



Funding Local Food In Virginia



January 2020

When a million different people do a million different things in a million different places the whole world changes. I believe that's exactly what's happening in our local food systems around the world. It's sometimes hard to see past the immense challenges our farmers face: climate chaos, financial hardship, unfair competition, inequitable access, and misinformed and apathetic consumers. But the world is changing and the arc is indeed bending toward what's good and true and just.

This is the time of year for farm conferences, with so many squeezed in during the "off-season," as if that's really a thing. While there is a lot of preaching to the choir at these conferences, make no mistake: There is a collective energy from the people attending these events that can not and will not be thwarted. We have every reason for hope, but hope can only go so far if it's not fueled by action.

So please act and support our local sustainable farmers every which way you can. The most effective way is to buy from them. Show up at the farmers market every week. Seek out their products in stores. Demand their products at your favorite restaurants. How much local food are you currently buying? Is it 5% of your overall purchases? 30%? 85%? Whatever it is, strive to increase it in the year ahead. Commit to making it 100% for a few weeks straight in the height of the season!

Another way to back our local farmers is to support organizations that support them. In Virginia alone there are dozens of them - amazing organizations. I know you can't support them all. But pick a few in your community or statewide. Of course we do appreciate your contributions to Virginia Foodshed Capital as well. While we and other nonprofits are all competing for funds to stay afloat and pursue our individual missions, or collective mission is all the same. There is nothing better than being part of a community of a million - or how about a billion? - different people doing a billion different things in a billion different places to make the whole world change.

Thank you,

Michael Reilly
Co-founder & Executive Director

Donations Here Appreciated

New Loan: Georges Mill Farm

[Georges Mill Farm](#), run by Molly and Sam Kroiz, is a pasture-based livestock farm and producer of artisan farmstead goat cheese. Located in Loudoun County, the farm has been in business since 2012, on property that's been in Sam's family for eight generations. Sam and Molly started with four alpine dairy goats and have grown their herd to nearly 50, managing the farm so the majority of their goats' diet comes from the land. As a farmstead cheesemaker, it means that every wheel of cheese they produce was made only with milk from their own goat herd. With their 0% SOIL loan, Molly and Sam will purchase a new raw milk cheese vat to help expand cheese production and grow their business for a more economically sustainable future. We are excited that this is our first loan in Northern Virginia and look forward to doing more work there.



Molly and Sam Kroiz from Georges Mill Farm

New Loan: Natural Roots Farm

[Natural Roots Farm](#) is a 29-acre livestock farm in Greene County, near Stanardsville. Started in 2017 by husband-and-wife team William and Rebecca Lunsford, the farm produces chickens, ducks, rabbits, quail, pigs, and dairy cows, raised on pasture using rotational grazing practices. They also grow heirloom vegetables. The Lunsfords focus on the health and well being of their land and grasses and do not use antibiotics, hormones, or any chemicals with their animals or in their gardens. The farm received a 0% SOIL to pay for construction of an on-farm store and a milking facility, as well as equipment for their raw milk share program.

Please see our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), and [Instagram account](#) for ongoing updates on all our projects.



William and Rebecca Lunsford from Natural Roots Farm

Total SOIL Loans Made: 18
Total Value of Loans: \$119,000

** since January 2019*

Nurture Capital At Work

Nurture Capital continues to do its job in our local foodshed. Young farmers were at work recently at Turnip the Beets Farm, laying

ground cloth, purchased with a SOIL Loan, to keep weeds under control this coming season. Karen Mann puts her new wood chipper to work at Heart & Bones Hollow, making mulch for the farm.



Virginia Biological Farming Conference

Our "Business of Farming Workshop" at the [Virginia Association for Biological Farming](#) conference in early January was a great success. Thanks to our co-presenters: Erica Hellen, from [Free Union Grass Farm](#), Maggy Gregory from [Gregory Family Farms](#), Heather Coiner from [Little Hat Creek Farm](#), and Resi Connell from [Independence FUNie Farm](#).



Join Us For A Social Gathering in Staunton!

[Lundch Food](#) is an amazing farm-to-table restaurant in Staunton run by the eponymous Mike Lund. It's the site for a social gathering we're having on February 20 at 6pm. This is a chance for us to get to know more folks in and around the Shenandoah Valley and talk about the work we've been doing there. The event is free of charge. We hope you can join us, wherever you live.



[Event RSVP](#)

Farmer John Wilson Rocks!

Farmer John Wilson is a VFC

founding board member and long-time organic farmer in Virginia Beach, currently running Farmer John's Market at [Back Bay's Farmhouse Brewing](#). John has always been a superlative steward of our soil and our ecology. In recognition of his efforts he recently received the River Star Award from the [Elizabeth River Project](#), whose mission has been to restore one of the most polluted rivers on the Chesapeake Bay. Congrats John!



Always Accepting Farmer Loan Applications!

The mission of Virginia Foodshed Capital is to support the financial needs of farmers and food enterprises in our region. Our signature grassroots program called **SOIL** is a 0% revolving loan program for amounts up to \$10,000. We are currently accepting applications on a rolling basis.



[Virginia Foodshed Capital Borrower Information Form](#)

Other Events & Opportunities

Real Local RVA Farm-to-Table Panel



*February 3, 2020
10:30-11:45
St. Stephen's Church*

[Real Local RVA's](#) February meeting features a farm-to-table panel discussion. Among the five participants from the local food movement is VFC loan partner, Dominic Carpini from delli Carpini Farm in Hanover County.

[Event Details](#)

Lulus Local Food Annual Producers Meeting



February 11, 2020
8:30am-4pm
Richmond, VA

Lulus Local Food Annual Producers Meeting 2020

Join us for a free full-day workshop uniquely designed for family farms in Central Virginia.

Tuesday, February 11
8:30 to 4:00 pm

Virginia Farm Bureau, West Creek office
12580 West Creek Parkway, Richmond, VA 23238

Selling to K12 Schools, Making Farm to School a Reality
Working with your Marketing Director for Best Results

Marketing on a Shoestring

Who are you?: Storytelling as Branding for Producers

All Hands: A Panel Discussion on Farm Labor

Space is limited, Sign up by Feb 7
Snow date Tuesday, February 18

Can't make it in person? Join online through webex!

To Register
email Molly.Harris@vafb.com
text or call 804 980-1173



Join [Lulus Local Food and VA FAIRS](#) for a full day of free workshops designed for family farms in Central Virginia. This includes a session on making Farm-to-School a reality.

[Event Details](#)

FoodCap.org

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