

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024



“Our farmers deserve praise, not condemnation; and their efficiency should be cause for gratitude, not something for which they are penalized.” — John F. Kennedy



The new year arrives and it's all about the 2024 Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention January 30th - February 1st, 2024.



Our Annual Member Breakfast meeting is Thursday, February 1st at 7:30 am in Cocoa Suites 3, 4 & 5. Your advanced registration is due by January 19th.

We now have the option to use **PayPal** for payments, the link is posted on our webpage www.virginiaapples.net/vshs or click paypal.me/VSHSociety *you will need to request an invoice if you do not have a paypal account.

Wishing you a prosperous, healthy, happy New Year!
Laura Wiley

vshsociety@gmail.com

PO Box 2445, Winchester, VA 22604, 540.667.9101

CHECK THIS OUT!



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The 2024 Mid-Atlantic Convention promises to be another exceptional grower gathering. We will be joined by the **North American Strawberry Growers Association!**

An estimated 2,200 or more persons are expected for the 2024 edition of the Mid-Atlantic Convention January 30 to February 1 at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Over 160 companies will be represented in the trade show which is sold-out with a waiting list of exhibitors anxious to get into the show. A series of pre-convention workshops and a farm market bus tour on January 29 are expected to attract several hundred participants with the bus tour usually being sold out. This year's Convention is noteworthy because the members of the North American Strawberry Growers Association from all over the continent will be holding their annual meeting in conjunction with the Mid-Atlantic Convention. Various committees have been planning for the 2024 Convention with the goal of building on the 47-year history of a premier grower educational event.



Eric Finkenbinder, an award-winning meteorologist with abc27, will address "Challenges of Our Changing Local Climate" as our 2024 Keynote Speaker

Eric lives in Perry county, PA where he enjoys most of his time on the family farm or in his backyard working on one of his many hobbies. His time on the farm showed him the importance of detailed, local weather forecasts which is why he pursued meteorology at Penn State. He received a B.S. in meteorology in 2003 and started working at his hometown news station. This will be Eric's 21st year with abc27 where you can see him during the weekday evening newscasts at 5, 6, 7 and 11 p.m. Eric also provides science and agriculture stories for the station and writes a weather outlook for Lancaster Farming, a weekly regional newspaper.

When he is not forecasting or working in the fields, Eric enjoys learning new ways to improve his vegetable and fruit gardens, beekeeping, forest regeneration projects, helping his daughters with 4-H projects, or perhaps learning another new hobby. He is a member of the Capital Area Beekeepers Association and American Chestnut Foundation.

Mark your calendar now for January 30 to February 1st, 2024 in Hershey, PA.


[2024 MAFVC](http://www.mafvc.org)



2024

MID-ATLANTIC *fruit & vegetable convention*

JANUARY 30–FEBRUARY 1, 2024

HERSHEY LODGE
Hershey, Pennsylvania

www.mafvc.org

Pre-Convention Workshops – January 29

Lancaster-Berks County Farm Market Bus Tour • Maximizing Strawberry Production • Farm Transition
Farm Software Solutions • FSMA Grower Training • Recall Readiness • Specialty Mushrooms
Vegetable Transplants • Sustainable High Tunnels • PA Pesticide Applicator License Training

Educational Sessions on all 3 days with 50 sessions

January 30

Keynote

High Tunnels • Tree Fruit • Strawberries • General Vegetables
Urban Agriculture • Herbs • Irrigation • Tree Nuts • Cut Flowers
Farm Market Management • Creative Farm Market Stories • Wholesale Marketing

January 31

Strawberries • Tomatoes • Tree Fruit • Stone Fruit • General Vegetables
Sweet Corn • Greenhouse Ornamentals • Organic Vegetable Production • H-2A Labor
Small Fruit • Marketing 101 • Agritourism • Spanish

February 1

Tree Fruit • Stone Fruit • Small Fruit • Pumpkins • Wildlife Damage Control
Potatoes • General Vegetables • Soil Health/Cover Crops • Post Harvest Handling
Hydroponic Vegetables • Innovative Marketing and High Value Niche Crops
Digital & Social Media Marketing Potatoes • Labor/Farm Management

Trade Show

*with over 160 exhibitors featuring the
latest in grower and direct marketing supplies!*

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Virginia State Horticultural Society MID-ATLANTIC FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONVENTION



January 30th - February 1st, 2024

Hershey Lodge, 325 University Dr, Hershey, PA 17033

(NOTE: VSHS Annual Meeting is Thursday, February 1, 2024 @ 7:30am in Cocoa Suites)

Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

REGISTRATION FEES

Advance registration must be received by **January 19, 2024**. Registration is required for each person, including spouses. Fees allow one to attend both fruit and vegetable sessions as well as enter the exhibit area. **No refund of pre-registration fees will be made unless canceled by January 19th** in writing, by phone (540) 667-9101, or by email vshsociety@gmail.com. Please indicate above all who will be attending, use back of form if necessary.

