

# Virgin Islands Agricultural Plan



December 29, 2021

**Authored by the:**  
2021 Agricultural Plan Task Force



VI AGRICULTURAL  
PLAN TASK FORCE  
2021

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## Executive Summary

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One of the most critical issues facing the world today, and the territory in particular, is ensuring a sustainable food supply. As worldwide distribution channels continue to experience disruptions brought on by climate change issues, the pandemic and other factors, challenges with shortages have been increasingly in the spotlight. Locally, 97% of the United States Virgin Islands' food supply is imported according to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization. Importation of food not only leaves the territory susceptible to shortages, but it impacts freshness and nutritional value and brings additional transportation costs that in some cases double for Virgin Islanders what stateside residents pay for the same products. Environmental issues are a factor as well since importation increases carbon emissions and pollution.

The goal of the 2021 Territorial Agricultural Plan, directed by Act 8404, is to increase agricultural productivity locally to make food security and sovereignty a reality for those living in the Virgin Islands.

Although there are variations on the definition, the central theme behind the term “food sovereignty” refers to a system by which the food supply is produced locally through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, with the community having authority over their own food and agricultural mechanisms/system on a local basis. Food security, as defined by the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security, is “...when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

In order to move the territory closer to food security and sovereignty, the development and execution of a feasible plan for farmers and the community is not just an option but a necessity. Strategizing innovative solutions for local farmers and the community is key. The Plan provides a roadmap with both long and short-term goals, programming, policy, budgeting recommendations, and proposals for legislative enactment.

The eight mandates of the Territorial Agricultural Plan include:

1. Comprehensive regulatory component for the territory's farming industries
2. Business models for profitable and sustainable community-based local food & farming businesses
3. Plan for the development of a position for and the hiring of a Local Food & Farm Coordinator
4. Creation of a Local Food and Farm Fund from voluntary sources to support initiatives and agriculture-related activities
5. Establishment of a local Food and Farm Advisory Committee
6. Creation of a “local food symbol” that can promote and highlight local produce
7. Development of education and training programs for local food farms, entrepreneurs, and

processors, and for the next generation of farmers

8. Collection of data, creation of benchmarks and assessment of progress on the building of the food and farm economy

The Plan provides recommendations on each of these mandates. Furthermore, the Plan provides a rich opportunity to develop five “Related High Priority Projects” as additional recommendations derived from the assessments of the Farmers and Community Engagement Surveys and feedback from four coordinated Town Hall Meetings with Farmers. These recommendations include:

1. Comprehensive Irrigation System and Water Supply
2. Enhanced Infrastructure, Tools, and Equipment
3. Strategic Increase in Personnel at the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture
4. Support for an Orchard Development Initiative
5. Enhanced Grant Writing at the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture

Once the Agricultural Plan is implemented, we recommend that the Local Food and Farm Advisory Committee regularly monitor the Plan and conduct an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the Agriculture Plan and deliver a report to the Legislature and the Governor.

To develop the Plan, the Agricultural Plan Task Force worked diligently for months, breaking off into subcommittees to focus on each of the mandates. As detailed in the Plan, we reviewed past agricultural plans, research, and strategic documents; consulted with numerous experts in the field; solicited input including surveys and events with farmers, businesses, the community, and other stakeholders; commissioned studies and further research; collaborated with partner agencies and other entities, and more.

The Task Force extends its gratitude to the numerous individuals who shared their time, insights, and expertise with us over a nine-month period. We especially want to thank members of the farming community who provided the fundamental information and insights that formed the basis for the vast majority of the recommendations contained in this plan. Those farmers on the Task Force enhanced our work and collaboration. The Task Force also wants to thank Ms. Jacquette Maynard for her outstanding and dedicated administrative support which was invaluable to the Task Force’s success.

## Plan Objective

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### Introduction

On December 11, 2020, The Honorable Governor of the Virgin Islands, Albert Bryan, Jr., signed into law Act. No. 8404 (Bill 33-0376), passed by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Legislature. The Act mandated that the Commissioner of Agriculture, Positive T.A. Nelson, and Dr. David Hall, President of the University of the Virgin Islands, work to develop a comprehensive Agricultural Plan for the United States Virgin Islands. The primary goal underlying the Act was to develop a plan that will increase agriculture productivity in the Territory so that food security and sovereignty are not just labels but a true reflection of the reality of the people's lives.

A diverse ten-member Agricultural Plan Task Force was convened to build various aspects of the Plan and address the mandates within the Act. The Task Force convened with seven members, which included qualified professionals from the community's academic, public, and private sectors. Subcommittees were organized to focus on the key elements of the Plan. To gain more hands-on expertise and perspective, the Task Force expanded and added three farmers in October 2021. The Task Force members are:

Dr. David Hall, President, University of the Virgin Islands

The Honorable Positive T.A. Nelson, Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture

Dr. Kendra Harris, Dean of the School of Business, University of the Virgin Islands

Dr. Usman Adamu, Dean of the School of Agriculture, University of the Virgin Islands

Diana Collingwood, Assistant Commissioner, Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture

Hannah Carty, Deputy Commissioner, Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture

Harith Wickrema, President of non-profit Island Green Living Association

Dale Browne, Farmer, Sejah Farms

Royce Creque, Farmer, Greenridge Guavaberry Farms

Nate Olive, Director, Ridge to Reef Farms

The Taskforce has coordinated a range of activities and events centered on engaging local farmers, food retailers, restaurateurs, and the community. Equipped with the shared input, feedback, and disclosure of current agriculture challenges and conditions, this Plan is presented to advance agricultural productivity and sustainability, including the organizational structure, economic conditions, and reputation of agriculture within our islands.

## Act 8404

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Pursuant to Act 8404,<sup>1</sup> sponsored by Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory, the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and the President of the University of the Virgin Islands are charged with collaborating on the development of a Territorial Agriculture Plan. It further outlines that the Territorial Agriculture Plan must contain policy and funding recommendations to support and expand the local food system, increase locally grown food production, and provide food security for the Territory. In addition, the Agriculture Plan must incorporate short-term and long-term goals, including proposals for legislative enactment.

The Act is comprised of the following eight mandates:

<b>I.</b> A comprehensive regulatory component for the territory's farming industries	<b>II.</b> Business models for profitable and sustainable community-based local food and farming businesses	<b>III.</b> A plan for the development of a position for and the hiring of a local food and farm coordinator	<b>IV.</b> The creation of a local food and farm fund from voluntary sources to support initiatives, and agriculture-related activities
<b>V.</b> Establish a local food and farm advisory committee, composed of seven members	<b>VI.</b> The creation of a "local food symbol" that can be placed on stickers, posters, stamps, etc., to identify local items for sale	<b>VII.</b> The development of education and training programs for local food farmers, entrepreneurs, and processors	<b>VIII.</b> The collection of data, creation of benchmarks, and assessment of progress on the building of the local food and farm economy

Under this Act, the Task Force was granted 180 days to submit the Agricultural Plan to the Governor and the Legislature. If additional time was necessary, extension requests could be considered, providing proof that substantial work on the Plan was completed.

Finally, to solidify the progression of this Plan, the Act requires an annual review by the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture. Any future recommendations to the Plan must be sent to the Governor and the Legislature every five years beginning from the date on which the agriculture plan was submitted to the Governor and the Legislature under section 2(a).

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<sup>1</sup> *Appendix A: Act 8404 – Agricultural Plan Task Force*

## Overview of Task Force

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The Task Force has been assiduously and strategically working to fulfill the mandate of Act 8404 and has been deeply committed to developing an effective and viable Agricultural Plan. The original 180 days contained in the Act expired on June 11, 2021, and as permitted under the Act, an extension was requested and granted by Governor Bryan for an additional 120 days. After further consultation, the Task Force sought and received an additional extension from the Governor to facilitate the inclusion of three farmers on the Task Force, at the farming industry's request, in order to ensure their valuable input.

The following is a list of key activities and actions of the Task Force leading up to the development of this proposed Plan. The Task Force:

1. Convened a meeting of national experts on tropical agriculture who provided insights into developing a tropical region plan. The following individuals participated in this session:
  - Dr. Douglas Steele, Vice President, Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources, Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities
  - Dr. J. Scott Angle, Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources and leader of University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences
  - Dr. Dean Comerford, Dean and Director for Research and Cooperative Extensions at the University of Hawaii Manoa, the College of Agriculture and Human Resources
2. Collected and reviewed two prior Agriculture Plans for the Territory, which were issued in 1999 and 2008.
3. Secured and analyzed the latest USVI Agriculture Census, which the USDA conducted in 2018.
4. Created branding with a logo design, developed an email address (agplan@doa.vi.gov), and established a webpage (www.doa.vi.gov/ag-plan).
5. Developed and distributed a Farmers Survey<sup>2</sup>, which reached approximately 373 individuals via media from the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture's (VIDA) social media sites and direct email. To date, 177 farmers responded to the survey.
6. Developed a Community Survey<sup>3</sup> that was distributed during the week of May 24th. The number of individuals responding to this survey is 246 to date.
7. Developed a Food Retailers and Restaurateurs Survey<sup>4</sup> specific to the Food Retail Industry

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix B: Final Results of the VI Agricultural Plan Farmers Engagement Survey

<sup>3</sup> Appendix C: Final Results of the VI Agricultural Plan Community Engagement Survey

<sup>4</sup> Appendix D: Final Results of the VI Agricultural Plan Food Retailers and Restaurateurs Engagement Survey

and Restaurants to understand better the needs of those who may or may not purchase local agriculture products.

8. Organized three Food Security Town Hall Meeting for farmers on all islands.<sup>5</sup> This platform allowed the farmers to participate in person or online via Zoom and share their comments.<sup>6</sup>

9. Developed a comprehensive list of data that the Task Force recommends should be collected annually.

10. Received weekly reports from the eight subcommittees on their progress. In addition, various subcommittees met in between the weekly meetings of the Task Force.

11. Visited FarmPod on St. Croix to see what role Controlled Environment Agriculture can play in increasing productivity.

12. Interviewed two former Commissioners of Agriculture, Dr. Louis Petersen and Mr. Carlos Robles, to solicit their perspectives on the significant hurdles to increasing productivity and their top priority proposals.

13. Received and reviewed the Economic Development Authority's commissioned feasibility study for a food processing plant on St. Croix.

14. Reviewed Vision 2040 and its implications for increasing agricultural productivity from an economic impact perspective.

15. Hired Ms. Jacquette Maynard to serve as Administrative Assistant to the Task Force.

16. Selected four External Reviewers to assess a draft version of the Plan:

- Dr. Louis Petersen, Assistant Director – UVI Cooperative Extension Services and former Commissioner of Agriculture
- Dr. Allison DeGazon, Virgin Islands Farmer, Director & Former Senator – Bureau of Economic Research
- Dr. Nicholas Comerford, Dean and Director of Human Resources & Agriculture – Research and Cooperative Extension at the University of Hawaii, the College of Agriculture and Human Resources
- Dr. Moses Kairo, Dean of the School of Agriculture and Natural Sciences Research Director, 1890 Land Grant Programs Administrator, UMES Extension – University of Maryland Eastern Shore

17. Collaborated with the VI Department of Education on the Education & Training

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix E: Activities Flyer and Promotional Notices

<sup>6</sup> Appendix F: Food Security Town Hall Participants Comments and Questions

Framework.

18. Secured the services of Mr. Errol Chichester to perform outreach on the Farmer's Survey.
19. Selected three local Graphic Design Artists to create the Local Food Symbol.
20. Secured the services of the UVI Caribbean Green Technology Center to conduct a study on irrigation and water supply.
21. Secured the services of AppleSeed to conduct a study on the economic impact of agriculture productivity.
22. Collaborated with USVI Hotel and Tourism Department and the Chambers of Commerce on the distribution of the Food Retailers and Restaurateurs Survey.
23. Held a fourth Town Hall Meeting to present the draft recommendations of the Plan to Farmers and Stakeholders.
24. Held a Farmers Group Forum giving farmers an opportunity to share their feedback of the plan recommendations.
25. Consulted with Cornelius Blanding and Terrence Courtney of the Federation of Southern Cooperative Land Assistance Fund, a Georgia based nonprofit cooperative of Black farmers, landowners, and cooperatives.
26. The Task Force was granted approval from the Department of Education to participate in a C.O.E.R. Meeting.

## **TASK FORCE SUBCOMMITTEES**

The Task Force worked consistently through subcommittees based on the eight mandates and included various non-Task Force members.

This team also consulted with agriculture professionals, farmers, vendors, and food retailers throughout this process.

## Task Force Subcommittees

Legislative Mandates	Chairperson	Co-Chairperson(s)	Non-Taskforce Members Contributors
1. Comprehensive Regulatory Framework	Hannah Carty	- Commissioner Positive T.A. Nelson - Dale Browne	- Jawanza Wallace-Hilaire, Director of Agricultural Development, VIDA - Christopher McDonald, Research Scientist
2. Business Models	Dr. Kendra Harris	- Diana Collingwood - Harith Wickrema - Nate Olive	- Stafford Crossman, Associate Director, Cooperative Extension Service - Josh Walton, District Director, Georgia SBDC - Walt Moore, Area Director, Georgia SBDC - Jim Johnson, Region Director, SCSU Region SBDC - Francisco Depusoir, Chair, Accounting and Finance, and Farmer - Dr. Paul Flemming, Chair Management and Marketing, and former VIEDA Manager - Dr. Eustace Esdaille, Director, Executive MBA Program - Dr. Renel Smith, Assistant Professor, Information Systems and Technology
3. Coordinator for Local Farm Program	Dr. David Hall	- Hannah Carty - Dale Browne	
4. Local Food Farm Fund	Commissioner Positive T. A. Nelson	- Dr. Usman Adamu	
5. Advisory Committee	Diana Collingwood	- Commissioner Positive T. A. Nelson - Harith Wickrema	
6. Local Food Symbol	Dr. Kendra Harris	- Hannah Carty	
7. Education and Training	Dr. Usman Adamu	- Diana Collingwood - Harith Wickrema - Royce Creque	- Stafford Crossman, Associate Director, Cooperative Extension Service - Dr. Louis Petersen, Assistant Director, Cooperative Extension Services and Former Commissioner of Agriculture
8. Data and Analysis	Dr. David Hall	- Dr. Kendra Harris - Dr. Usman Adamu	

## **Key Agricultural Facts**

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Under the "Census of Agriculture Act of 1997," Public Law 105-113 (Title 7, United States Code, Section 2204g), a census was conducted in the United States Virgin Islands focusing on Agriculture. According to the census, the statistics were related to agricultural operations qualifying as farms.

The 2018 U.S. Virgin Islands Census of Agriculture<sup>7</sup> data were collected under a Cooperative Agreement approved by the Director of the Census and Survey Division of NASS and by the University of the Virgin Islands, Cooperative Extension Service.

The census used the referenced 12-month period between January 1 and December 31, 2018, and identified various agriculture areas that affect territory farmers, such as the inventory of livestock, poultry, machinery, equipment, crop production, crop sales, livestock sales, and expense data.

Below highlights a few results from the 2018 USVI Census of Agriculture:

### **TECHNOLOGY AND INCOME FROM GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

An essential aspect of the census studied in 2018 was the section on Computer Use and Income from Government Programs. It found that 244 farmers used computers for their business, while 321 did not. Further, 233 farmers had internet access while one producer used dial-up service. The data also indicated that 130 farmers had a mobile broadband plan for a computer or cellphone. It also found that 126 farmers participated in government farm programs, totaling \$971,114 in public support for farmers.

### **FARM CHARACTERISTICS**

An outline of the structural and organizational characteristics in 2018 revealed that farms operated by individuals numbered 473. It was also reported that 37 farms were operated as partnerships, 28 as corporations, and 27 as other types of operations. In comparison, the 2007 results reflected 194 farms were operated by individuals, 16 as partnerships, 5 as corporations, and 4 as other types of operations.

### **SALES AND EXPENSES**

In the Virgin Islands, agriculture sales totaled \$3,334,652 in 2018, and \$2,071,022 in 2007. Farm expenses, including labor, feed for livestock, poultry, fish, fertilizers, seed, and insecticides, totaled \$81,850 in 2007 and increased significantly to \$889,923 in 2018.

### **IRRIGATION**

Land irrigation plays a vital role in farm production. The census disclosed an increase in irrigated farms from 99 in 2007 to 247 in 2018. The primary irrigation water sources were wells and cisterns used by 178 farmers, while 38 producers sourced water from lakes and private ponds.

All farms were classified based on the total value of agricultural products sold. Farm products produced in the Virgin Islands included fruits, nuts, nursery crops, livestock, poultry, and vegetable harvests such as cabbage, carrots, celery, cucumbers, eggplants, and other produce.

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<sup>7</sup> *Appendix G: Farm Ownership Analysis*

### 1. COMPREHENSIVE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

Under Act 8404, the first mandate establishes the Plan's goal to create a regulatory component for the Territory's farming industries. To address the regulatory aspects of this mandate, the legislative subcommittee conducted an extensive review of all existing laws that govern agriculture in the Territory.<sup>8</sup> This comprehensive review led the Task Force to conclude that 1) the responsibilities of VIDA provided through these numerous legislative Acts are extensive and many of the Acts are not funded or unclear; 2) agriculture is not defined in the VI Code, and the "sustainable agriculture" definition is insufficient; 3) some agriculture legislative mandates (like Agriculture in the Classroom) are scattered throughout the Code; 4) information on climate change and food sovereignty are not presently included in VI Code.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Contained within the appendices of this plan is a comprehensive database of all laws related to Agriculture in the Virgin Islands. This database should make it easier for the Senate and others to readily access existing law. However, to improve the regulatory framework that presently governs agriculture in the Virgin Islands, the Task Force hereby offers the following recommendations.

1. Below is a list of existing law that were **passed without funding (Unfunded Items section)**. We recommend that funding be provided for each of these legislative initiatives since they are relevant and meaningful ways to increase agriculture productivity or enhance the state of agriculture in the Territory.
2. Below is a list of existing laws that the Task Force **concludes no longer provide any meaningful contribution to the field of agriculture and should be repealed or amended (Repeal or Amend section)**. A brief explanation is provided next to each Act indicating the basis for the repeal.
3. To streamline the use of the Code as it pertains to agriculture provisions, **we recommend that certain provisions are duplicative and should be combined or condensed**. In the alternative, reference should be made to related other sections of the Code. Appendix VIII "Review of Agriculture Laws and Regulations" provides an example of how this condensing or referencing can occur for some provisions.
4. To enhance agriculture in the Territory, the Task Force believes that **a compelling definition and intent for agriculture in the Virgin Islands must be developed and enacted**. Below we offer a proposed definition. Further exploration of this definition will be required to garner community support for the language.

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<sup>8</sup> *Appendix H: Review of Agricultural Laws and Regulations*

5. As climate change and food sovereignty are critical to the future of the Virgin Islands, we recommend that an inclusive and informative stance and definition for these items must be enacted as part of the regulatory scheme for the VI Code and the future of Agriculture.

## Unfunded Items

1. Under VIC 3 § 291, there are 12 provisions that the Department is unable to support at this time.<sup>9</sup> (Please note grey highlighting below denotes the specific code and light grey/purple highlighting denotes the position name.)

A. Many key purposes of these powers and duties include terms such as “enforce,” “inspect,” “investigate,” “supervise,” and “regulate.” Presently, the Department of Agriculture neither has the authority nor enforcement/regulatory capacity to perform these functions. The Department will need to either contract businesses, hire individuals, or work with other governmental bodies to perform these tasks including:

i. Market Inspectors & Cost Analyzers (VIC 3 § 291 a3, a5, a13)

1. Positions Required:

a. (4) Market Inspector / Cost Analyzers

ii. Fertilizer Inspector (Soil Specialist) (VIC 3 § 291 a6)

1. Service Contract Required:

a. (1) Agronomist (potentially through UVI)

iii. Local Food Promotion (VIC 3 § 291 a2, a11)

1. Position Required:

a. (1) Local Food Promoter & Culture Bearer

iv. Animal, Insect, & Plant Disease Inspector (VIC 3 § 291 a8, a14)

1. Position Required:

a. (1) Entomologist

v. Aquaculture Enforcement

1. No programs exist; support could be provided through DPNR and DFW.

vi. Public Veterinary Clinic Supervisor

1. Maybe integrated under the responsibilities of VIDA’s current Veterinary Program

2. Due to the volume of responsibilities under Title 7 of the VI Code, the following items will be required for compliance:

A. Livestock for Breeding Purposes (VIC 7 § 4d)

i. Animals will need to be provided for distribution to the farmers especially during territorial emergency

1. This can be done through purchase or husbandry program

2. VIDA will need to include this in their annual budget request

B. Purchase of equipment and supplies for farmers (VIC 7 § 5)

i. Department or other agencies will need to purchase excess equipment to be available for rental to farmers

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<sup>9</sup> Appendix I: Review of Agricultural Laws and Regulations

1. Will need to develop maintenance and protection team for equipment
- ii. Fund & Budget shall be developed to provide repairs of farm equipment, at cost to licensed farmers
  1. VIDA will need to include this in their annual budget request
- C. Land management: organic materials recycling program (**RENAME**) (VIC 7 § 7)
  - i. Provide annual budget for an Organic Materials Recycling Program including:
    1. Service Contract
- D. Administration
  - i. Commissioner's Responsibilities (VIC 7 § 9)
    1. Protect and purchase agriculturally zoned lands for agriculture (VIC 7 § 9a)
    2. Procurement of a processing and marketing facility (VIC 7 § 9b)
    3. Appoint/Hire the following Individuals (VIC 7 § 9g):
      - a. Environmental Enforcement Officers (VIC 7 § 9g)
        1. To be integrated with DPNR and provide environmentally specific enforcement for VIDA issues.
        2. Positions Required:
          - a.(2) Environmental Enforcement Officers
      - b. Research & Data Collection Staff (VIC 7 § 9d)
        1. Positions Required:
          - a.(1) Data Analyst & Researcher
          - b.(1) Data Entry Specialist
      - c. Grant Writers (VIC 7 § 9d/g)
        1. Budgeted in the "Additional Recommendations" Subsections
      - d. Mechanics & Heavy Equipment Operators (VIC 7 § 9e)
        1. to demonstrate farm equipment and Agriculture Techniques
        2. Positions Required:
          - a.(3) Heavy Equipment Mechanic
          - b.(1) Small Engine Mechanic
      - e. Agriculturists (VIC 7 § 9h)
        1. To be promoted under the Agricultural Development Division & new UVI programming
      - f. Cooperative Agreement Coordinator (VIC 7 § 9j)
        1. To be integrated under Marketing Division & Local Food/Farm Coordinator
      - g. Loan Specialist (VIC 7 § 9k)
        1. To be integrated with EDA & SBDC



## Repeal or Amend Proposal

### 1. **Unfunded Items**

- A. If the body decides not to fund any of the aforementioned items in the “Unfunded” section of this document, we recommend that they be repealed or amended.

