

The Role of Innovation in the Chesapeake Bay - Agriculture's Perspective



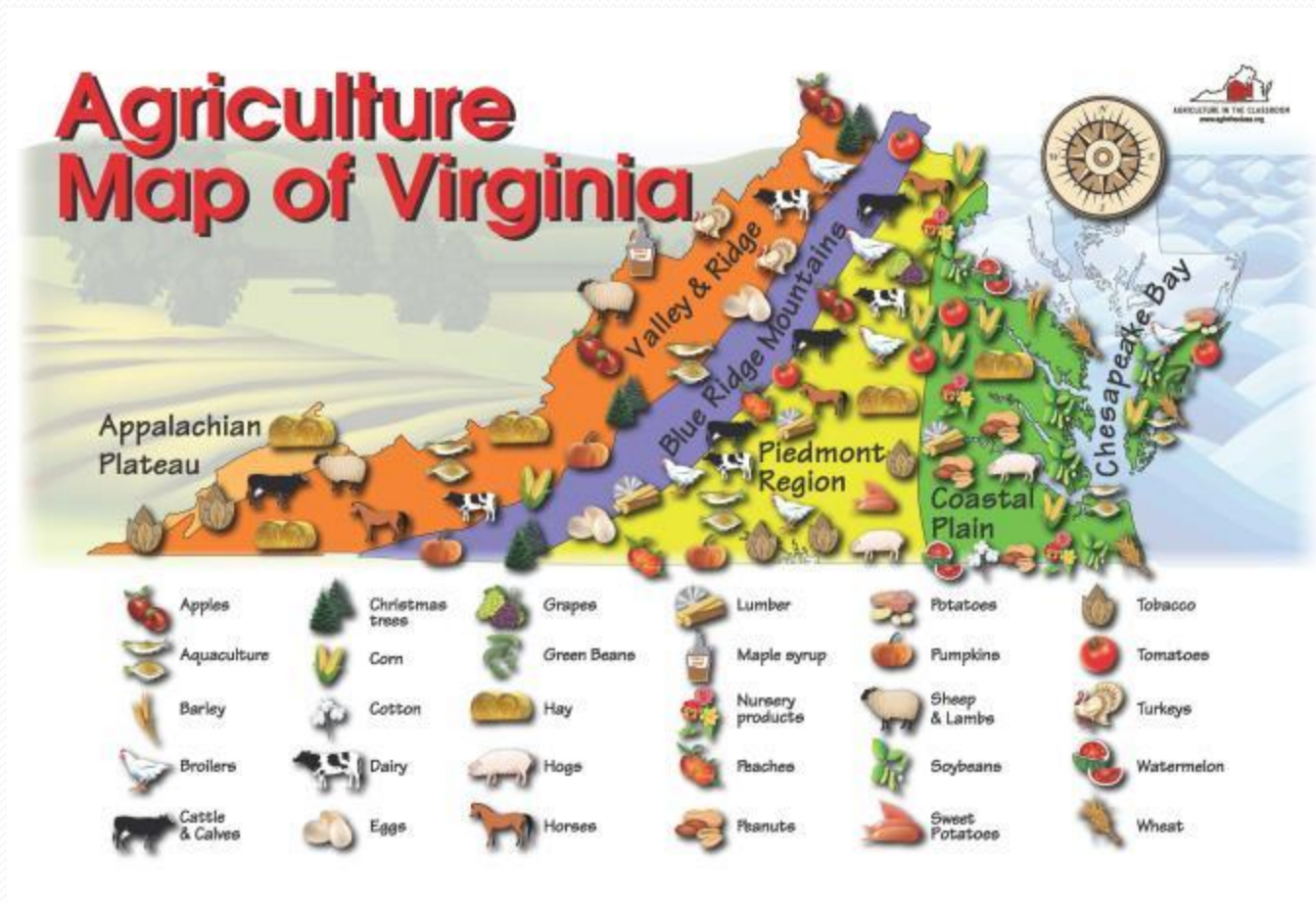
Katie K. Frazier, President
Virginia Agribusiness Council
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- What has worked
- Why is it working



- What Is Needed
- Innovation and Possibilities

Ag In the Chesapeake



Source: Virginia Ag In The Classroom

What Has Worked?

- Nutrient Management Planning (NMP),
 - Spoon feeding nutrient applications
 - Phosphorus cut-offs
 - Animal feeding operations and biosolids permits require NMPs
 - Cost-share practices requiring NMPs
- Resource Management Plans – Safe Harbor
 - 2011 Legislation- requested by Agriculture
 - Resource Management Plans = Whole Farm Conservation Plans
 - Nutrient Management Plans
 - Meeting “T” - Conservation Tillage
 - Cover Crops
 - Stream fencing/buffers
 - Safe Harbor for Implementing RMPs = Compliance with TMDLs
 - Protects individual farm data



What Has Worked?

- Voluntary Agricultural Best Management Practice Adoption & Changes In Basic Farm Management
 - Cover crops – new species, new planting methods, harvestable
 - Conservation Tillage- from some till to no till to never till
 - Stream fencing– livestock out of streams; alternative water sources- 100% Cost-Share (To date, almost 2000 projects)
 - Technical Assistance Key!

Why Is it Working?

- Best Management Practices make sense for farm productivity
 - Example: Save Money & Time as you implement NMP
 - Less fertilizer, more efficient applications, better yield results
- Leading by Example
 - Researchers, Soil & Water Districts demonstrate successes
- Financial Assistance Provided to Make the Funds Work
 - Costly practices like stream fencing rely heavily on Cost-Share
- Providing a path forward for farms to prove themselves
 - Proving progress from Ag Community
 - Protects their individual data but shows progress towards goals

What Is Needed?

- Technical Assistance, Research and Funding
 - Soil and Water Districts, NRCS are Key Partners
 - Boots on the Ground, Trusted Partners
 - Researchers and Land Grants
 - New Practices, Verification of Water Quality Impacts
 - Proven success & implementation strategies
 - Stable Funding Is Critical
 - FY18 “need” for BMP Funding is well over \$100 million
 - Stream-fencing backlog between \$25-\$33 million

What Is Needed?

- “Every Apple from the Tree”
 - High levels of implementation of BMPs to meet goals
 - Small & beginning farmers
 - Small AFO outreach program- focus on dairies
 - Average age of farmer in Va- 59.5
 - Limited Resource Producers- New Market
 - Technical Assistance Needs- different producers
 - Message delivery may be different

Innovations & Possibilities

- Manpower- More to do, less people to do it
 - Partnership with Extension
 - Funding & staffing is key
 - Outreach to limited resource & new farmers
 - Retired Corp of Technical Assistance Providers
 - Why Needed? Turnover & competition for trained employees
 - Training & trust in community
 - Potential barrier- state conflict of interest policies

Innovations & Possibilities

- Technologies to Embrace
 - Precision Agriculture
 - “Layering” BMPs
 - Alternative energy options
- Farmers gather/verify data
 - Embracing new technology
 - Data gathering opportunities



Innovations & Possibilities

- Market Driving Actions
 - Markets drive future farm decisions
 - Consumer trends & marketing
 - Nutrient Trading



Source: NC Small Fruits IPM Blog

What Can You Do?

- Commit to Cost-Share & Technical Assistance
- Seek innovative ways to partner with new producers
- Provide farmers resources to prove conservation on own & work in marketplace
- Continue to carry message of success- and push to build upon it

Questions?

Katie K. Frazier

President

Virginia Agribusiness Council

katie@va-agribusiness.org

(804) 643-3555 or (804) 314-7618 (cell)