VSHS Member Registration

Advanced Registration

First Person from a family, farm, or business _____ @ \$80.00 = \$ _____

Additional persons from a family, farm, or business _____ @ \$65.00 = \$ _____

Walk-In Registration at Hershey or postmarked after 1/19/24 _____ @ \$95.00 = \$ _____

Non-Member Registration

One Day _____ @ \$130.00 = \$ _____

Three Day _____ @ \$170.00 = \$ _____

ANNUAL FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS BANQUET

Tuesday, January 30, 2024 – Nigerian Room _____ @ \$35.00 = \$ _____

Workshops/Bus Tour -Monday, January 29, 2024 – **Pre-Registration is Required for these Events**

(NOTE: **Convention** Registration is **not** required for these events)

Producing Vegetable Transplants (Includes Lunch & Handouts) 9:00am – 4pm _____ @ \$70.00 = \$ _____

Food Safety Modernization Act Grower Training (Includes Lunch & Manual) 9am-5:15pm _____ @ \$50.00 = \$ _____

Begin with the End in Mind: An Overview of the Farm Transition Process 9am – 12pm _____ @ \$25.00 = \$ _____

Sustainable High Tunnel Vegetable Production (Includes Lunch & Handouts) - 9am to 4:30pm _____ @ \$70.00 = \$ _____

Recall Readiness (Includes Lunch) – 9am – 3pm _____ @ \$75.00 = \$ _____

PA Pesticide Applicators License Training (Includes Lunch & Manual) 9am – 4pm _____ @ \$85.00 = \$ _____

Maximizing Productivity: Strawberry Production Workshop (Includes Lunch) – 9am – 4:30pm _____ @ \$80.00 = \$ _____

Software Solutions for Farm Management (Young Grower Alliance) – 2pm – 4pm _____ @ \$15.00 = \$ _____

Specialty Mushrooms – 12pm – 4:30pm _____ @ \$35.00 = \$ _____

Berks/Lancaster County Bus Tour (Includes Lunch) – 7:45am – 5:30pm _____ @ \$95.00 = \$ _____

Credit Card Payment Online: paypal.me/vshsociety

*If you do not have a PayPal account, please request an invoice.

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make check payable to VSHS, mail to PO Box 2445, Winchester, VA 22604

You must provide names of all attendees so that name badges may be prepared, use back of form if necessary.

ENTRY TO EXHIBIT HALLS AND SESSIONS REQUIRE AN IDENTIFICATION BADGE

[CLICK HERE FOR AN ON-LINE PDF OF OUR 2024 ADVANCED REGISTRATION FORM](#)

The total number of apples in storage on December 1, 2023, was 173 million bushels, 29 percent more than last December's total of 134 million bushels and 19 percent more than the 5-year average for that date.

Fresh apple holdings this December totaled 124 million bushels, 33 percent more than the inventories reported for last December. Processing holdings totaled 49 million bushels, 19 percent more than last year on December 1.

This report captures more than 95 percent of the national storage capacity.



[USAppleTracker: December 2023](#)

Excel format: [December 2023 – Tables](#)

USAppleTracker: Harvest Wrap-Up Webinar

Presenter: Chris Gerlach, Director of Industry Analytics, USApple

Chris Gerlach, USApple's Economist and Director of Industry Analytics, will review the latest storage reports, helping the industry recalibrate for the remainder of the marketing year. The webinar will highlight findings from the proprietary USAppleTracker national storage surveys that detail the holdings and movement of U.S. apples by state, variety, use and storage type over the course of the year. These data are critical to understanding where we are relative to prior seasons and for identifying prevailing trends in production and varietal shifts.



[US Apple Harvest Wrap Up Webinar](#)

USApple in the News

Apples have been front and center in many news cycles over the last few weeks. National news stories in CNN and NPR reached more than 50 million readers; USApple worked with reporters at both outlets to help shape the stories to accurately hit key points. In D.C. news outlets, we're seeing reporting about the coalition letter USApple signed regarding China's Permanent Normal Trade Relations status. Plus, USApple's December Storage Report is making headlines, as well as the USDA Under Secretary's visit to a packing house in PA.