### 2. **Title 3 § 291 A9: Aquaculture**

- A. **Original Language:** Administer and enforce laws regulating aquaculture
- B. **Revised Language Proposal:** (*AMEND TO REMOVE FROM VIC § 291 a9 to be placed under responsibilities of DPNR & DFW*)

### 3. **Title 7 § 2: Agriculture in the Classroom Leadership Council**

- A. **Revised Language Proposal:** (*See Recommendation from Education Subcommittee*)

### 4. **Title 7 § 3: Legislative Purpose**

- A. **Original Language:** N/A
- B. **Revised Language Proposal:** Whereas climate change is recognized as a fundamental challenge to the future of Virgin Islands society, and resiliency in all aspects including food sovereignty, it is critical to the infrastructure of the Virgin Islands. Therefore, let all current and future Legislation concerning Agriculture be amended to reflect the definitions of climate change and food sovereignty in both practice and application.

### 5. **Title 7 § 7: Land management: organic materials recycling program**

- A. **Original Language:** Land management: organic materials recycling program
- B. **Revised Language Proposal:** (*RENAME*) Land Management: Industrial Composting Program

### 6. **Title 7 § 9i: Farm Certification Program**

- A. **Original Language:** In conjunction with the University of the Virgin Islands and the Department of Labor, develop a farm certification program in crop farming and livestock rearing.
- B. **Revised Language Proposal:** [**Repeal**; *see Education Subcommittee Recommendations*]

### 7. **Title 7 § 16e: Cost-sharing program**

- A. **Original Language:** Conduct a program of incentives through a cost-sharing program
- B. **Revised Language Proposal:** [**Repeal**; *language too vague*]

### 8. **Title 7 § 25: Virgin Islands Fruit of Choice**

- A. **Original Language:**
  - i. The Julie Mango is the fruit of choice of the Virgin Islands.

- ii. In collaboration with the Agriculture Department and our local farmers, the University of the Virgin Islands shall host annual workshops and demonstrations on mango production and marketing.
- iii. The Department of Agriculture shall set aside acreage for mango development on St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix to develop harvesting and production of factories of mangoes.
- iv. The Department of Agriculture shall establish and implement the Julie Mango in Every Yard Program to encourage private residents of the Virgin Islands to dedicate a portion of their land for at least one Julie Mango Tree.
- v. The program established by the Department of Agriculture must provide financial incentives to Virgin Islands residents who grow Julie Mango trees in their yard through an established purchasing program that buys from each owner a percentage of their Julie Mango tree harvest.
- vi. Through funds appropriated by the Legislature from time to time, the Department of Agriculture shall develop the purchasing program for residents who partake in the Julie Mango in Every Yard Program. The Department of Agriculture shall include the Julie Mango in Every Yard Program in its annual budget requests.
- vii. The Department of Tourism shall assist the Department of Agriculture in promoting the Julie Mango in Every Yard Program locally and nationally to encourage productions by residents who live in the territory and owners of land in the Virgin Islands who live abroad.
- viii. The Department of Tourism shall include Julie Mango value-added products in tourism promotions, conferences, and special events.

**B. Revised Language Proposal:**

- i. The Julie Mango is the fruit of choice of the Virgin Islands and the Mango is the Territorial Fruit Symbol of the Virgin Islands.
- ii. In collaboration with the Agriculture Department and our local farmers, the University of the Virgin Islands shall host annual workshops and demonstrations on mango production and marketing.
- iii. The Department of Agriculture shall set aside acreage for mango development on St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix to develop harvesting and production of factories of mangoes.
- iv. The Department of Agriculture shall establish and implement the Mango in Every Yard Program to encourage private residents of the Virgin Islands to dedicate a portion of their land for at least one Mango Tree.
- v. The program established by the Department of Agriculture must provide financial incentive to Virgin Islands residents who grow Mango trees in their yard through an established purchasing program that buys from each owner a percentage of their mango tree harvest. Special consideration is given to those who grow Julie Mango trees.

- vi. Through funds appropriated by the Legislature annually, the Department of Agriculture shall develop the purchasing program for residents who partake in the Mango in Every Yard Program. The Department of Agriculture shall include the Mango in Every Yard Program in its annual budget requests.
- vii. The Department of Tourism shall assist the Department of Agriculture in promoting the Mango in Every Yard Program locally and nationally to encourage productions by residents who live in the territory and owners of land in the Virgin Islands who live abroad.
- viii. The Department of Tourism shall include Mango value-added products with special consideration given to Julie Mango value-added products in tourism promotions, conferences, and special events.

**9. Title 7 § 301 – 309: Virgin Islands Agriculture Business Incubator Center<sup>10</sup>**

- A. The incubator concept sounds like a positive component of the VI Department of Agriculture operations. However, a major caveat is that the “incubator” *must have* the support/partnership of UVI or a Cooperative Extension Services type entity to be viable. In addition, the VI Department of Agriculture should also work with the VI Department of Labor to fulfill some of the incubator’s staffing needs with student interns.
- B. Given the description for the incubator in the legislation, it appears that what is desired is an “Agriculture Business Center.” This concept is broader than just an incubator. The Agriculture Business Center could serve the dual role of “incubating” truly “new” farm businesses that are in the initial stages of their development. Conversely, the center could also serve as a “resource” to those more mature farming businesses that need guidance with respect to farming practices, business aspects of farming, scaling up the business, and identifying additional customers/markets for farm output.
- C. Additional partnerships for the Agriculture Business Center should be forged with the FSA (Farm Service Agency), EDA, SBA, and the SBDC, as well.
- D. Services in the center would be geared towards analyzing the needs of the farmers served by the Agriculture Business Center. Those needs would then be translated into resources and training related to technology, accounting/bookkeeping, social media marketing, etc., to name a few.
  - i. **Revised Language Proposal:** *See Business Model Subcommittee Recommendations under Mandate # 2*

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<sup>10</sup> As prepared by the Subcommittee on Business Models, submitted September 9, 2021:  
<https://law.justia.com/codes/virgin-islands/2019/title-7/chapter-15/>

## 10. Bill No 24-0223

- A. To provide that agricultural land leased from the Government of the Virgin Islands for farming purposes be leased for not more than \$20.00 per acre.
- i. **RECOMMENDATION 1:** Differentiation must be made between those that live full time on the property and those that do not, to bring them into fair housing market rates. Pricing should not be dictated by legislative ordinance to allow for the fluid adjustment with market standards. The adjustment should be conducted over a longer period.
  - ii. **RECOMMENDATION 2:** The Department of Agriculture, as stewards of lands of the Government of the Virgin Islands for the purposes of Agriculture, would be exclusively responsible for the conveyance and leasing of Agricultural land through the Department of Justice. All lessees shall be responsible for the infrastructure developed on the property and shall be responsible for following business plans.

### Provisions to be Combined

1. The responsibilities of the Department of Agriculture are broken up into several sections and spread across the Title Three & Title Seven of the VI Code with other entities, penalties, etc., interspersed with Department regulations. Additionally, there is a constant switch between the responsibilities of “The Department of Agriculture” and “Commissioner.” As far as the Department of Agriculture is proposed in the VI Code, the roles and responsibilities of the Department should be attached to the regulation of the Agricultural Industry.

- A. A good example of this is in the Florida Statutes which organize the Department of Agriculture as part of the Title Agriculture, but not separately.<sup>11</sup>

2. Another legislative item which lies throughout the Code is the “Agriculture in the Classroom” initiative. While it is an example of detailed and comprehensive legislation, it appears in three separate titles of the VI Code (Title 7 § 2, Title 17 § 41F, Title 33 § 3018a), while having no reference to one another. This has caused some confusion in the execution of this law. Either referencing or combining the information will allow for better implementation.

### Sustainable Agriculture Definition & Mission

The VI Code lists Chapter 1 of Title Seven as “The Development of Sustainable Agriculture” or the “Sustainable Farming Act;” however, it fails to provide a definition or legislative intent for the promulgation of the listed rules. According to Mary Gold of the US Department of Agriculture, sustainable agriculture has become one of the terms that “defy definition.”<sup>10</sup> Addressed by Congress in the 1990 “Farm Bill,” [Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990

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<sup>11</sup> Appendix J: Mandate 1 Legislative Definitions

(FACTA), Public Law 101-624, Title XVI, Subtitle A, Section 1603 (Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1990) NAL Call # KF1692.A31 1990], the term sustainable agriculture “means an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term:

- satisfy human food and fiber needs;
- enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends;
- make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls;
- sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and
- enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.”

### **Recommended Definitions for the VI Code**

The Task Force hereby recommends that the following definitions of “agriculture” and “sustainable agriculture” contained in the State of Florida code be adopted by the Virgin Islands. They state:

- “For the purposes of this section, ‘agriculture’ means the science and art of production of plants and animals useful to humans, including to a variable extent the preparation of these products for human use and their disposal by marketing or otherwise, and includes aquaculture, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture, forestry, dairy, livestock, poultry, bees, and any and all forms of farm products and farm production. For the purposes of marketing and promotional activities, seafood shall also be included in this definition.
- Further, all activity under this section shall meet the merit of Sustainable Agriculture as defined as an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term:
  - satisfy human food and fiber needs;
  - enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends;
  - make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls;
  - sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and
  - enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.”

### **Climate Change and Food Sovereignty**

- Whereas “the Virgin Islands’ history as a colony has created a food system that relies heavily on the importation of goods, which has resulted in high costs of food, low rates of food sovereignty, and has left the territory vulnerable to market manipulation and price shocks.”<sup>11</sup> Further, due to climate change, the air and ocean are warming, heavy rainstorms are becoming more severe, sea levels are rising, and the

ocean is becoming more acidic which will impact the overall livability of the islands including food supply and agriculture.<sup>12</sup>

- With rising global prices, the looming impact of climate change, and the substantially high cost of living, the USVI has high importation rates, which leave the territory and its economy vulnerable. While it is very unlikely that the Virgin Islands will ever become entirely self-sufficient due to the large volume of food required based on population size; the islands can become *more* food sovereign.<sup>13</sup> Food sovereignty focuses on food for people and its providers, localizing food systems, building local knowledge and skills, working with nature, and asserting that people must reclaim their power in the food system by focusing on the needs of the community at large.

- A food sovereignty approach increases resilience to crises, helps mitigate the impacts of climate change, and ensures that people live in dignity and harmony with the environment.<sup>14</sup> It is important that we diversify and innovate ways to produce, protect, and promote crops that will be and are impacted by climate change.

- Seven Tenets of Food Sovereignty<sup>15</sup> include:

- **1. FOCUSES ON FOOD FOR PEOPLE**
  - Puts people's need for food at the center of policies
  - Insists that food is more than just a commodity
- **2. BUILDS KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**
  - Builds on traditional knowledge
  - Uses research to support and pass this knowledge to future generations
  - Rejects technologies that undermine or contaminate local food systems
- **3. WORKS WITH NATURE**
  - Optimizes the contributions of ecosystems
  - Improves resilience
- **4. VALUES FOOD PROVIDERS**
  - Supports sustainable livelihoods
  - Respects the work of all food providers
- **5. LOCALIZES FOOD SYSTEMS**
  - Reduces distance between food providers and consumers
  - Promotes local food producers over importation
  - Rejects dumping and inappropriate food aid
  - Resists dependency on remote and unaccountable corporations
- **6. PUTS CONTROL LOCALLY**
  - Places control in the hands of local food providers
  - Recognizes the need to inhabit and to share territories
  - Rejects the privatization of natural resources
- **7. FOOD IS SACRED**

- Recognizes that food is a gift of life, and not to be squandered
- Asserts that food cannot be commodified
- The issues of climate change and food sovereignty will shape the future of the Territory and must be considered in all future discussions pertaining to agriculture.

### **Inclusion of the 2021 Agricultural Plan as Law**

Since this Agricultural Plan provides a comprehensive approach to the development of agriculture, it is recommended that this Plan is enacted by the Legislation and the appropriate recommendations contained herein.

## **2. BUSINESS MODEL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The primary focus of the Business Models Framework is to identify a plan for profitable and sustainable community-based local food and develop various types of farming businesses.

The chief concern in this area is the need for more well-developed businesses in the agriculture sector to increase productivity by a significant amount. In addition, the overarching and ambitious goal of food sovereignty for the Virgin Islands will demand that all agriculture businesses expand and operate at a reasonable and optimal level. For this to occur, small farms will require assistance in developing their businesses and infusion of capital resources. Ensuring that farmers engage in standard business processes, including filing taxes, will be important to collecting accurate data to justify public and private investments.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To increase agriculture production, the industry must be viewed, treated, and supported as a robust and critical business industry to the Virgin Islands. There are three major business models that must be nurtured and supported for the agriculture industry in the Territory, and three major support mechanisms that enhance these models. We recommend that the agriculture industry be organized around the following business models:

- 1. Traditional Small Private Businesses**
- 2. Farming Cooperatives**
- 3. Public-Private Partnerships**

The two major support mechanisms that are critical to enhancing and supporting each model are:

- 1. Agriculture Business Center**
- 2. Government Grant Funding Support for Farmers**

The three business models' recommendations recognize that farmers are not a homogenous group. Differences among farmers include size, productivity, land ownership (or leasing) type, and very importantly type of items produced (e.g., crops, livestock). The commonalities that characterize the farm community result in general needs that are consistent across a variety of farms. However, the differences among farmers call for some attention to addressing particular needs that result from those nuances.

When looking at the number of farms in the territory, the overwhelming majority, 72% of them, are small farms, defined as farms of 10 acres or less. Conversely, we acknowledge that nearly 45% of the farming acreage in the territory consists of farms that range between 100 and 999 acres and are owned by 14 individuals, according to the 2017 USVI Census of Agriculture report (the latest available as of this report date). There are also farmers who have less than 100 acres but are not as small as small farmers. In that regard, according to the same Census data, there are 67 farmers who have between 20 and 99 acres. Depending on the actual percentage "yield" from that collective set of farmers, these farmers' productivity could significantly impact the agriculture productivity in

the territory overall and therefore should be included in this report. Furthermore, their productivity could provide the key inputs for a potential processing plant and clean kitchen.

- **Model #1 – Traditional Small Private Businesses:** Unless something changes dramatically, most farmers in the Territory will operate small businesses. For this model to flourish, there is a tremendous need for a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) like entity just for farmers. This resource can provide assistance with obtaining business licenses and adopting best practices, business development plans, securing funding and financial grants and loans, accounting and recordkeeping, cash flow analysis, and other fundamental business practices that can provide for effective operation and expansion.

Though some small farmers may utilize the existing Small Business Development Center (SBDC) as a resource, we strongly recommend the creation of an Agriculture Business Center that can be utilized by traditional small farmers but can also benefit a wide variety of farmers who fall under all three of the models. A more detailed description of the Agriculture Business Center is provided below.

- **Model #2 – Farming Cooperatives:** When farming cooperatives have been operationalized appropriately, they have proven to be quite effective in substantively improving upon the overall productivity of farms participating in those cooperatives. As was mentioned in the narrative regarding the Agriculture Business Center, we recommend that support and guidance be provided for farmers to become knowledgeable of, and subsequently involved in, the development of cooperatives as a mechanism for them to expand their productivity both individually and collectively. Again, we recommend that a cooperative facilitator is contracted.

One of the creative ways farmers can merge resources and expertise as well as spread out the challenges associated with their business is by entering into farming cooperatives, a long-standing approach to farming and other industries. In the farmer survey, 28% indicated that they were interested in this alternative. Mini (land) grants could be established (39.22% government support responses) for the cooperatives.

Farming cooperatives in the Virgin Islands have not existed without controversy. One of the issues related to them has been that of trust. That said, there are numerous advantages to having cooperatives that should be considered:

1. Sharing of best practices, which would increase farming efficiencies across the territory
2. Increased knowledge for farmers with respect to farming practices as well as regarding business practices that could increase efficiencies
3. Leveraging the increased power resulting from the cooperatives for initiatives such as purchasing or selling at more competitive rates (with returns balanced by volume)
4. Better utilization of governmental resources (e.g., funding of expensive equipment that groups of farmers can access)

5. Reduction in failures in growing certain produce because of lack of knowledge of optimal crops as dictated by location, time of year, and soil type
6. More efficient implementation of growing food safety mandates for the territory

Farmers who have joined the Ag Plan Task Force have endorsed the validity of cooperatives. They echoed the concern regarding “trust” in cooperatives. The task force believes that contracting an independent individual as the coordinator for the cooperative structure, will mitigate some of the challenges of developing cooperatives.

Historically, farmers in the territory have had a difficult time (at best) in getting the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA) and to a degree the IRB to recognize farm cooperatives in the territory, in a manner that allows for those cooperatives to receive the full benefit of the tax law. Specifically, section 521 of the Internal Revenue Code allows for specific exemptions related to the farm cooperative structure. USVI farmers need to be able to have the farm cooperative structure recognized as an eligible entity for this exemption in order for the cooperatives to get the maximum utility out of that structure.

- **Model #3 – Public-Private Partnerships:** The business model that has the greatest potential to increase productivity and transform the role of farming in the Virgin Islands is strategic investment by the government into specific farm operations and types of farming.

There are a multitude of endeavors in which farmers could benefit from financial support and partnership with the Virgin Islands government. Funds would in turn facilitate farmers’ ability to expand food security in the territory. Potential activities vary in type, scope, and size. Examples include engaging in controlled environment agriculture initiatives, becoming involved in or enhancing hydroponics or aquaponics activities, facilitating agritourism, or engaging in other revenue generating enterprises.

There is at least one establishment in the Virgin Islands that is working on indoor farming through **vertical farming**. They have procured a warehouse type facility on St. Thomas for this endeavor. They have already received training to meet the FSMA mandate, are funding training through the VIDOL, and collaborating with SBA and private investors to obtain equipment. Their goal is to strengthen food security by providing agricultural projects to individuals and businesses. This model can be used to educate Virgin Island citizens on what is possible.

The UVI Tech Village Project, which has a substantial focus on innovative agricultural research and production, is another example of emerging public/private partnerships in the Virgin Islands. Additionally, a potential project for public-private partnerships is a processing plant and a clean kitchen. This project would be particularly useful to larger farmers. The Task Force has learned that the **VIEDA** is currently engaged in developing this project.

However, an untapped area for public private partnership is in the area of **agritourism**. Various farmers have identified that assisting them with developing an agritourism industry will be useful in expanding farming revenue and resources into the territory. The primary goal of agritourism would be the value-added component of farm-based interpretive experiences, defined in VI ACT 733 192.a(8) as farm tours, seminars, farm classes, student field trips, farm food events, and farm stays.

We suggest that the VI Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the VI Department of Tourism establish a quality safety rating system for farms so that the safety of patrons is prioritized in the instance where agritourism involves visits to farms.

We recommend that there be a public-private fund for farmers that is utilized for these types of initiatives. In the case of agritourism, farmers can utilize the funds to help enhance their properties for the purpose of being conducive to receiving tourists. Examples include ensuring that the appropriate rest room facilities are there or ensuring accessibility to various sites on the respective farms (e.g., walking paths, handicap accessibility, etc.). In some cases, public roads leading to farms have been allowed to fall into disrepair, subsequently preventing the level of agritourism to continue that once took place. Funds could be used to rectify that issue as well.

Aside from individual farms being the sites of various stops on an agritourism route, we recommend also that there should ultimately be a designated, centralized Agritourism Center featuring VI Agricultural History to include a variety of farm outputs from the territory. This centralized destination could also contain farm-to-table (locally grown produce and products) eating establishments, agritourism souvenir retailers, and the like.

### **Support Mechanisms for the Three Models**

- **Agriculture Business Center:** We recommend the establishment of an Agriculture Business Center that provides resources for a broad spectrum of farmers, ranging from small farm businesses to larger or commercial farmers. The Center should be housed at the University of the Virgin Islands, specifically under the umbrella of the School of Agriculture. The Center will bring together the resources for assisting farmers with both the actual practices and skills that will facilitate improved farm productivity, as well as resources for assisting farmers with the “business” of farming (e.g., bookkeeping, technical skills, grant writing, etc.).

The Agriculture Business Center should have a director (operating on St. Croix), an assistant director (operating on St. Thomas), two consultants, and an individual who can help farmers write grants for their operations. In addition, because the farm cooperative model has proven to be a success at improving farm production and strengthening individual farms through collaborative effort, the Center should contract an independent individual as a coordinator for farmers interested in learning about and developing cooperatives. This individual will have primary responsibility for educating farmers about cooperatives and providing training to farmers on the cooperative model.

- **Government Grant Funding Support for Farmers:** There are numerous opportunities for farmers to pursue grants for various goods and services associated with farm operations. We recommend that a fund be set aside that can be accessed by farmers to use as matching funds when those farmers are successful at pursuing grants.

The USVI government has already set a precedent for establishing a pool of money that can be potentially used by agriculture producers to match grants that they have won. Heretofore, there has not been clear evidence that any of the long-standing, established farmers in the territory have been beneficiaries of these resources. Hence, this plan recommends that processes need to be in place or better clarity needs to be provided to enable farmers access to this financial resource. One example of use for these funds would be farmers' acquisition of solar systems (58.49% of famers requested training in this area).

