

# NEW RIVER VALLEY

## AGRICULTURE & AGRITOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN



2015



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Strategic Plan - Executive Summary ..... iii

Chapter 1 - Agribusiness..... 1

    New River Valley Agribusiness Plan of Work ..... 2

Chapter 2 - Agritourism..... 9

    New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work..... 10

Appendix..... 19

## **STRATEGIC PLAN - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

---

For Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Floyd Counties, agritourism and agribusiness are vehicles for increasing community wealth, providing a broader market base for locally produced products, and diversifying the mix of products and services available to visitors. The purpose of the New River Valley Agriculture and Agritourism Strategic Plan is two-fold: 1) gain a better understanding of what the current agriculture assets are in the community; and 2) develop a plan of work that will support and enhance agriculture and agritourism in the region.

In order to identify current agriculture assets in the community, the Project Management Team recruited the expertise of Matson Consulting and the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension. Matson Consulting prepared a Regional Assessment that established the groundwork for the planning process. The Regional Assessment provided a comprehensive overview of agriculture characteristics, an evaluation of the current agriculture sector, case studies and statewide/national trends, and over 70 recommendation ideas. The Cooperative Extension facilitated local community meeting discussions, the Agritourism in a Creative Economy Workshop, and several educational programs. The Extension's work produced the Linking our Community's Hidden Gems document, which identifies strategies for agritourism. Both, Matson Consulting and the Cooperative Extension, were instrumental in starting our local agriculture and agritourism conversation.

Developing the Strategic Plan was a collaborative effort, funded by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Giles County, Montgomery County, and Pulaski County. The local Agriculture and Agritourism community dedicated their time and expertise throughout the planning process. The Grant Management Team was supported by four subcommittees, including: Team Agritourism, Team Education and Outreach, Team Research and Evaluation, and Team Marketing. In addition, a Steering Committee consisting of local farmers, agribusiness owners, and agritourism operators prioritized the goals and recommendations, and guided the project deliverables into tangible work outcomes.

The final Strategic Plan document is comprised of two chapters. The first chapter focuses on agribusiness and the second chapter focuses on agritourism. While each chapter is interconnected, our team decided that both areas needed a separate plan of work.

Key Recommendations for Agribusiness included: 1) developing Agriculture Development Boards at each county; 2) exploring production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce; 3) establishing a small producer network to generally foster closer communication and collaboration; 4) identifying opportunities for beginning farmers; and 5) creating teams to assist with whole farm planning.

Key recommendations for Agritourism included: 1) developing and enhancing agritourism marketing strategies in the NRV; 2) increasing the number of festivals and events held on farms; 3) creating an interactive web-based tool that promotes and grows agritourism in the region; 4) providing educational opportunities for the agritourism community; and 5) increasing opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced food and value added products.

The Strategic Plan outlines a collaborative effort for our regional partners. Accomplishing the goals and strategies will preserve and promote the positive impacts that agriculture and agritourism offer our community.



## **CHAPTER 1 - AGRIBUSINESS**

---

Agriculture is Virginia’s largest and oldest industry, generating over \$52 billion annually. The agriculture sector provides 357,000 jobs, consists of over 46,000 farms, and when combined with forestry, accounts for about 8.1% of the state’s GDP. Almost 90% of Virginia’s farms are family owned and operated.

In the New River Valley, beef and forestry/timber are the largest agriculture sectors, generating over \$60 million annually. Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties have a total of 1,426 farms, nearly 270,000 acres of farmland. Regionally, the population is aging and the average aged farmer is 57. While the agriculture landscape is dominated by grass grazing animals and steep forests, acreage in forages and forestry continue to grow. Additionally, agriculture continues to have a significant economic impact across the region.

