

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



June 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY LINDA LUCAS

Elections were held at the May meeting, and we welcome four new members to the JCC/W MG Association Board. A joint board meeting will be held June 17 with out-going members turning over records and responsibilities to incoming members. Mary Ellen Edwards will step into Pat Janot's shoes as our new secretary; Bob Winther will take over treasurer's duties from Linda Wever; and Beth Fugate will be the new Projects VP, taking over from Jeanne Millin. Pat Janot and Linda Wever joined the board when I did in July of 2009. Jeanne has served for three years, filling a vacancy and then continuing for a full 2-year term. Dave Banks will be stepping off the board after serving as treasurer, president and past-president! It has been a pleasure to serve with all these capable, hard-working people who have been dedicated to their board duties while continuing to be active in projects and other administrative areas, too. And I am so pleased to pass the president's gavel into the very capable hands of Roger Evans. Margene Hartsough, VP Administration, Harriet Parsons, VP Internal Education and our two VMGA Reps, Angela Cingale and Marilyn Riddle will all continue on the board, along with Doris Heath as our VCE advisor and me in the past-president's spot.

Hopefully a number of you will be attending Master Gardener College at Virginia Tech. You should have received registration information in an email from Dave Close. You can also find details at www.hort.vt.edu/mastergardener/ regarding program schedule and on-campus housing; or you can contact Angela Cingale or

**In memory of Jack Duane Gross
June 7, 1945 – May 12, 2011
JCC/W VCE Master Gardener,
Class of 2008**

(Please see Page 3 for a Tribute)

Marilyn Riddle. There are pre-conference tours and workshops on Thursday, June 23, and conference sessions June 24 and 25 with Sunday activities as well. On-line registration is available through June 5th. If you are planning to do advanced training to become an MG Land Steward, don't forget to request a referral from Doris Heath. Please let Angela, Marilyn or me know if you are planning to go to MG College.

Pam Burton gave an excellent presentation on bees and beekeeping at our May meeting. She is pictured below with MG Erin Halleran, Education Committee member who introduced her. We made a last minute change in May, switching the business meeting to first on the agenda; but on June 2nd our speaker, Dan Nortman, VCE Agent, York County, will give a program on controlling insects in the garden at 9:00 a.m., followed by the business meeting. Hope to see many of you there.

Next Monthly Meeting:

June 2, 9 a.m.,
Williamsburg Regional Library;
Guest Speaker: Dan Nortman, VCE Agent, York
County, "Controlling Insects in the Garden."



The Colonial Master Gardener June 2011

INTERNAL EDUCATION

BY HARRIET PARSONS

MG COLLEGE? What the heck is MG College and why do we need to go back to school at this late date? Master Gardener College is so much more fun than regular college, no tests for one thing! This is a great opportunity to earn massive advanced hours and to educate yourself in a condensed time frame on everything from Land Care Stewardship, plant breeding, community gardening, Bonsai, organic sustainable gardening and so much more. Experts from Virginia Tech and speakers from across the state have gathered together just for **you**. Please take advantage of the time and effort that has gone into the planning of this week and register for the 24th MG College being held from 6/21 -26th at the Virginia Tech Campus in Blacksburg, Virginia. Registration deadline is June 5. Check your recent e-mails from me that include all the info you will need.

And don't forget International Master Gardener College coming up October 11-14 in Morgantown, WV, a beautiful time of the year in the panhandle state. I will be sending you information as I receive it, but registration is open and reservations should be made now. Some classes are filled already.

Let me know if you are going to Virginia State University in Petersburg on July 14 for the 8th Annual Commercial Vegetable and Berry Field Day so that carpools can be arranged. This event will be at Randolph Farm and the theme is *Super Foods*.

Remember that our next field trip is to Linda and Bill Pinkham's garden in Suffolk on June 16. If you didn't sign up at May's meeting and want to go, e-mail me and I will add you to the list. We will be looking for drivers with vans or vehicles with extra seating.

