



FAIRFAX Food Council

healthy • accessible • affordable

COMMUNITY FOOD NEWS

The latest news and updates from the Fairfax Food Council

IMPORTANT DATES

URBAN AG MEETINGS

June 21 | 10:00 – 11:30 am
July 19 | 10:00 – 11:30 am
August 16 | 10:00 – 11:30 am

FOOD ACCESS & LITERACY MEETINGS

June 30 | 10:30 – 11:30 am
July 28 | 10:30 – 11:30 am
August 25 | 10:30 – 11:30 am

FFC STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

July 15 | 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Want to attend? Both the Urban Agriculture and Food Access & Literacy Work Group meetings are open to the public and anyone interested in getting more engaged is welcome to attend.

Please email FairfaxFoodCouncil@fairfaxcounty.gov for information about the location and/or how to 'attend' a meeting.

Summer News

by Diane Charles, Project Manager, Fairfax Food Council

The summer season is underway and our community members are venturing outside even more as vaccination rates increase! During the summer months, the Fairfax Food Council members are engaged in a variety of important activities. Be sure to check them out:

- The Fairfax Food Council is celebrating summer by holding a virtual Food Summit: **Empowering Equitable Food Solutions – Collaborations during COVID – and Beyond** on June 16th from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00. See more information on Page 2 or read [here](#) for more information and to register.
- It is never too early to plan for *Farmers Market Week*, which will be the week of August 2 – 8, 2021. Until then, supporting local farmers is easy at the many farmers markets located throughout Fairfax County. Many of these markets also accept SNAP. Visit the [Fairfax County Park Authority Markets](#) and [FreshFarms' Farmer Markets](#).
- The Urban Ag Work Group sponsored several workshops this spring. If you missed the incredible Brie Arthur virtual workshop on *Edible Plants for Your Landscape and Front Yard*, be sure to watch it [here](#). Be on the lookout for recordings of other spring workshops that will soon be posted on the Food Council's website.
- Food Council partner Capital Area Food Bank continues to highlight the role that government at every level can play in reducing hunger and poverty in our region. If you have not yet reviewed their 2021 Policy Agenda, [check it out here](#).

2021 FAIRFAX FOOD SUMMIT



You're Invited to the Fairfax Food Council's 2021 Virtual Summit

Empowering Equitable Food Solutions: Collaborations During COVID and Beyond

[Click here to register](#)

What: Tune-in to this unique, virtual opportunity to learn about the many ways our food system responded to the challenges of the pandemic. There is no cost to attend the Summit.

- Speakers will detail creative collaborations such as the linkage between food and health; saving urban and local agriculture; addressing the needs of first-time food insecure residents; and innovative solutions to keep restaurant workers employed.
- You'll hear from the Health Department, Capital Area Food Bank, Great American Restaurants, Inova, Fairfax County Public Schools and many more!

The first 250 registrants can choose a FREE lunch from one of three culturally diverse food trucks:

- Food trucks: Memaw's Table, Bonn Boni, and ChaatAnd More
- Lunch can be picked up at the Fairfax County Government Center after the summit
- If you choose a ticket with lunch, you will receive the order links in your confirmation email (links will be at the bottom of the confirmation email)

Where: On Zoom, from the comfort of your home or office!

When: June 16, 2021, from 10am – 12pm

How: Register on EventBrite – there is no cost to attend: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/empowering-equitable-food-solutions-collaborations-during-covid-beyond-tickets-154416984357>

Learn more on our website: <https://sites.google.com/view/ffcs summit/home>

FOOD COUNCIL HAPPENINGS

Two New Gardens in the County

This spring the Fairfax Food Council’s Urban Ag Work Group (UAWG) has helped stand up two new gardens in the county, one at Gum Springs Community Center and the other at Kingsley Commons in Falls Church.

Gum Springs Community Center is located in the heart of the oldest African American community (founded in 1833) in Fairfax County. For many years residents and staff had expressed interest in having a garden, and this year the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Agriculture, the Urban Ag Work Group, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Suters Glen Permaculture farm donated staff expertise, labor, fruit trees, and lumber to build eleven raised beds, and four hugelkultur beds where two plums, two elderberries and two fig trees were planted.