December 18, 2014, the NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Project Steering Committee reviewed the Regional Assessment, prepared by Matson Consulting, and collaboratively identified five priority recommendations:

1. Form an agriculture development board
2. Explore production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce
3. Establish a small producer network
4. Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers
5. Create teams to assist with whole farm planning

## New River Valley Agribusiness Plan of Work

Overarching Goal: Support and enhance agribusiness in the New River Valley

(Goal → Objectives → Strategies)

OBJECTIVE 1		Form an Agriculture Development Board.			
<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
1-1	Establish an Agriculture Development Board (ADB) at each county in the New River Valley.	<p>Formalization of ADB, a subcommittee of the Board of Supervisors; 4-6 total voting members appointed from the following sectors: Farm Bureau, VCE, Finance, School Board, Farmer's Market, Meat &amp; Wholefood, Dairy, Produce, Lad Conservation, Forestry/Timber, Agritourism, Wine/Beer/Cider, or Value Added; County Staff to coordinate and document meetings.</p> <p>Potential funding for staff.</p>	NRV Agriculture & Agritourism Management Team, County Board of Supervisors, County Administrators, County Staff.	June 2016	<p>Memo prepared for County Administrators and presentation recommending the establishment of an ADB is complete.</p> <p>ADB established in the Fall/Winter of 2015; Key Focus Areas: defining the purpose, establishing an agriculture network at the county level, preserving existing farmland, zoning, economic development opportunities, best management practices, current industry issues, and advocating for agriculture.</p>

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>		Explore production infrastructure opportunities for meats and produce.			
2-1	Support the establishment of production infrastructure for meats and produce.	<p>Conceptual facility plan, cost analysis, business plan, product development analysis, and community support.</p> <p>Sustain Floyd data/studies; Appalachian Sustainable Development data.</p> <p>Potential funding for a consultant.</p>	VDACS, NRV Meat Coalition, NRVRC, local farmers/producers, New River Highlands RC&D.	June 2016	Location(s), building conceptual design or re-design, survey of interested producers, list equipment, cost analysis, and business plan.

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
2-2	Increase the amount of locally grown and sold meats.	<p>USDA certified abattoir located within a 60 minute drive or less of local meat producers. Ability to process half, quarter, meats by the cut, and value-added products.</p> <p>Attached or adjacent building that showcases and sells wholesale/retail to restaurants, caterers, local institutions, residents, and tourists.</p> <p>Potential seed funding (3-years) for facility staff and operations. Potential funding for engineering and construction services.</p>	NRV Meat Coalition, VDACS, Agriculture Development Board(s).	June 2018	<p>Facility operational to meet increasing consumer demands; increase the accessibility to locally grown products for existing and growing consumer base; increase local and state government tax revenue; create new employment opportunities.</p> <p>Retain up to 4% of weight that could be lost during longer trips due to excessive stress on animals; reduce travel/hauling costs for local producers and increase ability to process meats year-round; increase opportunities for producers to collaborate and diversify sales through specialty products; increase opportunities for the next generation of farmers.</p> <p>Ensure that the Agriculture sector continues to significantly impact the local, regional, and state economies.</p>

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
2-3	Increase opportunities for producers to collaborate and diversify sales through specialty products.	Commercial kitchen/packaging facility for local produce and meats.  Appalachian Sustainable Development data.  Potential seed funding (3-years) for facility staff and operations. Potential funding for engineering and construction services.	VDACS, NRV Meat Coalition, NRVRC, local farmers/producers, Sustain Floyd, New River Highlands RC&D.	June 2018	Facility operational.  Increased sales of meats and produce. Value added product capability.  Increased opportunity to sell locally grown and sold meats and produce.
<b>OBJECTIVE 3</b>		Establish a small producer network.			
3-1	Compile a regional list of small producers individually and by clusters.	Potential seed funding (3-years) for facility staff and operations. Potential funding for consultant services to develop a web application that links products to buyers.	VCE, VDACS, NRVRC, SO Fresh.	June 2015	Complete and distribute list to local stakeholders (VCE, SO Fresh, VDACS, etc).
3-2	Establish special events and activities that increase small producer's networking opportunities.	Locations for events, hosts, and organizers.  Potential funding for event supplies, expenses, and staff.	ADB(s), VCE, VDACS, NRVRC, SO Fresh.	June 2016	Coordinate a minimum of one networking event.