### **Business Requirement for All Farmers and Models**

For any of the above business models to operate effectively, there must be some fundamental requirements that all farmers adhere to as listed below:

1. Farmers agree to engage in a minimum level of "continuous improvement" training practices regarding their farming strategies. In cases where farmers are doing exceptionally well, those farmers should function as the "opinion leaders" who can provide peer-to-peer farm practice improvements to other farmers. In that regard, farmers are engaging with individuals who "speak their language" as opposed to forcing farmers to leapfrog into a learning environment to which they are not accustomed.
2. Farmers agree to report on authentic production/yield information so that the territory's strategies are built on solid information that legitimizes projections for progress towards food sovereignty.
3. Farmers engage in standard business practices (e.g., tax reporting). It is counter-intuitive, counter-productive, and essentially defies the concept of providing good stewardship over the territory's resources to allow those farmers who do not provide authentic data points or provide appropriate business documentation to continue with their "business as usual" practices that are detrimental to the territory while reaping the benefits of the territory's financial resources. This agriculture plan provides an opportunity for the territory to utilize its resources to incentivize farmers to provide the product information and the tax base that has been missing.
4. Farm support and communication from the Department of Agriculture will be critical to the success of any business model. Inter-island communication and exchanges must become systematic and robust. For example, farmers at the St. John town hall indicated that they desired a mechanism for an inter-island farm exchange that could smooth out the supply and demand of farm products across the three islands. The VI Department of Agriculture has a program already in place that does just that. However, based on the St. John town hall feedback, this mechanism is unknown to farmers or under-

utilized. Ensuring that all farms across the territory are aware of this initiative can go a long way in getting food where it needs to be, thus strengthening farm revenues and decreasing food dependency on outside sources

5. With respect to farmers' continuing training and education, although the SBDC is a great source, we must also acknowledge that not all farmers will be inclined to engage in a more formal structure for training. Part of the proposed model emphasizes that there should be peer-to-peer training whereby we "meet farmers where they are." The thought is that not all farmers can easily take part in a more formalized consulting environment. We want all farmers to feel that they can take steps towards improving their situations. The peer-to-peer training also creates an opportunity for knowledgeable farmers to spread their expertise to others.

- The Small Business Development Center, Cooperatives and any other entities, will work together to conduct consulting and training directed specifically to farmers to assist with farmers' accounting, financing, bookkeeping, and other related business records needs. In addition, the **Agriculture Business Center** will be valuable to farmers across the various spectrums of their knowledge, size, and farming experience.
- Communication has been made with the Cooperative Extension Service to work with the SBDC to provide assistance where needed, especially as it relates to specific farm-related technical issues.

### **Other Business-Related Considerations and Initiatives**

An overarching challenge for farmers in the territory is that there have been governmental constraints placed on farm diversification, which is manifested in the licensing structure. Specifically, farmers are generally not allowed to farm both crops *and* livestock. Acknowledging that the existence of the two diverse types of farms require explicit care with respect to cross contamination and other challenges, USVI farmers insist that this government policy is a severe impediment to farmers. [The Agriculture Commissioner is currently working to eradicate this issue.]

In addition, farmers are finding it inordinately challenging to get the property tax and gross receipts exemptions that should be commensurate with the operations of their businesses. Emphatically, the Advisory Committee and the Local Farm Coordinator should be involved in getting this issue resolved for farmers.

Below is a list of other business-related initiatives and approaches that the Legislature should consider that may enhance agriculture productivity in the territory. They include the following:

1. Providing incentives for local retailers and restaurants to buy local food instead of importing from outside the territory.
2. Consider imposing import controls on certain crops, fruits, and other products for periods when those products are in abundance in the Virgin Islands. Currently, the

crops that were the highest in production on the survey were bananas (55.7%), mangoes (42.3%), coconuts (30.7%), and breadfruit (26.9%).

3. Provide financial incentives for farmers' heirs so that it is more enticing for them to continue active farm production. Government grant funding support can assist in this area.
4. Ensure that all farmers are complying with USDA standards regarding safety and health. This will also assist farmers when exporting produce.
5. There is also the consideration of the marijuana, hemp, and hemp-related products market.

### 3. COORDINATOR FOR LOCAL FOOD FARM PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Included in the Plan is the framework to develop a position and hire a Local Food and Farm Coordinator who will execute the programs and coordinate efforts within 180 days of submitting the Plan. This role will be the cohesive unit to merge data, communicate with farmers, and communicate on the Agricultural Plan's progress.

This position, along with the Advisory Committee mandate in Act 8404, creates a new approach to the advocacy, implementation and monitoring of agricultural productivity in the territory. Though the Local Food and Farm Coordinator and their staff will be employees in the Department of Agriculture, the Coordinator would report directly to and work very closely with the Advisory Committee that the Act 8404 mandates. This person and the staff would work across the various stakeholder groups. The description below from the State of Iowa, which has a similar role, captures our belief about how this person should function.

*“Many groups and organizations can play a role in building a local food system. However, experience suggests the most efficient way to create a sustainable, healthy, and effective local food system with the greatest economic impact is to hire a coordinator who can orchestrate and lead its evolution. The creation of a resilient local food system requires the participation of many different community stakeholders: producers, consumers, institutions, businesses, those with tenuous food security, and government agencies. Because of the number of participants with varying priorities, each community is best served by hiring and supporting its own local food coordinator.”* Excerpted from Local Food Coordinators: “Who are They, and Why are They Important?” published by ISU Extension and Outreach -- Local Foods Team, June 2014. View or download the entire publication at this link:

<https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Local-Food-Coordinators>

This proposed position, along with the Agriculture Advisory Committee, would be responsible for the monitoring and implementation of the comprehensive Agricultural Plan that the Task Force is proposing. It is essential that various positions in the Department work closely with the Coordinator and be available for consultation and collaboration. The highest priority duties would be:

1. With guidance from the Advisory Committee, monitor the implementation of the Agricultural Plan.
2. Working closely with the Department of Agriculture (VIDA) and the University, develop specific outreach efforts and trainings to encourage more individuals to engage in home and community gardening. The outreach efforts should specifically be done in coordination with the Marketing Division of (VIDA), the VI Conservation District, the University of the Virgin Islands, the Cooperative Extension Services and the Agricultural Development Division.

3. Ensure that the annual data collection process is occurring in a professional and thorough manner. (The Coordinator would not collect the data but hire a person or entity to collect the data)
4. Cultivate more trusting relationship across the various stakeholder groups involved in the local industry (farmers, consumers, business, education, etc.)
5. Develop a local fundraising strategy for the Local Food and Farm Fund
6. Promote the local farm symbol and ensure it is being used across the various stakeholder groups
7. Identify and share grant opportunities with farmers and other appropriate entities

#### **4. LOCAL FOOD FARM FUND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A unique aspect of Act 8404 and this proposed Plan is the creation of a Local Food and Farm Fund from voluntary sources to support agriculture initiatives and activities.

To encourage individuals, foundations, and corporations in the private sector to become more supportive of agriculture productivity in the Virgin Islands, the Task Force supports the mandate in Act 8404 that a fund be created to support specific initiatives. We recommend that the Agriculture Advisory Committee discussed below be responsible for creating a 501 (C) (3) foundation, similar to the University of the Virgin Islands Foundation, which will serve as the legal entity into which funds are deposited, invested, and disbursed. The Advisory Committee will serve as the Board of Directors for the foundation and thus for the fund. There should be an annual solicitation of contributions in addition to grants and other major gift solicitations.

The Advisory Committee will develop a list of agriculture initiatives and projects that the funds would be used to support. These projects will be used to promote the fund and solicit donations. The fund should have a particular focus on encouraging home gardens and community farming to supplement the work of the farmers in the territory as another means of obtaining food sovereignty. If successful, this fund could relieve some of the financial burdens from the local government in providing support to the agriculture industry. An annual reporting to the Legislature and Governor of the amount of funds raised and disbursed should occur as mandated.

## 5. ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognizing how difficult it will be to create a new culture around agriculture productivity, and sustain growth and support over time, Act 8404 and this Plan recommends establishing a Local Food and Farm Advisory Committee. The following committee members were recommended by Act 8404:

- Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture or the Commissioner's designee
- Executive Director of the Economic Development Authority, or the Executive Director's designee
- Two members from the University of the Virgin Islands, including the President of the University of the Virgin Islands or the President's designee and the Dean of Agriculture or the Dean's designee
- Three other members to be appointed by the Governor, with those three being farmers from each island.

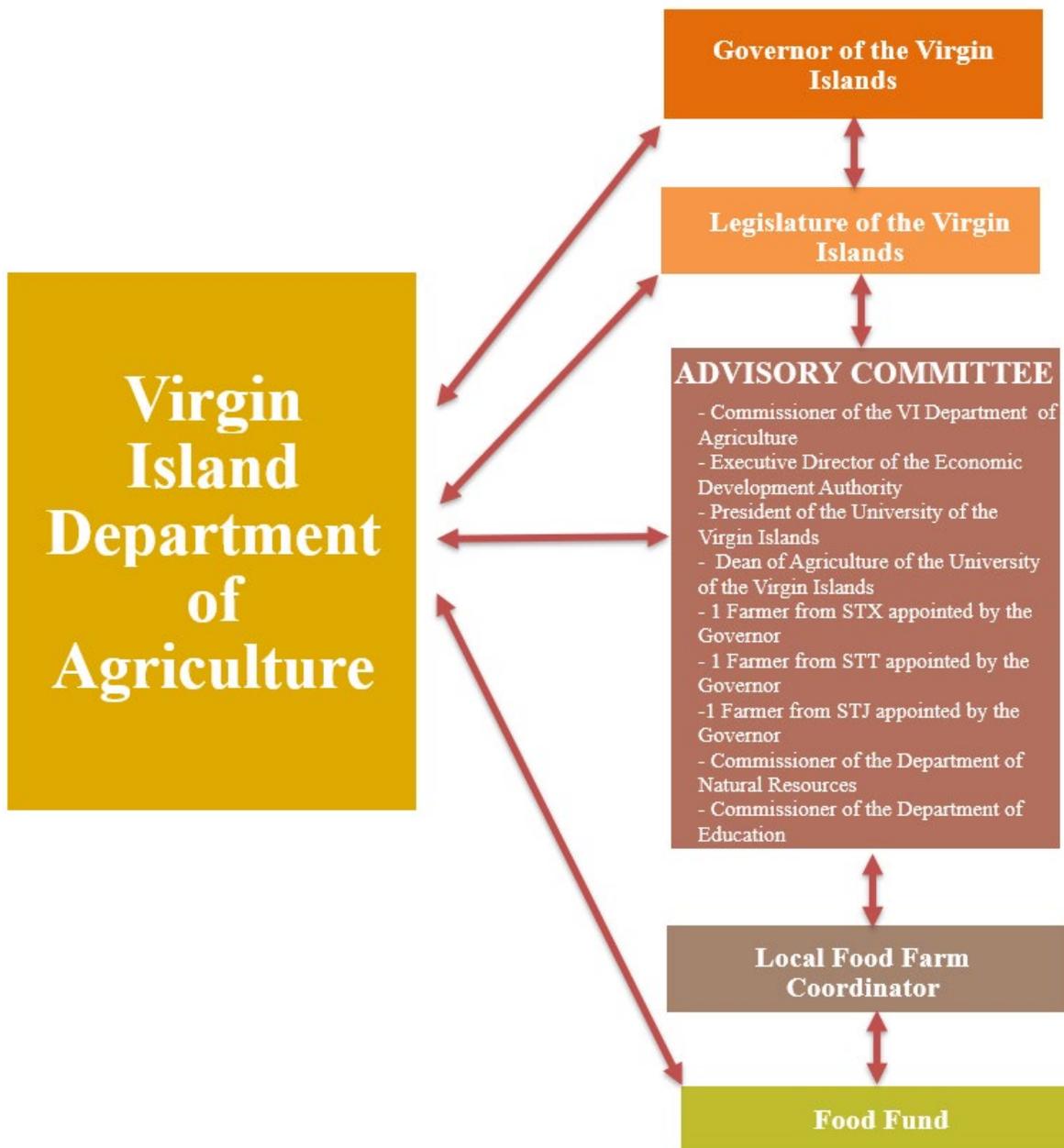
The Advisory Committee will have the responsibilities to create and oversee the Local Food and Farm Fund, participate in the grant decision-making process, disburse resources from the fund, advise the Local Food and Farm Coordinator, collect and evaluate critical local food systems production and marketing data and respond to any requests by the Legislature for policy or funding recommendations as legislated.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establishment of a Local Food and Farm Advisory Committee to consist of nine members.
2. Inclusion of the following two (2) additional members to the Advisory Committee to provide the technical expertise and breadth of knowledge needed to make the Plan successful:
  - Commissioner of the Department of Education or the Commissioner's designee, due to the major emphasis on training and educational enhancement in the agricultural field.
  - Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) or the Commissioner's designee, to ensure representation due to the close engagement of DPNR and its involvement in the agricultural industry.
3. Collaboration between the Advisory Committee and DPNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to research, explore, and enhance food security opportunities available through the Fishing Industry (Marine Life, Salt, and Land Component) in the Virgin Islands. Similar outreach through surveys and town halls to members of the fishing industry should be conducted as was instituted for the farming community to increase their productivity.
4. The Task Force submits the following criteria for use by the Governor when considering the selection of the farmer appointees:

- Documented revenue generation
- Crop yield & technology used
- Technical skills, education, documented training, and industry certifications
- Length of time farming or engaging in agriculture entrepreneurial initiatives
- Representation sourced from a range of agriculture focus areas (ex. vegetable crop production, ornamental horticulture, fruit crop production, livestock production, diversified ag production, value-added production) with strong consideration of the Board's role.
- Input from the farming community about potential appointees

## NEW ADVOCACY STRUCTURE FOR AGRICULTURE



## 6. LOCAL FOOD SYMBOL RECOMMENDATIONS

It is essential for the Plan to establish a brand and promote agriculture's benefits in the United States Virgin Islands, regionally and nationally. A very compelling and appropriate local food symbol is important as a marketing tool to convey the importance of food sovereignty in the Virgin Islands, encourage the importance of “home grown” produce, and elevate the importance of agriculture throughout the territory.

The Task Force commissioned three graphic designers to devise a symbol or label that embodies the values indicated above. Though the Task Force discussed having a student competition to develop the local food symbol, time constraints and the summer break made it difficult to implement. There will be opportunities in the future to engage students around projects related to the local symbol. An essay contest and marketing strategies that include students can be considered in the future.

Below are the three local food symbols that the Task Force is recommending for consideration.

## LOCAL FOOD SYMBOL DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

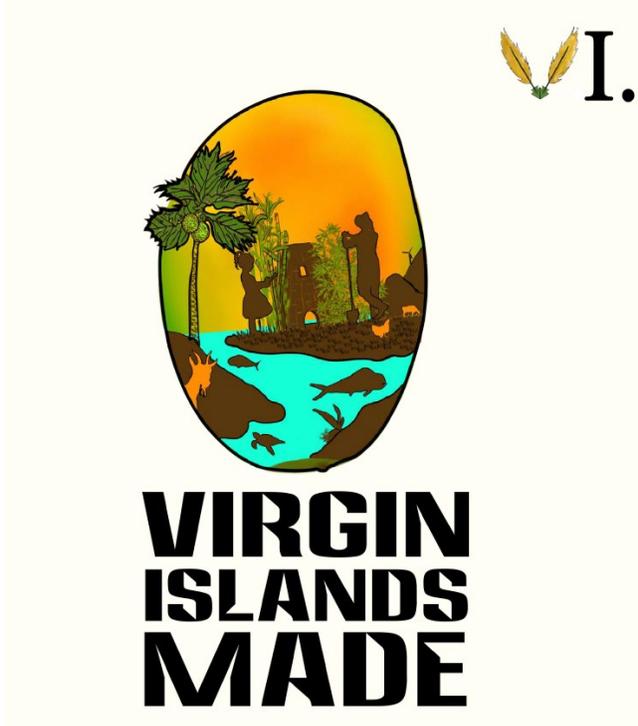
**FOOD SYMBOL #1**  
**Jenne Dee Creative**



**FOOD SYMBOL #2**  
Joshua the Jenius



**FOOD SYMBOL #3**  
Love Art Group



## **Local Food Symbol Marketing Activities**

Once a symbol is chosen, it will serve as a source of “branding” for products that originate from the Virgin Islands. Because the food symbol is not one that has been utilized previously in a broad way on a wide scale, it is essential that there be an awareness promotional campaign that incorporates traditional mass media as well as social media marketing.

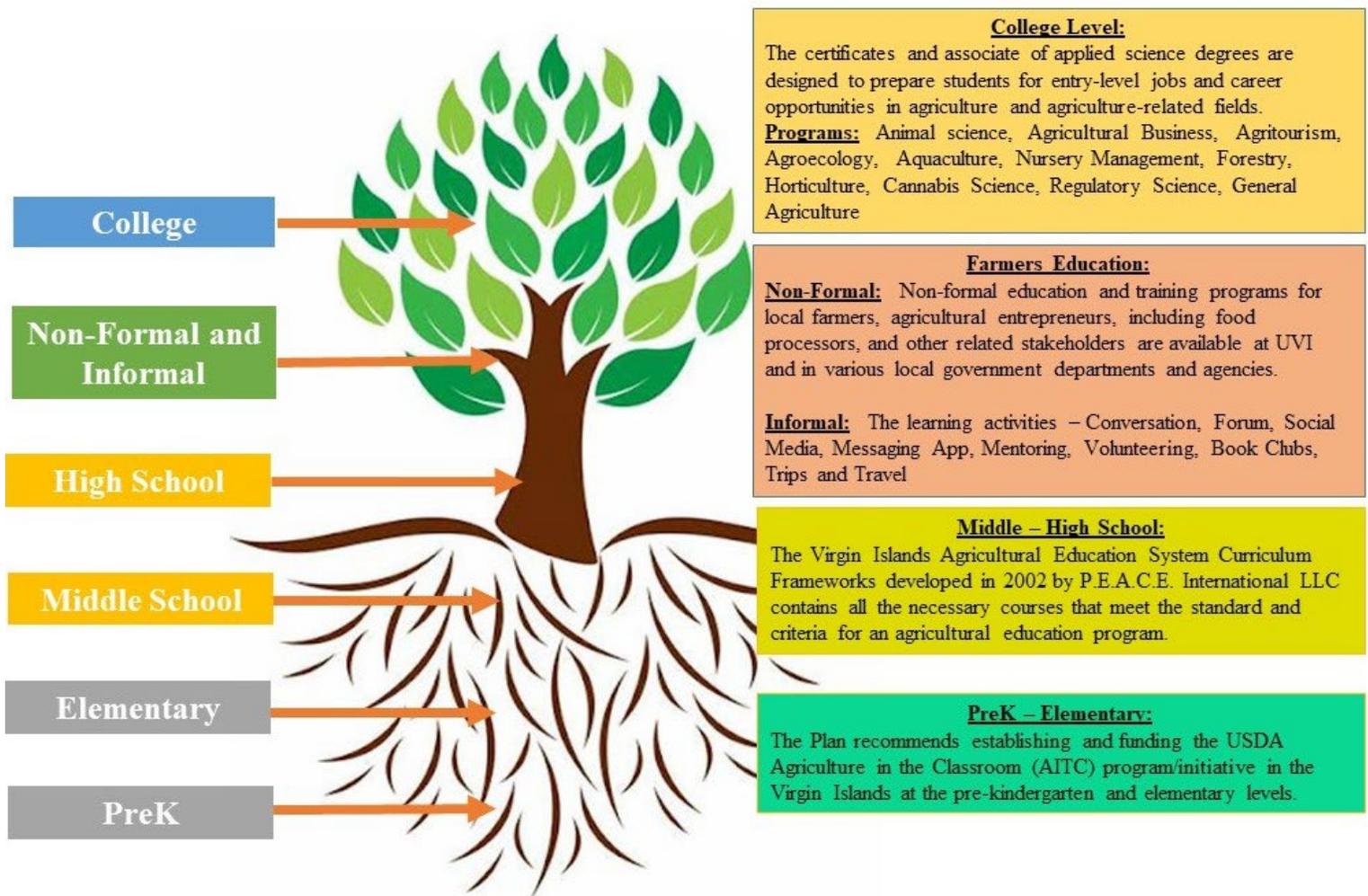
The awareness campaign should combine marketing communications across the spectrum of traditional mass media including television, radio, newspaper, and mobile billboards. In addition, there will need to be window signs for retailers who carry these “home grown” products, signaling that they support the goal of food security. In addition to conventional marketing communication elements, social media marketing should also be executed, including but not necessarily limited to the VIDA platform as well as the overall Virgin Islands government platform.

Execution of the marketing strategies should be commensurate with the launch of using the local food symbol. In that regard, there needs to be a mass awareness campaign blitz within the first six months of the utilization of the food symbol. In subsequent years, there should be reminder promotion campaigns regarding the food symbol.

## 7. EDUCATION AND TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS

The development framework of the education and training programs for the local farmers, entrepreneurs, and processors is critical to implementing the Agricultural Plan and increasing agricultural productivity in the short and long run. The Task Force’s sincere belief is that agriculture education and training must be a systematic and comprehensive part of the future of the Virgin Islands if food sustainability is to become a reality. This process must begin at a child’s early age and be available throughout his/her formal education, including higher education. In addition, there must be robust and consistent informal education processes for farmers and others.

The diagram below attempts to capture the comprehensive and systematic approach to agriculture education that the Task Force recommends.



At each level of the territory's educational system, agricultural exposure and competency must be integrated. Though we start below focusing on the current educational needs of existing farmers, we fully recognize that without a different approach to agriculture education, we will lose an entire generation of farmers that the Virgin Islands desperately need.

### **Farmer Education**

To stimulate more productivity in the territory, it is critical that more resources be devoted to farmer education. The farmer survey results indicated great receptivity to this need, and it was identified as one of the top needs from the local government (60.7%). A substantive portion of farmers responses (nearly 70%) explicitly related to training said their interest in an agriculture training outreach program. Another 26% were "maybe" interested in a training program. Eighty-two percent of the respondents are willing to devote at least 1-2 hours per week to training. Among that group, a total of 32% are willing to devote at least 3-4 hours of training. The remaining 18% of the respondents are willing to devote a minimum of 5 hours a week to training. The farmers were also very clear about the type of training they felt was most important. The key areas were: accounting and finance (desired by 56%), financial counseling (desired by 30%), legal counseling (32%), disaster resilience (49%).