Gum Springs work group poses with newly planted plum trees



Vivian Brown (age 79) proudly adopted, designed and planted this Gum Springs bed

At Kingsley Commons, UAWG and Virginia Cooperative Extension worked with Arlington Blvd Community Development, the development owner and residents to revive a former 4-H garden that the townhouse community hadn’t used in several years. Over two days, the site was transformed from a weedy set of beds to a weeded, mulched and composted planting site – with help from Cory Suter’s weed-eating sheep! Eight families adopted plots in the garden and planted in late May. One plot was saved for a kids garden, which will be taken care of over the summer as part of a weekly garden club.



The Fairfax Food Council Seeks a Youth Representative for Steering Committee

The Food Council is asking that the application materials be shared with organizations that work with high school students, as well as any contacts people may have with high schools. Students should live and go to school in Fairfax, Falls Church or Fairfax City, and be a rising high school junior.

Applications are due June 30.

[Visit the website](#) to view the position description, application, and to get a flier. If you have questions, please email kgarsson@masonlive.gmu.edu.

Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/ffc-youth-rep-application/home>

School Garden Partnerships

Thanks to **Lynbrook Elementary School** Science Resource Teacher Rayanne Pirozzi and in partnership with the Urban Ag Work Group, Lynbrook is offering gardening workshops for their families and community members. These workshops will be taught by two Master Gardeners. Families will use school gardens and resources to learn to grow food and then bring it home to their families. Lynbrook students ages 7-11 have already begun the gardens by planting lots of plants and seeds. Every day students visit the garden to learn about sustainable practices and to care for gardens. Lynbrook's goal is to grow as much food as they can for their school community while maintaining healthy soil and conserving water.

Stratford Landing Elementary School's Mary Charlton has ensured that Stratford Landing continues their "Share the Harvest" Program this summer where gardeners can drop off their extra produce at the school to be distributed to families in need within the community. Stratford Landing has expanded their garden adding in six new garden beds and a 16' x 8' greenhouse. The garden is student run and continues to harvest produce weekly for local communities. Arcadia and the Urban Ag Work Group are thrilled to partner with Stratford Landing on this project.



Second graders at Lynbrook Elementary watering the Pizza Garden

FOOD COUNCIL EVENTS

Workshop: Integrated Pest Management for Northern Virginia Gardeners

Save the Date: June 22, 2021

Are you losing some of your home plantings and crops to insect damage? Do you want to reduce your losses without destroying beneficial pollinators, amphibians and birds in our local ecosystem? Senior Conservation/Agricultural Specialist, Willie Woode will be presenting a virtual workshop to teach you how to identify insects, determine if action needs to be taken, and provide a range of organic pest control options. This event is cosponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension, Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District where Willie works, and the Fairfax Food Council. Watch for more information about this virtual event – and an in-person program on this topic on June 23rd. For more information, contact FairfaxFoodCouncil@fairfaxcounty.gov.



Updated information for all of the Fairfax Food Council events can be found on our website:
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/food-council/>



EVENTS

Farmers Market Plant Clinics

In 2021, Virginia Cooperative Extension’s Master Gardeners will be at seven weekly farmers markets -- ready to discuss gardening issues and identify plants and insects. Master Gardner volunteers offer free, unbiased, and research-based advice on selecting and caring for ornamental plants, vegetables, and lawn. They will be available at one of the farmers markets throughout the county from May through September. See [the website](#) for 2021 Plant Clinic Schedule and the map to these locations.

Virtual Plant Clinics

Looking for gardening insights and advice on seasonal topics? Join Fairfax Master Gardeners on Zoom as they present expert information on gardening topics and answer gardening questions. Four clinics are offered each week. All are free.

For more information or to sign-up for these opportunities and others see the [Plant Clinic Schedule](#).



Inova Healthy Plate Club: Virtual Summer Camp for Kids

As the Inova Healthy Plate Club (IHPC) enters its second summer of virtual programs, registration is now open for July and August summer camps. Schools or organizations who work with students from lower income areas are encouraged to enroll kids in this summer camp. Contact HealthyPlateClub@inova.org.

To-date, the virtual IHPC has served over 300 students, expanded from a 4-week to a 5-week curriculum, and continues to provide students with all class materials and the ingredients to make each recipe! This virtual program has also grown to offer classes for parents in both English and Spanish. Also, virtual classes on “Healthy Snacking” and “Cooking with Veggies” have been built for the kids of Inova Employees and our community partners. To learn more about IHPC, follow them on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)!



Greenhouse & Gardens Program at George Mason Launches Seedling Sale

It's the perfect time to plant gardens! The [Office of Sustainability's Greenhouse & Gardens](#) has the seedlings needed to plant today!