<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
<b>OBJECTIVE 4</b>		Identify opportunities and needs for beginning farmers.			
4-1	Support and promote educational programs for farmers.	<p>Knowledgeable speakers with expertise in the areas of scaled production infrastructure, year 'round production (grazing, produce), small producer networks, beginning farmers, whole farm planning, best management practices, production training resources, farm management plans, tax business resources, and specialty crops; meeting space for activities; and materials for packets.</p> <p>Potential funding for a staff position.</p>	VCE, VA Beginning Farmer, VA Tourism, USDA, SO Fresh, VDACS, Sustain Floyd, Dept. of Forestry, NRCS, Local Soil & Water, NRV Grape Growers Group, Food Safety Team, New River-Highlands RC&D, DHCD, VDACS, local farming community.	June 2015	<p>Educational Plan of Work for Agritourism in the NRV.</p> <p>Attendance at events.</p> <p>Building Collaborative Efforts with local and state wide groups and resources to enhance communication and outreach efforts.</p> <p>Identify types of equipment/structures that might be viable in the region (e.g. seed drill to be shared among grazers, high tunnels for produce).</p>

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
4-2	Facilitate and enhance a network of producers/operators to dialog and learn from pragmatic experiences.	<p>Production Association(s).</p> <p>Skilled farmers and Agribusiness operators to demonstrate or volunteer on-site learning experiences (mentoring).</p> <p>Funding for space and marketing materials for networking.</p> <p>Funding to support quarterly commodity focused breakfast workshops (speakers/panel, food, etc.)</p>	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, Sustain Floyd, VDACS.	September 2015	<p>Skilled farmers in meat/whole food and produce are identified. Initial demonstrations and/or on-site learning experiences are scheduled for Calendar Year 2016.</p> <p>Specific local needs by county are integrated into each educational program.</p> <p>Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held quarterly to share best management practices.</p>
4-3	Host "Meet the Farmer" days for the local products buyer and sellers and also for direct consumers.	<p>Database of local restaurants, schools, and hospitals that desire local produce, meat, dairy products.</p> <p>VDACS's Market Maker Team - Potential funding for a broker to promote Market Maker, provide a list of current events/meetings, and keep the database current.</p>	Staff for each county, new VCE or SD Fresh, VA Food System Council, Sustain Floyd.	February 2016	<p>Planning potential round 2 AFID/DHCD grant application, funding and staffing plan complete for database manager.</p> <p>Survey of a core group of restaurants, schools, and hospitals that desire local foods complete.</p>

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
4-4	Foster relationships that create access to land.	Land owners that are willing to lease under-utilized property. Existing real estate databases.  VDACS's Farmlink program.	VDACS, Farm Bureau, VCE, Sustain Floyd, local financial institutions.	September 2015	Educational information for local farmers about potential revenue and property management  Materials that identify properties that are available for new/beginning farmers to lease; Identify farms willing to lease agriculture property in the NRV; submit information to Farmlink.
<b>OBJECTIVE 5</b>		Create teams to assist with whole farm planning.			
5-1	Support the existing whole farm planning programs. Compile a list of local skilled farmers for each county.	Identify skilled farmers, individually and by cluster, who are willing to share their expertise and ideas for holistic farm management.  Funding for farming expert support.  Funding for a staff position at each county.	Local farmers/producers, VCE.	December 2015	Agriculture Development Board develop an annual list of skilled farmers and resources available online and in printed materials.  Staff position at county would coordinate resources with local partners.



## CHAPTER 2 - AGRITOURISM

---

State Code of Virginia defines agritourism as any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allow members of the general public for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes. In the New River Valley, agritourism is simply defined as creating on-farm experiences. A farm is more than open fields and wooded areas – a true farm should have produce growing or livestock roaming on a regular basis.

