

VIRGINIA TECH AND VCE PRESENT

AGROFORESTRY FIELD DAY

8:00 - 8:30 AM: Registration and breakfast

8:30 - 8:40 AM: Welcome

8:40 - 9:10 AM: Intro to agroforestry and silvopasture - John Fike

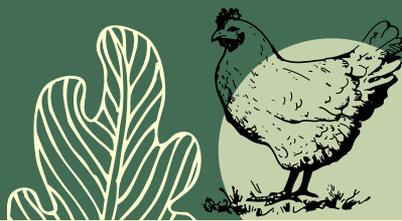
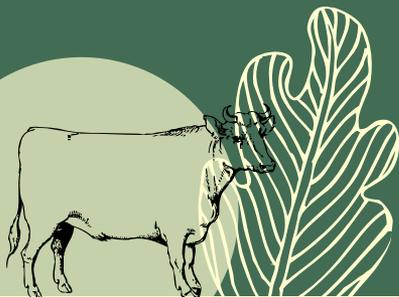
9:10 - 9:40 AM: Whole farm planning - Tim Mize

10:00 - 10:30 AM: Transitioning from a pasture-based laying hen operation to a forest-based practice - Kate Bowen

10:30 - 11:00 AM: Silvopasture and poultry welfare - Leonie Jacobs

11:00 - 12:15 PM: Panel Discussion: Practicalities of an agroforestry production system - Austin Unruh (Trees for Graziers), Kate Bowen (Meadowdale Farm), Stesha Warren (Appalachian Sustainable Development)

1:00 - 5:00 PM: 3 farm visits



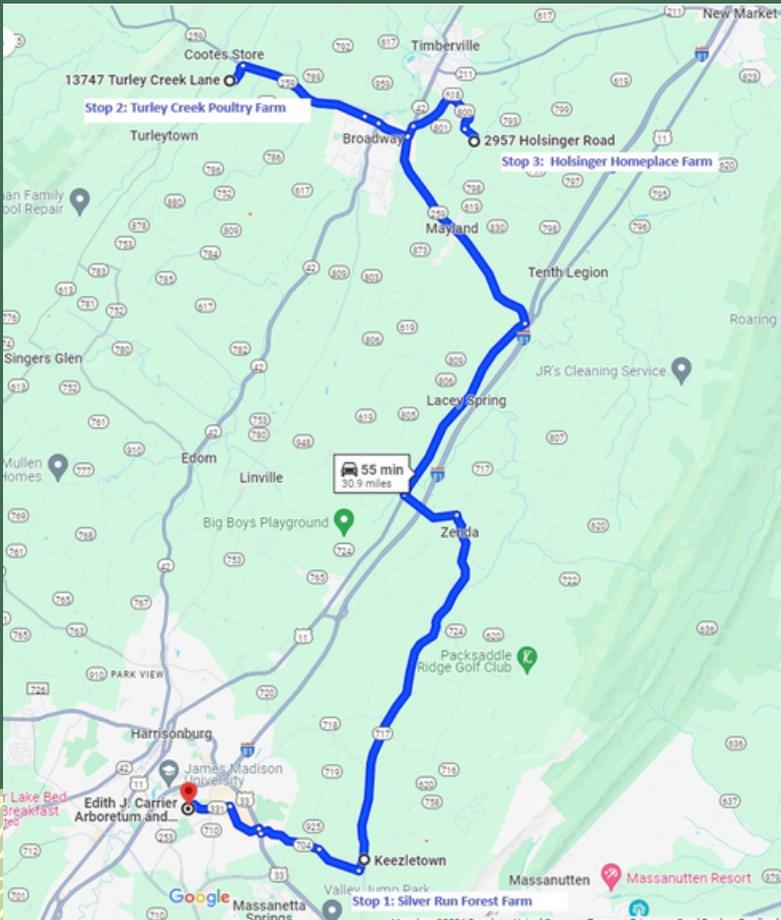
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FIELD TRIP

TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED

Start & End: Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU, 780
University Blvd, Harrisonburg, VA 22807



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Timothy Mize, Virginia Tech - tmize@vt.edu

Tim is a long-time resident of Fauquier County with many years of experience in livestock production and agribusiness, and is currently serving as the Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent in the county. His focus is on grazing livestock, forages, and integrating wildlife habitat into working farms. Tim also works with farm succession planning, farm profitability, and farm resource management. His hobbies include fly fishing and training working stock dogs. He is a graduate of Virginia Tech with a BS in Animal Science and MS in Agriculture with a concentration in Environmental Science.

John Fike, Virginia Tech - jfike@vt.edu

John Fike is a professor in Virginia Tech's School of Plant and Environmental Sciences and serves as Virginia's state forage extension specialist. Fike holds an MS in forage agronomy (Virginia Tech) and a PHD in dairy nutrition (University of Florida). His primary research arena is with forages, but over his career he has conducted research in forage-livestock systems, bioenergy crops and systems, and industrial hemp production. Silvopasture has been a primary research and extension arena for Fike for over 20 years, and he has focused on developing new information and demonstrations to show the multiple production, animal welfare, and ecosystem benefits of integrating trees into pastures. Fike grew up on a small family dairy farm in Virginia.