In late May, a group of us traveled to the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research Extension Center. What an exciting day! The first thing we learned was to **Slow it Down!** Water, that is. We learned so much about how to keep water from moving rapidly into the storm drains. Speaking of storm drains we were fortunate to have two vans driven by Barry and Pat from the county's Storm Water Department. It was refreshing to see that James City County shares the same views on water management as the Master Gardeners.

Dr. Laurie Fox talked to us about rain gardens, buffer zones and sustainable landscaping. I was eager to hear her explanation of how to install a **rain garden** and felt much more at ease after her explanation. As you know, a rain garden's job is to improve the quality of water that eventually moves into nearby bodies of water. A rain garden is simply a planted depression that allows rain water runoff from surfaces like roofs, driveways and parking lots to be absorbed instead of going into the storm drain. First, locate a low spot on your property, check where it drains. Second do a perk test as the area must drain. If not, amend the area with compost, consider French drains or a dry well (rocks). Excavate a shallow area (6-8 inches). Next, create a berm from the excavated soil, add compost, plant, using natives to avoid the need for chemicals. This is a simple explanation but I want you to feel this is something you can do at home. Laurie says, "Yes, you can!" I have her handouts and plan on sending them

out to the general membership.

We also saw a beautiful buffer zone. A buffer zone is an area of vegetation bordering a body of water. It is designed to slow runoff, filter sediment and stabilize the shoreline while preventing erosion. For those of you lucky enough to live near a pond, stream or other body of water you should definitely go to HRAREC.

We learned a lot about sustainable landscape practices also. The front and sides of the building were lined with examples of landscaped swales, permeable paving, ground covers, mulches, rain chains, rain sensors, rain barrels, watering bags, recycled products, storm drain protection, canopy layering and so much more. I particularly liked the pavers made of recycled plastic bags. Canopied layering to slow the water was evident from the progression of large trees, shrubs, smaller perennials, to the lowly ground covers that gracefully covered the soil.

Our day was made perfect by the tour of demonstration gardens by the Virginia Beach Master Gardeners. Beautiful themed gardens carefully tended by the MG's and is used to educate the public on a daily basis. Dr. Fox made it clear that the site would not have been possible without the work and dedication of the Master Gardeners of Virginia Beach. What a team!



The Colonial Master Gardener June 2011

REMEMBERING JACK GROSS

BY DENNIS WOOL

In recognition of Jack's commitment to JCCW-MG, I would like to share a few words to describe my MG experience with Jack. Knowing Jack, a great many MGs were fortunate to have similar experiences as well.

I met Jack in our '07 MG Training Class – we sat on OPPOSITE sides of the room –OPPOSITE being the descriptor of us in so many ways. Our contacts in class were very limited until the class on container gardening where I had a chance to share my experience with SWC's in South Georgia ---instantly it seemed we had a CONNECTION & the attention of Art and Barb Gustafson who literally CAPTURED us for their Incredible Edible Team.

From this single CONNECTION grew projects and presentations: SWC's – composters – rain barrels. We became the side show hucksters at the carnival – showing up in all manner of places to promote our “no work” garden ideas and sell our recycled products.

When we agreed to make our grow boxes for Incredible Edibles – Jack bought every 18 gal Rubbermaid storage container he could find, delivered those to CDR - then made 12 for himself that lined his driveway with tomato plants. When we needed 6” pots for the plant sale, he brought 1,000 from the CW greenhouse and 450 plants to put in them!

When I casually mentioned to him I was having trouble finding leaves to mix into my composter, he showed up 4 hours later at my house with 13 leaf bags he had collected in his neighborhood.

He never said no to any request – providing his time, talent, and ‘yes we can’ attitude to many MG projects and the Board. He traveled in that wonderful truck tagged OPTIMISM - a word that captured his spirit & the hope that the truck would both go and bring him back.

We set up shop at the JCC Fair to promote what had now become our Barrels and Bins MG Project. On Friday night we had moved all our rain barrels and composters in place and left Jack's demo SWC of herbs on the table. Early Saturday morning we returned to the Fair Grounds to find Jack's grow box missing! While some of us were hot – Jack just

commented that someone obviously needed that box more than we did. Moments later a young 4-H-er came toward our tent carrying that grow box with a great big Blue Ribbon – explaining the extension agent had entered the box in the Fair and Jack had one First Place! I will never forget the grin on his face.