The Cooperative Extension Services or peer-to-peer training provided by UVI is also important to farmers. The areas identified were: food preservation and storage (56.6%), sustainable agriculture (56.6%), harvest planning (35.8%), and food security (33.9%).

### **Informal Education and Non-Formal Education for Farmers**

Informal learning activities should be encouraged and promoted among local farmers and growers to preserve and retain the most beneficial traditional agricultural production system in the Virgin Islands. Many informal learning activities include mentoring, conversations, book clubs, forums, volunteerism, etc.

- Conversation and Forum
- Social Media and Messaging App, etc.
- Mentoring and Volunteering
- Book Clubs (including eBooks)
- Trips and Travel (Trade/Agriculture Shows, etc.)

Non-formal education/training programs for local farmers, agricultural entrepreneurs, including food processors, and other related stakeholders are available at UVI and in various local government departments and agencies. However, these programs need to be promoted and their accessibility and funding improved in local budget allocations. The Cooperative Extension Service (CES) of the UVI School of Agriculture is an outreach unit with expertise and experts in non-formal education/training programs and services for farmers, ranchers, home gardeners, communities/residents including youth and residents. CES fulfills the land-grant mission of UVI through subject matter experts in various agriculture disciplines, who translate science-based research results into language (written, verbal and electronic) that is appropriate for our target audiences.

CES is a non-credit educational organization that addresses public needs. Extension agents help farmers grow crops and raise livestock, homeowners plan and maintain their home gardens, and youth learn skills to become tomorrow's leaders.

The main programs of the Cooperative Extension Service are:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- 4-H/Family and Consumer Science
- Computer Training and Technology
- Community Economic Development (planned)

Specific project/subject matter areas include:

1. Small Livestock Production focuses on education and training activities on proper/adequate housing facilities; improved pasture management/usage; animal identification; and recordkeeping to increase animal production and reduce parasitism resulting in productive/profitable animal enterprises.
2. The Computer Technology Training programs include computer/technology-based workshops focused on introductory computer classes that begin with Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Word, and E-mail/Internet usage followed by Beginning/Intermediate MS PowerPoint; Beginning/Intermediate Excel; and Usefulness of Internet. Training is also focused on computerized financial recordkeeping for farmers/farm households to increase participants' knowledge and usage of relevant computer-based technologies.
3. The Sustainable Agriculture program educates and encourages farmers to adopt agricultural practices that are environmentally responsible, economically viable, and enhance the overall wellbeing of the territory. With a focus on the long-term success of local farms, the educational outreach programs disseminate to producers recommended research-based information on (a) management and production practices, (b) farm financial and operational planning, organizing, managing and recordkeeping practices, (c) enhancing water resources, (d) alternative enterprises and commodities, and (e) value-added technologies.
4. The Urban Gardening program provides information, education, and technical advice to commercial growers, home gardeners, nonprofit organizations, public and private agencies, and residents about caring for and cultivating fruits and vegetables. In addition, the rising cost of imported necessities, including food items, has created a desire among residents to reduce their cost of living. As a result, many residents have begun to make lifestyle changes such as getting more exercise, reducing stress levels, and changing dietary habits.
5. The planned Master Gardener Volunteer Program will undertake projects and assist the Cooperative Extension Service in offering horticulture outreach programs. The program will increase the ability of CES to respond to and fulfill the increasing demand of the farming community, including home/backyard gardeners.

These programs and services are being offered one-on-one and/or in a small-group format at no cost to farmers and other related clientele groups.

The University's Center for Excellence in Leadership and Learning (UVI-CELL), another educational outreach agency, also has various non-formal educational programs in skilled trades, entrepreneurship, hospitality, accounting and finance. These programs help enhance local farmers' knowledge and skills, including agricultural entrepreneurs, processors, and other related stakeholders in the Virgin Islands. However, most of the programs are available only online and are not free like CES programs.

The VI Department of Agriculture has non-formal educational programs and services in land development and maintenance, agricultural development, veterinary health services and abattoir operations, and a hemp program that will benefit the three target audiences. Additionally, annual offerings of the following training opportunities are provided in collaboration with industry partners and stakeholders:

- Beekeeper Certification Training Seminar
- Organic Pest Control Mechanism Workshop
- Composting Seminar
- Forest Maintenance and Tree Health Workshop
- Essential Recordkeeping Skills for Farm Management
- USDA Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Abattoir School Tour
- WIC Agriculture Product Use Demonstration
- Backyard Farming Training Workshop

The VI Department of Planning and Natural Resources environmental programs will help improve and sustain the agriculture, food and natural resources base of the Virgin Islands.

In addition, the VI Adult Education programs such as the GED and other career and technical education offerings are excellent non-formal educational opportunities for overall personal enrichment for local farmers, agricultural entrepreneurs including processors and other related stakeholders in the territory.

### **New Education and Training Program with Possible Applicability to the Virgin Islands**

The GoFarm Hawaii educational training initiative is one of the country's most successful extension and outreach-oriented programs. It is designed to enhance food security and the economy by increasing the number, knowledge, and skills of farmers and growers in Hawaii. Three of the six programs can be replicated in the Virgin Islands with relatively few changes to fit the needs of the target audiences and the overall environment of the territory. The candidate programs are Grow Your Own, AgCurious, and the Statewide Beginning Farmer Program. In the past, the UVI Cooperative Extension Service has successfully conducted the Beginning Farmer Program with a grant from the USDA. With new reliable local funding support, the program can be revived with an integrated approach combining UVI-CES ideas and GoFarm Hawaii.

## **Comprehensive Formal Agriculture Education System (Pre-K through College)**

The Task Force recommends that the Territory develop robust formal education and training programs and curricula in agriculture to secure a sustainable local food production system. The Plan recommends establishing and funding the USDA Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) program/initiative in the Virgin Islands at the pre-kindergarten and elementary levels. The program was implemented back in 1982 in almost all fifty states and territories through the state departments of agriculture and/or organizations such as the Farm Bureau. Its mission is “to improve agricultural literacy awareness, knowledge, and appreciation....among PreK-12 teachers and their students” (USDA: Agriculture in the Classroom, 2011, p. 1). The AITC instructional materials, programs, and activities integrate agricultural content information in social studies, science, mathematics, language arts and required subjects. Most instructional materials and programs align with educational standards, increasing their credibility with state educational agencies.

The structure of the AITC educational curriculum and the goals and objectives of the program vary from state to state. However, the USDA emphasizes the need for the educational curriculum to include the following:

- Science literacy
- Agricultural careers
- Nutrition
- Pre-service and professional development opportunities for teachers

For example, in the state of Illinois, one of the goals of their program is the provision of a systematic infusion of agricultural concepts into the basic subject areas of their curriculum. A similar approach can be seen in the Michigan AITC program that integrates agriculture in their language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and health lessons. Again, a version of this methodology should be developed in the Virgin Islands school system.

At the middle and high school levels, the Task Force recommends implementing comprehensive agriscience education programs and curricula using the three-component model or four-component model of agricultural instruction in public schools. The three-component model comprises classroom and laboratory instructions, experiential learning, and leadership development. The four-component model comprises classroom instructions, supervised agricultural experiences, laboratory instructions, and Future Farmer of America (FFA) activities.

A comprehensive program of agricultural education in public schools should provide agricultural science as a part of the school’s career exploration program, education for citizenship, consumer education, special education, applied sciences, practical arts, planning for admission into the UVI School of Agriculture, and as a part of planning for present and prospective entrepreneurs and employees in the agriculture industry.

The foundation of the agricultural education program encompasses agricultural production, agribusiness, horticulture, agricultural mechanics, agricultural resources and forestry, and agricultural product processing. Agricultural production consists of courses in livestock and crop production, farm mechanics, and farm business management. Agribusiness consists of sales,

agricultural supplies, agricultural services, agricultural business management, marketing, and transportation. Horticulture consists of floriculture, arboriculture, greenhouse operation and management, landscaping, nursery operation and management, and turf management. Agricultural mechanics consists of agricultural power and machinery courses, structures and conveniences, soil and water management, construction, and electrification. Agricultural resources and forestry consist of natural resources conservation, wildlife management, recreation, forest management and technology, and marketing of forest products. Finally, agricultural product processing consists of courses in the processing and marketing of food and non-food agricultural products.

The Virgin Islands Agricultural Education System Curriculum Frameworks developed in 2002 by P.E.A.C.E. International LLC contains all the necessary courses that meet the standard and criteria for an agricultural education program. The summary of the curriculum frameworks is included here to review and approve implementation in the Virgin Islands middle and high schools. This curriculum has been shared with the Department of Education and members attended a **Curriculum and Open Educational Resources (COER)** meeting to present the curriculum and answer questions.

The Virgin Islands Agricultural Education curriculum frameworks were developed out of a shared and documented need to provide career and technical education training in agriculture to:

- Provide exploratory courses at the elementary, middle, and secondary school levels, designed to give students initial exposure to a broad range of agribusiness occupations to assist them in preparing their academic and occupational plans.
- Provide job-preparatory instruction at the secondary school level, with competencies that prepare students for effective entry into an occupation, including diversified cooperative education, work experience, and job-entry programs that coordinate directed study and on-the-job training.

Applicants of this program will be prepared to enter advanced training and education in any career or specialized field in agricultural production, agriscience, agribusiness, agritourism, or forestry. They may also be employed as trainees or beginning workers in various agriscience or agribusiness-related positions.

Each course comprises two parts: a curriculum framework and the student performance standards listed for each intended outcome. For example, the middle school curriculum offers Introduction, Exploration, and Fundamentals to Agribusiness, Agriscience and Natural Resources courses (6th – 8<sup>th</sup> grades, respectively). In contrast, Agriscience & Technology courses, I, II, III & IV are offered for 9th to 12th grades, and adult learners.

### Middle School Agricultural Science Curriculum Summary

Course Name	Grade and Credit(s)
<b>Introduction to Agribusiness, Agriscience and Natural Resources</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> grade and .5 credit
<b>Exploration of Agribusiness, Agriscience and Natural Resources</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> grade and .5 credit
<b>Fundamentals Agribusiness, Agriscience and Natural Resources</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade and 1 credit

### High School Agricultural Science Curriculum Summary

Course Name	Grade and Credit(s)
<b>Agriscience and Technology I</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> grade and 1 credit
<b>Agriscience and Technology II</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> grade and 1 credit
<b>Agriscience and Technology III</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> grade and 1 credit
<b>Agriscience and Technology IV</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade and 1 credit

Agriscience laboratory activities (shops, wet labs, land labs, and greenhouses) are an integral part of this program, which includes the safe use and application of high technology equipment. Examples are computer software, telecommunications equipment, scientific testing, and observation equipment, as well as mechanics' tools, field tools, carpentry tools, arc welders, oxyacetylene torches, tractors, field equipment, chemical applicators, power sprayers, irrigation equipment, and fire-control hand equipment.

The National FFA Organization (FFA) is the appropriate Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) to provide leadership training and reinforce specific agricultural and career technical skills as an integral part of the curriculum.

Planned and Supervised Agriculture Experiences (SAE) must also be provided through directed laboratory experience, student projects, placement for experience, community volunteer activities or cooperative education, and other on-the-job training (OJT) activities.

#### **Higher Education in Agriculture**

The Task Force believes that a robust agriculture production system in higher education is critical to advancing productivity in the territory. Therefore, we support and promote college-level agricultural science certificates, an associate of applied sciences, undergraduate degree programs in animal science, agricultural business, agritourism, agroecology, aquaculture, forestry, and nursery management, horticulture, cannabis science, regulatory science, and general agriculture at the UVI School of Agriculture. The certificates and associate of applied science degrees are designed to prepare students for entry-level jobs and career opportunities in agriculture and agriculture-related fields. The undergraduate programs prepare students for both entry and middle-level professional careers in agriculture and STEM fields and admission to graduate and professional schools. Below is the summary of the UVI School of Agriculture academic programs and curricula in agricultural sciences that have either been approved by the Board of Trustees or are in development for approval.

<b>Certificates</b>		<b>Required Credits</b>
<b>Agricultural Business</b>		17
<b>Agritourism</b>		15
<b>Animal Science</b>		18
<b>Aquaculture</b>		18
<b>Cannabis Social Science</b>		16
<b>General Agriculture</b>		16-17
<b>Horticulture</b>		18
<b>Forestry and Nursery Management</b>		15-16
<b>Associate of Applied Science Degrees</b>		
<b>Animal Science</b>		63-64
<b>Agroecology</b>		62-64
<b>Agricultural Business</b>		62-65
<b>Cannabis Biotechnology</b>		62-63
<b>Cannabis Social Science</b>		63-64
<b>Horticulture</b>		64-65
<b>Regulatory Science</b>		63-64
<b>General Agriculture</b>		64-65
<b>Bachelor of Science Degrees</b>		
<b>Animal Science</b>		120
<b>Agroecology</b>		120
<b>Agricultural Business/Economics</b>		120
<b>General Agriculture</b>		120
<b>Regulatory Science</b>		120
<b>Horticulture</b>		120

## Incentives for Agriculture Graduates of the Territory

To encourage young people and the next generation of educated local food farmers, entrepreneurs, and processors from the Virgin Islands with college degrees and certificates in agriculture and food production, the Task Force recommends three types of incentives for those who are interested in becoming full-time growers/food producers in the territory.

**Incentive Number 1:** The government should allocate seventy-five (75) acres of farmland where available and award a portion of the farmland as a lease to graduates who are interested in becoming full-time growers and food producers in the territory. The portion of the farmland to be awarded will vary based on the type of farming business the graduate may go into. For example, a poultry production operation may not need as much land as crop and livestock farming operations. Farmland should not be indefinitely available, and the application process should be developed with a business plan required along with the application.

**Incentive Number 2:** Tuition aid/support annually for ten (10) students pursuing certificate programs in agriculture at the University of the Virgin School of Agriculture. These are students who do not qualify for standard financial aid available to those pursuing undergraduate associate and bachelor degrees. The tuition aid for the certificate students will be fifty (50) percent of the cost of tuition for the certificate program.

**Incentive Number 3:** Full tuition support for agriculture students seeking at least an associate degree who are native to the Virgin Islands and meet the requirements of the Virgin Islands Higher Education Scholarship Program.

## **8. DATA, BENCHMARK, AND ANALYSIS RECOMMENDATIONS**

The final mandate of Act 8404 is to establish a process for collecting agriculture data and creating benchmarks.

In carrying out its mission, the Task Force concluded that there is a lack of consistent and accurate data regarding agriculture production, consumption, and other critical indicators in the agriculture arena in the Virgin Islands. Though the USDA Agriculture Census is a highly beneficial data source, it is only conducted every five years. Thus, it cannot provide up-to-date information to measure annual progress or inform policy development. There is also an absence of benchmarks to guide increased agricultural productivity and other key metrics. Finally, there are no comprehensive and ongoing assessment processes relative to the agricultural field in the Virgin Islands.

The Task Force, therefore, recommends that a systematic approach to data collection be developed and funded. We further recommend that the below list of data collection points be adopted to collect this information annually, except during the years when the Agriculture Census is being conducted. Even during those years, data that is not directly covered by the census will be collected.

We also recommend that the following benchmarks be developed to determine whether progress is being made under the Plan to achieve food security:

1. Increasing local agricultural productivity by 2% each year in order to meet the agriculture production goals contained in Vision 2040.
2. Decreasing the need for assistance with irrigation from the present level to a more acceptable level.
3. Increasing the overall acreage in production by 2% each year.
4. Increasing the number of licensed farmers by a 5% each year.
5. Increasing the number of individuals engaged in home gardening and community growing by a 5% each year.
6. Reducing the number of agricultural imports by a 2% percent each year.
7. Increasing the amount of Education and Training provided to farmers by 10% each year.
8. Increasing by 5% the amount of locally grown and produced agriculture products purchased by the local government.
9. The following governmental entities (Department of Education, Human Services, Bureau of Corrections, and Department of Health) that have active kitchen facilities purchase at least 10% of needed produce from locally grown sources.
10. Increasing the number of high school and college graduates entering agricultural workforce in the range of 1-2% per year.

## Proposed Annual List for Data Collection & Analysis

1. Number of licensed farmers in the Territory.
2. Number of farmers with leased land from the Government.
3. Number of farmers with occupancy permits from the Government
4. Size of all farms and the number of acres in production and out of production.
5. The amount of crops and other produce harvested.
6. The amount of crops and other produce sold.
7. The amount of crops and other produce given away.
8. Value in dollars of the amount of produce, livestock, etc. sold to the local market.
9. Value in dollar amount of produce, livestock, etc. that is exported.
10. Direct local Governmental support in dollars to local farmers.
11. Direct Federal Government support in dollars to local farmers.
12. Overall acres in production in the Territory by Islands: STX, STT, STJ.
13. Overall acres out of production in the Territory by Islands: STX, STT, STJ.
14. Number of new licenses issued to farmers each year.
15. Number of licenses renewed to farmers each year.
16. Number of individuals who indicate they are engaged in home gardening.
17. Number of individuals who indicate they are engaged in community farming.
18. Amount of produce each individual home produces each year.
19. Amount of produce each individual community grower produces each year.
20. Amount in percentage of quantity of individual garden produce consumed locally by individuals.
21. Amount in percentage of quantity of community garden produce consumed locally by individuals.
22. Survey of grocery stores and other retailers to discover how much they purchase each year from local farmers.
23. How much in quantity of the locally grown produce are purchased by grocery stores and other retailers?
24. How much in quantity of the locally grown produce are purchased by restaurants annually
25. How much quantity of the locally raised livestock and poultry are purchased by grocery stores and restaurant annually?
26. How much in quantity of the locally raised livestock and poultry are purchased by restaurants annually?
27. Number of hours devoted to education and training each year.
28. Type of training needs desired \_\_\_\_\_.
29. For conservation purposes, the amount of land in permanent riparian buffer zone; production related facilities; an intentional fallow period for later crop/livestock use; intentional buffer zones, and in conservation use related to farm production.

Regarding assessment, we recommend that the Local Food and Farm Advisory Committee conduct an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the Agriculture Plan and deliver a report to the Legislature and the Governor.

## **ADDITIONAL HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **Additional Recommendation I**

#### **COMPREHENSIVE IRRIGATION SYSTEM AND WATER SUPPLY**

The number one concern raised by farmers was the need for a comprehensive irrigation system to provide a consistent water supply. There is data that the drought period is lasting longer; therefore, assistance in this arena is vital to increasing productivity. As a result of this significant concern, the Task Force commissioned UVI Caribbean Center for Green Technology Center (CCGT) to analyze the water situation and develop recommendations.

#### **Water Systems Recommendations**

As the USVI moved to an industrial society from an agrarian one in the 1960s, the USVI stopped investing in water resource infrastructure. Now that the climate is drying, water security is becoming a pressing issue. Access to water is the most important chronic problem facing farmers in the USVI.

#### **Statement of Problem**

##### **Water System**

The water system for farmers can be broken down into three categories: water resources, distribution network, and farmers. The USVI has a wide variety of water resources: ponds; wells, which are used to access water stored in aquifers; and cisterns. The last option, which is not used currently, is to treat and reuse wastewater. Water from ponds, wells, and some cisterns is pumped, filtered of sediments, and transported to the farmers through a pipe network or by trucks. Water is used by fruit and orchard farmers, livestock farmers, and crop farmers at different times of the day and in different quantities.

##### **Reasons for Water Scarcity**

The USVI has a wide diversity in water resources. However, most farmers in the USVI feel water insecure for two reasons: drought and lack of management of the water system. The biggest threat to water security is drought (Figure 1). Because of climate change, the territory has experienced more short-term and prolonged droughts in the past 20 years, including the past five (5) years, than any other time in its recorded weather history. Additionally, although the USVI is now part of the U.S. Drought Monitor network, there is still a lack of understanding of micro-climates and projections for rainfall: an area can experience a drought while another does not.



Figure 1: Drought images of Bordeaux farmland showing Green Ridge Guavaberry Farm and the VIDA pond in May 25, 2021 (left) and August 25, 2021 (right). Aerial photos by Royce Creque.

Drought notwithstanding, another reason for the apparent contradiction between the wealth of resources and water insecurity is a lack of understanding of the reliability of the system components. There is in general a lack of data on the exact amount of water stored in the resources, and lack of maintenance of these resources; a lack of maintenance and the illegal tapping of the distribution network; and a lack of data on and optimization of the usage (Table 1).

Table 1: Barriers to Water Security for Farmers

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Data Issue</b>	<b>Operation</b>
Water Source	Wells	Lack of knowledge of aquifer location and capacity; Paving of aquifers	Maintain pumps and extraction pipes
	Ponds	Lack of understanding of rainfall patterns	Sedimentation and liner maintenance
	Cistern	Lack of understanding of rainfall patterns	Maintenance of roof, gutters, and pipes
Water Distribution	Pumps	-	Maintenance
	Pipes	-	Leaks and illegal tapping; Sedimentation due to lack of water filtration
Water Usage	Pipes and storage	Need/demand	Timing and water saving technology
Water Quality	-	No tracking	Lack of water purifiers/filtering

Ponds lose capacity because of sediment accumulation, and the absence or degradation of lining, which causes infiltration. Wells can also run dry if aquifers do not recharge properly because of the paving of aquifers for development. Water can also become brackish and unusable if salt water intrudes in the aquifer because of sea-level rise. Finally, cisterns can run dry if roofs, gutters, and pipes directing water to the cistern are not maintained.

In addition to issues with sources of water, a fair amount of water can be lost or not accessed efficiently because of a lack of maintenance and monitoring of the distribution network. Pumps stop working if not properly maintained; sediment in unfiltered water can clog pipes; water can drip out of pipes if they are not maintained; and thieves illegally tap into lines that are not monitored. Lastly, water can be lost by users if the timing and amount of water used for crops, fruits and orchards, and livestock are not optimized.

## Water Quality

In addition to water quantity, water quality is important for agriculture. In the USVI, the major threats to water quality are emissions from industrial areas, particulate matter from fires and car emissions, and potentially from Sahara dust. In cases where these pollutants negatively impact farm production, filtering and purifying the water can be a necessary step. Currently, there's no tracking of water quality or an understanding of water quality standards required by various farmers.