Kate Bowen, Meadowdale Farm - kategraves2@yahoo.com

Kate Bowen, a first-generation farmer, co-owns Meadowdale Farm, veteran-owned in East Tennessee. Her farm utilizes pasture-based and agroforestry methods to raise nutrient-dense meat, eggs, hay, and forest products with sales through farmers markets, restaurants, grocery stores, CSAs, and an on-farm store. Having recently relocated, she's building her third farm from scratch. The current venture focuses on an extensive, experimental 24-acre multi-year agroforestry project. Kate prioritizes animal welfare, sustainable practices, and creative solutions for physical disabilities with adaptive resources. Her passion extends to mentoring beginning farmers and supporting veterans transitioning into agriculture, fostering a community of truly resilient agriculture.



Leonie Jacobs- Virginia Tech - jacobs1@vt.edu

Dr. Leonie Jacobs is an Associate Professor in the School of Animal Sciences at Virginia Tech, USA. With a research and extension appointment, she focuses her efforts towards improving the welfare of production animals. Her current work includes identifying objective measures for positive welfare status in poultry, cognitive test development to determine affective states, sustainable pasture-based broiler chicken production, and pain assessment and management in pig production. She has completed her PhD in Veterinary Sciences at Ghent University in Belgium with her thesis focusing on the impact of transportation on broiler chicken welfare. She has a master's degree in Animal Sciences from Wageningen University in the Netherlands, and one from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.



Stesha Warren, Appalachian Sustainable Development - swarren@asdevelop.org

Stesha Warren is a Agroforester with Appalachian Sustainable Development. She leads “Agroforestry Trainings for Natural Resource Professionals” and has assisted producers with technical assistance for agroforestry adoption of forest farming, silvopasture and alley cropping for many years. Stesha has a extensive background in horticulture, agricultural education and foraging. She and her husband also have a diversified farm in North Carolina that embraces agroforestry practices. Stesha’s expertise is in forest farming.

Austin Unruh, Trees for Graziers - austin@treesforgraziers.com

Austin Unruh is the founder and CEO of Trees For Graziers, a company helping farmers in Pennsylvania and beyond take their grazing to new heights using silvopasture. It’s his goal to make silvopasture as easy and cost effective as possible for farmers, which is why TFG offers everything from planning and funding acquisition to planting and aftercare, while also growing silvo-specific nursery stock. When not thinking about silvopasture, Austin’s favorite activity is picking all manner of tree crops with his young family.



Adam Downing, Virginia Tech - adowning@vt.edu

Adam is the Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Agent serving Virginia Cooperative Extension’s Northwest District. He provides informal education regarding forestry and natural resources to address current issues in rural, urban, and rural/urban interface areas to home & landowners, professionals, decision-makers, and the general public. A long time ago, Adam volunteered with the United States Peace Corps in Kenya as an agroforestry extension agent. B.S. Forestry - Purdue University. M.S. Degree Forest Resources - Penn State University.



FARM VISITS

TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED

Silver Run Forest Farm

silverrunforestfarm@gmail.com

silverrunforestfarm.org

Silver Run Forest Farm is a riparian nursery, woodland collective, and folk school rooted in love and living soil. These roots sprout out as agroforestry, watershed health, and restorative justice. In their nursery, they cultivate and celebrate tree crops and other plant allies that cross-pollinate food sovereignty and ecological restoration. They tend the silver waters of Shenandoah - Cub Run, Blacks Run, and downstream - by farming in the image of the forest and remediating the toxins that pollute souls, society, and soil, from erosion to empire. They do all this to propagate plants and power that feed the earth.



FARM VISITS

USDA-certified organic large-scale broiler chicken farm with silvopasture - Clay and Cynthia Miller, Broadway, VA

farmerfocus.com/farmer/clay-cynthia-miller

Clay and Cynthia Miller started Hidden Hollow Farm right next to Clay's parent's farm, Turley Creek. Now they run the day-to-day of both farms, with guidance from Pam and Dennis. These generational farmers enjoy a gorgeous landscape adjacent to the Shenandoah River. Daily tasks for this busy family include walking the chickens, completing paperwork, preparing meals for hungry toddlers, and keeping up with chores, maintenance, and repairs. The Millers enjoy a bountiful life outside of chicken farming, too. They love to garden and to bottle-feed their calves and lambs. They attend fairs where they often show sheep, participate in frequent church events, and love to be outdoors as a family. Clay and Cynthia want to grow healthier chickens and feel proud of their work. All their chicks arrive in good health, and being able to raise fewer birds according to organic standards creates a "better growing environment".



FARM VISITS

Holsinger Homeplace Farms

Buck and AJ Holsinger, Broadway, VA

holsingerhomeplacefarms@gmail.com

facebook.com/HolsingerHomeplaceFarms

Holsinger Homeplace Farms is a family farm providing natural food products to the Shenandoah Valley. Farmer/cattleman Major Buck Holsinger is a full-time pilot, and runs this farm with the help of his wife Amanda and four children. He is the ninth generation of his family on this farm. They specialize in Grass Fed Galloway Beef as a healthy and sustainable alternative to more conventional production. They run a cow-calf to finish operation with mixed grass pasture/hay as the only feed source.

Holsinger Homeplace Farms energizes with diversity and minimizes soil disturbance through practicing rotational grazing. They use silvopastures, where commercial timber and livestock are grown and managed in the same area.

