

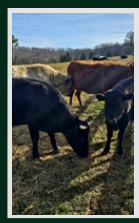
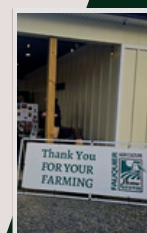
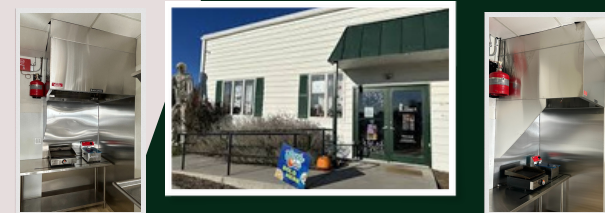


# FAUQUIER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

## MARCH 2024 UPDATE

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Abattoir Feasibility Study. March 19th.** AgDev and the abattoir feasibility study project team met with consultants New Venture Advisors (NVA) to review study progress. Currently the study is in Phase 2 and on schedule for site analysis and facility modeling. Phase 2 should conclude in May. The final report is due in September 2024.
- Agricultural Advisory Committee. March 14th.** The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) members are official in their role. The AAC's first meeting is scheduled for 6PM on April 18 in the Warren Green Building.
- Agricultural Production Mini-Grants.** The Economic Development Authority approved eight Fauquier farmers for the 2024 Agriculture Production Mini-grants. Collectively, the grants total \$25,000. All grant funds will be applied toward purchases of equipment that improves their farm operation.
- Erin's Elderberries' Range Hood. March 19th.** Contractors completed the installation of a range hood at 4257 Aiken Drive, Vint Hill. Fauquier County funded the range hood to support local, value-added food producers add a protein-cooking capability in commercial kitchen operated by Erin Mann, owner of Erin's Elderberries.
- Chamber of Commerce Agriculture is Business After 5 Event. March 14th.** AgDev sponsored Fauquier's first, Agriculture is Business Chamber of Commerce event hosted by 4Js Brewery. Alec Burnett, President/CEO of The Fauquier Chamber indicated that the event drew more participants than any Chamber After 5 Event in the past two years. Multiple local farm businesses and supporting government agencies set up tables or booths to engage with the public.
- Be Farm Wise Education Program Marketing at Farmers Markets. March 20th.** AgDev's Marketing and Promotion Coordinator, hosted Heather Wheeler, VDAC's Manager of Domestic Marketing and Promotions. Together with AgDev staff, Heather presented a workshop to help Fauquier's producers improve their farmers' market promotion skills and techniques.

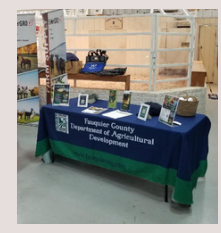




# Update Continued

## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Easter Local-Food Promotion Campaign. March 29th.** AgDev staff developed and published seasonal promotions of local food producers and products using social media and printed new outlets.
- **Blue Ridge Cattlemen's Association (BRCA) Annual Meeting.** AgDev staff participated in the 2024 BRCA Annual Dinner as a displaying sponsor. The event drew over 200 people, AgDev was able to speak with many, explaining the department's new role and organization.
- **Agricultural Education Map. February 22nd.** AgDev staff created a folded brochure to help residents map a learning course relating to lifelong, Ag education. On one side is a map for youth, on the other is a chart for adults. A QR code connects readers to each highlighted education provider.
- **Virginia Agricultural Expo FY26. 1 March.** AgDev obtained commitment by Virginia Agricultural Expo to bring the event to Fauquier County in the summer of 2026. The Virginia Agricultural Expo is the largest agricultural field day in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The expo is sponsored by Virginia Grain Producers and Virginia Soybean Association in cooperation with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. Location and date details are pending.



## Department Purpose

**The Department of Agricultural Development increases the economic viability of farming in Fauquier by promoting the County's agricultural industries, providing marketing assistance to producers, farmers markets and agribusinesses and developing marketing opportunities for Fauquier's farm products and services. In partnership with other government offices and private organizations, the department supports sustainable agricultural production through farmland preservation, natural resources conservation, grant obtainment, information dissemination, and workshop presentations. Agricultural Development's staff advises the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors and producers on matters affecting the agricultural economy by compiling and publishing farm statistics and production data.**

## Department Goals

- Increase the economic viability of Fauquier's farm operations and agricultural businesses.**
- Advise the Board of Supervisors on matters relating to the agricultural economy.**
- Educate citizens about the importance of agriculture in Fauquier County.**
- Provide promotion and marketing assistance to Fauquier producers and the Fauquier County farmers market managers.**
- Connect Fauquier's producers and agricultural businesses with new customers.**
- Create opportunities for the sale of Fauquier farm products beyond Fauquier County.**
- Assist Fauquier County's farmers markets to increase the number of Fauquier-based vendors.**
- Assist producers and farm business comply with County zoning requirements.**
- Maintain or increase the number of Fauquier farm operations and agricultural businesses.**
- Assist other government offices and private organizations with farmland preservation, natural resources conservation, and lifelong agricultural learning initiatives.**
- Serve as County Staff liaison to the Fauquier Educational Farm.**