



# MINORITY & VETERAN FARMERS OF THE PIEDMONT

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - JULY 2021

### JULY 2021

- MVFP GROWER GRANT RECIPIENT SHOWCASE: BOTANICAL BITES & PROVISIONS, LLC AND ANCHOR MERE FARM
- JULIE BUSH AND THE SALVATION ARMY SERVE CULPEPER, ORANGE, AND FAUQUIER COUNTIES
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- SUMMERTIME RECIPE - WATERMELON CUCUMBER AND FETA SALAD
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### MVFP GROW GRANT FARM SHOWCASE

MVFP will contract with several farmers in growing and supplying fruit, vegetables, herbs, meat, and other commodities to local food banks. MVFP will “purchase” produce from these farms, and ask that instead of delivering the food to us, that the farms directly supply the Rappahannock, Madison, Orange, Fauquier, and Greene Food Banks.

To be considered, interested farms must: have a proven track record of ecologically sound and environmentally-friendly growing practices (organic certification is not a requirement.) They must also be able to produce between 300-2000 lbs. (or more) of a variety of produce between May - October. The farms will be responsible for making a weekly delivery to the Rappahannock, Orange, Greene, Fauquier, and Madison Food Banks.

Highlighted below are two of the farms that have been selected for this partnership.

### BOTANICAL BITES & PROVISIONS, LLC



Botanical Bites & Provisions, LLC started as a hobby until they attended a Small Farms Outreach Program at Virginia State University (SFOP). The education and training propelled them to explore farming. Intrigued by the health benefits, they

wanted to farm from a more holistic point of view. The personal impact and environmental health was monumental therefore and they wanted to share those benefits with their community. They farm 3-5 acres to include multiple high tunnels to enhance production and while not certified organic, they follow organic practices and grow naturally.

Botanical Bites & Provisions, LLC has diversified their farm operations and expanded into ethnic vegetables (okra, collards, mustard greens, garlic) venturing into small orchards, cut flowers, berries, pomegranates, and value added products and hemp.

Part of their agrarian legacy is to build generational wealth by establishing a teaching enterprise and/or learning lab. They say, *“It is our belief that farms will be used to fulfill others and teach future minority farmers.”*



### ANCHOR MERE FARM



Anchor Mere Farm is a family owned operation in Culpeper, Virginia. The owner grew up on a dairy farm and taught agriculture for a few years. They operate roughly 90 acres here in the northern piedmont region. His passion for agriculture empowered him to come back to the farm to operate a beef cattle operation with heifers and cows. Anchor Mere Farm’s beef is all natural with no added hormones. Although not certified organic, they follow the natural and organic practices and standard in addition to beef quality assurance. Pasture raised and

finished with corn silage. Last year, they started direct marketing their beef alongside small scale produce for the local community.

As part of their agrarian legacy, they want to engage their kids and allow them the same experience and opportunity.

The farm applied for this grant as a way to give back to the community and provide fresh local food to marginalized communities. It is just as important to give the higher quality product to the disadvantaged. They know the food closet is a blessing however would like to bring awareness and support a healthier lifestyle in their community. *“Our farm can provide the local food banks with beef, potatoes, lettuce, collard spinach, tomatoes, okra, pumpkins, and string beans.”*



# JULIE BUSH AND THE SALVATION ARMY AID THEIR COMMUNITY



I am the social services worker for the Virginia Piedmont region of The Salvation Army. I have been working in this position for about two years. We serve residents of Culpeper, Orange and Fauquier counties 365 days a year! We offer many services to our community like energy assistance. We keep people from losing their utilities should they fall on hard times. We have an Angel Tree program during Christmastime to serve our community's children and senior citizens to help families that may be unable to provide new toys, clothes and food. We keep people from facing hunger with our emergency food pantries in Culpeper and Fauquier. Our food pantries also stock infant supplies like diapers, wipes and formula. At our annual faith-based summer camp at Camp Happyland in Richardsville, we offer full-ride scholarships to local children so they can have a life-changing summer. The camp sits on 635 acres of woodland and serves children from all over Virginia. With our Emergency Disaster Services, we train response teams to assist with local and regional natural disasters. Victims of disasters are eligible for assistance with furniture, clothing and household items. Our Pathway of Hope program allows us to guide families in breaking long-term patterns of poverty so that they can move from crisis to stability. We personalize this program for each family so they can set goals and overcome their unique challenges. We provide an incredibly fun children's program featuring games, crafts, music, and food during our Vacation Bible Study. Wednesday evenings at 6:30 feature our Bible Study time. We host Sunday worship service in our chapel every Sunday morning at 11. We thrive on donations at The Salvation Army to provide these services as we are a non-profit movement dedicated to following Jesus' command to love everyone without discrimination.

## MVFP PROUDLY PARTNERS WITH LOCAL FOODBANKS

<b>Fauquier Community Food Bank</b> 249 East Shirley Avenue, Warrenton, VA 20186 540-359-6053	<b>Madison Food Bank</b> 927 Orange Rd, Madison, VA 22727 (540) 948-4427	<b>Orange Food Bank</b> 105 N Madison Rd, Orange, VA 22960 (540) 308-7741
<b>Rappahannock Food Bank</b> 11763 Lee Highway Sperryville, VA 22740 (540)-987-5090	<b>Food Pantry of Greene County</b> 81 Main St, Stanardsville, VA 22973 (434) 985-3663	<b>Salvation Army Culpeper</b> 133 East Culpeper St. Culpeper VA 22701 (540) 317-5873



## WATERMELON CUCUMBER FETA SALAD

- 8 cups cubed ripe seedless watermelon (1 8-pound watermelon)
- 2 organic mini cucumbers or 1/2 English cucumber (1 cup sliced)
- 2 ounces Feta cheese crumbles
- Zest of 1/2 lemon
- 4 basil leaves
- Sea salt, for garnish

1. Chop the watermelon into cubes. Slice the cucumbers (if using an English cucumber, slice it into half moons). Chop the basil. Zest the lemon.
2. Arrange the watermelon and cucumbers on a platter. Sprinkle with feta crumbles, lemon zest, and sea salt. Taste and adjust flavors as desired. (If you'd like, you can add freshly ground black pepper or a drizzle of olive oil.) Serve immediately. If making ahead, refrigerate the cubed watermelon separately: it releases a lot of water after it is cut. Then assemble the salad directly before serving.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **USDA/DCR/NRCS/FSA/RMA Informational Session - Hispanic**  
 July 16, 2021, 1 PM - 4 PM  
[Click for more information](#)
- **VSU College of Agriculture Field Day**  
 July 30, 2021, 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM  
 Randolph Farm  
[Click here to register](#)
- **Skill-Share Workshops**  
 Presented by: Black Church Food Security Network  
 ⇒Community Outreach 101  
 Aug 1, 2021 @ 6 PM  
 ⇒Food Preservation: Crash Course  
 Sept. 5, 2021 @ 6 PM  
[Click Here to Register for Upcoming Workshops](#)
- **Small Farm Orientation**  
 Aug 9, 2021, 9 AM - 11 AM  
 Registration Opens Soon, Contact [smallfarm@vsu.edu](mailto:smallfarm@vsu.edu) with questions
- **Beginning Woodland Owner's Retreat**  
 Aug 27 - 28, 2021  
 Presented by Virginia Department of Forestry and Virginia Cooperative Extension [Click for more information](#)