

# Young Farmers of Virginia Newsletter

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Superintendent David Fiske discusses the operation of McCormick Farm and the Shenandoah Valley Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Steeles Tavern. This Virginia Tech research farm focuses on beef cattle and forage research. The site also has a museum, gristmill, blacksmith shop, and walking trail for groups to explore.



Guy Griffin is showing his berry crop to Virginia Young Farmer visitors.



Wade's Mill is owned by the Young's.

The **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual State Young Farmer Field Day** was held July 28, 2004 in Southern Augusta County and Northern Rockbridge County. Over 100 participated including several Japanese exchange students and two FFJ advisors (hosted by Turner Ashby FFA families and friends). The first stop was Rockbridge Vineyards where seventeen acres of grapes are in production and old dairy facilities are being used in the wine making process. The second tour stop was JL Farms in Raphine. It is a purebred Limousine and Angus operation with 500 head of cattle on the 1,100 acre farm. Stop three was to McCormick Farm/VT research center. The group toured all the facilities and ate a delicious lunch at the picnic area. The meal was sponsored by Farm Credit and prepared by Mr. Wade Hutchinson. The final stops included Orchardside Farm and Yarn Shop, Buffalo Springs Herb Farm and historic Wade's Mill. The pick-your-own berry farm included blackberries, blueberries and raspberries. That farm also maintained a unique yarn shop with critters such as peacocks and a friendly duck wandering the grounds. The herb farm next door sells 20,000 herb plants between April and June. Many also enjoyed the working water-powered flour mill and cookware/kitchen items/bagged flour varieties at Wade's Mill. It was a great day! Many thanks go to the sponsors and especially to the Augusta County Young Farmers and advisors for organizing this event.

## Message from the President's Tractor Seat



YFV has a new look on the web!! Go to [www.vayoungfarmer.org/](http://www.vayoungfarmer.org/). You will also see a brand new, green YFV display at the upcoming convention and various trade and career shows held around the State. Stop by to say hello and pick up some YFV information.

Greetings from the Young Farmers of Virginia. I'm sure everyone has been grateful and thankful for this year's abundant harvest. The executive committee has been busy planning the 55<sup>th</sup> State Convention which will be held at the Ramada Inn on January 28-30, 2005 in Fredericksburg, VA. Come to the state convention and relax around the beautiful surroundings and excellent services offered by the Ramada Inn. Be sure to take an active part in the contests and awards available to our members and associations. The Augusta County Young Farmers- Riverheads District hosted our state Tour for 2004. Some of the sites that we visited were Rockbridge Vineyards a vineyard and winery; J L Farm a local cattle operation of purebred cattle; McCormick Farm; Orchard side Farm and Yarn Shop, a local pick your own berry farm; Wade's Mill, a genuine working water-powered flour mill; Buffalo Spring Herb Farm, a local grower of herb plants. I again would like to thank Gene McIlwee, Daryl Steege and Barry Gray for organizing the event, the tour hosts and all of the many sponsors that made this event possible. I hope to see many of you in Orlando, Florida for the National Institute in December. The National officers have been planning a great Institute with many things to do in Orlando. I hope that everyone continues to have a prosperous farming year. Wishing you a safe and joyous holiday season.

-Mark Deavers



Newsletter  
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**Jon McDonald reports on some interesting events that the Rockbridge Young Farmers have been organizing:**

The Rockbridge YFA hosted the Third Annual 'Redneck Olympics' at the Rockbridge Regional Fair this past July. Over 50 people competed in events such as: hillbilly horseshoes (using toilet seats for horseshoes), watermelon seed spitting, pickle eating contest, sack race, egg carry relay (teams of three take turns carrying an egg on a spoon around an obstacle course), square bale toss, round bale roll (using a 6x4 bale), and round bale roll end over end (using a 4x4 bale). It was a fun afternoon of entertaining competition.

