



Extension Services

To improve Loudoun County's social, economic, and environmental sustainability by linking Loudoun County residents and Loudoun County Government employees and departments to Virginia's land-grant universities and research-based education programs relating to agriculture, animal husbandry, agronomy, horticulture, forestry, agroforestry, natural resources conservation, youth development, food safety, human nutrition, and community viability. Extension Services is mandated/supported by Virginia Code § 23.1-2610 (Duties of the Service, the Program, and the Station), which outlines the following duties and responsibilities:

- A. The Virginia Cooperative Extension Service shall provide the people of the Commonwealth with useful and practical information and knowledge on agriculture, including horticulture and silviculture, agribusiness, home economics, community resource development, 4-H Clubs, and related subjects through instruction and the dissemination of useful and practical information through demonstrations, conferences, courses, workshops, publications, meetings, mass media, and other educational programs. The necessary printing and distribution of information in connection with work of the Service shall be performed in such manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the University, Virginia State University, the Governor or his designee, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, and other participating bodies.
- B. The Program shall also conduct educational programs and disseminate useful and practical information to the people of the Commonwealth.
- C. Personnel of the Service shall inform local governing bodies of the Commonwealth whenever agricultural conditions are present in such localities that would warrant the declaration of a disaster pursuant to Section 301 of P.L. 93-288, 42 U.S.C. § 5141.
- D. Personnel of the Service shall provide farmers and local governing bodies with such assistance and information as is available concerning federal and state disaster relief programs.

Department Programs

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Provides education programs and technical information relating to production agriculture, recreational farming, agripreneurship, horse ownership, horticulture, pesticide application safety, natural resources conservation, water quality management, and soil health. This instruction helps residents (including farmers, beginner farmers, and agricultural workers) implement best management practices to increase farm sustainability, protect the environment, and assist Loudoun County Government in complying with federal and state Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) mandates.

Activities

- Animal and Crop Science Education
- Commercial Horticulture Education
- Community Horticulture Education

4-H Youth Development

Provides hands-on, experiential learning in the areas of science, healthy living, and citizenship to help Loudoun youth between the ages of 5 and 18 develop vital life skills and reduce the prevalence of youth depression.

- 4-H Youth Development



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Family and Consumer Sciences

Provides education and technical information to increase residents' understanding of where their food originates; how it is grown, purchased, and safely prepared; and its environmental, social, and economic impact. Family and consumer sciences programming also provides education to residents on nutrition and physical activity best practices to reduce the rate of chronic disease and obesity.

- Food Safety Education
- Community Nutrition Education

Financial Information

FY 2024 Adopted Information¹

	Expenditures	Revenue	LTF	FTE
Agriculture and Natural Resources	\$400,112	\$0	\$400,112	4.00
4-H Youth Development	217,011	0	217,011	1.00
Family and Consumer Sciences	124,711	0	124,711	0.00
Total²	\$741,834	\$0	\$741,834	5.00

¹ Sums may not equal due to rounding.

² 3.00 FTE are primarily state-funded positions.



Extension Services: Agriculture and Natural Resources

Animal and Crop Science Education

What We Do: This activity's focus areas include, but are not limited to, agricultural economics; aquaculture, aquaponics, and hydroponics; beginning farmer education; conventional and organic farm production methods and practices; equestrian husbandry; farm and farm equipment safety; hay, grain, and other crop production; livestock production; marketing for retail and wholesale agricultural products; pesticide application certification and safety; plant disease and pest insect identification; pond maintenance; and worker protection. The Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) extension agent tailors programs to these focus areas and provides in-person, classroom, telephonic, and online consultations with residents regarding their production and recreational agricultural information needs.

This activity serves internal customers, such as other County departments, and external customers, including County residents and businesses. The largest customer group consists of the County's residents. This activity involves developing and presenting educational programs in coordination with stakeholder organizations, including:

- Agribusiness organizations; for example, Evergro and Farm Credit.
- Agricultural organizations; for example, the Blue Ridge Cattlemen's Association.
- Commercial food, fiber, fleece producers, and commodity groups such as the Virginia Sheep Producers Association.
- Federal, state, and local agencies; for example, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District.
- Commonwealth of Virginia land-grant universities: Virginia Tech and Virginia State University (VSU).
- Loudoun County Government departments and Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS), particularly the Academies of Loudoun and educational institutions such as the Northern Virginia Community College.

