a sub-entity of the ABC, with massive percentages of their gross receipts going to government coffers, at a staggering cost to the economic potential of the industry. Similar to wineries and breweries, the tourism aspect of these local distilleries is centered around tastings and tours at their facilities. Unlike the wine and beer situation, however, sales of liquor tastings are currently limited by state code to 2 ounces in a 24-hour period. In regards to bulk distribution, ABC continues its micromanaging modus operandi of picking winners and losers, by tightly regulating which stores (within its government monopoly of distribution) carry a given local product. This has the effect of capping the growth of some distilleries, by limiting consumer access to supply.

The problems here are obvious. Whether or not we all personally value and consume a given product or service, I hope we can all agree that people should have the right to produce food AND food products without facing a constant uphill battle with an overbearing regulatory burden which makes it difficult for a local business to exist and survive, much less prosper and succeed.

The cause of agricultural and food freedom is broad in its scope, but that diversity within the cause can be its strength if we all recognize that when we fight for the rights of our neighbor, we continue to build the foundation for the security of our own liberties in the process. So while we advocate for legalization of raw milk, or industrial hemp, or whatever your pet cause may be – and worthy causes they all are – remember that the end goal is liberty and opportunity for our local entrepreneurial efforts, and please do what you can to assist VICFA and concerned farmers and consumers across the Commonwealth to achieve our shared goals. ■

— Virginia Votes “YES” to DARK

EDITOR’S NOTE: Last week, Virginia Representatives voted yes to Representative Mike Pompeo’s, H.R. 1599. The bill had 105 co-sponsors including Virginia Representatives Bob Goodlatte and Robert Hurt. Representatives Rob Wittman (R-01), Scott Rigell (R-02), J. Randy Forbes (R-04), Robert Hurt (R-05), Bob Goodlatte (R-06), Dave Brat (R-07), Morgan Griffith (R-09), and Barbara Comstock (R-10), all voted yes to the bill. Thank you to Representatives Bobby Scott (D-03), Don Beyer (D-08) and Gerald E. Connolly (D-11) for voting NO!

The DARK Act would overturn state laws that require the labeling of genetically engineered or GMO foods, such as Vermont’s law that is supposed to go into effect next year. In their place, it would effectively enshrine FDA’s failed policy of voluntary labeling – under which not a single company has labeled GMO foods in the last 14 years.

The DARK Act would also allow food companies to continue to make misleading “natural” claims for foods that contain GMO ingredients, while creating a federal bureaucracy that ethical food companies who wish to label their products as non-GMO will have to pay to comply with. The bill even pre-empts state and local regulation of the planting of GMO crops (although the exact scope of the pre-emption is unclear).

This is very bad news. The only ray of light is that the bill must also pass the Senate before becoming law, and we expect that the debates will be much closer there.

TAKE ACTION #1: Hold Your Representative Accountable
Make sure your Representative knows that you were watching and that you will remember how they voted.

If your Representative voted yes on H.R. 1599, call and tell him or her that you are very upset that they sided with large corporations instead of their constituents (politely, please).

If your Representative voted no on H.R. 1599 – standing up for individuals’ and states’ rights – call and say thank you.

TAKE ACTION #2: Contact your Senators
The Senators need to hear from you! Start by calling or emailing both of your Senators and urging them to oppose H.R. 1599 or any bill that pre-empts state laws for labeling GMOs.

You can multiply your impact by also meeting them in person. The Senate will recess on **August 10**, and the Senators will return to their home states for a month. They will have multiple public events, and you can find out about the ones nearest you by calling their district office.

Here’s a sample script for a call:
My name is _____, I am a constituent, and I am calling to urge Senator _____ to vote NO on H.R. 1599 or any other bill that blocks mandatory GMO labels by the states. It is very important to my family and me to know whether our food is genetically engineered. Based on the last 14 years of inaction, it’s clear that the large food manufacturers will not do so voluntarily. And H.R. 1599 goes further, pre-empting other state and local regulations, and creating a new federal bureaucracy for non-GMO labeling. This goes way too far! I urge my Senator to vote no on H.R. 1599 and any bill like it.

A phone call is more effective than an email. If you do send an email, please be sure to add a couple of personal sentences in the beginning so that it’s not just a form message.

