



A Look at *Virginia* Agriculture

Capital: Richmond

Population: 8,400,000

Founded: June 25, 1788 (10th)

State Bird: Cardinal

State Flower: American Dogwood

State Tree: Flowering Dogwood

Number of Counties: 95

Largest City: Virginia Beach- 437,994

Largest County: Fairfax - 1,138,652

Nickname: Old Dominion

Number of Farms: 44,000

Average Farm Size: 181 acres

Total Farmland: 8.1 million acres



www.agclassroom.org/va

Climate & Soil

- The average high temperature in Virginia is 69.5°F, while the average low is 48°F. The average annual rainfall is 43.3".
- Virginia is organized into 5 different regions, which vary widely by climate, soil, and topography. From east to west the regions are Coastal Plain, Piedmont, Blue Ridge Mountain, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian Plateau.
- Winters in the western part of the state can be bitterly cold while other parts of the state have longer growing seasons and temperatures that rarely drop below 0°F.
- Similarly, annual rainfall totals can vary from 33" in the Shenandoah Valley to more than 60" in the mountains of southwestern Virginia.
- Pamunkey soil is the state soil of Virginia. Pamunkey soils were first identified on a farm near Jamestown, Virginia which is known as the oldest tilled farm in the United States.
- The soil in the Coastal Plain region has the highest concentration of sand. West of Virginia's fall line the soils are clay based, with the Valley and Ridge and Appalachian Plateau regions having darker clay because of the higher mineral content.

Crops & Livestock

- Virginia's agricultural production is one of the most diverse in the nation due to its varying geography and climate.
- The top agricultural commodities in Virginia include broilers, cattle, dairy, soybeans and turkeys.
- Many Virginia commodities and products rank in the top 15 nationally. These commodities include: leaf tobacco, fresh market tomatoes, apples, grapes, peanuts, cotton, turkeys, and broilers.
- Virginia's equine industry has an annual impact of over 1 billion dollars. Famed Triple Crown winner Secretariat was born in Doswell, VA.
- The cultivation of tobacco as a cash crop was a major contributing factor to the success of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in the new world.

General

- Agriculture is Virginia's largest industry by far! The industry has an economic impact of over \$70 billion annually and provides nearly 334,000 jobs in the Commonwealth. The industries of agriculture and forestry together have a total economic impact of \$91 billion. Every job in agriculture and forestry supports 1.7 jobs elsewhere in the Virginia economy.
- The top export market for Virginia agriculture is China.
- Nearly 90 percent of Virginia farms are owned and operated by individuals or families.
- Virginia has nearly 44,000 farms, the average size of which is 181 acres. Farms cover 32 percent of Virginia's total land area.