### Solutions

Solutions to increase water security for farmers include a mix of investment in new infrastructure and maintenance of existing infrastructure. However, the key to a resilient water system is to **monitor water quantity and quality**, **maintain** system components, and ultimately **learn** how the system works to better anticipate and adapt to events.

The recommendations below provide a pathway to strengthen the system, make it more robust, and support training to better manage it. Recommendations also provide potential sources of funding for some of the activities. These funders include the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Department of Interior (DOI), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the Economic Development Agency (EDA).

A lot of the funds that these agencies provide can be accessed through competitive grants. However, even though some of the agencies can provide funds for equipment and some construction, most are reluctant to fund capital improvement and maintenance. Strategic planning would need to be applied to maximize the amount of grant funding.

In order to maximize the amount of funds coming from grants, it would potentially require a stronger and larger grant writing and management staff at VIDA. This would also require training and assistance to farmers so they can write, manage and access some of these grants. USDA and EPA have regular general calls for grant applications; funds from DOI and USGS can be accessed through their technical assistance programs; USGS and EDA might also ask for some level of match. An exception is NRCS. NRCS provides a fair amount of funding to states and territories in the form of direct assistance or work. However, to be eligible for NRCS assistance, farmers must be registered with the V.I. Department of Agriculture (VIDA). Currently, many of them are not. They can be eligible if they register with VIDA and request a letter from the Commissioner of Agriculture stating that they are farmers.

Below are short-term and long-term recommendations to improve water access to farmers. We provide a cost estimate, and potential sources of funding outside of the VIDA. When funding is not mentioned, it means that VIDA is likely to be the sole funder.

## Short-Term Recommendations (1-3 Years)

### Water Resources

#### 1. Improve Bordeaux Fairgrounds Infrastructure

- a. **Purify water at Bordeaux Fairground:** Purify water from Bordeaux Fairground so it can be safely used by farmers and other vendors. **Cost: \$7,000; Funder: USDA.**
- b. **Improve water harvesting at St. Thomas Fairgrounds:** Seal fairgrounds roofing gutter. **Cost: \$1,000**
- c. **Install modern food processing infrastructure at St. Thomas Fairgrounds:** Install modern food processing components at the fairgrounds to ensure federal food safety guidelines are met. **Cost: \$250,000; Funder: EDA.**

#### 2. Improve Capacity and Infrastructure of Ponds

- a. **Assessment of ponds:** conduct an environmental assessment with NRCS to determine the number of ponds to be dredged and identify simple sediment conservation strategies. **Cost: \$75,000; Funder: NRCS.**
- b. **Dredging of ponds:** Dredge ponds on each island to increase water capacity following recommendations of environmental assessment. This includes public, but also private ponds in Bordeaux, Coral Bay, and St. Croix. **Cost: NTE \$3.5 million; Funder: NRCS.**
- c. **Pond maintenance:** Once cleaned and dredged, it is important to regularly maintain ponds. Maintenance requires cleaning and relining public and private ponds in Bordeaux, Dorothea, Coral Bay, and St. Croix; expand as necessary. **Cost: \$2 million** (cost per year, for approximately 10 ponds/year).



Figure 2: VIDA water ponds on St. Croix showing sediment accumulation that need to be dredged – Photo by VI Aerial in July 2021.

#### 3. Expand Usage of Cisterns for Agriculture

- a. **Expand agriculture water resources with public school and public housing cisterns:** Install water purification devices on combination of 10 public school and public housing cisterns so it is usable for agriculture purposes. Water from these cisterns can be used during drought conditions. **Cost: \$200,000; Funder: USDA/NRCS.**

#### 4. **Database of Water Resources for Better Monitoring**

- a. **Inventory of water resources:** identify locations of known water sources (ponds, wells, dams, public cisterns) and list them as primary, secondary and disaster sources. **Cost: \$75,000; Funder: USGS.**
- b. **Aquifer mapping:** assess location, footprint and capacity of aquifers. **Cost: \$750,000-\$1.5 million; Funder: USGS or DOI.**

#### **Distribution Network**

1. **Repair Existing Water Distribution Network in Bordeaux. Cost: \$100,000; Partial Funder: DOI.**
  - Re-network lines for farmers on ag land in both Bordeaux / Dorothea and on land leased to farmers in St Croix that use shared water sources to equitably address access to water.
  - Buy new pumps, sediment filters, and catchments for each pond, well and dam
  - Purchase and install signage of “NO Illegal Tapping” for all VIDA network irrigation lines to minimize loss and increase data collection of use.
  - Install cameras to protect all VIDA assets to minimize loss, including ponds and other dams or water sources for visual and live oversight.
2. **Backup Power Supply for Pumps:** Equip major ponds in Bordeaux, Coral Bay and St. Croix with solar systems to operate pumps and protect infrastructure from weather events. **Cost: \$500,000; Funder: USDA or NRCS or DOI.**
3. **Purchase Water Truck:** Increase the service capacity of VIDA for the delivery of water on St. Thomas. **Cost: \$200,000; Funder: DOI.**



Figure 3: Example of water truck from knapheide.com.

#### **Farmers**

1. **Reduce Water Usage in Farming**
  - a. **Train farmers on water conservation methods:** Conduct an irrigation survey based on crops, farm size and water use(s) and train farmers on smart technology (solar timers, meters, gauges and sensors). **Cost: \$250,000; Funder: NRCS.**

- b. **St. Croix community gardens irrigation subsidy:** Provide up to 500 farmers with a subsidy of up to \$6000 based on need to purchase water conservation tools. **Cost: \$300,000; Funder: NRCS.**
2. **Demonstrate Efficacy of New Water Conservation Technology**
    - a. **Drip Irrigation Pilot Project:** Work with a small group of farmers that have specialty and row crops to demonstrate the effectiveness of micro-drip technology on water conservation and crop production. **Cost: NTE \$100,000; Funder: NRCS.**
    - b. **Smart Irrigation Pilot Study:** Sub-surface irrigation technology is a proven way to drastically reduce water use in orchard. Work with a series of farms, NTE 200 acres, to validate and calibrate the use of this technology in the USVI. **Cost: \$300,000; Funder: NRCS.**
  3. **Understand Timing and Quantity of Water Used in Farming**
    - a. **Water Demand Pilot Study:** a water demand pilot study of 14 micro-farms to understand patterns of water consumption and identify water conservation methods and tools. **Cost: \$100,000; Funder: USGS or NRCS.**
    - b. **Water Demand Study:** Conduct comprehensive water demand study to understand patterns of water consumption and identify water conservation methods and tools for famers of various scales and specialty. **Cost: \$500,000; Funder: USGS or NRCS.**

### Water Quality

1. **Air/Water Quality Monitoring Equipment:** Regular water testing for a spectrum of contaminants (H<sub>2</sub>S, SO<sub>2</sub>, oil, etc.) and salinity. **Cost: \$1.7 million** (this includes the cost of the SO<sub>2</sub> sensors and remote sensing equipment); **Funder: EPA or DOI or USGS.**

### General Management

1. **Create a Water Management Board:** Convene a water management board to coordinate the monitoring of sources and the distribution network, and work with farmers on accessing resources that help them conserve water. The board will also ensure that assets are maintained and encourage the anticipation of issues and solutions to adapt to crises. **Cost: Free.**



Figure 4: Steps to a resilient water system in the USVI. The Water Board ensures that all steps are followed, and assets are maintained.

2. **Create Monitoring Plan:** Create a long-term plan to monitor and maintain VIDA assets on a yearly and quarterly basis. **Cost: Free.**
3. **Create a Heavy Equipment Maintenance Plan:** Create a schedule of maintenance requirements for heavy equipment and overall needs with a schedule of semi-annual equipment repair and upgrades to be included in annual budget. **Cost: \$75,000.**
4. **Regular Grant Administration Training of VIDA Staff:** In collaboration with UVI, provide all VIDA staff and administrators with grant application, management, and training to include spending and no cost extension. **Cost: \$75,000/year; Funder: EDA.**
5. **Data Repository and Technical Assistance:** Work with the Caribbean Green Technology Center (CGTC) to include all data collected (tabular, geospatial, etc.) in their existing repository. CGTC will be responsible for maintaining, updating, and distributing these data to stakeholders, and assist them with access, use and interpretation of information. **Cost: \$75,000/year**

We estimate approximately \$11 million to immediately improve the water security of farmers in the USVI. Most of it can be funded by grants, if the funding is available and the grant applications are successful. NRCS in particular can provide a lot of technical assistance and services, however, as mentioned earlier, it is critical that those farmers whose ponds and assets need repair must be registered by VIDA. We estimate that approximately \$2.5 million will have to be spent by VIDA, \$2 million of which is dedicated to the maintenance of ponds. The total amount that will have to be spent by VIDA may increase depending on the grant availability and the urgency of some of these repairs.

### **Medium -Term Recommendations (3-5 Years)**

#### **Water Resources**

1. **Gut and Drainage Improvement and Debris Removal:** Clean and retrofit guts to improve drainage, remove debris from roads. **Cost: \$5 million; Funder: NRCS.**
2. **Improve Water Resources Infrastructure on St. John:** Connect primary and secondary ponds in Coral Bay with a bridge; repair and retrofit spill-away. **Cost: \$1.8 million; Funder: NRCS.**
3. **Cistern Repair and Maintenance**
  - a. **Bordeaux Cistern:** Build a 100,000-gallon cistern, made of five 20,000-gallon holding tanks, and a rooftop water collection system. **Cost: \$2 million; Funder: DOI.**
  - b. **Revitalize Ex-Constitution Hill Cistern at Bethlehem:** Assess conditions of historic Ex-Constitution Hill Cistern at Bethlehem and determine how to repair and/or preserve. **Cost: NTE \$15 million; Funder: USDA or DOI.**

4. **Improve Water Collection for Better Cistern Management:** Conduct a baseline water harvesting efficiency study and generate water collection and cistern management best practices guidelines for the USVI. Provide technical assistance to farmers of all sizes on how to better manage cisterns. **Cost: \$200,000.**
5. **Monitor and Maintain Water Infrastructure in St. Croix Community Gardens and Plots:** Work to recycle water and save energy related to community garden water infrastructure on STX and work on expansion plan to include potable water, regular water testing and a management plan for water use. **Cost: \$300,000; Funder: USDA or NRCS.**
6. **Wastewater Reuse:** Build infrastructure to reuse wastewater from Bordeaux wastewater treatment facility for agricultural use. **Cost: \$1.5 million; Funder: USDA or USGS.**
7. **Water Co-op/VI Soil and Water Conservation District:** Following VI Code, create a water co-op in Bordeaux/Dorothea as well as in St. Croix to include farmers in the decision making on water resource and soil management. **Cost: \$200,000 per year for operational costs; would not include stipends for members.**
8. **Expand National Weather Service NOAA Co-Op Stations:** Plan, develop and install co-op weather stations for NOAA evaluation of drought. This would require travel from the installers, training of operators, and general maintenance of the system. **Cost: \$270,000; Funder: NOAA or USDA.**
9. **Desalination Plant in Bordeaux:** Procure a desalination plant for the Bordeaux community on the westerly side of the island in the Bordeaux Bay area. This plant would be solely powered by battery back-up and solar system. **Cost: \$5.5 million; Funder: DOI or USDA.**
10. **Repair Creque Dam:** Repair Creque Dam in St. Croix to mitigate water loss. This project has to be led and completed by US Army Corps of Engineers. **Cost: \$15 million (USACE has to lead and fund this project).**

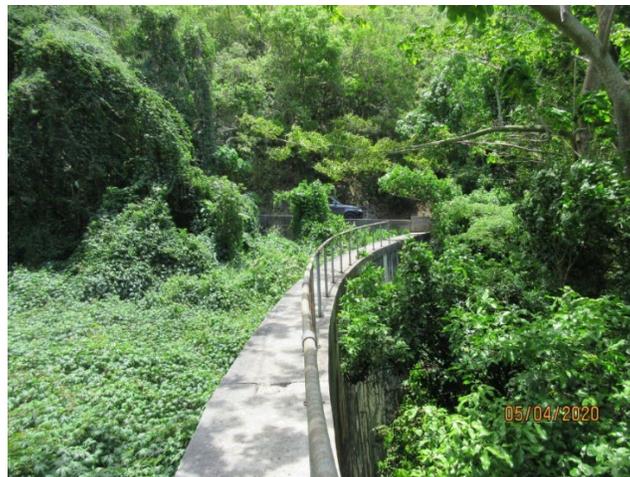


Figure 5: Creque Dam on St. Croix.

## Water Quality

1. **Monitor Air, Soil and Water Quality:** In partnership with DPNR, UVI CGTC to conduct testing of soil and water quality of wells, ponds, and dams for farm use on an ongoing basis. In addition, conduct and report regular monitoring of weather, particulate matter and water quality in the Territory. Results will be published on CGTC geophysical dashboard. **Cost: NTE \$350,000 for 5 years; Funder: EPA or USDA.**

## Distribution Network

1. **Water Trucks:** Expand the distribution network through the purchase of 3 new water trucks on St. Thomas and St. Croix. **Cost: \$750,000; Funder: DOI.**
2. **Purchase Heavy Equipment for Pond and General Maintenance** (mini-backhoes, dozers, dump truck, etc.). **Cost: \$2.5 million; Funder: DOI.**

## Farmers

1. **Water Purchase Subsidy for Farmers:** Provide yearly subsidy for specialty row and livestock farmers to purchase water during drought season. Subsidy of NTE \$1,000, for 500 farmers, annually. **Cost: NTE: \$2.5 million; Funder: EDA or USDA.**
2. **Poultry Farm Subsidy for Existing or Beginning Farmers:** Support poultry farmers by training them on use of water conservation technology (for ex.: evaporative pads How Chicken Farmers Reduce, Save and Recycle Water (chickencheck.in), or environmental bogs which help to retain rainwater). **Subsidy of \$1,000 for up to 500 farmers. Cost: NTE \$500,000; Funder: EDA or USDA**

## General Management

1. **Increase Capacity of VIDA:** Hire a geotechnical engineer and other support staff with background in biology or chemistry. **Cost: \$300,000.**
2. **No Cost Training Partnership with VING:** VIDA entered in an agreement with the VI National Guards (VING) to provide technical and construction assistance (cleaning of cisterns, upkeep of the pump, filter(s), etc.). Needs to be expanded to St. John and St. Croix. **Cost: Free.**
3. **Drought Assessments and Planning:** Create a yearly drought plan for 100 farmers, including livestock, specialty and row crop farmers, to include remote sensing technology, climate smart tools and training on how to use environmental dashboards. Could be conducted annually as part of the VIDA licensing process. **Cost: \$75,000 per year for initial 5 years; Funder: USDA.**

4. **Soil Conservation Plan:** Create soil conservation plan for all VIDA farmers. **Cost: NTE \$400,000; Funder: NRCS.**
5. **VIDA/UVI CES Vocational Training in Partnership with VIDOL:** Develop long-term distribution vocational training to increase capacity of VIDA, farmers and other partners in fields related to water delivery, irrigation and other agriculture related digital farming technologies. **Cost: NTE \$1 million.**
6. **VIDA Heavy Equipment and Maintenance Plan:** Include in annual budget allocations for vehicle and assets maintenance. **Cost: \$350,000**
7. **Long-Term Water Infrastructure Strategic Plan:** Develop water infrastructure strategic plan for territory. **Cost: \$150,000; Funder: NRCS**
8. **Long-Term Drought Plan:** Develop long-term drought mitigation plan for the territory. **Cost: \$150,000; Funder: NRCS.**
9. **Long-Term Storm Water Plan/Capital Improvement:** Develop storm water reuse plan, which includes strategies for maximizing aquifer recharge and minimizing sedimentation of ponds. **Cost: \$300,000; Funder: NRCS.**

The total for long-term recommendations is slightly below \$36 million, most of which could be funded through grants. These recommendations include a fair amount of capital improvement projects, which would require strategic planning in order to get funded. They also would require investment in maintenance.

### **Water Board Management Recommendations**

This recommendation provides an overview of the water system for farmers in the USVI. It shows that, in order to achieve water security, it is important to:

- 1- Monitor the sources and ensure that they are well managed
- 2- Monitor the distribution network
- 3- Maintain water resources and distribution infrastructure
- 4- Work with farmers to ensure that they use and/or have access to the latest water conservation technologies

Working systematically on these aspects will ensure that farmers have access to water of good quality on a consistent basis because they will have the tools and resources to anticipate and adapt to challenges. A Water Management Board would help with this management.

### **Brief Description of Virgin Islands Conservation District**

In the 1960s, the USVI Legislature created the Virgin Islands Conservation District (VICD) to manage, and conserve water and soil in the territory (Virgin Islands Code Title 7: Agriculture, Chapter 3: Soil Conservation).<sup>12</sup>

VICD is also meant to help maintain and improve soil quality and quantity, and water infrastructure in the territory.

### **VICD Mission**

Broadly speaking, VICD's mission is to first conduct activities relative to the conservation and development of soil, water, and related resources. This includes the prevention and control of erosion; the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages; and the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water.

Second, VICD has to conduct activities to provide for, encourage, and conduct surveys, investigations, research and demonstrations. They have to cooperate or enter into agreements with, and to furnish financial or other material and equipment aid, to any agency or any occupier of lands. They can also acquire property and manage the property to construct, improve, operate, and maintain any structures necessary.

Third, VICD can conduct activities on publicly owned lands with the consent or cooperation of the agency having jurisdiction, and on other lands with the consent of the occupier of such lands.

Fourth, VICD is charged with developing comprehensive plans for, among other things, the conservation of soil and water resources and the control and prevention of erosion.

Finally, VICD is charged with implementing and administering the Environmental Protection Program established by Title 12, chapter 13 of the Code. It is our understanding that DPNR is currently solely in charge of environmental protection in the USVI.

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<sup>12</sup> *Appendix XI: Soil Conservation: This section of the code states that: "The Virgin Islands Conservation District shall prepare and adopt an Environmental Protection Program in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Office of Planning, the Departments of Conservation and Cultural Affairs, Agriculture, Public Works, and Health. The provisions of the Environmental Protection Program and any amendments thereto shall be filed and published in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as administrative regulations pursuant to chapter 35 of Title 3 of this Code. Thereafter, such program shall have the force and effect of law".*

## USVI Water Management Board

### Mission

We propose that a water management entity be created to manage the USVI water resources for the benefit of farmers and the community. Broadly, following models from other states, the water management entity responsibilities would include the following:

- Water supply planning to address existing and future needs by developing water supply plans and management.
- Water quality improvement **projects** to ensure that farmers and people have access to and use clean water
- **Ecosystem restoration projects** to protect and preserve ecosystems critical to maintain water quantity and quality.
- **Monitoring and communicating the performance** of water resources and associated infrastructure, water distribution infrastructure, and irrigation infrastructure and methods.
- **Collecting scientific data** to support planning efforts and projects. This includes investigating the impacts of drought, sea-level rise, and other climate drivers, as well as Sahara dust and other air pollutants on water resources and water quality.
- **Promoting results and activities** to allow all stakeholders to learn about the performance of the systems so they can better anticipate and adapt to changing conditions.

These responsibilities overlap with VICD, but they are also more concentrated on the management of the resources for all in the USVI and promote the cooperation and learning between stakeholders to help better anticipate and adapt to existing and future challenges. To achieve this mission, the entity would need to regularly interact with the various government agencies that play a role in managing freshwater and in monitoring weather and climate processes: DPNR, VIDA, DPW, WMA, WAPA, and UVI. The entity would also regularly interact with farmers and community groups and residents about water resources and usage.

### Structure

The water management entity would be composed of members from the agencies mentioned previously, as well as members from the general public.

In addition, CGTC recommends that the water management entity receive funding to accommodate the need for more technical members. Additional funds might also be required to perform the other aspects of its mission. However, given the financial constraints of the territory, we recommend that the entity look for opportunities to leverage funds or activities conducted by other agencies, such as environmental research, monitoring, or communication. Funds for water quality, environmental or infrastructure restoration/conservation projects can be acquired from grants from the federal government, but the entity would need to have access to grant writers and managers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

CCGT recommends updating and amending the VICD statutory mission to accommodate the mission of the water management entity. CCGT also recommends that VICD board have

representatives from the power utility given the dependence of the water systems on power. It is also possible to have the entity be its own, like in other states.

The Water Board should be a part of the VICD.

CCGT also recommends that VICD budget be augmented from, say, \$200,000, to \$350,000 to accommodate the new members, to support additional support staff, and conduct projects. However, it would be strategic for VICD to leverage resources with other agencies and the University and apply for and receive grants to conduct projects and planning activities.

## **Additional Recommendation II**

### **INFRASTRUCTURE, TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT SUPPORT**

Another matter raised by the farmers was the need for various forms of heavy equipment, fencing, and other types of infrastructure support. The Task Force recommends that the Department of Agriculture be provided the funds to increase its pool of key equipment to support agriculture development (for example, tractors, bulldozers, Traxcavators, produce washing stations, refrigeration, packaging, etc.). Presently the budget of the VIDA provides approximately \$250,000 annually for equipment and tools. To stimulate and maintain increased agricultural productivity and achieve the productivity benchmarks contained in Mandate #8, we recommend that the amount be doubled to \$500,000 annually. Additional equipment and tools should be acquired through obtaining requests and feedback from the farming community regarding their needs.

## **Additional Recommendation III**

### **STRATEGIC INCREASE OF PERSONNEL IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

At various town halls, it was shared that certain positions which formerly existed in the Department of Agriculture are no longer funded, and thus related resources are unavailable to the farming community. We recommend that the following key strategic positions be filled, and that appropriate funding be provided to VIDA on a recurring basis. The positions are civil engineer, plant pathologist, soil and water conservationists, soil scientist, and entomologist.<sup>13</sup> There are divisions in VIDA, such as marketing, the abattoir and agricultural development that will need to be enhanced as personnel are added to the department. The increased personnel in this section and in Mandate #1 may require new or expanded facilities for VIDA. The Task Force is not able to make a specific recommendation regarding how much additional space is needed or where it should be located.