- NPR: [Millions of U.S. apples were almost left to rot. Now, they'll go to hungry families](#)
- CNN: [October is prime apple season. Why did prices plunge?](#)
- Lancaster Farming: [USDA Leader Touts Progress Growing Export Markets](#)
- Gettysburg Times: [U.S. trade official tours plant, brings ag export info](#)
- Fruit Growers News: [USDA chief visits Rice Fruit apple packinghouse](#)
- The Produce News: [USDA official tours Rice Fruit packinghouse](#)
- Fresh Plaza: [Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs visits apple packing house](#)
- Fruit Growers News: [Fresh apple storage numbers up 33%](#)
- The Packer: [Fresh apple holdings up by 33% year over year](#)
- Fresh Fruit Portal: [U.S. fresh apple holdings up in December](#)
- Fresh Plaza: [US December apple storage up 29 percent over 2022](#)
- Agri-Pulse: [Ag groups try to stop anti-PNTR proposal](#)
- Agri-Marketing: [FARM GROUPS WARN AGAINST IMPACTS OF CHINA'S PNTR REPEAL](#)



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Risk Management Agency

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Grower Resource page for selling
food to USDA.

[Follow this Link](#)



2024 Draft

The **2024 Draft Appendix III/M-13 Handbook** was released on 12/21/2023. You can download the entire handbook, and/or view the record types and their associated exhibits individually from the table below. The handbook files are available in Adobe PDF file format.

NOTE: If you have a problem accessing any of the records, please email [Appendix III comments](#).



[2024 Draft Appendix III/M-13 Handbook](#)

Agricultural Worker Protection Standard Posters, videos, and compliance information links



Current videos here: <https://pesticideresources.org/wps/training/percvids/>

Information on compliance: <https://pesticideresources.org/wps/guide/compliance.html>

EPA Website: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/agricultural-worker-protection-standard-wps>



*VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE AND
CONSUMER SERVICES*

A message from VDACS

NEW FARMER RESOURCE PAGE

Are you considering getting into the agriculture industry or are you a new farmer? VDACS has put together a webpage just for you! The Resources for New & Beginning Farmers page includes links to financial information, farm planning, training programs, technical assistance, conservation information, farm safety, and farm stress. The page also contains links to videos from a recent seminar hosted by the Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry and [VSU College of Agriculture](#).



[Resources for New and Beginning Farmers](#)

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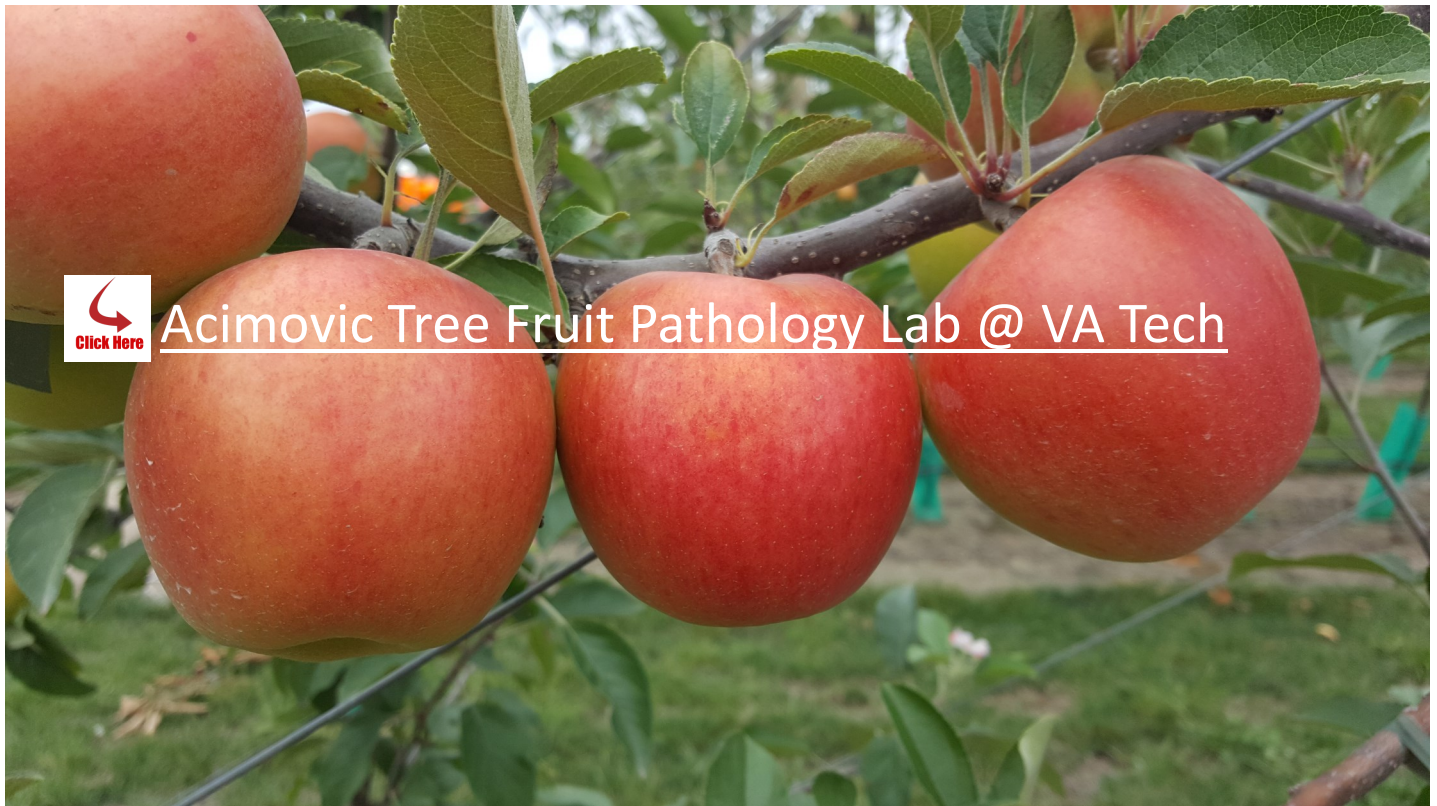
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[Acimovic Tree Fruit Pathology Lab @ VA Tech](#)