Organic tomatoes, peppers, medicinal and culinary herbs, and even edible flowers are all for sale! All seedlings are grown with expert care and attention from a professional team of growers.

Buying seedlings from the Greenhouse & Gardens program supports student learning opportunities like the [academic internship program](#) and service-learning experiences for students and the surrounding community. In 2021, more than 700 volunteer and intern shifts have been hosted resulting in more than 1,650 hours of experiential learning for students and community members!

The seedling sale lasts until everything is gone. [Purchase](#) from their secure, online store: <https://go.gmu.edu/GGStore>. Pay online and choose contactless pick-up time. Or visit the greenhouse in person, receive expert advice from staff, and then pay in cash.



Plants Play Music at George Mason University's 'Arcadia' Installation

If plants could talk, what would they say? What if they could sing?

[Sam Nester](#), the creator of Arcadia, and project leaders Yassmin Salem and Donald Russell explain how [George Mason University's Arcadia installation](#) lets plants play music and control a gorgeous light show, all in real time.

[Tune in to the recent podcast](#) on With Good Reason Radio: <http://go.gmu.edu/ArcadiaPodcast>

Visit the [official Arcadia installation](#) page for exclusive content like concert recordings, interviews, and more: <https://go.gmu.edu/Arcadia>



Photo by Evan Cantwell/Creative Services/George Mason University

Family Nutrition Program SNAP-Ed

2021 Programming Options

VCE FCS SNAP-Ed Agents are continuing to offer these exciting virtual programming options in 2021. Please see our marketing flyers below for more information:

- [Literacy, Eating, Activity for Preschoolers](#)
- [Pick a Better Snack](#)
- [Choose Health](#)
- [Teen Cuisine](#)
- [Physical Activity Challenge](#)

June 2021 is National Fruit & Vegetables Month!

Celebrate National Fruit and Vegetable month this June with these colorful, tasty, and nutrient-dense foods! Fruits and vegetables provide an array of nutrients, minerals, vitamins, and fiber. Additionally, they can assist in lowering risk of certain chronic diseases, such as heart disease. Whether you enjoy heading out to a farmers market, or having your own garden at home, enjoy these tasty foods to gain all the great benefits they offer!



Farmers Market Outreach

The warmer weather is here!

VCE SNAP-Ed Agents are able to conduct SNAP-Ed Outreach at farmers markets accepting SNAP benefits. In addition, we can provide recipes and nutrition education. If your farmers market is interested, please reach out to Kirsten Kelley at kirstenk19@vt.edu.

Also, please free free to access the below link for Farmers Market Resources from the Family Nutrition Program: [Using Your SNAP Benefits At a Farmers Market](#)



For more information, please reach out to:

Kirsten Kelley, M.S., CLC
FCS SNAP-Ed Extension Agent

kirstenk19@vt.edu

703-746-5542

For electronic resources, please visit our website at:

www.eatsmartmovemoreva.org

RESOURCES



Northern Virginia Food Rescue

About 40% of food in the United States is wasted, yet one in six people are hungry. That, among many other reasons, is why Northern Virginia Food Rescue is launching the Fairfax Food Rescue program this summer. Northern Virginia Food Rescue began as a single program in Prince William County in August 2019, rescuing food from donors that would otherwise be discarded and getting it to food pantries. Since that time, over 15 million pounds of food has been redistributed throughout Prince William County, the equivalent of over 12 million meals for food insecure families. This was the result of hundreds of volunteers using a simple app, Prince William Food Rescue. Fairfax County is the next location for this food rescue app.

This July the Northern Virginia Food Rescue app will be available on the Apple Store and Google Play, and Fairfax residents who are interested in volunteering can do so by downloading the app and claiming rescues! Volunteers can help rescue food from local grocery stores, restaurants, and other donors and get that food to families in need. Keep up-to-date on all developments for Northern Virginia Food Rescue by following them on social media, @nova.foodrescue, or checking their website, www.nova-fr.org.

In Need of Gardening Tools?

The Fairfax Food Council’s Tool Lending Library has three new gardening tools available for lending: a pruner, a shear hedge and a lopper. Check out how you can borrow these and other gardening tools: fairfaxcounty.gov/food-council/urban-agriculture



Hala Elbarmil Shares Fruit Tree Grafting Expertise on @GardenDC’s Podcast

Hala Elbarmil, the Greenhouse & Gardens Coordinator at George Mason University, was the featured guest for [Washington Gardener Magazine's podcast episode #58](#) with host Kathy Lentz!