Instruction presentation types can include individual and group meetings, workshops, field days, tours, and demonstrations. Information is disseminated in-person, via remote video, telephonically, electronically (email), and using mass media.

Mandate Information: This activity is mandated by the Code of Virginia § 23.1-2610. The VCE and Agricultural Experiment Station Division authorizes the establishment of the VCE and identifies its program areas. Specific mandated activities for the Loudoun agent are as follows:

- Providing the people of the Commonwealth with useful and practical information and knowledge on agriculture, including horticulture and silviculture, agribusiness, home economics, community resource development, 4-H Clubs, and related subjects through instruction and the dissemination of useful and practical information through demonstrations, conferences, courses, workshops, publications, meetings, mass media, and other educational programs. The necessary printing and distribution of information in connection with work of the Service shall be performed in such manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the University, Virginia State University, the Governor or his designee, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, and other participating bodies.
- Conducting educational programs and disseminating useful and practical information to the people of the Commonwealth.
- Informing local governing bodies of the Commonwealth whenever agricultural conditions are present in such localities that would warrant the declaration of a disaster pursuant to Section 301 of P.L. 93-288, 42 U.S.C. § 5141.
- Providing farmers and local governing bodies with such assistance and information as is available concerning federal and state disaster relief programs.
- Conducting research and investigations and establishing, publishing, and distributing results in such forms as will tend to increase the economy, efficiency, and safety of the various enterprises and activities of interest to the



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Commonwealth and the nation and promote the conservation and economic utilization of its natural and human resources.

Who Does It: The VCE ANR extension agent also serves as a Virginia Tech faculty member supporting Loudoun County. The agent's salary is cooperatively funded by the County and the VCE. Professional training is provided by the VCE, Virginia Tech, VSU, and Loudoun County Government. Administrative support is provided by the County's administration manager and marketing assistant. Additional funding is provided through grants, sponsors, and learner fees collected on a not-for-profit basis to minimize the cost of supplies, food, and guest speaker honoraria. Program instruction is primarily provided by staff, with assistance from university faculty, external professionals, and approximately 10 percent assistance from volunteers.

Why We Do It: This activity helps sustain the profitability of agricultural production in the County and enhances the quality of Loudoun's natural resources. Staff interprets and communicates the Commonwealth's land-grant university research relating to livestock and row-crop production. The resulting benefits from this translation of academic information into practical application are improved social, economic, and agricultural conditions.

The ANR agent collaborates with other extension agents and land-grant university faculty to develop and deliver agricultural education programs to improve local producer sustainability, raise resident awareness of food and food sources, promote farm safety, and assist beginning farmers getting started in agriculture. These initiatives also help foster understanding between rural and suburban residents. Although several nonprofit organizations exist to promote agriculture in Loudoun, none of those organizations have dedicated access to the scientists and research capacity of the state's land-grant universities. Moreover, none are mandated by federal and state laws. Specific topics addressed by the ANR programming include:

- Agricultural Technology
- Aquaponics
- Beef Cattle Production
- Beginning Farmer Education
- Crop Damage and Livestock Losses to Storms
- Dairy Operations (Micro)
- Equine Husbandry and Care
- Equine Nutrition
- Farm Safety
- Farm Succession and Transition
- Fencing for Livestock and Horses
- Forage Analysis
- Goat Production
- Livestock Budgets and Record Keeping
- Livestock Food and Nutrition
- Livestock Genetics
- Livestock Reproduction
- Marketing
- Natural Resources Conservation
- Parasite Management (Internal and External Parasites)
- Pasture Management
- Pesticide Application
- Poultry (Small Scale)
- Sheep Production
- Small Engine Troubleshooting/Repair
- Soil Analysis
- Soil Erosion Control
- Swine Production
- Tax Record Keeping
- Trees and Plants Toxic to Livestock and Horses