Jack loved being a JCCW-MG in a way that touched many MGs who evolved into a large circle of folks who support the organization's goals. That circle also became his friends who forever will hold him in their memory.



June 26, 2010, at the JCC Fair

MGs AT THE FARMERS' MARKET

BY SALLY SISSEL

June 4: *Gardening with Children*

June 18: *Flowers*

July 2: *Water with Barrels and Bins*

July 16: *Therapeutic Gardening*

July 30: *Drought Tolerant Plants*

The Colonial Master Gardener June 2011

2010
MG Board

President:
Linda Lucas

VP Projects:
Jeanne Millin

VP Internal Ed:
Harriet Parsons

VP Administration:
Margene Hartsough

Secretary:
Pat Janot

Treasurer:
Linda Wever

VMGA Reps:
Marilyn Riddle and
Angela Cingale

Past President:
Dave Banks

Co-op Ext Rep:
Doris Heath
564-2170

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month, at 9:00 am, at the James City County Health and Human Services Building, on Olde Towne Road.

The Board meetings are open to all Master Gardeners, and all are encouraged to attend.

2011 PLANT SALE BEST EVER

BY DENNIS WOOL



Without stepping on the toes of those who worked so hard building the annual MG Plant Sale into having a great community reputation, the event this year scored a lot of points toward being the best ever. There was some legitimate concern that the change in location might result in some participant drop-off or that our returning to a parallel sale with the VNP group might have its consequences. Neither of those materialized as we had a beautiful day, a steady stream of community friends, and a very impressive variety of plants. Books turned out to be a positive addition as well. As with last year, MG grown plants represented about 2/3 of the 2500 plants sold – well done. Now that most of the bills have been paid, it appears this year's sales exceeded previous totals. These funds will be used by the Board to support a wide array of service projects and the

Scholarship Project started last year.

The work of the Plant Sale created opportunities for MGs and interns to participate in a wide array of activities with special recognition for the interns who participated at the 100% level. Many MGs were engaged in the planning and organizing activities, transportation, contribution of plants and books, time before-during-after the event, and not to be overlooked – bought a lot of plants! The event allows our organization to demonstrate that MGs provide a significant community resource in both education and demonstration – we grow some pretty neat stuff.

To all who had a hand in making the sale a huge success – three cheers! We did so well we might consider a smaller Fall Sale that can focus on plants that attract attention during that season. If that sounds good to you, let the Board know.

LANDSCAPE LOVE SPRING VISITS

BY ANNE NIELSEN



This has been a very busy spring season for Landscape Love volunteers. We had 48 residents to see in the month of May. Thank goodness that most visits were made before the hot, humid weather started. We welcomed back 32 Master Gardeners with their vast local knowledge to shepherd 19 Interns through their first visits to residents. It is always a learning experience for everyone. I hope everyone had as much fun as our team did. Helping everyone garden "smarter, not harder" is our goal.

Special thanks to Team leaders; John Giffin, Margene Hartsough, Sally Sissel and Dan Tevlin who helped me immensely. A gold star goes to Margene with the Upper County team who were the first to complete their visits and get their reports submitted!!!!

The Interns seem to get smarter and smarter! As usual they were valuable assets to the teams. Their understanding of the problems and suggested remedies were evident in the final reports.

Thank you all **Ford's Colony:** John Giffin, Janet Giffin, Tod Allen, Annette Bell, Ruth Ann Penberthy, Mitzi Balma, Ken Caro, Jim Henry, Valerie Hillyer, Donna Thibeault; **Governor's**

Land: Anne Nielsen, Becky Morgan, Jeanne Millin, Donna Xander, Denise Fleischman, Judy Casone, Cathy Hill, Gary Streb, Patti Louche, Patti Lupton; **Jamestown:** Dan Tevlin, Carol Fryer, Beth Fugate, Ann Hobson, Reba Hazelwood, Barb Landa, Renee Napolitano, atricia Ridgeway, Avril Purvis, Vince Rasper; **Upper County:** Margene Hartsough, Chere Harper, Gary Driscole, Rosemarie Brennan, Nancy Cassano, Ray Mindrup, Nancy Bayne, Iris Grant, Deborah Griesinger, Joanne Sheffield; **Williamsburg:** Sally Sissel, Suzanne Brown, Richard Stratton, Patricia Abraham, Jan Rockoff, Barbara Floyd, Ellen Greene, Diane Hare, Sherry Sumerlin, Jordan Westenaver.

