



Spring 2024



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

#### It's Spring Cleaning Time!

Spring is here and it's time to do a bit of spring cleaning. As daunting as it may seem, doing a spring cleaning of your home and habits can be accomplished with a little planning.

##### Your home

- Open the windows and let some fresh air in, keep the rooms well ventilated while using cleaning products
- Declutter and simplify your space starting with one room at a time. This will be less overwhelming. Clean from top to bottom by clearing off flat surfaces and putting things away. Throw out broken and damaged items and donate or sell things you no longer need.
- Use the same process on drawers and shelves.
- Wipe down surfaces and finish by cleaning the floor.



##### Your Kitchen

- Throw out expired food in the refrigerator, freezer and pantry
- Get rid of food that doesn't align with your new nutritional goals such as junk food. Refill the shelves with healthier foods.

##### Your Mental Health

- Write down your short-term goals (finished 6 months to 1 year) and long-term goals. Prioritize these goals.
- Drop old habits and focus on your good habits. Think about how you can spend more time on your good habits each day.

Put some movement into your day. Stretch while your coffee is brewing, take a walk outside, actively play with your kids or pets.

Try a few of these tips and you will have a great Spring clean!

Source: *Extension News, Porter County Posts*

#### Upcoming Events

##### ServSafe Manager Class

May 20, 9 am – 5:30 pm,  
Rockingham County Extension Office

##### Dial Gauge Pressure Canner Testing

May 30, 10 am – 12 noon,  
Shenandoah Valley Produce Auction

May 31, 11 am - 1 pm,  
Rockbridge Farmers Coop, Lexington

June 5, 12 noon – 2 pm,  
Highland County Extension Office

#### ADDITIONAL PAGES INCLUDE

4-H UPDATES & EVENTS

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES TOPICS

EXTENSION STAFF SERVING YOU

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 at (540) 839-7261 or Highland Unit Office at (540) 468-2225 during business hours to discuss accommodations. (TDD 800-828-1120)

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# 4-H HAPPENINGS

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



## Recent Highlights

- Youth in the Bath and Highland 4-H programs had the opportunity to share their knowledge and skills in local contests held in February and March. Bath 4-H partnered with the fourth grade at Valley Elementary to hold a Science Fair Contest. In Highland, a Contest Day program was held with members participating in a variety of contests including presentations, share-the-fun, table setting, and more!



- During March, participants from both Bath and Highland 4-H helped with several service projects associated with the annual Highland County Maple Festival. These projects included assisting local Ruritan clubs with their pancake meals and donut box assembly. 4-H members also helped vendors set up at the festival by carrying inventory from vehicles to their vending tables.



- The animal science program in Highland 4-H continues to grow beyond the annual livestock show and sale through the new collaborative 4-H/FFA livestock club. Monthly club meetings have provided experiential, hands-on learning. Club members have participated in various contests and programs across the state including the state Skilla-thon competition, a youth Beef Field Day at Virginia Tech and a regional cattle working competition.



## Looking Ahead

- In June, members of Bath and Highland 4-H will have the opportunity to participate in the Virginia 4-H Congress at Virginia Tech. This annual event brings young people from across the state together for a multi-day conference in which participants engage in workshops and competitions, honing their leadership skills and expanding their knowledge.



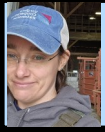
- Members of Bath and Highland 4-H will attend Junior 4-H Camp at the W.E. Skelton 4-H Center the week of July 1-5 with their 4-H peers from Alleghany, Augusta, and Rockingham counties. The week will be packed with adventure, new friendships, and hands-on learning experiences. Each day will bring opportunities for personal growth, teamwork, and unforgettable memories.



- In July, five members of Highland 4-H will travel to the Dominican Republic to participate in a service program offered through Virginia 4-H. While in the Dominican, program participants will facilitate a day camp for Dominican children as well as perform service work in the local communities.



**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

## Invasive Plant Control

The Highland County Board of Supervisors has approved an invasive plant control program for 2024 to offset Highland landowners cost of herbicides for multiflora rose, barberry, and autumn olive. Qualified landowners will receive a mailing in the coming weeks with program information and a sign-up packet. For more information, please call or email the Highland Extension Office. For questions about Multiflora rose control in Bath, contact Chris Swecker at the Mtn Soil and Water office at 540.839.4616.