How We Do It Now – Current Service Level: In FY 2020, approximately 730 people participated in an agricultural program/consultation to increase awareness of best management and safety practices. In subsequent years, this service was degraded due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In FY 2024, with current resources, this activity will have approximately 1,000 participants in ANR programs or consultation, with more than 90 percent of participants indicating they will adopt a best management and/or safety practice following their participation. The FY 2023 number reflects the multi-month, fifteen-



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session Afghan Shepherd Program (ASP) that the ANR agent developed and coordinated for a small number of Afghan refugees relocated to Loudoun County as part of OPERATION ALLIES WELCOME. ASP was a closed-audience program, not promoted or advertised to the general public. The FY 2023 number also reflects the ANR agent's Future Farmers of America programming for youth enrolled at Academies of Loudoun or other high schools; like ASP, these are closed-audience classes and are not promoted or advertised to the general public.

How We Plan to Do It in the Future – Recommended Service Level: In the future, the Department anticipates that there will be 900 to 1,000 participants annually in an agriculture program/consultation, with the goal of getting 85 percent of participants to adopt best management and/or safety practices.

	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Projected
Increase awareness of best management and safety practices associated with agriculture and horticulture.					
Percentage of participants who indicated they will adopt a best management and/or safety practice following their participation in an ANR program/consultation	97%	96%	94%	93%	93%
Number of participants in an ANR program/consultation	447	911	960	1,000	1,000



Extension Services: Agriculture and Natural Resources

Commercial Horticulture Education

What We Do: The Commercial Horticulture Education activity's programs are developed in coordination with the VCE, but County staff adapts these programs in a sustainable way to Loudoun's varied soil, vegetation, microclimate, and commercial horticulture-production communities. The County's horticulture industry is composed mostly of winegrapes, vegetables, Christmas trees, fruits (trees and berries), ethnic crops, greenhouse, and nursery products. This activity and its programs provide consultations, technical advice, education, and recertifications – bilingual (English and Spanish), in-person, telephonic, online, and hybrid – to farmers, beginner farmers, residents interested in farming, agricultural workers, and, in small capacity, to the green industry regarding their commercial horticulture information needs related to the following:

- Beginning Farmer Education
- Berries, Cane Fruit, and Tree Fruit Production
- Bilingual Worker Protection Standards
- Christmas Trees
- Crop Damage Reports
- Cut Flowers
- Ethnic, Specialty, and Niche Crops (e.g., Green Tea, Mushrooms)
- Farm Safety
- FSMA-PSA (Food Safety Modernization Act-Produce Safety Alliance) Training and Preparation
- Good Agricultural Practice Certification Training and Preparation
- Green House/High Tunnel Production
- Harvest and Post-Harvest Methods
- Hops and Hemp
- Horticultural Economics
- Hydroponics
- Marketing: Retail and Wholesale
- Naturally Grown Guidance for Certification
- Organic Farm and Traditional Production Methods and Practices
- Pesticides: Bilingual Applicator Certification Training, Recertification, and Safety
- Pest (insects, diseases, and weeds) Identification and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Post-Harvest Best Agricultural Practices
- Soil Health
- Vegetable Production
- Water Quality: Irrigation

Loudoun's Commercial Horticulture Education programs serve multiple customers internal and external to Loudoun County Government. The largest customer group consists of the County's residents. This activity involves developing and presenting programs in coordination with stakeholder organizations, many of which are identified in the list below:

- Commercial producers.
- Agribusiness organizations; for example, Southern States and Farm Credit.
- Agricultural for-profit and nonprofit organizations; for example, the Loudoun County Farm Bureau, the Loudoun Wineries and Winegrowers Association, and the Virginia Vineyards Association (VVA).
- Federal, state, and local agencies; for example, USDA, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District, and Councils of Governments.
- Commonwealth of Virginia land-grant universities: Virginia Tech and VSU.
- Environmental groups; for example, Loudoun Environmental Stewardship Alliance and NOVA Native Plants.
- Loudoun County Government departments; for example, Loudoun County Public Library (LCPL); Department of Economic Development (DED); Office of Mapping and Geographic Information (OMAGI); Public Affairs and Communications (PAC); Parks, Recreation, and Community Services (PRCS); Department of General Services



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(DGS); and LCPS, particularly the Academies of Loudoun and educational institutions such as the Northern Virginia Community College.