## **Additional Recommendation IV**

### **STRATEGIC ORCHARD DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

Fruit orchards are essential production sites of local foods that are consumed regularly. It is recommended that tracts of governmental farmland be set aside for the specific development of fruit orchards. These initiatives can increase local productivity and be a source for the eventual development of a food processing plant. In addition, there is a further recommendation to designate 10 acres of land for the development of orchard in the Territory. This will include fencing, land preparation costs, post-hole digging (augers), tree stocks and variety sourcing, irrigation system purchase and installation, well drilling and establishment, well pumps, fertilizers, pesticides, and plant maintenance tools.

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<sup>13</sup> Appendix K: VIDA Current Organizational Chart

## **Additional Recommendation V**

### **ENHANCE GRANT WRITING AT VIDA**

So that the cost of implementing this Plan does not rest solely upon local resources, it is imperative that federal resources are secured to make a substantial investment in the local agriculture industry. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, the Task Force recommends that the grant writing capabilities at VIDA be enhanced to secure some of the funds necessary to implement the VI Agricultural Plan, especially in the water and irrigation area. Following are the recommended steps to complete this process:

1. VIDA to work with the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) Sponsored Program Office to create Grant Writing and Administration training and development strategy.
2. VIDA to be provided funds to hire three (3) full-time Grant Writers to carry out the goal of identifying, securing, and managing agriculture grants for the territory.
3. VIDA to conduct ongoing consultation with UVI Sponsored Program Office to enhance its capacity and effectiveness.
4. The Grant Writing Division of VIDA to work collaboratively with the Advisory Committee and the Local Farm and Food Coordinator to ensure that there is systematic and coordinated efforts to carry out this recommendation.

## Budget Plan

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The formulation of an Agricultural Plan Budget is a critical aspect of the recommendations. Accordingly, the Task Force members developed the Plan's budget and justification for each mandate. The budget thoroughly examines the cost of each recommendation, determines the need for annual recurring cost, identifies the funding source, reviews the initiation of the funds on a short-term through long-term basis, and an implementation period.

### Budget Summary

The territory's Agricultural Plan will require a substantial investment by the local and federal governments to achieve these goals and recommendations. The benefit of this type of investment is that food security could become a reality in the Virgin Islands. The territory would be less vulnerable during periods of crisis, and its people would be consuming fresher produce that will lead to improved health benefits. There are numerous economic benefits from creating a robust agricultural industry which generates more revenue for the local government and more jobs for the local populace.

In summary, the following budget recommendations amount to a baseline request from the local government of **\$10,436,100**, much of which requires recurring appropriation with some increases over the years as the Plan develops. All projects and initiatives may not be able to be implemented in the first year of the Plan, but we wanted to indicate what is ideally needed to fund its operation. In addition, there are one-time investments for certain initiatives that amount to **\$3,500,000** which can be implemented over a three-year period. The Task Force is confident that the remaining cost for the Plan, which amounts to **\$50,477,000** can be obtained from federal agencies either through direct grants or through other resources provided to the local government from federal sources. The major need for these funds is in the area of irrigation and water supply, which is the most critical need of the farming community. The local funding will leverage extensive federal investment, which will transform agriculture in the Virgin Islands.

The Task Force recognizes that these are large sums that are requested in an environment where there are numerous competing needs. We also recognize that the local investment is close to twice as much as the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture is presently appropriated (approximately \$6 million) on an annual basis. However, we see our task as providing a workable and realistic framework for not only dramatically increasing agricultural productivity in the Virgin Islands but elevating agriculture to a level never imagined. An incremental strategy will not achieve this bold goal, nor will it send the message to the agricultural community that the Virgin Islands government is ushering in a new day for agriculture.

**Budget Justification for Mandate Recommendations:**

**Mandate I: Comprehensive Regulatory Framework Budget Recommendations**

**Unfunded Positions per VI Code**

<b>Description /Position</b>	<b># of Employees Needed</b>	<b>Salary (pp)</b>	<b>Fringe \$ (pp)</b>	<b>Total Funding Needed</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	
Market Inspectors & Cost Analyzers	4	\$45,000.00	\$22,500.00	\$270,000.00	4	Recurring	
Local Food Promoter & Culture Bearer	1	\$47,000.00	\$23,500.00	\$70,500.00	1		
Entomologist	1	\$58,000.00	\$29,000.00	\$87,000.00	2		
Data Analyst & Researcher	1	\$60,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$90,000.00	1		
Data Entry Specialist	1	\$30,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$45,000.00	1		
Heavy Equipment Mechanic	3	\$29,000.00	\$14,500.00	\$130,500.00	3		
Small Engine Mechanic	1	\$29,000.00	\$14,500.00	\$43,500.00	1		
Territorial Outreach Coordinator	1	\$55,000.00	\$27,500.00	\$82,500.00	2		
Agricultural Enforcement Officers	2	\$49,000.00	\$24,500.00	\$147,000.00	1		
Environmental Enforcement Officers	2	\$47,000.00	\$23,500.00	\$141,000.00	3		
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>17</b>	<b><u>\$395,500 - Year 1 Implementation</u></b>					
		<b>\$1,107,000.00 Full Implementation after 4 years</b>					

**JUSTIFICATION:** *(Brief job descriptions and responsibilities of each position)*

- (1) **Market Inspectors & Cost Analyzers** will review the quality of a farmer's goods and services, making sure they are fit for distribution. They will study and gather cost expenses, and financial data to create a variety of reports, estimate production cost, compare, and monitor budgets and costs, track changes and trends.
- (2) **Local Food Promoter and Cultural Bearer** will collaborate with the Local Food & Farm Coordinator to promote the culture of farming and agriculture of the Virgin Islands to other Caribbean islands, on the US mainland and internationally. They will plan, develop, and participate in special events, locally and abroad.
- (3) **Entomologist** will be a field biological scientist specializing in the study of insects that affects crop and farming.
- (4) **Data Analyst and Researcher** will perform complex data gathering and analysis from various databases and sources. They will develop and facilitate the provision of services for statistical reports and visual representations, maintain databases, provide consultation on a wide variety of conditions that impacts agriculture.
- (5) **Data Entry Specialist** will input, process, organize and maintain a variety of data figures and information in a digital database.
- (6) **Heavy Equipment Mechanic** will perform preventative maintenance and repairs of gasoline and diesel equipment and overhaul farm machinery. They will travel to various sites to make electrical, mechanical, and hydraulic repairs on equipment such as tractors, bulldozers, Traxcavators, harvesters and irrigation systems.
- (7) **Small Equipment Mechanic** will inspect, service, and repair various equipment.
- (8) **Territorial Outreach Coordinator** will be responsible for planning program and event engagements to develop relationships between the department and the agriculture community.
- (9) **Agriculture Enforcement Officer** will be a sworn Peace Officer of the Department of Agriculture who will ensure compliance with all local and federal agriculture laws and regulations in the protection of safety, property, and commerce in the field.
- (10) **Environmental Enforcement Officers** will track, monitor, promote and enforce the provisions of local and federal environmental code requirements and conditions.

**Additional VIDA Personnel Plan Requests**

<b>Description /Position</b>	<b># of Employees Needed</b>	<b>Cost/Salary (pp)</b>	<b>Fringe \$ (pp)</b>	<b>Total Funding Needed</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
CDL/Heavy Equipment Driver	1	\$27,100.00	\$13,550.00	\$40,650.00	Recurring
Laborer II	2	\$27,100.00	\$13,550.00	\$81,300.00	
Marketing Manager	1	\$55,000.00	\$27,500.00	\$82,500.00	
Horticulturist	1	\$58,000.00	\$29,000.00	\$87,000.00	
Veterinarian	1	\$65,000.00	\$32,500.00	\$97,500.00	
Animal Wardens	2	\$45,000.00	\$22,500.00	\$135,000.00	
Human Resources / Performance Manager	1	\$47,000.00	\$23,500.00	\$70,500.00	
Administrative Assistant	1	\$30,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$45,000.00	
Accountant I	1	\$33,000.00	\$16,500.00	\$49,500.00	
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>11</b>	<b><u>\$688,990- Year 1 Implementation</u></b>			

**JUSTIFICATION:** *(Brief job descriptions and responsibilities of each position)*

- (1) **CDL/Heavy Equipment Driver** will obtain and maintain a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to operate various agricultural machines in the field daily.
- (2) **Laborer II** will construct trellises, repair fences and farm buildings, and participate in irrigation activities. They will perform landscaping, weeding, cleaning, basic fixing of equipment, and other general labor tasks.
- (3) **Marketing Manager** will work collaboratively with the Local Food & Farm Coordinator to promote various crops and agricultural products and services to farmers, the community, and consumers. They will manage the departments' website and social media.
- (4) **Horticulturist** will be responsible for increasing yield, improving vigor, size, and taste of plants. They also coordinate research programs for selective crops. Horticulturists must have extensive knowledge about trees, flowers, vegetables, nuts, bushes, and fruits.
- (5) **Veterinarian** will specialize in treating pets, horses, wildlife, farm animals. Treatment of fish, marine mammals, and invertebrates.
- (6) **Animal Warden** will control and maintain public safety by enforcing animal licensing laws and humane care regulations.
- (7) **Human Resources/Performance Manager** will plan, direct, and coordinate the administrative functions of the department. They will oversee the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of new staff and serve as a link between an organization's management and its employees.
- (8) **Administrative Assistant** will be responsible for providing support to managers, other employees, and office visitors by handling a variety of tasks to ensure that all interactions between the department and others are positive and productive.
- (9) **Accountant I** will perform basic accounting functions such as ledger/fund analysis, cost analysis, fund reconciliation, posting, and fiscal control of inventory. They will prepare financial reports from standard operating statistics and/or financial data. Investigate and resolve problems related to funds, budgets, expenditures, and/or procurement practices.

**Mandate II: Business Models Budget Recommendations**

<b>Description /Position</b>	<b># of Employees Needed</b>	<b>Cost/Salary (pp)</b>	<b>Fringe \$ (pp)</b>	<b>Total Funding Needed</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Agricultural Business Center</b>						
Director	1	\$65,000	\$32,500	\$97,500	1	Recurring
Assistant Director	1	\$55,000	\$27,500	\$82,500	2	
Consultants	2	\$45,000		\$90,000	1	
Administrative Specialist	1	\$35,000	\$17,500	\$52,000	1	
Contracted Services: Cooperative Coordinator	1	\$45,000		\$45,000	1	
<b>Total Salaries:</b>				<b><u>\$284,500 –Year 1</u></b> <b><u>\$367,000 Full Implementation</u></b>		
Office Equipment				\$37,500	1	Recurring*
Office Electronics				\$75,000	1	
Office Supplies				\$60,000	1	
Travel (Inter-Island)				\$250,000	1	
Travel (Off Island)				\$200,000	1	
Rental and Leasing (Annual)				\$673,000	1	
Communications (Phone, Internet, Cell phone stipends)				\$131,000	1	
Printing and Publication				\$100,000	1	
Advertising and Promotion				\$145,000	1	
<b>Total Equipment, Supplies, Travel and Promotions:</b>				<b><u>\$167,150 Year 1</u></b> <b><u>Implementation</u></b>		

Agriculture Business Center				<u>\$451,650</u> <u>Year 1</u> \$534,150 Full Implement	1	Recurring
Public-Private Partnership Fund				<u>\$1,000,000</u> <u>Year 1</u> \$3,500,000 Full Implement	1 (One Time spread out over first three years)	
VI Government Grant Funds to be Accessed by Farmers for Grant Matches				\$1,250,000	1	
<b>Total Cost for Business Models:</b>				<u>\$2,681,650 Year 1 Implementation</u>		
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>				\$1,681,650 After Year 3		

**JUSTIFICATION:** To ensure that the Agriculture Business Center becomes operational, there will be the need for one individual who will serve as the anchor to coordinate the existing resources in the SBDC and the Cooperative Extension Services. Likewise, to spearhead the development of farming cooperatives, there needs to be at least one full-time position. An initial investment into the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program of \$3.5 Million will create the type of fund which can stimulate agriculture productivity in innovative and sustainable ways. Since this PPP Agriculture Fund will require some form of profit-sharing, the fund should replenish itself over time.

***Brief Job Descriptions and Responsibilities of Each Position:***

- (1) **Director** will oversee the departments’ business operations, liaise with stakeholders, drive strategic growth, and be responsible for the overall performance of the operations.
- (2) **Assistant Director** will provide support to the Director in departmental planning and monitoring of the operations. They will also enhance productivity, client and employee satisfaction and ensure compliance with rules and regulations.
- (3) **Consultant** will undertake short-term or long-term projects to address a variety of farm related and agricultural issues and business needs. They will present farming solutions in a comprehensive and detailed manner.
- (4) **Administrative Specialist** will provide senior-level administrative support and programmatic assistance to field of agriculture, business, and operations.
- (5) **Cooperative Coordinator** will be a representative of the Agricultural Business Center and coordinate a variety of cooperative education programs, trainings, and events.

**Mandate III: Coordinator for Local Farm Program Budget Recommendations**

Description /Position	Cost	Implementation Year	Frequency
Local Farm Program Coordinator and 2 Assistant Coordinators	\$390,000.00	1	Recurring
Operational Expense	\$90,000.00	1	
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b><u>\$480,000 Year 1 Implementation</u></b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** This innovative position will require an experienced agriculture expert who will earn approximately \$70,000 per year plus benefits. To impact all three islands, we propose that two assistant Coordinators be hired for each island at a rate of \$50,000 plus benefits. Because of the numerous responsibilities of this office, there is an estimated operational expenditure of \$90,000.

**Mandate IV: Local Food Farm Fund Budget Recommendations**

Description /Position	Cost	Implementation Year	Frequency
Operational Expense for establishing a 501(c) (3)	\$2,800.00	1	One-Time
Accounting Audit Expense	\$10,000.00	1	Recurring
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b><u>\$12,800.00 Year 1 Implementation</u></b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** To create a 501 (c) (3) legal entity that can legally receive and disburse funds will require legal assistance, which has been confirmed to be \$2,800. This is a one-time expenditure. The Foundation's financial statements will be audited each year, and we anticipate a cost of \$10,000 per year.

**Mandate V: Advisory Committee Budget Recommendations**

Description /Position	Cost	Implementation Year	Frequency
Honorarium and travel expenses for Advisory Committee members	\$5,000.00	1	Recurring
Travel Accommodations	\$15,000.00	1	
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b><u>\$20,000 Year 1 Implementation</u></b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** The above cost will provide a small honorarium for each meeting to the members of the Advisory Committee who are farmers. There is no honorarium for the governmental officials on the Committee; however, funds are provided for travel expenses for meetings.

**Mandate VI: Local Food Symbol Budget Recommendations**

Description /Position	Cost	Implementation Year	Frequency
Television - (6 months)	\$9,000	<1	Recurring
Newspaper (4 months)	\$11,460	<1	
Radio (4 months)	\$4,800	<1	
Mobile Signs: (250 signs 18 days; \$4,100/3 days)	\$24,600	<1	
Window Signs	\$900	<1	
Promotion of Local Symbol	\$100,760	2	
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b><u>\$151,520 Year 1 Implementation</u></b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** To promote the symbol locally, regionally, and nationally, an annual allocation is being requested. The cost for the design of the symbol has already been covered through the planning funds provided.

**Mandate VII: Education and Training Budget Recommendations**

<b>Description /Position</b>	<b># of Employees Needed</b>	<b>Cost/Salary (pp)</b>	<b>Fringe \$ (pp)</b>	<b>Total Funding Needed</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Informal Agriculture Education and Training</b>						
Travel to Tradeshows for 5 Farmers @ \$2,500/pp		\$12,500		\$12,500	1	Recurring
Book Club and Mentoring /Volunteering		\$3,500		\$3,500	1	
Training Materials		\$12,500		\$12,500	1	
<b>Sub Total:</b>				<b>\$28,500</b>		
<b>Non-formal Agriculture Education and Training</b>						
Extension Specialist Salary 2 x \$60,000	2	\$60,000		\$120,000	1	Recurring
Extension Agent Salary 2 x \$50,000	2	\$50,000		\$100,000	1	
Total Benefits for Specialist and Agent @ 33%			\$72,600	\$72,600		
Travel for Meetings/Conferences for 5 Farmers /Stakeholders @ \$2,500/pp		\$12,500		\$12,500	1	
Training Materials		\$12,500		\$12,500	1	
<b>Sub Total:</b>				<b>\$317,600</b>		

**PreK-12 Schools Agriculture Education and Training**

Teacher's Salaries = 44 x \$55,000	44	\$55,000		\$2,420,000		Recurring
Agriculture Education Program Coordinator	1	\$75,000		\$75,000		
Total Benefits for Teachers and Program Coordinator @ 50%				\$1,245,500		
Equipment, Teaching Materials, & Professional Development		\$2,500,000		\$2,500,000		
Future Farmers of America (FFA) Annual Local, State, & National Meetings /Conferences		\$100,000		\$100,000		
Annual Agriculture Student (AAS) Awards/Recogn Ceremonies at Annual FFA State Meeting and/or VI AgFair		\$100,000		\$100,000		
<b>Sub Total:</b>				<b>\$6,440,500</b>		

College Level Agriculture Education and Training						
Travel to Council for Higher Education (CACHE) Annual Meeting (One UVI School of Agriculture Administrator)		\$2,500		\$2,500		
Tuition Aid for Ten (10) Agriculture Certificate Students (17 credits/student @ \$154/credit = \$2,618 x 10 students = \$26,180); 50% students/50% support = \$13,090		\$13,090		\$13,090		
<b>Sub Total:</b>				<b>\$16,590</b>		
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>				<b><u>\$6,380,040 Year 1</u> Implementation</b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:**

**Informal Agriculture Education Cost**

The estimated annual cost of travels to trade and agricultural shows/fairs for five local farmers at \$2,500 per person totals \$12,500. The estimated cost of eBooks purchase/membership for book clubs and incentives/recognition rewards for seasoned volunteer farmers helping in mentoring and guiding young farmers/producers in farming profession = \$3,500. Training materials in the amount of \$12,500 to include presentation software, manuals, etc.

**Non-formal Agriculture Education Cost**

Annual salaries for two Extension Specialists with expertise in control environment, artificial intelligence, and other high-tech farming, one per district (St. Thomas and St. Croix) at \$60,000 per person totaling \$120,000. Annual salaries for two Extension Agents with expertise in control environment, artificial intelligence, and other high-tech farming, one per district (St. Thomas and St. Croix) at \$50,000 per person totaling \$100,000. And the total fringe benefits for the four Extension personnel at 33 percent totaling \$72,600. Travels to meetings/conferences for 5

farmers/stakeholders at \$2,500 per person = \$12,500. Training materials in the amount of \$12,500 to include presentation software, manuals, etc.

### **PreK – 12 Schools Agriculture Education Cost**

Combined total of \$3,318,350 to cover salaries and benefits for 44 teachers in 24 public schools and 18 private schools, and an Agricultural Education Program Coordinator. Equipment, teaching materials and professional development funds requested will be used to purchase current and/or modern agricultural science teaching equipment, facilities for classroom, laboratories, shops, and field instructions such smartboards, greenhouses, computers, FarmPod, composting facilities, aquaponics systems, etc., as well as professional development for teachers/coordinator. For the short term (years 1 to 3), \$2.5 million is requested each year to purchase equipment, teaching materials and professional development. \$1.5 million is requested for each of the mid-term years (years 4 to 6) to cover maintenance/repairs, additional teaching materials, as needed, and professional development. For the long term (years 7 to 10), \$3.5 million each year is requested for additional/replacement equipment, teaching materials and professional development.

Future Farmers of America (FFA) activities funds requested will be used to engage and support the development of future agricultural leaders in the territory through leadership and agricultural career development/awareness events at local, state, and national levels. Also, some of these funds may be used to encourage and support the creation of local FFA chapters in schools across the territory.

The Annual Agricultural Student (AAS) awards/recognition events are connected to agriculture education curricula in schools. The events will be organized and implemented in all schools with agriculture programs in the territory with a grand finale taking place during the annual Future Farmers of America (FFA) state meeting/convention in St. Thomas. These awards/recognition events are expected to change perceptions and create interest and motivation among young people for careers in agricultural sciences, technology, and food production. The events have the potential to attract supporters from youth development organizations, agricultural business companies and other related non-governmental organizations in addition to local government.

There are good examples where funds from local and federal sources are permitted to support private school programs such as school bus programs, lunch programs, teacher training, etc.

### **College of Agriculture Education Cost**

It is vital for the UVI School of Agriculture to be reconnected with the Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE), an important regional organization of higher education institutions fostering human resources development for sustainable transformation of agriculture in the Caribbean. Engaging with CACHE will not only advance human resources development for sustainable food production in the region but also increase networking capabilities in agricultural research and extension as well. One administrator from the School of Agriculture will be attending the annual meeting of the council, and the estimated cost of attendance, including air tickets, lodging, meals, and ground transportation, is \$5,000.

***Brief Job Descriptions and Responsibilities of Each Position:***

- (1) **Specialists** develop, implement, and evaluate educational programs in expertise and provide advanced technical advice to farmers. The individual in this position must have a minimum of a Master’s degree with six years of experience.
- (2) **Agent** develops and implements general educational programs and provides technical advice to farmers. The minimum educational requirement is a bachelor degree with or without experience of three years.

**Mandate VIII: Data and Analysis Budget Summary Recommendations**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Development of a Data Collection System</b>	\$150,000.00	1	Recurring
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b><u>\$150,000.00 Year 1 Implementation</u></b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** The amount above is the estimated cost for the Eastern Caribbean Center, or a similarly experienced entity, to conduct the annual survey of farming activities and production in the Virgin Islands.

**Budget for Additional High Profile Project Recommendations:**

In addition to the eight (8) legislative mandates, the Task Force identified five areas that required development under this Plan.

**Additional Recommendation I**

**Comprehensive Irrigation System and Water Supply System:** Most of the funds requested below can be obtained through various federal grants from various agencies.