Agritourism creates opportunities for the region’s farmers to diversify their income. The additional earnings help to offset losses experienced during difficult growing seasons and/or reductions in meat pricing. The Virginia Tech Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics recently explored consumer interests in agritourism venues. The main objective of the analysis was to assess consumers’ interest and potential expenditure levels for varying types of agritourism operations in the region. The study found that 47% of agritourism venue users are willing to travel 30-60 minutes. In addition, 65% of travelers spend \$11-\$30 on average at agritourism venues.<sup>1</sup>

April 14, 2015, the Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension completed a plan of work with Team Agritourism. The following priority objectives are established for the region:

1. Develop and enhance agritourism marketing strategies for the NRV
2. Increase the number of festivals and events held on farms
3. Create an interactive web-based tool to promote and grow agritourism in the NRV
4. Provide educational opportunities for the NRV agritourism community
5. Increase opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced and value added products

---

<sup>1</sup> Virginia Tech Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics, 2015. *Exploring Consumer Interest in Agritourism Venues Located in the New River Valley*. Retrieved from: <http://news.cals.vt.edu/fbm-update/2015/04/08/exploring-consumer-interest-in-agritourism-venues-located-in-the-new-river-valley/>

## New River Valley Agritourism Plan of Work

Overarching Goal: Support and enhance agritourism in the New River Valley

(Goal → Objectives → Strategies)

OBJECTIVE 1		Develop and enhance agritourism marketing strategies for the NRV			
<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
1-1	Establish regional position to serve as the coordinator for regional agritourism activities.	Find partners and funding to support position, office space. Focus early on sustainable funding (not just start-up funds)	Team Agritourism, DHCD, NRVRC, New River Highlands RC&D.	June 2016	Funding secured, position hired.
1-2	Develop a regional brand for trails, farms, and festivals specific to each season. Name & logo for the region.	Funding: VTC Marketing Leverage Program, AFID & DHCD Grants marketing/branding firm	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, VDACS, Team Agritourism, Team Marketing.	January 2016	Economic impact through travelers spending, lodging, number of visits to trip planner, survey travelers, website visitation, social media metrics.
1-3	Partner with other local and regional tourism initiatives, rest stops, hotels, sporting events, gas stations, universities, and other public spaces to market agritourism.	Funding for consultant/graphic services, and printed materials such as, rack cards, coupons, brochures List of partners	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, Team Marketing.	March 2016	Print Materials (3 types), placement of print material throughout 5 tourism businesses, placement Virginia Welcome Center, establish hub space with partners.
1-4	Develop a digital marketing campaign.	Marketing firm, marketing funding, review by VA Tourism Corp (VTC) staff	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, Marketing Consultant.	June 2016	Active marketing campaign, working website.

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
1-5	Provide technical assistance to farms to develop farm brands.	Seasoned Agritourism businesses, funding for a marketing consultant and/or staff.  Secure funding partners	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), DHCD, VCE, Marketing Consultant, Team Marketing, staff.	March 2016	Develop assistance program, create printed materials for assistance, branding toolkit/resources to share, workshop created, marketing tools including website, brochures, logo, and other materials.
1-6	Deliver production information & workshops related to agritourism topics, including grapes, hops, and apples production for sale to wineries/breweries/cideries and Food Safety Regulations for local product producers and farmers mkt. managers.	Initial survey. Meet the farmer position could link wineries, breweries, and cideries to local producers.  Potential funding for staff, enhance the safety of locally grown produce, GAP Training & Certification.	County or regional staff, VCE, Farm Safety Team, VT Food Innovations, VDACS, DHCD.	Survey: June 2016  Position: June 2017	Local wineries, breweries, and cideries have a single point of contact that can link them to a series of local agribusiness owners (that specifically meet their needs).
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>		Increase the number of festivals and events held on farms.			
2-1	Inventory the festivals currently held on the New River Valley.	Funding with grant money for part-time coordinator (first year). "Next Three Days" is a possible coordinator, information sharing from: extension databases, and tourism directors.	Agricultural Development Board (ADB), Team Marketing, County Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), VCE, staff, DHCD.	March 2016	Revenue generated, number of festivals increased, coordinator reports to ADB(s).