Instruction presentation types include individual and group meetings, workshops, field days, tours, and demonstrations. Information is disseminated in-person, telephonically, electronically (email and WhatsApp), and using mass media.

Mandate Information: This activity is mandated by the Code of Virginia § 23.1-2610. The VCE and Agricultural Experiment Station Division authorizes the establishment of the VCE and identifies its program areas. Mandated activities relating to commercial horticulture in support of the VCE include:

- Providing the people of the Commonwealth with useful and practical information and knowledge on agriculture, including horticulture and silviculture, agribusiness, home economics, community resource development, 4-H Clubs, and related subjects through instruction and the dissemination of useful and practical information through demonstrations, conferences, courses, workshops, publications, meetings, mass media, and other educational programs. The necessary printing and distribution of information in connection with work of the Service shall be performed in such manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the University, Virginia State University, the Governor or his designee, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, and other participating bodies.
- Conducting educational programs and disseminating useful and practical information to the people of the Commonwealth.
- Informing local governing bodies of the Commonwealth whenever agricultural conditions are present in such localities that would warrant the declaration of a disaster pursuant to Section 301 of P.L. 93-288, 42 U.S.C. § 5141.
- Providing farmers and local governing bodies with such assistance and information as is available concerning federal and state disaster relief programs.
- Conducting research and investigations and establishing, publishing, and distributing results in such forms as will tend to increase the economy, efficiency, and safety of the various enterprises and activities of interest to the Commonwealth and the nation and promote the conservation and economic utilization of its natural and human resources.

Who Does It: This activity is primarily provided by the County horticulture specialist. Outside professionals and volunteers provide minimal assistance with programs. Administrative support is provided by the County's information services technician and the administrative manager. Additional funding is provided through learner fees collected on a not-for-profit basis to offset the cost of supplies, food, and guest speaker honoraria. Funding from federal or state grants may be available but is not guaranteed. The commercial horticulturist's training is provided through Loudoun County Government, the VCE, Virginia Tech, and VSU.

Why We Do It: Commercial Horticulture Education programs help sustain the profitability of commercial horticulture production in the County and enhance the quality of Loudoun's natural resources. Commercial horticulture production, like livestock and row-crop production, is vibrant in Loudoun. Working in direct support of the VCE, the County's horticulture specialist is the only County employee authorized to interpret and communicate the Commonwealth's land-grant university research relating to commercial horticulture production. The resulting benefits from this translation of academic information into practical application are improved social and economic conditions associated with horticulture.

Opportunities to expand the production of horticulture items abound, particularly in the local food industry serving Loudoun's growing suburban population and agritourism visitors. Extension Services facilitates this expansion through non-formal education programs and partnership grants with other government agencies. Although several nonprofit organizations exist to promote horticulture in Loudoun, none of those organizations have ready access to the scientists and infrastructure existing in the state's land-grant universities. Moreover, none are mandated by federal and state laws.



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How We Do It Now – Current Service Level: Currently, this program serves close to 1,500 Loudoun residents, which represents approximately 80 percent of the horticultural farm business in Loudoun County. 95 percent of participants indicate that they will adopt or modify a farm business management practice as a result of attending a program or receiving consultation. In recent years, there has been an increasing demand for programs related to pesticide and worker protection safety, tree fruit production for cider, ethnic crops, cut flower production, hemp, soil health, and beginner horticulture farmer basic education.

How We Plan to Do It in the Future – Recommended Service Level: With the support of the Department’s robust marketing system, more farmers and people interested in farming will be aware of this programming throughout the year. In the future, the Department anticipates that there will be more than 1,500 participants in the program, with at least 95 percent of participants reporting they will adopt best management practices.