Item	Cost	Implementation Year(s)	Frequency
<b>Comprehensive Irrigation System and Water Supply System</b>	\$125,000.00	1	Recurring
<b><u>Short-Term Budget</u></b> 1-3 years			
<b>Water Resources</b>	<b><u>\$2,001,000</u></b> Local Funding \$4,857,000 Federal Grants	1	Recurring
<b>Water Distribution Network</b>	<b><u>\$200,000</u></b> Local Funding \$600,000 Federal Grants	1	
<b>Irrigation Investment for Farmers</b>	\$1,550,000 Federal Grants	1	
<b>Water Quality</b>	\$1,700,000 Federal Grants	1	
<b>General Management</b>	\$225,000 Federal Grants	1	
<b>Total Short-Term Water &amp; Irrigation Budget</b>	<b><u>\$2,201,000</u></b> Local Funding Years 1-3 \$8,932,000 from Federal Grants	1	
<b><u>Medium-Term Budget</u></b> 3-5 years			
<b>Water Resources</b>	<b><u>\$400,000</u></b> Local Funding \$32,570,000 Federal Grants	3	Recurring
<b>Water Distribution Network</b>	\$3,250,000 Federal Grants	3-5	
<b>Irrigation Investment for Farmers</b>	\$3,000,000 Federal Grants	3-5	

<b>Water Quality</b>	\$350,000 Federal Grants	3-5	
<b>General Management</b>	<b>\$650,000</b> Local Funding \$2,375,000 Federal Grants	3-5	
<b>Total Long-Term Water &amp; Irrigation Budget</b>	<b>\$1,050,000</b> Local Funding \$41,545,000 Federal Grants	3-5	
<b>Grand Total:</b>			

**JUSTIFICATION:** To accomplish Additional Recommendation I, the Task Force commissioned the University of the Virgin Islands, Caribbean Green Technology Center (CTC) to study the water and irrigation systems throughout the Territory. Under the guidance of Dr. Gregory Guannel and Christina Chanes, Research Specialist, they conducted comprehensive research of the impact of the water System.

## Additional Recommendation II

### Infrastructure, Tools and Equipment Support

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Infrastructure, Tools and Equipment Support</b>	\$250,000	1	Recurring
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b><u>\$250,000 Year 1 Implementation</u></b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** One of the major concerns raised by farmers is the need for more heavy equipment that can assist them in the development and expansion of their farming activities. The amounts above would permit the VIDA to greatly enhance the type and number of equipment available to assist farmers so that productivity can be significantly increased. Additionally, the purchase of tools and equipment should be

**Additional Recommendation III**

**Increase Personnel at the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture**

Position	# of Employees Needed	Salary (pp)	Fringe \$ (pp)	Total Funding Needed	Implementation Year	Frequency
Civil Engineer	1	\$70,00	\$35,000	\$105,000	1	Recurring
Plant Pathologist	1	\$56,000	\$28,000	\$84,000	1	
Soil and Water Conservationist	1	\$52,000	\$26,000	\$78,000	1	
Soil Scientist	1	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$90,000	1	
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>4</b>	<b><u>\$357,000 Year 1 Implementation</u></b>				

**JUSTIFICATION:** To fulfill the mission of VIDA and address the various needs identified by farmers addressed in this Plan, there is a critical need for additional personnel. Many of these positions previously existed at VIDA but were eliminated through various budget reductions in the past.

**Additional Recommendation IV**

**Strategic Orchard Development Initiative**

Item	Cost	Implementation Year	Frequency
Strategic Orchard Development Initiative	\$500,000.00	1	Recurring
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>\$500,000.00</b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** Designate 10 acres of land for the development of orchards in the Territory. This will include fencing, land preparation costs, post-hole digging (augers), tree stocks and variety sourcing, irrigation system purchase and installation, well drilling and establishment, well pumps, fertilizers, pesticides, and plant maintenance tools.

**Additional Recommendation V**

**Enhance Grant Writing at the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Enhance Grant Writing at VIDA by hiring 3 Grant Writers</b>	\$186,000.00	Year 1	Recurring
<b>Grant Writing Consultation with UVI's Sponsored Program Office</b>	\$75,000.00	Year 1	
<b>Operational Expense</b>	\$85,000.00	Year 1	
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>\$346,000.00</b>		

**JUSTIFICATION:** To lessen the burden on the local government, there must be a comprehensive and systematic attempt to secure federal funding available to support agriculture productivity in the Virgin Islands. This will not occur without experienced grant writers and an effective sponsored program operating within the VIDA. The above cost will enable such an operation to be created and sustained. In the long run, the overhead from the grants will be able to cover some of the expenses related to the sponsored program's operation.

***Brief Job Descriptions and Responsibilities of Each Position:***

- (1) **Grants Manager** will plan and implement grant programs from application to approval, execution, and utilization. They will perform grant research, grant writing, grant program design and implementation, compliance, and grant reporting.
- (2) **Grants Writer** will research and identify appropriate funding resources, grant opportunities and grant administration by coordinating with local and national partners. They will draft non-technical proposal components, assist in managing funder relationships, engages in compliance reporting, and support special project initiatives.

## Conclusion

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The Agricultural Plan Task Force is confident that the 2021 Territorial Agricultural Plan can transform agriculture in the Virgin Islands and move us closer to food security and sovereignty. We applaud the drafters of Act 8404 for creating a sound and innovative framework that gave the Task Force a viable road map to follow. We have expanded the map based on input from farmers across the Virgin Islands and from national experts. If the recommendations contained in this Plan are embraced, we believe that the goals of Act 8404 will be achieved and indeed surpassed.

The Task Force understands that this Plan requires a substantial and historic investment in agriculture in the Virgin Islands. Yet we are also cognizant that federal resources can significantly assist with this investment. At this rare moment when billions of dollars will be flowing into the Virgin Islands to aid in recovery from the hurricanes and the pandemic, we must plan for the future and ensure a portion of funding is allocated to shore up resilience to natural disasters and challenges in the years to come. This will make the territory and her people stronger and more self-reliant. Increased food security and sovereignty are key to that. We identify federal resources that can potentially be tapped in the plan, however there must be a commitment and investment from the local government to create a new foundation for agriculture productivity as well.

The farmers in the Virgin Islands who toil and sweat each day to keep agriculture alive and provide a means for the people to obtain locally grown and raised, fresh, nutritious and flavorful food, deserve our commendation and support. The best way for us to keep this sacred tradition alive and prepare the next generation of farmers, who will need more from us in the form of technology, ingenuity, and educational support, is to embrace and fund this Plan.

We look forward to discussing the various components of the Plan and answering questions that the Legislature, the Governor, and the public will have once they review this comprehensive and creative agriculture roadmap.

## Appendices

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Appendix A: Act 8404: 2021 Agricultural Plan Task Force

**ACT NO. 8404**

**BILL NO. 33-0376**

**THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**

**Regular Session**

**2020**

An Act requiring the Department of Agriculture and the President of the University of the Virgin Islands to develop a territorial agriculture plan; and for other related purposes

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:*

**SECTION 1.** (a) The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and the President of the University of the Virgin Islands shall develop a territorial agriculture plan.

(b) The territorial agriculture plan, known as the "agriculture plan" must contain policy and funding recommendations to support and expand the local food system, to increase locally grown food production and to provide food security for the Territory. The agriculture plan must include short-term and long-term goals, including proposals for legislative enactment.

(c) The agriculture plan must be comprised of:

(1) A comprehensive regulatory component for the territory's farming industries;

(2) Business models for profitable and sustainable community-based local food and farming businesses;

(3) A plan for the development of a position for and the hiring of a local food and farm coordinator to carry out programs and to coordinate efforts within 180 days of submission of the plan;

(4) The creation of a local food and farm fund from voluntary sources to support initiatives, and agriculture-related activities;

(5) Recommendations for the establishment of a local food and farm advisory committee, composed of seven members, including the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture or the Commissioner's designee, the Executive Director of the Economic Development Authority or the Executive Director's designee; two members from the University of the Virgin Islands, including the President of the University of the Virgin Islands or the President's designee and the Dean of Agriculture

or the Dean's designee and three other members appointed by the Governor, with those three being farmers from each island, to create and oversee the local food and farm fund, participate in the grant decision-making process, disburse resources from the fund, advise the Local Food and Farm Coordinator, collect and evaluate critical local food systems production and marketing data and, respond to any requests by the Legislature for policy or funding recommendations:

(6) The creation of a "local food symbol" that can be placed on stickers, posters, stamps, etc. for sale;

(7) The Development of education and training programs for local food farmers, entrepreneurs, and processors; and

(8) The collection of data, creation of benchmarks, and assessment of progress on the building of the local food and farm economy.

**SECTION 2.** (a) The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and President of the University of the Virgin Islands shall submit the agriculture plan to the Governor and to the Legislature not later than 180 days after the enactment of this act.

(b) A request to the Governor for an extension for the submission of the agriculture plan may be considered upon proof that substantial work on the plan has been completed.

**SECTION 3.** The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture shall review the agriculture plan and submit any recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature every five years beginning from the date on which the agriculture plan was submitted to the Governor and the Legislature under section 2 (a).

**SECTION 4.** Funding to carry out the requirements of this act is appropriated as provided in the Fiscal Year 2021 Executive Appropriation Act.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on December 11, 2020.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 21<sup>st</sup> day of December, A.D., 2020.



  
Novelle E. Francis, Jr.  
President

  
Alicia V. Barnes  
Legislative Secretary



Bill No. 33-0376 is hereby approved.

Witness my hand and the seal of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, this 31<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2020 A.D.

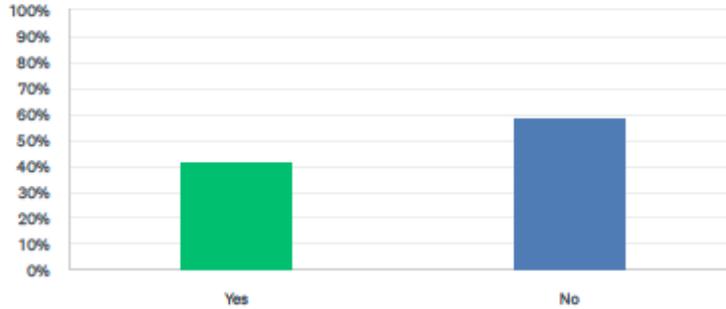
  
Albert Bryan, Jr.  
Governor

**Appendix B: Final Results of the VI Agricultural Plan Farmers Engagement Survey**  
*(Omitted are pages 43-50 and 52-59 which contained personal information such as name, telephone numbers and email addresses)*

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

**Q1 Are you aware of Act No. 8404 (Bill No. 33-0736), which the Legislature approved to develop a territorial agriculture plan?**

Answered: 174 Skipped: 3

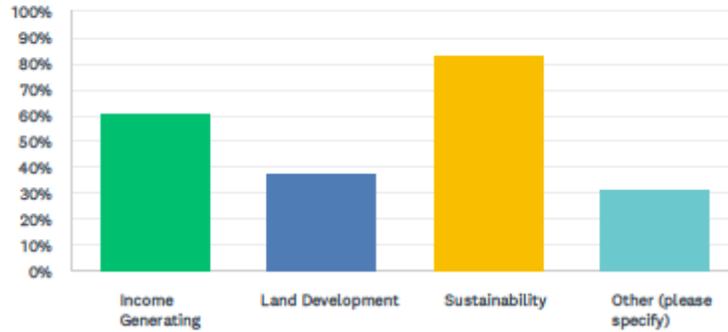


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	41.38%	72
No	58.62%	102
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>174</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q2 Why is farming important to you? (select all that applies)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Income Generating	60.34%	105
Land Development	37.93%	66
Sustainability	83.33%	145
Other (please specify)	31.61%	55
Total Respondents: 174		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Local content development	10/24/2021 9:35 AM
2	Home grown means healthier consumption.	10/15/2021 11:13 AM
3	Future for my children in the community	9/29/2021 8:12 AM
4	Community	9/24/2021 6:34 AM
5	Reforestation	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
6	Enjoyment	9/17/2021 4:29 PM
7	Nature is Love	9/17/2021 3:37 PM
8	Educational	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
9	Growing own food and for other without pesticides and chemicals	9/16/2021 7:11 AM
10	Health	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
11	Hobby, food survival	9/15/2021 3:54 PM
12	Hobby, food survival	9/15/2021 3:34 PM
13	Economic Development, Health	9/14/2021 10:45 PM
14	Food resource and supply	9/14/2021 1:18 PM
15	I like the idea of us being able to feed ourselves.	9/14/2021 10:38 AM
16	Providing high quality produce to Virgin Islanders	9/13/2021 5:00 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

17	Personal enrichment	9/13/2021 3:22 PM
18	Be able to supply our VI community with at least 50% of our food	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
19	Be able to supply our VI community with at least 50% of our food	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
20	The amount I am receiving from Social Security disability is not enough	9/13/2021 12:46 PM
21	Culture	9/13/2021 12:29 PM
22	done it all mylife	9/13/2021 12:01 PM
23	All the above plus health factors	9/13/2021 11:57 AM
24	Supplying fruits grown locally to island residents	9/10/2021 12:20 PM
25	Health, Wellness, Peace	7/29/2021 9:48 PM
26	FOOD SECURITY	7/16/2021 5:42 AM
27	Localized, regional food security	7/15/2021 12:09 PM
28	Family tradition	7/13/2021 10:34 PM
29	Food security	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
30	Food security	6/19/2021 8:07 PM
31	Equity in food options	6/13/2021 1:55 PM
32	OPTIMAL HEALTH MAINTENANCE/ GENERATIONAL FREEDOM	6/7/2021 11:27 PM
33	Community Food Security	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
34	To eat/food	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
35	Sovereignty	5/28/2021 11:26 AM
36	Food security and environmental s	5/26/2021 9:13 AM
37	Fulfilling work that enriches the community	5/25/2021 5:12 PM
38	Provide fresh healthy food to a community in dire need of fresh food.	5/25/2021 5:50 AM
39	Local food sources and appropriate land stewardship are critical	5/24/2021 10:44 AM
40	Health and Security	5/22/2021 8:23 PM
41	Family Tradition	5/22/2021 6:49 PM
42	Community building	5/20/2021 11:36 PM
43	Food security	5/20/2021 7:27 AM
44	Serve the community support healthy choices preserve the environment	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
45	economic and social development for the territory	5/19/2021 7:14 PM
46	Healthy lifestyle, affordable,	5/19/2021 6:47 PM
47	Food sovereignty	5/19/2021 6:06 PM
48	i need to eat in order to survive	5/19/2021 4:35 PM
49	health	5/19/2021 11:02 AM
50	Everyone deserves access to good food. We need community gardens all over the vi where the food is free.	5/17/2021 6:47 PM
51	Culture	5/14/2021 10:34 PM
52	Local food supply	5/11/2021 5:56 AM
53	Food security	5/10/2021 1:00 PM

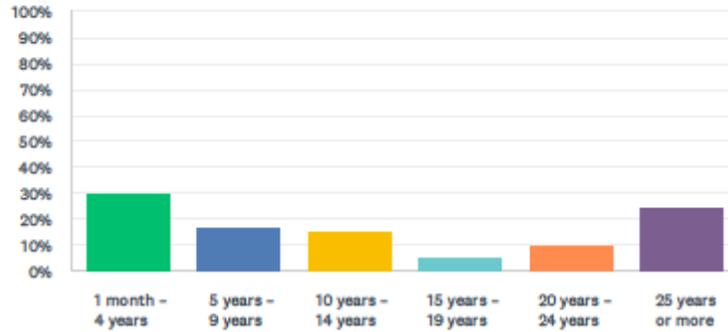
VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

54	Self-sufficiency	5/10/2021 8:25 AM
55	Beekeeping is good for all plants	5/10/2021 8:21 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q3 How long have you been farming?

Answered: 170 Skipped: 7

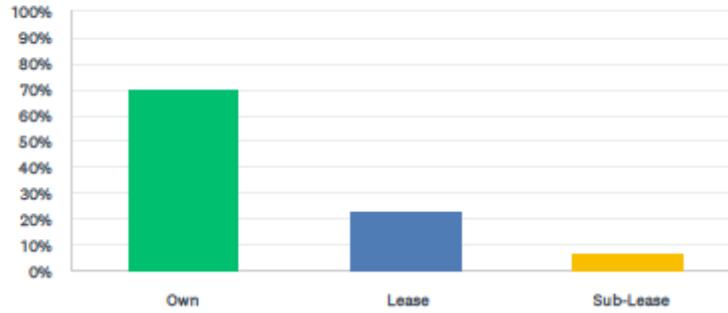


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1 month – 4 years	29.41%	50
5 years – 9 years	16.47%	28
10 years – 14 years	15.29%	26
15 years – 19 years	4.71%	8
20 years – 24 years	10.00%	17
25 years or more	24.12%	41
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>170</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

### Q4 Do you own or lease your farmland?

Answered: 171 Skipped: 6

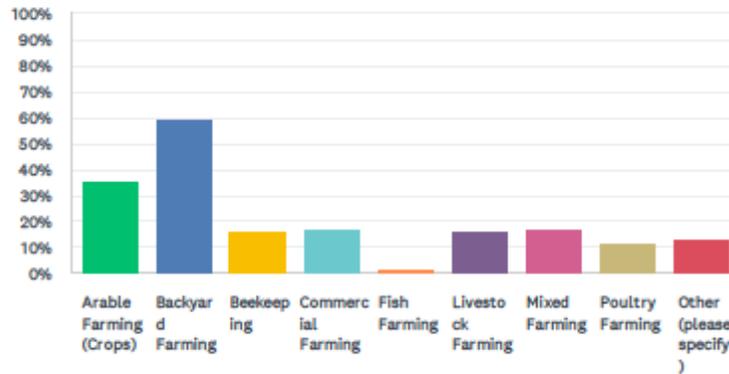


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Own	70.18%	120
Lease	23.39%	40
Sub-Lease	6.43%	11
TOTAL		171

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q5 What category of farming do you currently employ? (select all that applies)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Arable Farming (Crops)	35.47% 61
Backyard Farming	58.72% 101
Beekeeping	15.70% 27
Commercial Farming	16.86% 29
Fish Farming	1.16% 2
Livestock Farming	15.70% 27
Mixed Farming	16.86% 29
Poultry Farming	11.05% 19
Other (please specify)	13.37% 23
Total Respondents: 172	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Container horticulture	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
2	Orchard	9/18/2021 10:10 AM
3	Fruit trees	9/17/2021 4:29 PM
4	I have crops on borrowed Land	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
5	Fruit Trees	9/15/2021 7:19 PM
6	Sale Plants	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
7	Fruit trees and eggs	9/14/2021 2:43 PM
8	Xeric plants and fruit trees	9/13/2021 3:22 PM

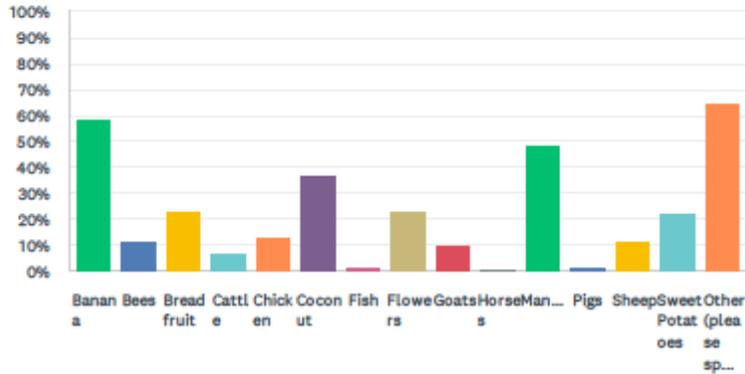
VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

9	Fruit Trees	9/10/2021 12:20 PM
10	Native Tree stewardship	9/10/2021 8:02 AM
11	Grafted fruit tree nursery	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
12	Grafted fruit tree nursery	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
13	Seeds and Plants	6/4/2021 12:55 AM
14	Organic, Agro Forestry	6/3/2021 5:25 PM
15	Regenerative Agro Forestry	6/3/2021 5:02 PM
16	micro green, raised beds, and hydroponics	5/26/2021 12:09 PM
17	Plant nursery	5/25/2021 6:38 AM
18	Container gardening for personal use, primarily herbs	5/24/2021 10:44 AM
19	Orchard and nursery products	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
20	Agro-Tourism, Ag-Education, Local Culinary Events	5/19/2021 7:14 PM
21	Indoor vertical farm (in development)	5/19/2021 4:43 PM
22	Replant indigenous fruit trees	5/14/2021 10:34 PM
23	Agro-Forestry	5/10/2021 1:00 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q6 What specific crop or livestock do you produce? (select all that applies)

Answered: 173 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Banana	58.38% 101
Bees	11.56% 20
Breadfruit	22.54% 39
Cattle	6.36% 11
Chicken	13.29% 23
Coconut	36.99% 64
Fish	1.16% 2
Flowers	22.54% 39
Goats	9.25% 16
Horses	0.58% 1
Mango	48.55% 84
Pigs	1.73% 3
Sheep	10.98% 19
Sweet Potatoes	21.97% 38
Other (please specify)	64.74% 112
Total Respondents: 173	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Vegetables, eggs, beans	10/24/2021 9:35 AM
2	Pineapples, Avocados, Herbs, Spinach, Cherries, Eggplant, PokChoy	10/20/2021 4:38 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