This Fall registration is from August 1st through Sept 15th. We will be out there helping with problems in transplanting, composting leaves and preparing our landscape for winter. I hope that all of you will be able to join your team again for visits starting in October. Have a great summer and stay cool.

DEMONSTRATION RAIN GARDEN PROJECT AT NEW QUARTER PARK

BY JEANNE MILLIN

After the Water Steward class offered at MG College last June, the idea of a rain garden project at New Quarter Park (NQP) was developed as a certification project by Jeanne Millin. The teaching garden at Trail #1 was originally developed as a joint effort of the Historic Rivers Chapter Master Naturalists, the Native Plant Society and Boy Scout Troop 103 using native plants from different seasons in a woodland setting. Part of the 1/4 mile loop, just below the large culvert that drains the parking area, was designated as a rain garden. It was never fully developed and the runoff from the culvert was causing erosion, since there was no way to stop the heavy flow from the paved parking area from going down the hill to the York River Basin during storm events.

A rain garden is a planted depression designed to absorb and filter a portion of the rainwater from a house, landscape or other non-pervious surface. Rain Gardens should help to filter and absorb pollutants, control storm water, prevent damage to existing landscape, provide wildlife habitat and be a less expensive and more long-term solution to storm water retention ponds. Runoff should be held for no more than 2- 4 days in a shallow pond of 6 inches. Plantings in a rain garden are designed to slow down and dissipate heavy water flow. There should be three planting zones (low, medium and high) each designed to handle different types of water conditions. Plants in the rain garden need to tolerate wet feet and also dry periods. Most rain gardens, such as the new ones at the William and Mary Education Building, are located in sunny areas. The New Quarter Park garden is in shade.

Carol Fryer and Anne Nielsen participated in the design and construction of a small rain garden in Blacksburg, Virginia during their Water Steward class about four years ago. They were asked and agreed to help with the NQP project. They took lots of pictures of the existing area and came up with a design, which was submitted to and approved by York County. Then the Water Steward team lucked out. Dr. Laurie Fox from Virginia Tech was in Williamsburg for a meeting and she agreed to take a side trip, look at the site, and let us know if the project was feasible. She not only agreed with the feasibility of the project, but she committed her time, energy (she can plant faster than any landscaper), and donated many plants from the Hampton roads Agricultural Research & Extension Center, where Dr. Fox is located.



Laurie Fox from VT and Carol Fryer, Anne Nielsen and two Master Naturalists.

There were two planting dates and after a heavy storm and some washout the design was modified. York County Parks and Recreation Supervisor, Molly Nealer, and Sarah Lewis and Thad Hecht, Master Naturalists, and New Quarter Park staff provided equipment, support and labor. The rain garden has been filled with more than 2,000 plants. The initial plantings were purchased with seed money from York County but the majority of plants were donated from the Master Gardener Plant Sale, the Native Plant Society Plant Sale, and Ralph and Carolyn Will and Bob and Cynthia Long, long time supporters of New Quarter Park, and Dr. Fox. Jack Cole, New Quarter Park staff, and Jean Balutanski, Patty Maloney and Nancy Norton of the Master Naturalists also provided planting assistance. As you can see from the picture, Carol Fryer, Anne Nielsen and Jeanne Millin JCC/W Master Gardener/ Water Stewards were active participants, during all phases of the project.

The project will need limited maintenance and signage will change to give the Peninsula Chapter of the Master Gardener-Water Stewards recognition. A listing of the plants used is being prepared. Overall, the project has survived some heavy rains and we are looking forward to seeing it mature. The erosion and runoff has stopped. Please tour the garden and take away some helpful erosion control strategies.