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Sample Email:

Subject: Oppose HR 1599 and protect states’ and individuals’ rights

As a constituent, I urge you to reject H.R. 1599, Rep. Pompeo’s so-called “Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act,” which would prohibit states from requiring the labeling of genetically engineered foods, or GMOs.

We have a right to know what is in our food so that we can make educated decisions about the food we eat. This bill does not meet the concerns of Americans about what’s in their food. What it really does is deny states the right to pass meaningful mandatory GMO food labeling bills.

The free market can only work when consumers have the information they need to make informed choices among different products. It is absurd to claim that voluntary labeling addresses the issue. In the 14 years that FDA has allowed companies to voluntarily label genetically engineered foods, not one single company has done so. Without mandatory labeling, consumers are effectively being defrauded.

The bill goes even further by forbidding state and local governments from any sort of oversight of GMO crops, even when the federal government has declined or failed to regulate them. Yet these local controls have been adopted in areas based on overwhelming public support, and in order to protect very valuable non-GMO agricultural industries. It is undemocratic and bad for our economy to overturn these local laws.

Please stand up for states’ and consumers’ rights and vote NO on H.R. 1599. ■

Sources:

- <http://farmandranchfreedom.org/house-passes-bill-to-ban-gmo-labeling/>
- <http://farmandranchfreedom.org/hr-1599-fact-sheet/>

VICFA Notes



Don’t miss our August Meeting

Our next monthly meeting will be held just north of Charlottesville, VA on August 9, 2015

VICFA would like to extend our appreciation to our host for this month’s meeting. Thank you to Curt and 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, August 9, 2015 at 1:00 PM

hosted by Chuck and Robin Cole

2135 Browns Gap Tpk. • Charlottesville, VA 22901

(434) 218-0137

DIRECTIONS:

From the Amherst Area: Head toward E Court St on S Main St (US-29-BR). Take 1st exit from roundabout onto Richmond Hwy. Take left ramp onto N Amherst Hwy (US-29 N) toward Charlottesville. Go for about 23 miles. Turn left onto River Rd (VA-6). After 5.8 miles, Turn right onto Rockfish Valley Hwy (VA-151, VA-6). After 6.2 miles, Continue on Critzer Shop Rd (VA-151). After 2.5 miles, Turn right onto Rockfish Gap Tpke (US-250). After 9 miles, Turn left onto Three Notch’d Rd (VA-240). After 0.7 mile, Turn right onto Old Three Notched Rd. After 0.4 mile, Turn sharp left onto Browns Gap Tpke. After 0.7 mile, Turn left to stay on Browns Gap Tpke. After 1.3 mile, Turn right. Your destination is on the right: 2135 Browns Gap Tpke, Charlottesville, VA 22901.

From the Richmond Area: Take I-95 North toward I-64 W/Airport/ Charlottesville/ Washington. After 3.6 mi Take exit #79/I-64 W/I-195 S/Powhite Pkwy/Charlottesville onto I-64 W. Go for 72.5 miles. Take exit #114/VA-637/ Ivy. After 0.2 mile, Turn right onto Dick Woods Rd. After 1.6 mile, Turn sharp right to stay on Dick Woods Rd. After 0.3 mile, Turn left onto Ivy Rd (US-250). After 3.3 mile, Turn right onto Browns Gap Tpke. After 1.2 mile, Turn left to stay on Browns Gap Tpke. After 1.3 mile, Turn right. Your destination is on the right: 2135 Browns Gap Tpke, Charlottesville, VA 22901.

VICFA Special Announcement

VICFA is now accepting a lifetime membership fee in the amount of **\$375.00**. This was approved by the Board at it’s March 8th, 2015 meeting. Take advantage of this great deal now: live to be old and save!

Food Freedom Fest 2015

...We’ll be there!



Please join VICFA as we host a booth during this year’s Food Freedom Fest, brought to us by the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund®.

The 2nd annual Food Freedom Fest takes place **Friday-Sunday, August 14-16** in the scenic and historic Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

Food Freedom Fest is an educational and entertaining gathering for anyone who celebrates and appreciates freedom of choice in food and farming.

It’s a weekend full of food, fun, and fellowship around the small farm and food freedom table!

VICFA will be present, sharing information on our mission and we’d love to see you there!

Registration and more information is available on the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund® website: <http://www.farmtoconsumer.org/fff/> ■