	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Projected
Increase awareness of the resources required to start or sustain a farm operation.					
Percentage of participants who indicated they will adopt or modify a farm business management practice as a result of attending a program/consultation	75%	96%	99%	95%	95%
Number of participants in a farm business management program/consultation	1,204	1,424	1,389	1,500	1,600



Extension Services: Agriculture and Natural Resources

Community Horticulture Education

What We Do: This activity is a VCE initiative implemented through the support of volunteers. These volunteers receive extensive training and provide vital education to Loudoun County residents, homeowners' associations, and other communities about safe, effective, and sustainable landscape management practices, community gardens, and residential vegetable gardens. Services include help-desk support, school and community garden support, pond and lawn assessments through site visits, a demonstration garden where produce is donated to the local food pantry, speaking engagements, community events, and participation in County-led focus groups. In addition, this activity supports Loudoun County Government's efforts to address stormwater runoff, Virginia's Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan, and attainment of Chesapeake Bay TMDL mandates. The stormwater management initiatives were awarded a NACo, a VACo, and a House Resolution in FY 2022.

Mandate Information: This activity is not mandated; however, volunteers support Loudoun County Government's activities to comply with all federal or state laws and regulations governing water quality.

Who Does It: A County community engagement coordinator initiates, recruits, trains, and participates in this activity that is implemented through more than 100 volunteers. Additional funding for some program supplies comes from local nonprofit associations. Funding for projects from state grants may or may not be available.

Why We Do It: This program allows VCE Loudoun to extend the expert knowledge to the community through volunteer efforts and provide up-to-date, reliable knowledge of landscape management, so consumers may enjoy and protect the value of the natural environment around their homes and community. In addition, providing education and resources for fruit and vegetable gardening enables consumers' healthy choices and food security. Loudoun County Government enjoys the expertise and knowledge gained from the Commonwealth's land-grant universities in supporting County-led initiatives. Volunteers, who are residents, benefit from participating in training classes that provide personal knowledge relating to plants and horticulture through hands-on activities and excellent quality training materials. This knowledge is passed on to neighbors and family, cultivating a knowledgeable community.

How We Do It Now – Current Service Level: In FY 2020, the Board of Supervisors added a community engagement coordinator to enhance and further facilitate community horticulture education. In FY 2020, 15,000 Loudoun residents participated in the programs. In subsequent years, this program has directly educated approximately 42,000 Loudoun residents in environmental stewardship best management practices. In FY 2024, with current resources, the Community Horticulture Education program will remain on track to meet the FY 2020 pre-pandemic levels, educating 16,000 residents in environmental stewardship best management practices.

How We Plan to Do It in the Future – Recommended Service Level: The current service level is the recommended service level to provide responsible and sustainable community horticulture programming. In the future, this service will continue to provide environmental stewardship best management practice education to approximately 16,000 residents each fiscal year. Over time, the Department expects the demand for these services to increase and shift in terms of topic. This is attributed to the climate changing and more residents interested in healthy soil, the watershed, native plants, and food security. The volunteers are key to VCE Loudoun reaching hundreds more than the Department would otherwise.

	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Projected
Maximize programming impact using grants, organization, partnerships, volunteers, and interdepartmental collaborations.					
Value of grants or cost share contributions received from other departments or organizations	\$530	\$13,510	\$12,500	\$13,500	\$13,500
Value of volunteer community outreach initiatives	\$242,966	\$346,254	\$360,000	\$384,000	\$396,000



Extension Services: 4-H Youth Development

4-H Youth Development

What We Do: The mission of 4-H is to provide meaningful opportunities for youth and adults to work together to create sustainable community change. The 4-H Youth Development program provides hands-on, experiential learning opportunities for County youth between the ages of 5 and 18. Activities focus on helping youth develop valuable life skills such as teamwork, decision-making, responsibility, communication and public speaking, and problem solving. The USDA issued the following three specific mission mandates for 4-H programming: citizenship; healthy living; and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Each 4-H program also focuses on one of the following research-based curriculum areas: animal science; natural resources; careers and economic education; communications and expressive arts; family sciences; or plants, soils, and entomology. Programs are achieved by developing youth-adult partnerships through project-based and community clubs, in-school and after-school programs, educational workshops, and camps.