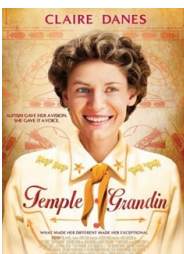
## Avian Flu: Have a [Biosecurity] Plan

High Path Avian Influenza (HPAI) is resurfacing as wild birds migrate this spring. Adding to the situation, in March, HPAI was found in dairy cattle in Texas and Kansas and is being called Bovine Influenza A Virus. The bad news—HPAI can affect mid-to-late lactation dairy cattle in close proximity to infected wild birds. The good news—less than 10% of dairy cattle were infected and symptomatic and less than 5% died from the disease. Mammals are also “dead end hosts”, meaning minimal spread after infecting an exposed cow. AND, pasteurized milk is still safe to consume.

What does this mean for Virginia and what should you do? Have a biosecurity plan, no matter the size or scope of your production! Consider the following:

- Restrict entry onto your farm by visitors and keep a written log
- Remove dead/sick animals
- Monitor animal health often
- Obtain health records and set up a ‘quarantine area’ for incoming animals
- Wash clothes and shoes that have been on another farm to alleviate cross contamination or spread.

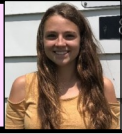
With poultry producers in our area, commercial and backyard, help keep everyone’s livestock as safe and healthy as possible by being diligent with biosecurity. More information about this developing disease will be shared on April 25<sup>th</sup> during a webinar held by VT, the VA/MD vet school, and VDACS. Email Kari for a link to the meeting.



## Ag in the Movies: The Temple Grandin Story

I’m excited to host “Ag in the Movies” this month. Join us at 6 PM on **April 18<sup>th</sup>** at the Highland Co Library or at 5:30 PM on **April 23<sup>rd</sup>** at the Bath Co Public Library to watch the 2010 drama “Temple Grandin”. Ages 9+ welcome and NO RSVP needed; light refreshments are sponsored by Farm Credit of the Virginias, Verona Branch.

Are you receiving the monthly Ag Producer email update? If not, let us know and we’ll add you to the producer email group for local, regional, and state programs available to you. Remember to **Like** and **Follow** our VCE Bath and Highland **Facebook** pages as well!



# 4-H & ANR PROGRAM EDUCATOR

Jordan Alexander, Bath & Highland—Phone: 540-839-7261—Email: jordan98@vt.edu

**Reading at Bath Co. Public Library for Agriculture Literacy Week** — Agriculture Literacy Week was March 18-22, Highland-Bath County Farm Bureau generously donated books to the local elementary schools and libraries. The 2024 Agriculture in the Classroom Book of the Year is “Logan’s Greenhouse” by JaNay Brown-Wood. I was able to read this book to youth at the Bath County Public Library and at the Spring Cloverbud Day Camp in Monterey. This book highlights cool-season fruits and vegetables, many of which are grown in Virginia! Youth were able to create their own little greenhouses to hang in a sunny window and observe seed growth over the next several days.

**Highland 4-H & FFA Livestock Club visiting Monterey Mountain Butcher Shop** – The Highland 4-H & FFA Livestock Club visited Monterey Mountain Butcher Shop in Monterey for their March meeting to learn about how livestock are processed at a custom exempt operation. Friendly and knowledgeable staff of the butcher shop gave a tour of their facility from start to finish. From humane handling to a safe and wholesome product ready for pick up, youth learned about what is often the next step for their project animals once the fair is over. The club thanks Monterey Mountain Butcher Shop for the visit and what they learned, I hope to set up another visit this summer for the youth to evaluate some of their own project animals carcasses and cuts.

### Bath County Office

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### Your Area Extension Agents and Staff include:

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Becky Gartner, Family & Consumer Sciences, Rockingham County  
Vacant, Crops & Soils, Rockingham County  
Jason Cooper, Horticulture, Rockingham County  
Tom Stanley, Farm Business Management, Rockbridge County  
Adam Downing, Forestry, Madison County  
Rebecca Owen, SNAP-Ed Agent, Rockbridge County  
Jordan Alexander, Program Educator 4-H/ANR, Bath & Highland County  
Deseray Chaplin, Administrative Fiscal Assistant, Bath County  
Kathy Beverage, Administrative Assistant, Highland County

### Virginia Cooperative Extension

#### Highland County Office

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS

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