[Tune in](#) to learn about fruit tree grafting and how these “zombie” trees are nothing to be afraid of!

Listen (https://go.gmu.edu/grafting_fruit_trees)

FEATURED GUEST

Hala Elbarmil
Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator, Office of Sustainability

GARDENDC PODCAST EPISODE 58
GRAFTING FRUIT TREES

HOSTED BY KATHY JENTZ, EDITOR OF WASHINGTON GARDENER MAGAZINE

LISTEN ON ALL AVAILABLE PLATFORMS

- Apple
- Spotify
- RadioPublic
- iHeartRADIO
- YouTube
- Amazon Music

& MANY MORE!

Recording at @GardenDC

LISTEN NOW

GO.GMU.EDU/GRAFTING_FRUIT_TREES

COMMUNITY STORIES

Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture Publishes Report

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted inequities across the country including Fairfax County. In an effort to provide the human stories behind the often-faceless statistics, Arcadia chronicled the lived experiences of 15 residents in the Route 1 Corridor who experienced varying levels of food insecurity because of the pandemic. Each of their stories is different. But they share a common narrative: the global COVID pandemic pushed Fairfax County families that were already economically vulnerable to the brink. This report is a call to action for collaborative efforts that work toward building a food secure environment along the Route 1 corridor by identifying the systems that perpetuate food insecurity and working to dismantle and recreate them.

[Route 1 Lived Experiences Report](#)



New Partnership Seeks Hosts for Community Gardens

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD) is one of 20 conservation districts across 14 states to receive funding through the National Association of Conservation District and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service to support urban agriculture in Fairfax County. The Nourish the Land, Cultivate Community project partnership includes the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, Fairfax Food Council, Food for Others, Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, and Virginia Cooperative Extension. Through this initiative, the partners will work together to provide extensive technical assistance, training, and support to up to eight new and existing small-scale production community gardens in food-insecure parts of Fairfax County.

The partnership is looking for motivated groups who want to host a community garden and boost their community's access to fresh and healthy produce. Gardening and food distribution experience is not necessary. The partnership will work together to provide participants with technical assistance from start-up to harvest, trainings on how to start and maintain a garden, share a community garden manual and workbook, provide a small amount of funding assistance and connect growers with experienced community gardeners and mentors to assist with growing and distributing foods. If you are interested in receiving a free site analysis for your potential participation in this effort, please contact Willie Woode, Senior Conservation Specialist with NVSWCD at Willie.Woode@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-1430.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

SNAP/EBT Coordinator at Annandale Farmers Market

This Spring, Britepaths will be taking on the management of SNAP at the Annandale Farmers Market. They are seeking a Volunteer SNAP/EBT Coordinator for this new Britepath's program. Check out the details and [job description](#). Please share this opportunity with colleagues and friends.

'Green' Volunteering with George Mason University's Office of Sustainability

Learn how to grow produce without soil (hydroponics), how to design landscapes with permaculture techniques, and how to compost your waste! Volunteer with the [Office of Sustainability's Greenhouse & Gardens](#) program at George Mason University! Start volunteering today! You don't need prior gardening experience as our expert staff will teach you everything you need to know! Create a free account on GMU's Sustainable Volunteer Sign Ups portal and select any available shift from their live calendar: <https://go.gmu.edu/greenvolunteering> Masks and social distancing are required to protect the health, safety, and well-being of all volunteers and staff members.

JOB OPENINGS

Program Coordinator Position

Cornerstones is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing complete social support services to individuals and families in need throughout Northern Virginia. Cornerstones works to promote self-sufficiency through support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other services. They currently have a full-time Program Coordinator opening at the Assistance Services and Pantry Program, where the primary responsibility of the position is to assist in coordinating food capture and distribution efforts for those in the community in need of supplemental food. See the details for [Program Coordinator Position](#).



This information is provided by the Fairfax Food Council.

fairfaxcounty.gov/food-council

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[@FairfaxFoodCouncil](#)

If you have something for the next newsletter, please submit to FairfaxFoodCouncil@fairfaxcounty.gov by August 15th.

To subscribe or unsubscribe, please email FairfaxFoodCouncil@fairfaxcounty.gov.

We encourage you to share this newsletter widely with all who may be interested! If you have any issues accessing the information in this newsletter, please let us know by emailing

FairfaxFoodCouncil@fairfaxcounty.gov.