Mandate Information: The 4-H program falls under the VCE, mandated by § 23.1-2610 of the Code of Virginia.

Who Does It: The state's VCE 4-H extension agent, the County's 4-H program technician and administrative manager, and trained, adult volunteers provide this activity. In addition, grant funds, in-kind donations, and public-private partnerships support this activity.

Why We Do It: The 4-H program provides hands-on learning experiences at little to no cost for the youth of Loudoun County. Not only do these programs serve as an educational vehicle for youth, but they also help develop them into contributing citizens of their community. According to the Tufts University study of Positive Youth Development, 4-H members are two times more likely than other youth to make contributions to their communities and are more likely to score highly on measures of active and engaged citizenship.

How We Do It Now – Current Service Level: In FY 2022, there was an increase in the level of participation in 4-H Youth Development programs, workshops, and activities due to fewer pandemic restrictions than the few years prior. Current service level reflects 4-H programming in approximately 60 schools with approximately 17,000 4-H in-school participants. Current service level indicates approximately 200 4-H educational events and approximately 2,400 youth participants in a Loudoun 4-H educational event.

How We Plan to Do It in the Future – Recommended Service Level: Over time, as the County's youth population continues to increase, the 4-H program anticipates the need for additional STEM-related opportunities. Between now and then, the 4-H program will continue to explore the needs of the youth of Loudoun County in order to better provide a well-rounded program for youth with varying interests and backgrounds.

	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Projected
Develop and present 4-H Youth Development programs, activities, and workshops that promote life skill development.					
Number of 4-H in-school participants	91	17,074	27,051	17,200	17,300
Number of schools provided with 4-H programming	2	60	66	61	62
Number of 4-H camping programs	2	4	4	4	4
Number of youth participants in a 4-H camping program	81	264	363	270	275
Number of 4-H Clubs in Loudoun County	16	16	15	16	16
Number of youth enrolled in a Loudoun 4-H Club	325	316	366	320	325
Number of 4-H educational events	194	207	197	209	211
Number of youth participants in a Loudoun 4-H educational event	2,510	2,388	2,288	2,400	2,500



Extension Services: Family and Consumer Sciences

Food Safety Education

What We Do: This activity provides food safety programs for residential and commercial audiences in Loudoun County. Target audiences include residents, produce farmers, food entrepreneurs, farmer's markets, and other direct market venues, as well as wholesaler and retailer producers, retail food establishments, consumers, and home food preservers. Opportunities for collaborative, multi-dimensional programming are emphasized. Examples of collaborative educational programming include water quality programming in partnership with DGS and nutrition education programming in partnership with nonprofit organizations. This activity provides information, programming, training, and assistance relating to the following:

- FSMA Produce Safety Rule Training
- Farmworker Health and Hygiene Training
- Farmers market best practices
- Food preservation
- Food safety certifications (e.g., ServSafe, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Cooking for Crowds, etc.)
- Food science consultations (e.g., pH testing, product testing)
- Water quality testing (household and irrigation)

Loudoun's Food Safety Education activity serves multiple internal and external communities. The largest customer group consists of the County's residents. Other customers include:

- Commercial food producers
- Agribusiness organizations
- Commonwealth of Virginia agencies; for example, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Food Safety Program
- Commonwealth of Virginia land-grant universities: Virginia Tech and VSU
- Federal government agencies; for example, the USDA, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Loudoun County Government departments; for example, providing training for County staff

This activity involves the development and presentation of programs in coordination with stakeholder organizations. Instruction presentation types can include individual and group meetings, workshops, tours, and demonstrations. Information is disseminated in-person, telephonically, electronically, and using mass media.

Mandate Information: This activity is mandated by the Code of Virginia § 23.1-2610. The VCE and Agricultural Experiment Station Division authorizes the establishment of the VCE and identifies program areas.

