



Winter 2023



Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

BATH-HIGHLAND NEWS



FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE TOPICS

Becky Gartner, Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Science—rebes13@vt.edu—540 564 3080

FAD DIETS

Welcome to 2023. Many of us make plans to get healthy in the New Year. This is a great plan but you need to make sure you are not falling for scams or unhealthy weight loss programs.

THERE ARE NO MIRACLE PILLS OR FOODS THAT BURN FAT. No super foods will alter your genetic code or burn fat while you sleep or watch TV. Some ingredients in supplements and herbal products can be dangerous and even deadly for some people.

Take a look at the pitfalls of these fad diets.

Rapid Weight Loss – Losing weight quickly will cause you to lose muscle, bone and water. You are also more likely to regain the pounds.

Quantities and Limitations – Stay away from foods that limit most foods and promote unlimited quantities of specific foods such as grapefruit and cabbage soup. It’s boring to eat the same foods all the time and it gets monotonous over time. Avoid any diet that eliminates or severely restricts entire food groups or macronutrients such as carbohydrates.

Specific Food Combinations – There’s no evidence that combining certain foods or eating foods at specific times of the day will help with weight loss. Also, there is no evidence that the wrong combinations of foods will cause them to turn to fat when eaten or produce toxins in your intestine.

Rigid Menus - Limiting food choices or following rigid meal plans can be overwhelming. Ask yourself “Can I eat this way for the rest of my life?” If you answer no, the plan is not for you.

No Need to Exercise – Regular physical activity is essential for good health. Find activities that you enjoy and aim for 150 minutes a week of activity.

What works best for weight loss? Eat a variety of foods, watch your portion sizes and get moving. Make a few small changes and you will see big results in the near future.

Source: *The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’*

Cooking for Crowds



Are you a member of an organization that prepares and serves food to the public or your members? Is selling food a fundraising event for your organization? Your members should attend the Cooking for Crowds Workshop.

Cooking for Crowds is a workshop that will teach food safety and how your organization can ensure the safe handling of food. Learn how to handle food during cooking and serving and the food safety standards for temporary events.

Date: January 31

Time: 6 to 8 pm

Location: Rockingham County Fairgrounds (Horticulture Bldg.)

Cost: 20 per organization

Registration deadline: January 24

Call the Rockingham Extension Office to register (540)564-3080

ADDITIONAL PAGES INCLUDE

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES TOPICS

4-H UPDATES & EVENTS

EXTENSION STAFF SERVING YOU



4-H HAPPENINGS

Ben Hindman, Extension Agent, 4-H Bath/Highland—benjaminh@vt.edu—540 839 7261



Recent Highlights

- Students at HHS as well as students at MES and VES schools learned about drone technology and the many ways they are being used across various industries as a part of 4-H in-school programming. All students took a turn flying a drone as a part of this experience!



- 6th grade students at MES explored food webs in an owl pellet dissection activity. It was so much fun to watch the kids' curiosity take over after their initial disgust!



- 4th and 5th grade students at Highland, Millboro, and Valley schools continue to explore circuitry through "Magic of Electricity" program as a part of their monthly in-school 4-H programs. Each month students add to their overall knowledge of electricity through hands-on learning activities; following 4-H's "learn by doing" model of instruction.



- Local community clubs met in both counties through the fall. Pictured: Bath Homeschool 4-H Club made paper origami and Busy Bee 4-H Club assembled Operation Christmas Child boxes.



Looking Ahead

- In January, **applications for teen counselors and counselors-in-training** will be available for those interested in volunteering for Junior 4-H Camp held at the W.E. Skelton 4-H Center at Smith Mountain Lake this July. Teens play a vital role in ensuring that kids' have the best camp experience possible. In this role they also have the opportunity to meet and interact with teens from the neighboring counties that camp with us; building new and lasting friendships. Deadline to apply is 1/27/2023.