If you are not already subscribed to Dr. Srdjan Acimovic's Lab, the Assistant Professor of Plant Pathology (PI) at the Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Virginia Tech Winchester. Click the link in the photograph above and do so today!. You will receive up to date reports from Dr. Acimovic on Tree Fruit Pathology in real time.

New Post 11/15/2023



Looking for an Orchard near you to visit? Our directory includes over 50 Apple Orchards all over the Commonwealth. If yours isn't listed, be sure to contact us to be included.

[Virginia Apple Orchards](#)

News from the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance

[What is the Farm Bill?](#)



**AMERICAN AGRICULTURE.
STRONGER TOGETHER.**

Congress has enacted legislation that extends the 2018 farm bill for an additional fiscal year. It is a clean extension that fully funds our farm bill programs through September 30, 2024, without any additional enhancements or changes.

What does this full year extension mean for the future of the farm bill?

The bipartisan leadership of the House and Senate agriculture committees released a joint statement on November 12th that this extension is in no way a substitute for passing a five-year farm bill and that they are committed to working together to accomplish that goal next year. We anticipate there will be significant activity on the farm bill in both chambers throughout 2024, particularly during the first quarter of the year, as House and Senate leaders attempt to conclude their work before the 2024 election season is fully underway.

What has the SCFBA been doing to prepare for 2024?

At the beginning of this year, the SCFBA published more than 100 farm bill recommendations to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crop growers in the United States. We published two additional proposals this summer that would make effective and affordable crop insurance available to all specialty crop growers. The SCFBA Legislative Committee, co-chaired by Diane Kurrle (U.S. Apple) and Rebeckah Adcock (IFPA), has facilitated countless meetings with the members and staff of the House and Senate agriculture committees and recently hosted two well-attended policy briefings open to all House and Senate staff working on the farm bill. More than a dozen marker bills advancing Alliance priorities have been introduced in the House and in the Senate and more are in the works.

On a personal note, we have not had a single interaction in which we've been told that we don't need the things we as an industry are requesting in this farm bill. What we are told, however, is that resources are limited, and we might not get everything we want. Specialty Crops account for nearly half the farm gate value in the United States and receive far less than ten percent of the farm bill's resources. It is imperative that we continue fighting for additional resources to advance ALL our priorities throughout the entirety of this process.

As we conclude 2023 and prepare for 2024, we are confident that the SCFBA is advancing the right suite of proposals to help our growers stay competitive in an increasingly difficult environment. We remain vigilant and look forward to engaging with you more frequently as the pace of legislative activity increases throughout 2024.

Sincerely yours,

Cathy Burns, Co-chair
CEO, IFPA

Mike Joyner, Co-chair
President, FFVA

Dave Puglia, Co-chair
President & CEO, WGA

Kam Quarles, Co-chair
CEO, NPC



Interested in becoming a member of the
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Secrets of the Blue Ridge: Mountain Apples: For the Love of Fruit

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By Phil James - Crozet Gazette



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Wayne H. Drumheller, M.Ed., Editor & Founder
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is published in a standard 8 x 10 format, 120 pages, illustrated, with Apple Recipes-Instructions and over fifty (50) "Color Me" apple drawings and illustrations for home & classrooms or children-adult interactive fun times. The book is available directly from the author for **\$15.00** or [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Published by The Rockfish River Valley Short Book Writers,
Wayne Drumheller, Editor and Founder

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