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
2-2	Explore creative alternative ideas for on farm events & festivals.	Potential funding for a part-time coordinator or consultant, local agritourism operators.	VCE, SO Fresh, NRVRC, DHCD.	September 2015	<p>Press releases submitted by coordinator and Extension agents as they work with individual producers or host workshops.</p> <p>So Fresh/NRVRC website listing of farms. Extension data-base list of producers.</p> <p>Increase in number of producers beginning their own events.</p>
2-3	Create a support team working with the local landowner to tailor resources needed for planning and executing an event or festival.	Tools for evaluating economic feasibility, a marketing strategy, one-on-one or workshops on: food safety, liability insurance, zoning ordinances, VDOT (site distance requirements, etc.); another producer and/or an extension agent with expertise in showcasing produce as an event; volunteers to assist in preparation and on day of event.	Sub-Committee of county Agricultural Development Board, DHCD.	July 2016	<p>A list of contact information for persons and organizations willing to volunteer their time and/or resources.</p> <p>At least 1 new successful farm event held. Initiated in Montgomery County.</p>

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
2-4	Assess county based policies affecting agritourism festivals and events.	Links to or hard copies of local ordinances and regulations	Team Research and Evaluation, Agriculture Development Board, DHCD.	June 2016	Memo for each county.
<b>OBJECTIVE 3</b>		Create an interactive web-based tool to promote and grow agritourism in the NRV.			
3-1	Compile a list of local agritourism options individually and by clusters.	NRVRC information, list from previous Agritourism event, volunteer team, detailed maps of the area counties, SO Fresh website.	NRVRC, SO Fresh, DHCD.	June 2015	Completed list.
3-2	Create a detailed calendar of local agritourism events.	Chamber of Commerce information, So Fresh calendars, volunteer team, Next Three Days, Explore NRV website, VDACS Marketing Tool.	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Marketing, DHCD.	September 2015	Completed calendar.
3-3	Draft a layout for an online interactive Trip Planner.	Samples from other similar sites, compiled list of agritourism options, calendar of events, volunteer team, interactive application consultant.	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVRC, DHCD.	June 2015	Outline and supporting materials submitted to Team Agritourism.



<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
3-4	Create interactive web-based product site.	<p>List of local agritourism venues individually and by clusters, draft calendar, draft trip planner, Volunteer team Paid or volunteer website consultant.</p> <p>Seek funding (application for regional branding)</p>	Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Team Agritourism, Team Marketing, NRVRC, DHCD.	September 2016	<p>Interactive site linking travelers to venues is up and running.</p> <p>Evaluate the feasibility an online farmer support services tool.</p>
3-5	Build partnerships between "cluster" event sites for marketing and trip planning purposes.	Staff to facilitate cluster community work, website consultant, funds for print marketing for clusters CO-OP Marketing (VA Tourism)	Staff, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), Community Partners, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), NRVRC, DHCD.	December 2015	List of at least 3 cluster communities.

OBJECTIVE 4		Provide educational opportunities for the NRV agritourism community.			
<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
4-1	Support and promote educational programs for farmers.	Knowledgeable speakers/farmers with expertise in the areas of scaled production infrastructure, year around production (grazing, produce), small producer networks, beginning farmers, whole farm planning, agritourism trails, marketing events, branding, festivals/event preparation, best management practices, production training resources, farm management plans, farm tax business resources, and specialty crops; meeting space for activities; and materials for packets. Potential funding for a staff position. Grants for equipment/structures (e.g. seed drill to be shared among grazers, high tunnels for produce).	VCE, VA Tourism Corp, USDA, SO Fresh, VDACS, Dept. of Forestry, NRCS, Local Soil & Water, NRV Grape Growers Group, Food Safety Team, New River-Highlands RC&D, DHCD, local farming community.	June 2015	<p>Educational Plan of Work for Agritourism in the NRV.</p> <p>Attendance at events.</p> <p>Building Collaborative Efforts with local and state wide groups and resources to enhance communication and outreach efforts.</p> <p>Build on current programs, VCE offering local opportunities; VDACS and VA Tourism offering statewide resources (farm to school, VA Agritourism Conference).</p>