SUPER TURF SATURDAY

Please add **August 6** to your calendars for the next Super Turf Saturday!

The Colonial Master Gardener June 2011

THE INTERN EXPERIENCE

BY JORDAN WESTENHAVER

I fear my head is about to explode.
I think it must be "intern overload."
So many projects, so many faces....
How can I be at once in two places?

First there was the "intern anxiety,"
Caused, I think, by classroom satiety.
Every time I looked at a quiz
My brain began to sizzle and fizz.

Now that part's over and this is the fun
Checking off hours, getting it done.
But how do I choose when to be where?
It's the intern dilemma we probably all share.

"It gets better" is the Master Gardeners' pitch.
"You'll soon enough find your own niche."
Encouraging words that we all hope are true
Even though right now we don't have a clue!

TAKING ROOT FARM TOUR

BY SUE VOIGT

The 2011 Taking Root Farm Tour is a self-driving tour to 3 local farms on Sunday, June 26, 2011 from 1:00 - 5:00 PM. At each of the 3 farm business sites, a team of Master Gardeners will provide support including a Help Desk, parking assistance, site control (including set up, clean up and break down).

This year the 3 featured farms, located in the northwest area of New Kent County along (and off) Old Church Road, are:

Thompson's Border Collies (home of working border Collies, guardian dogs, sheep and goats)

Old Church Sod & Shimokan Farm (a sod/turf and grain farm in production)

Kuhn's Animal Rescue Farm (a rescue farm for various animals).

(See attached flyer for more information.)

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH – JUNE 2011

VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

RATTLESNAKE MASTER:

Eryngium yuccifolium

The Rattlesnake Master is an unmistakable bluish perennial plant with spiny-edged, yucca-like leaves and round heads of tiny 5-parted florets, often concealed by green bracts. The leaves are mostly found at the base of the plant, and reduced on the stem.

Growing to 3 feet tall, rattlesnake-master is a good plant for the back of a perennial border, or in a meadow. Their spiny leaves make walking through clumps of these plants difficult, and also make them unpalatable to grazing livestock. The flower and seedheads last a long time and are good for indoor floral arrangements.

Found in woods and open places in wet or dry soil, thickets and prairies, from Minnesota east to New Jersey, and south, rattlesnake-master is native in Virginia mostly to south-central counties.



Photo: Rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) taken by Helen Hamilton

American Indians used the root as a poultice for snakebites and many other disorders; traditionally, root tincture was used as a diuretic, and also for female reproductive disorders. Chewing the root increases saliva flow.

For more information about native plants visit www.claytonvnps.org.

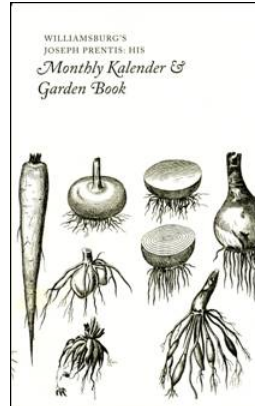
COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG PUBLISHES 18TH-CENTURY PERSONAL GARDEN JOURNAL

SUBMITTED BY PAT CROWE

Williamsburg has been known for beautiful gardens since the 18th century, when one of the town's most enthusiastic gardeners was Joseph Prentis, an attorney who kept a personal garden book and calendar. Gardeners interested in his notes will be sure to enjoy "Williamsburg's Joseph Prentis: His Monthly Kalender & Garden Book," newly published by Colonial Williamsburg.

The "growing interest in historic gardens and re-creating typical period-specific and site-specific gardens . . . has made Joseph Prentis' garden records and gardening instructions worthy of publication," writes Colonial Williamsburg landscape supervisor Rollin Woolley in his introduction. "This information is invaluable to an increasing number of gardeners, historians, garden historians, and anyone interested in the vegetables, flowers, trees and shrubs of the late 18th century and the cultural techniques of the times."