Who Does It: A state Food Safety Agent (FSA) assigned to Loudoun County provides this activity. The FSA's salary is cooperatively funded. Professional training is provided by the VCE, Virginia Tech, VSU, and Loudoun County Government. Federal and state grant funding may cover program costs whenever possible. Additional funding is provided through learner fees collected on a not-for-profit basis to offset the cost of supplies, food, and guest speaker honoraria.

Why We Do It: In addition to human costs, foodborne illness can result in the loss of customers and sales, loss of reputation, negative media exposure, lawsuits and legal fees, increased insurance premiums, and staff retraining. In Loudoun County, reported foodborne outbreaks occurred in restaurants, private homes, assisted living facilities, convenience stores, a college, a school (K-12), and a group residential setting, indicating the need for training catered to a variety of audiences and situations.

The FDA's 2011 FSMA emphasizes proactive food safety efforts that prevent illness rather than respond to it. The FSA has access to the scientists and infrastructure existing in the state's land-grant universities. The educational programming and technical information provided by the FSA for a variety of commercial and residence audiences in Loudoun County can



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mitigate the common factors of foodborne illness, such as purchasing food from unsafe sources, failing to adequately cook and store food, using contaminated equipment and supplies, and poor personal hygiene, which, in turn, reduces the incidence of illness. In addition, the FSA supports County and state food regulatory agencies by aiding with technical applications to clients. This activity complements the Health Department's Food Safety activities.

How We Do It Now – Current Service Level: In FY 2020, Food Safety Education educated 260 participants in food safety requirements and best management practices. In subsequent years, this service was enhanced so that an average of approximately 600 participants were educated in food safety requirements/best management practices. In FY 2024, with current resources, the program will continue to educate approximately 600 participants in food safety requirements and best management practices, with the goal of having 90 percent of participants adopt requirements/best management practices.

How We Plan to Do It in the Future – Recommended Service Level: The current service level is the recommended service level to provide responsible and sustainable food safety requirements and best management practice education. In the future, the Department recommends that this program continues to provide food safety requirements and best management practice education to approximately 600 residents each fiscal year.

	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Projected
Increase knowledge of safe food handling practices and methods for preventing foodborne illnesses.					
Percentage of participants who indicated they will adopt or modify a commercial food production best management or safety practice as a result of attending a program/consultation	84%	89%	92%	90%	90%
Number of participants in the Food Safety Education program	459	500	626	600	600



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Community Nutrition Education

What We Do: This activity is a VCE initiative currently implemented through trained volunteers. These volunteers educate Loudoun County residents about nutrition, meal planning, cooking skills, food budgeting, and food safety. Services include hands-on training classes and informational presentations.

Mandate Information: This activity is not mandated.

Who Does It: A County community engagement coordinator supports this activity that is implemented through trained volunteers.

Why We Do It: There are three primary beneficiaries of the Department's volunteer efforts. First, residents and businesses benefit from receiving research-based information in response to their questions regarding nutrition. Second, Loudoun County Government and the nonprofit community benefit from the expertise and knowledge gained from the Commonwealth's land-grant universities in supporting County-led initiatives. Third, volunteers, who are residents, benefit from participating in training classes that provide knowledge relating to nutrition and cooking skills through hands-on activities and excellent-quality training materials.

How We Do It Now – Current Service Level: When this activity was created in FY 2022, the service level provided with current resources was offering five nutrition and physical programs, with 78 percent of participants indicating they will change their nutrition and/or physical activity habits following the program. In FY 2024, with current resources, approximately 20 nutrition and physical activity programs will be offered.

How We Plan to Do It in the Future – Recommended Service Level: With the addition of a dedicated nutrition education FTE, this program would be significantly enhanced. This would result in a projected increase of programming by approximately 200 percent (45 total programs annually), reaching over 100 percent more Loudoun residents (850 total residents) compared to current service levels.

	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Projected
Increase the number of families making healthy food and activity choices.¹					
Number of participants in nutrition and physical activity programming	n/a	186	500	200	200
Percentage of participants who indicated that they would change their nutrition and/or physical activity habits following programming	n/a	78%	59%	80%	80%
Number of nutrition and physical programs offered	n/a	5	28	20	20

¹ Data shown as n/a indicates a measure that does not have historical data.