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
4-2	Foster relationships among agritourism operations. Facilitate and Enhance an Agritourism Network of producers/operators to dialog and learn from pragmatic experiences. (Operators learning from Operators – “Mentoring”).	<p>Production Association(s). Skilled farmers and Agribusiness operators to demonstrate or volunteer on-site learning experiences (mentoring). Provide space/time for networking Potential integration into farmer panels and farm tours.</p> <p>Create hands-on experiences for beginning farmers and farmers interested in diversifying business.</p>	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, Team Education and Outreach, DHCD.	September 2015	<p>Skilled farmers in meat/whole food and produce are identified. Initial demonstrations and/or on-site learning experiences are scheduled for Calendar Year 2016. Specific local needs by county are integrated into each educational opportunity.</p> <p>Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices.</p>
4-3	Provide Farm Tours for Agritourism Operators to see what is possible. Highlight season extension (winter grazing and growing cold-season produce).	Farmers willing to share their experiences, consultants to organize and hold workshops, High Tunnel Programs, Forage & Grassland Council – Grazing programs.	Local Farming Community, VCE, So Fresh, New River-Highlands RC&D, DHCD, NRCS, VA Forage & Grassland Council, Appalachian Sustainable Development, other regional consultants.	September 2015	<p>Farmers have established networks by trade in each county. Informal breakfasts are held every other month to share best management practices.</p> <p>Support farmers with annual production and season extension practices.</p>

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
4-4	Host "Meet the Farmer" days for the Local Products Buyer and Sellers and also for direct consumers.	Survey of existing local restaurants, schools, and hospitals focusing on local produce, meat, dairy products desired, database manager to link farmers and product seekers, educational materials and local events for the consumer and farmer, potential funding for a staff position.	Staff for each county, new VCE or SD Fresh, DHCD, VA Food System Council.	September 2015	Planning potential round 2 AFID/DHCD grant application, funding and staffing plan complete for database manager.
4-5	Provide educational resources regarding regulations and best management practices on farm stays and "staycations".	Research current rules and regulations. Explore where there are barriers to offering staycations. Labor laws - Liability	VCE, NRVRC, DHCD, Local Planning Departments.	September 2015	Memo prepared and submitted to County Administrators and local farmers.
<b>OBJECTIVE 5</b>		Increase opportunities for on farm direct sales of locally produced food and value added products.			
5-1	Support on-farm Farm to Fork Events.	Producers, local products, licensed caterer & staff.	VCE, DHCD, and local partners	September 2016	Hold a minimum of 1 event.
5-2	Support the establishment of a commercial kitchen.	Feasibility study, cost analysis, business plan, and community support.	Team Agritourism, local farmers/producers, Sustain Floyd, Appalachian Sustainable Development, Pulaski Grow, SD Fresh, VDACS, DHCD.	July 2016	Location(s), building conceptual design or re-design, survey of interested producers, list equipment, cost analysis, and business plan.

<i>ID</i>	<i>Strategies/Actions</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Evaluation/Outcome</i>
5-3	Showcase producers' value-added products and providing brochures with directions to each producer's farm for future sales and their own special events.	Advertising such as press releases, brochures at Virginia Tourism Centers, etc., and coordinators to plan and execute events, products.  Potential venue, such as a community kitchen or agriculture fair Farms willing to showcase	DMOs, DHCD, local farming community, Team Agritourism.	August 2016	Event well publicized and well attended.

## APPENDIX

---

Linking Our Community's Hidden Gems: Virginia Cooperative Extension, 2014	Appendix A
NRV Agriculture Industry SWOT Analysis: Department of Housing & Community Development, 2014	Appendix B
Tri-County Agriculture Assessment: Matson Consulting, 2014	Appendix C
Project Reporting	Appendix D
Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, AFID Planning Grant	
Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development, Regional Project Planning Grant	
Branding	Appendix E
Planning for an Agriculture Future in Southwest Virginia	Appendix F