The book honors the memory of Colonial Williamsburg garden tour volunteer and supporter James M. Bilderback of Williamsburg, who died in September 2009. "Williamsburg's Joseph Prentis: His Monthly Kalender & Garden Book" is available for \$12.95 at Colonial Williamsburg's Visitor Center, the Prentis store and the Colonial Garden Nursery in the Historic Area, or from www.williamsburgmarketplace.com



NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The deadline for submission of material for the **July Newsletter** is **Sunday, June 19.**

Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at cathy.lohwater@cox.net or call 757-259-1133.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- 6/2 MG Monthly Meeting
- 6/19 July Newsletter Deadline
- 6/21-6/26 MG College 2011
- 8/6 Super Turf Saturday
- 10/11-15 International MG Conference, WV

JCC/W Master Gardener Mission Statement

The purpose of the James City County/ Williamsburg Master Gardener is to learn, educate, and communicate environmentally sound horticultural practices to the community. Trained by the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Master Gardener volunteers are committed to offering information to the public through sustainable landscape management educational programs.

SUNSHINE NOTES



A get well note was sent to Ailene Bartlett. A sympathy note and plant were sent to the family of Jack Gross.

If you know a Master Gardener who is ill, facing surgery, has suffered a family loss, or any event in which that person might benefit from a **sunshine note**, please contact the MG Secretary, Pat Janot. She will send a note or take appropriate action on behalf on the organization. Pat may be reached at 221-0289 or janotap@verizon.net.

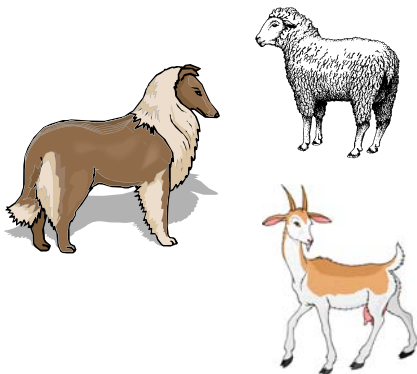
ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth.

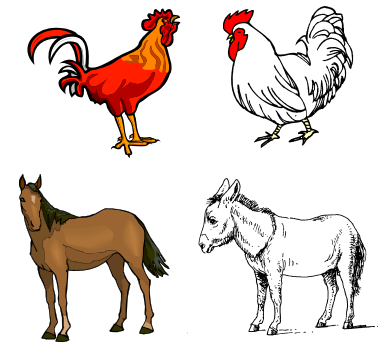
Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

TAKING ROOT

Farm Tour



Self-Driving Tour of
Local Farms
SUNDAY
June 26, 2011
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM



Visit 3 diverse farming businesses, meet the farm families
and learn about agriculture in your community.

Featuring:

Thompson's Border Collies

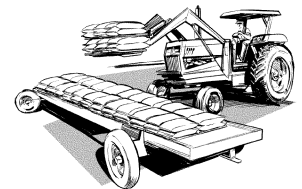
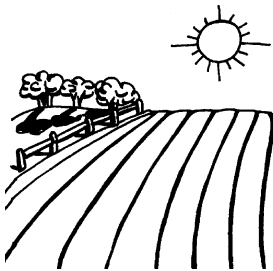
(home of working border collies, guardian dogs, sheep & goats)

Old Church Sod & Shimokan Farm

(a sod/turf and grain farm in production)

Kuhn's Dominion Animal Rescue Farm

(a rescue farm for various animals)



☞ Sites located in New Kent/Quinton, VA Area ☞

From Interstate 64 take Exit 211 (Rt. 106 Talleyville/Roxbury) towards Talleyville
& Follow Signs at Rt. 249 Rotary to Farms.

Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension, New Kent County, CSX Transportation, Inc., Farm Bureau,
and the JCC/NK/Williamsburg Master Gardener Assoc.

For more information visit: <http://offices.ext.vt.edu/new-kent/> under "What's New" or <http://jccwmg.org/farmtour2011.htm>
or call the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, New Kent County (804) 966-9645.

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Cynthia Rowles at (804) 966-9645 during business hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. *TDD number is (800) 828-1120.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; Jewel E. Hairston, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State, Petersburg.