- The Highland 4-H Food Challenge team** is back for another competition in 2023. Teams have 45 minutes to prepare a dish with predetermined ingredients and access to a pantry. Youth are judged 25% on cooking and food prep skills and 75% on the 5-minute oral presentation on food safety, nutrition and MyPlate". This year's Northwest District 4-H Food Challenge Competition will be held on Saturday, March 11th at Augusta Expo Event Center in Fishersville.



- NEW! The Bath County 4-H Horse Club, led by Meaghan Ryder, begins in February. Youth age 9-18 can join; horse ownership not required. Participation in the club will allow opportunities in contests and events such as horse quiz bowl, hippology, horse judging, and the 4-H State Horse & Pony Show. The club will meet on third Tuesdays at Life Line Ministries in Mitchelltown. 4-Honline enrollment is required prior to first meeting.

Contact Ben Hindman if you or someone you know is interested in any 4-H opportunity.



AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Kari Sponaugle, Extension Agent, Ag & Natural Resources, Highland & Bath—Cell: 540 679 9664—Email: karis@vt.edu

Spring Calving Preparation

As a beef producer, how do you prepare for calving season? Here are some items to either add or revisit from your preparation list before the first calf arrives on your farm:

- ◆ Check forage quality. Lactating or soon-to-be lactating cows need high quality feed to maintain body condition. If hay is lacking in energy and/or protein, adding corn or a protein byproduct can help meet cows' needs.
- ◆ Check cow body condition score (BCS). Cows should be a 5 BCS, while heifers should be a 6. If scores are lower, consider an energy or protein supplement.
- ◆ Check vitamin and mineral supplementation strategies. Lactating cows are in their highest nutrient-demanding phase. In early spring, ensure cows have a source of magnesium to help prevent magnesium deficiencies or grass tetany.
- ◆ Gather supplies BEFORE calving begins. Obstetrics, tags, syringes, needles, elastrator rings, iodine solution, vaccines, vitamin E and selenium are a few things you will need. Don't let the first calf or last calf of the season suffer because you are out of essential supplies.
- ◆ Have a plan with your veterinarian for medical emergencies. Timely intervention is key to preventing calf or cow loss. Cows can calve at 3 AM, on a weekend, and you need to have a plan of action if things go south.
- ◆ Make sure your handling facility is easily accessible and in working order. More stress is added to the cow and time is wasted if its chased around the pasture to a working chute. If a veterinarian visits to pull a calf, then they will want to see the cow properly restrained before intervening.
- ◆ Implement an evening feeding plan. A study conducted at Iowa State University fed cattle at 4pm, once a day, starting two weeks prior to calving (the Konefal Method). Results concluded that 82% of calves were born between 6am and 10pm. Furthermore, a survey of 15 producers feeding between 5pm and 10pm reported 85% of calving occurred between 5am and midnight.

The largest percentage of calf crop loss occurs within 11 days of calving. The largest percentage of remaining mortality occurs within 40 days of birth. In conclusion, check forage quality and body condition scores. Initiate and keep a good communication pathway with your vet in case of emergencies and implement a consistent, evening feeding plan to help increase likelihood of daylight-born calves.

Information in this article supplied from PennState Extension's Nation Briggs, Adele Harty of SDSU Extension and VCE-Augusta County's Extension Agent John Benner.



Shout out to fellow Ag Agent Tom Stanley (VCE Rockbridge) and local sheep producer Jeff Shumate for their help during our Sheep Shearing workshop on December 16th. Our small but energetic crew had a great day learning to shear and enjoyed sharing local sheep shearing stories.



**DO NOT FORGET TO
SUBMIT YOUR AG
CENSUS SURVEY BY
FEBRUARY 6**

Call the Extension Office if you have questions

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PO Box 357
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540-839-7261

Highland County Office

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Kari Sponaugle

If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodations to participate in programs listed in this newsletter, please contact the VCE--Bath or Highland Unit Office at (540) 839-7261 or (540) 468-2225 during business hours to discuss accommodations. (TDD 800-828-1120)



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Virginia Cooperative Extension

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