The Rockbridge YFA will be hosting a *Progressive Farmer Farm Safety Day Camp* on Saturday, April 2, 2005. It will be the first event of its kind in the County. The RYFA is in the process of recruiting volunteers and donations for the Day Camp. The Day Camp provides age appropriate, hands-on safety lessons and demonstrations for on the farm and off the farm hazards. This is a great opportunity for young people to learn valuable lessons that may save their lives and the lives of others.

⇒ *Join us for the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Young Farmers of Virginia Convention!* ←  
*January 28-30, 2005*

The convention will be held at the Ramada Inn in Fredericksburg. Take I-95 to the Massaponax Exit #126. Young Farmers from across the State will be participating in contests, bidding on auction items, attending tours, socializing and having fun at this convention. The Spokesperson Banquet will be on Friday evening at 7:00 p.m. at the hotel. Following that banquet, everyone is invited to the hospitality suite for the President's reception.

On Saturday, there will be tours to Westmoreland County, set up by the Northumberland Young Farmer Association. The stops include Monrovia Farms, a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation farming operation with 475 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat, barley, and hay. It was originally part of James Monroe's birthplace and is owned by Northumberland Young Farmer, Shirley Powell. The farm includes an automated feedlot with 200 angus cattle. Another stop is to Ingleside Plantation Nurseries in Oak Grove. It has become known as "Virginia's largest and finest nursery." IPN owns 2,900 acres with approximately 1,000 acres in nursery stock at any one time. They also have a vineyard that grows 20 different varieties of wine grapes on 70 acres. The day's tour will also include a visit to George Washington's birthplace, Popes Creek Plantation.

The annual business session will follow the tours along with the awards banquet at 6:30 p.m. A speaker will also be part of the banquet to discuss agricultural legislation. The Young's will join us again for entertainment in addition to both the live and silent auctions.

Sunday morning will begin with a breakfast buffet followed by an inspirational message and second business/awards session before adjournment.

**\* PLEASE REMEMBER \***  
We need State Officer Candidates,  
Spokespersons for Agriculture, Auction  
Items/Door Prizes and Participants in all of the  
Generously Sponsored Contests!

## 2004 NYFEA Institute in Orlando, FLORIDA, December 8-12<sup>th</sup>

- **Good Luck** to Stuart Melton, Jr. in the AGCO Spokesperson for Agriculture Contest (Our winner is unable to attend and Stuart was runner up at the State contest.)
- Official delegates will be President Mark Deavers and Vice President Tom Lam.
- Terry Lam will be attending NYFEA's Executive Secretary meeting.
- Many others from Virginia are planning to go to participate in other contests, tours and attending banquets/receptions (to try and win that John Deere lawn mower tractor) in the heart of Walt Disney World. (Oh yeah, vacation a little too!!) We wish safe travel for everyone and their families!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There will be **NO** Northern Area Young Farmer Banquet this year. It is usually held the first Monday in December and this year, several members involved with the banquet will be in or on their way to Florida for the institute, so we decided to cancel it this year.

We are still looking for a **Host for the 2005 State Summer Field Day**. Please let us know if your association or area may be interested in setting up some interesting tours!

***Award Applications*** (Corn/Soybean Growing, Outstanding Young Farmer, Agricultural Stewardship, etc.) are DUE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup> (to be judged on December 3<sup>rd</sup> in Harrisonburg). They may be found on the website—[www.vayoungfarmer.org/](http://www.vayoungfarmer.org/) or in the VA Agricultural Curriculum Guide for Continuing Education. It is important to get them to Terry Lam by the deadline. You can email them to [lamttc@aol.com](mailto:lamttc@aol.com), fax them to 540-828-3287, or the good 'ole fashioned way....mail them in an envelope to P.O. Box 221, Bridgewater, VA 22812.

A **registration form** for the 2005 State Convention is enclosed in this newsletter. Be sure to stick it on the refrigerator or somewhere handy so you don't forget to register and reserve a hotel room by the January 14<sup>th</sup> deadline. The officers and others have put a lot of effort into making this a great convention!! We would love to have you join us. Bring a friend!