3	various vegetables and fruit	10/15/2021 11:13 AM
4	Ducks	10/4/2021 11:13 AM
5	Pineapple, Fruit Trees	9/29/2021 8:12 AM
6	Plantain, Avocado, Yams	9/29/2021 7:58 AM
7	Sugar Apple, Soursop	9/29/2021 7:54 AM
8	Guavaberies	9/25/2021 8:14 AM
9	Eggplant, basil, pumpkin	9/24/2021 6:34 AM
10	a little bit of everything	9/23/2021 10:13 AM
11	a little bit of everything	9/23/2021 10:11 AM
12	Vegetables	9/23/2021 8:00 AM
13	Sugar cane, soursop, peppers etc	9/22/2021 10:55 AM
14	avacados, breadnut fruit, carambola, passion fruit	9/20/2021 1:29 PM
15	Green (Pak Choi, ) cucumbers, watermelons, beets, culinary herbs,cabbage, tomatoes, sorrell, pumpkin, lemongrass, basil	9/20/2021 11:47 AM
16	Fruit trees and a variety of ornaments	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
17	Short term crops, exotic fruits avocados	9/18/2021 10:10 AM
18	Pepper, eggplant,sorrel,guva, banana,sugar apple,soursop	9/18/2021 8:43 AM
19	Dasheen, yams, plantains	9/17/2021 6:10 PM
20	Papaya, pineapple, tea bush	9/17/2021 4:29 PM
21	Bush teas	9/17/2021 4:09 PM
22	Passion Fruit Sugar Apple, Papaya, parsley, garlic, ackee	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
23	Vegetables and herbs	9/16/2021 7:11 AM
24	Fruit	9/15/2021 9:48 PM
25	Avocados, chives, parsley and celery	9/15/2021 8:17 PM
26	Dragon Fruits	9/15/2021 7:19 PM
27	Greens, lettuce, collards etc.	9/15/2021 6:18 PM
28	Peppers, eggplant, tomatoes,celery, spinach,ground provisions yam, cassava, edo	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
29	Fruits and vegetables	9/15/2021 3:54 PM
30	Fruits and vegetables	9/15/2021 3:34 PM
31	Cucumber, pumpkin, squash, tomatoes, greens, melons, tree fruits, beets, carrots, pineapples, plantain	9/15/2021 2:48 PM
32	vegetables	9/15/2021 2:32 PM
33	Avocado, Lime, Guava, Guavaberry, Papaya, Sugarcane, Soursop, Sugar Apple	9/14/2021 10:45 PM
34	lettuce, greens, broccoli	9/14/2021 4:06 PM
35	Vegetables and fresh herbs	9/14/2021 3:49 PM
36	Passion fruit Aloe vera, lemon grass	9/14/2021 3:20 PM
37	Limes lemons soursop sugar apple starfruit eggs	9/14/2021 2:43 PM
38	Herbs	9/14/2021 1:44 PM
39	Herbs	9/14/2021 1:43 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

40	Lettuce tomato cucumbers Peppa different kinds of tea bush	9/14/2021 1:18 PM
41	Herbs	9/14/2021 11:03 AM
42	Rosemary, Basil, Green Spinach and Red Malabar Spinach	9/14/2021 10:57 AM
43	Pineapples, tomatoes peppers cabbage ect	9/14/2021 8:13 AM
44	Aloe, avacado, bush tea, cherry, goose berry, sweet sop, sour sap, passion fruit slip, plaitain slips etc	9/13/2021 10:24 PM
45	Succulents and other xeric plants as well as Ficus carica edible fig	9/13/2021 3:22 PM
46	Guava, plum,carambola	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
47	Guava, plum,carambola	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
48	Spinach, passion fruits, berries, guava	9/13/2021 1:49 PM
49	I want to grow a lot more but I don't have the resources	9/13/2021 12:46 PM
50	Herbs and vegetables	9/13/2021 12:23 PM
51	Pineapple, herbs, dragonfruit	9/13/2021 11:17 AM
52	Herbs	9/11/2021 5:15 PM
53	Herbs	9/11/2021 5:14 PM
54	Avocado, plums, passion fruit, soursop, guavaberries,	9/10/2021 3:24 PM
55	Guava berry production	9/10/2021 3:13 PM
56	Guava Berries - Sour Sop	9/10/2021 12:20 PM
57	Cucumbers, Corn, Pumpkin, etc.	9/10/2021 11:27 AM
58	Orange trees, guava berry	9/10/2021 8:02 AM
59	Gfayed fruit tree nursery	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
60	Gfayed fruit tree nursery	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
61	Guava berry, herbs & seasoning	9/9/2021 6:46 PM
62	vegetable crops and herbs	7/30/2021 2:39 PM
63	Vegetables	7/30/2021 1:37 PM
64	TROPICAL FRUITS	7/16/2021 5:42 AM
65	vegetables, tree fruits, herbs,	7/15/2021 12:09 PM
66	Jack fruit,black Sapote , egg fruit,star fruit,macademia nut,soursop,eggs	7/14/2021 1:37 PM
67	Avocado, passion fruit, soursop, cassava, potato, okra, tea bush,cashew, sugar apple, pineapple, papaya, gooseberrie	7/14/2021 8:12 AM
68	Avacado	7/14/2021 8:10 AM
69	Herbs, eggplant, tomatoes, peppers, pumpkins, watermelon etc	7/13/2021 10:34 PM
70	Herbs	7/13/2021 8:55 PM
71	Arugula, cooking greens, beets, melons, passionfruit	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
72	Pineapple, plantain	7/13/2021 6:32 PM
73	Veg, Sarubs	6/28/2021 3:34 PM
74	Tomato, Chives and Pineapple	6/28/2021 3:30 PM
75	Honey	6/19/2021 8:07 PM
76	Tomatoes/Pepper/Passion Fruit	6/13/2021 1:55 PM

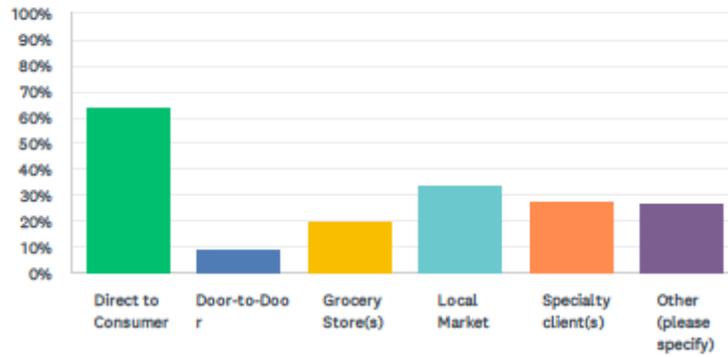
VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

77	AVOCADO/BANANA/PINEAPPLE	6/7/2021 11:27 PM
78	Ducks, Quail and Rabbits	6/4/2021 12:55 AM
79	Tomato/Lettuce/Beans/Greens/etc.	6/4/2021 12:12 AM
80	Mushrooms, Peppers, Beans and Basil	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
81	Green groceries	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
82	Vegetable	5/28/2021 11:26 AM
83	Greens	5/27/2021 1:27 PM
84	lettuce, basil, peppers, greens, & etc	5/26/2021 12:09 PM
85	Vegetable and herbs	5/26/2021 9:13 AM
86	Diverse array of Vegetable crops, fruits	5/25/2021 5:12 PM
87	Seedlings and plants	5/25/2021 6:38 AM
88	Green vegetables, fresh herbs, a lot depends on water	5/25/2021 5:50 AM
89	Plantains, okra, cucumber , tomatoes , eggplant , watermelon, peppers	5/24/2021 8:08 PM
90	primarily herbs for personal use	5/24/2021 10:44 AM
91	Various tropical fruits	5/22/2021 8:23 PM
92	variety of Provisions, Fruits, Herbs, Sugar Cane, & Value-added Products	5/22/2021 6:49 PM
93	Market produce, eggs	5/20/2021 11:36 PM
94	Okra, pumpkin	5/20/2021 11:56 AM
95	Hobey and tea bush	5/20/2021 7:27 AM
96	Tomatoes lettuce	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
97	peppers and tomatoes, basil	5/19/2021 7:43 PM
98	Crop production	5/19/2021 7:14 PM
99	Tomatoes, okras, lettuce, collard green.	5/19/2021 6:47 PM
100	We will grow leafy greens, herbs, some small vegetables. No root vegetables.	5/19/2021 4:43 PM
101	Other Fruits: Guava, Passion Fruit, Papaya, Cherries, Sugar Apple,	5/19/2021 4:14 PM
102	cucumbers, tomatoes, pumpkin, okra, plantains, sour sop, avocado	5/19/2021 11:02 AM
103	Okra, cassava, spinach, amaranth, tomatoes, bok chocolate, green onions, beans, etc.	5/18/2021 7:22 PM
104	Passionfruit; sorrel; okra; peppers; collard greens; eggplant; cilantro; mint; basil; parsley	5/17/2021 6:47 PM
105	Peppers, greens, etc, other fruits	5/14/2021 10:34 PM
106	Abocado	5/11/2021 12:29 PM
107	Pineapples, vegetables	5/10/2021 3:36 PM
108	Papaya, Aloe	5/10/2021 1:00 PM
109	Tomatoes, lettuce, herbs, root crops, melons, and many many more	5/10/2021 9:07 AM
110	Okra, pumpkin, spinach, basil, tomatoes, etc	5/10/2021 8:25 AM
111	Avocados, gavaberry	5/10/2021 8:24 AM
112	Honey	5/10/2021 8:21 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q7 Where do you sell your crops/produce? (select all that applies)

Answered: 171 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Direct to Consumer	63.74% 109
Door-to-Door	8.77% 15
Grocery Store(s)	19.30% 33
Local Market	33.92% 58
Specialty client(s)	27.49% 47
Other (please specify)	26.90% 46
Total Respondents: 171	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Currently for home consumption	10/15/2021 11:13 AM
2	Friends	9/29/2021 8:12 AM
3	STT farmer's market	9/24/2021 6:34 AM
4	VIDA Marketing Dept	9/23/2021 8:00 AM
5	I do not sell at this time	9/20/2021 1:29 PM
6	online market	9/18/2021 10:10 AM
7	I haven't. St. Croix cost of living is high. Indecisive	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
8	Social media	9/16/2021 7:11 AM
9	Cant sell anything right now due to situation	9/16/2021 7:10 AM
10	Sell to vendors who sell to consumers	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
11	To Agriculture Department and local gas station	9/15/2021 3:54 PM
12	To Agriculture Department and local gas station	9/15/2021 3:34 PM
13	Restaurants	9/15/2021 2:48 PM

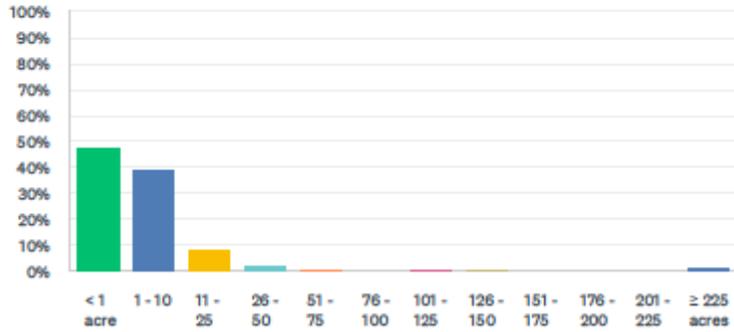
VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

14	Don't sell	9/14/2021 7:28 PM
15	None for sale. Water issues.Drought.	9/14/2021 3:49 PM
16	Do not sell	9/13/2021 10:24 PM
17	local consumption	9/13/2021 5:17 PM
18	Agriculture	9/13/2021 5:00 PM
19	Not selling as yet	9/13/2021 4:03 PM
20	Online from our farm	9/13/2021 3:22 PM
21	Currently I am not selling to anyone but I would love to grow food to feed myself and everyone else lord have mercy	9/13/2021 12:46 PM
22	Over sea specifically mainland	9/10/2021 3:13 PM
23	Have had tenant farmers	9/10/2021 8:02 AM
24	Family & friends	9/9/2021 6:46 PM
25	Currently working on building up production to sell.	7/30/2021 2:39 PM
26	DONATION TO SENIORS	7/16/2021 5:42 AM
27	provide for family, immediate and extended	7/15/2021 12:09 PM
28	Plants are not currently producing	7/14/2021 8:10 AM
29	Wholesalers	7/13/2021 10:34 PM
30	Restaurants	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
31	Garden Centers	6/28/2021 3:34 PM
32	Non-Monetary Exchange	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
33	Self-usage	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
34	Restaurants	5/28/2021 11:26 AM
35	Give to soup kitchens	5/26/2021 9:13 AM
36	Online presales via myneighborsgardenstx.com	5/25/2021 5:12 PM
37	stt.locallygrown.net	5/22/2021 8:23 PM
38	Collaborations with doctors Rx Bucks, supply and contact with area food babk	5/20/2021 11:36 PM
39	Family and friends	5/19/2021 6:47 PM
40	We will be selling to local distributors, not directly to retailers	5/19/2021 4:43 PM
41	We share, not sell currently.	5/19/2021 4:14 PM
42	Online	5/17/2021 6:47 PM
43	Very little due lack of water	5/11/2021 4:44 AM
44	Share with family/friends	5/10/2021 5:14 PM
45	Give to family and friends	5/10/2021 1:00 PM
46	Value added products	5/10/2021 8:25 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q8 How many acres of land is your Farm?

Answered: 172 Skipped: 5

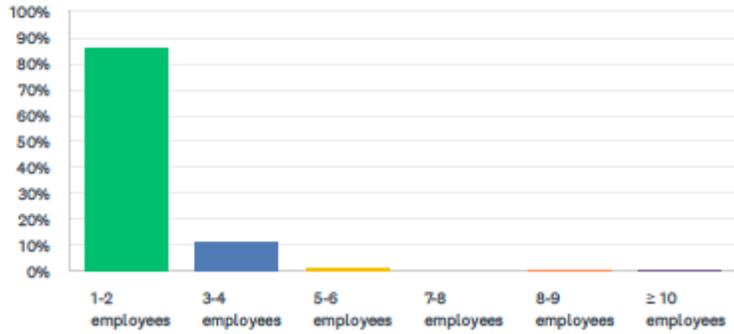


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
< 1 acre	47.67%	82
1 - 10	38.95%	67
11 - 25	8.14%	14
26 - 50	2.33%	4
51 - 75	0.58%	1
76 - 100	0.00%	0
101 - 125	0.58%	1
126 - 150	0.58%	1
151 - 175	0.00%	0
176 - 200	0.00%	0
201 - 225	0.00%	0
≥ 225 acres	1.16%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>172</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q9 Annually, how many persons do you employ?

Answered: 148 Skipped: 29

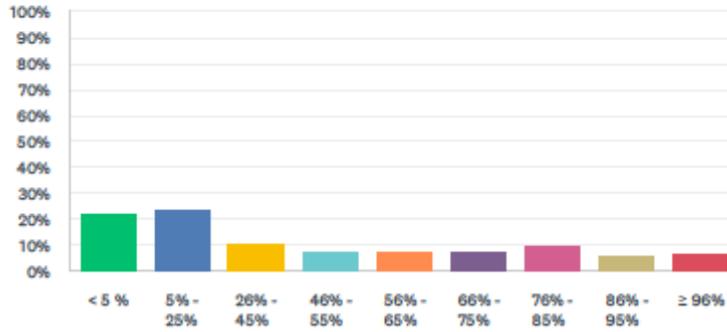


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-2 employees	85.81%	127
3-4 employees	11.49%	17
5-6 employees	1.35%	2
7-8 employees	0.00%	0
8-9 employees	0.68%	1
≥ 10 employees	0.68%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>148</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q10 On average, how much of your Farm is in production?

Answered: 168 Skipped: 9

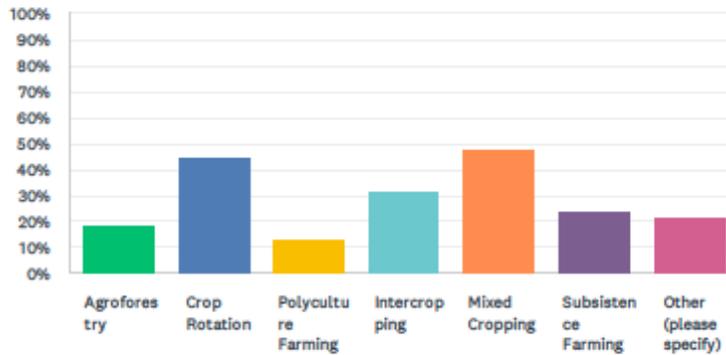


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
< 5 %	22.02%	37
5% - 25%	23.81%	40
26% - 45%	10.71%	18
46% - 55%	7.14%	12
56% - 65%	7.14%	12
66% - 75%	7.14%	12
76% - 85%	9.52%	16
86% - 95%	5.95%	10
≥ 96%	6.55%	11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>168</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q11 What traditional farming methods do you currently utilize? (select all that applies)

Answered: 161 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Agroforestry	18.63% 30
Crop Rotation	44.10% 71
Polyculture Farming	13.04% 21
Intercropping	31.68% 51
Mixed Cropping	47.83% 77
Subsistence Farming	23.60% 38
Other (please specify)	21.74% 35
Total Respondents: 161	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Rotating pastures	9/29/2021 9:36 AM
2	organic	9/23/2021 8:00 AM
3	Container horticulture	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
4	Livestock Farming	9/18/2021 8:11 AM
5	I guess a few Methods. I have long term fruit trees bearing in 22 months	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
6	Rotate I guess, and potting	9/16/2021 7:11 AM
7	Organic but not certified	9/15/2021 2:48 PM
8	Apiary and orchard	9/14/2021 2:43 PM
9	I plant crops that me and family will utilize and sell the excess when harvesting	9/14/2021 10:57 AM
10	Aerophonics...really not sure what question means	9/14/2021 8:13 AM

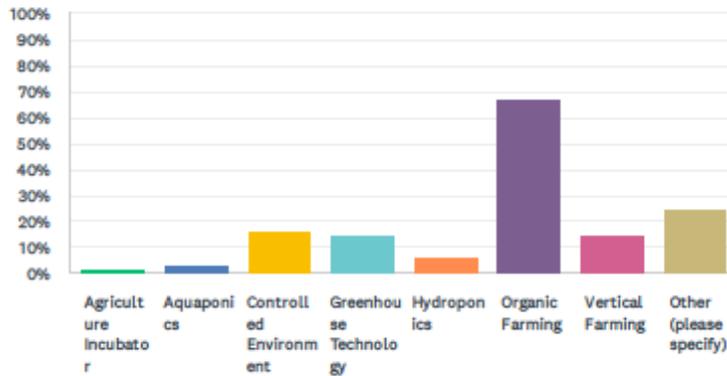
VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

11	Fig orchard	9/13/2021 3:22 PM
12	Deep litter for egg production	9/13/2021 12:32 PM
13	rotational grazing	9/13/2021 12:01 PM
14	Garden style	9/13/2021 11:57 AM
15	Biodynamic organic farming	9/11/2021 5:15 PM
16	Biodynamic organic farming	9/11/2021 5:14 PM
17	Nursey operation	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
18	Nursey operation	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
19	Container planting	9/9/2021 6:46 PM
20	TRADITIONAL FRUIT FARMING	7/16/2021 5:42 AM
21	Contour farming	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
22	Container	6/28/2021 3:34 PM
23	Korean Natural Farming	6/10/2021 1:15 PM
24	Syntropic Farming	6/4/2021 12:12 AM
25	Organic	6/3/2021 5:25 PM
26	Historic Research	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
27	Backyard Farming	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
28	Regenerative	5/28/2021 11:26 AM
29	high tunnel, hydroponics, micro greens	5/26/2021 12:09 PM
30	Alley cropping in contour orchard	5/25/2021 5:12 PM
31	Terracing, trellising, permaculture	5/20/2021 11:36 PM
32	Permaculture	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
33	We are a start up and will be doing high tech farming indoors only	5/19/2021 4:43 PM
34	Plant, protect, and support (fruit trees primarily)	5/19/2021 4:14 PM
35	Permaculture	5/10/2021 9:07 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q12 Have you used any innovative systems in your farming production?  
(select all that applies)

Answered: 154 Skipped: 23



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Agriculture Incubator	1.30% 2
Aquaponics	3.25% 5
Controlled Environment	15.58% 24
Greenhouse Technology	14.94% 23
Hydroponics	6.49% 10
Organic Farming	66.88% 103
Vertical Farming	14.94% 23
Other (please specify)	24.03% 37
Total Respondents: 154	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Drip irrigation	11/3/2021 6:01 AM
2	Drip irrigation	11/2/2021 9:05 PM
3	Hugelkultur	10/24/2021 9:35 AM
4	Drip Irrigation	9/20/2021 11:47 AM
5	None of the above	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
6	None	9/18/2021 8:11 AM
7	Large scale outdoor farming	9/17/2021 6:10 PM
8	Boxed. Grantley gave me over 200 Omar plants and I added them to a few boxed gardens. It worked	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
9	Not sure	9/16/2021 7:11 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

10	Drip irrigation auto feeding and watering system for laying hens	9/14/2021 2:43 PM
11	None	9/14/2021 11:03 AM
12	Garden Hose	9/14/2021 10:57 AM
13	Aerophonics	9/14/2021 8:13 AM
14	No	9/13/2021 10:24 PM
15	Hillside farming	9/13/2021 5:00 PM
16	None	9/13/2021 3:22 PM
17	None	9/13/2021 12:23 PM
18	Nursery business	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
19	Nursery business	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
20	Wicking systems to conserve water	7/30/2021 2:39 PM
21	NO	7/16/2021 5:42 AM
22	No	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
23	No till for soil conservation	6/4/2021 12:55 AM
24	Agro Forestry	6/3/2021 5:25 PM
25	Mycology	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
26	Backyard	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
27	none of the above	5/25/2021 6:30 AM
28	containers	5/24/2021 10:44 AM
29	Permaculture	5/22/2021 8:23 PM
30	N/A	5/22/2021 6:49 PM
31	Hugelkultur	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
32	Raised beds	5/19/2021 6:47 PM
33	No	5/19/2021 4:14 PM
34	Self watering containers	5/17/2021 6:47 PM
35	None	5/11/2021 12:29 PM
36	Permaculture regenerative	5/10/2021 9:07 AM
37	None	5/10/2021 8:25 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q13 What support would you need from the local government to increase farm productivity? (select all that applies)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Education and Training	55.23% 95
Farm Subsidies	54.07% 93
Fertilizer	31.98% 55
Irrigation	55.23% 95
Land Grants	44.77% 77
Market Place	19.77% 34
Minimum Pricing	12.21% 21
Seedlings	45.35% 78
Starter Crop	25.58% 44
Storage Facility	26.16% 45
Tools and Equipment	62.21% 107
Other (please specify)	29.65% 51
Total Respondents: 172	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Better water supply	11/3/2021 6:01 AM
2	Better water supply	11/2/2021 9:05 PM
3	Part-time helpers 1-2 days p/week for 3 hours p/day	9/29/2021 8:12 AM
4	A junctional abattoir	9/23/2021 7:19 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

5	Maximum Pricing	9/23/2021 8:00 AM
6	None	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
7	Ag installed in education curriculum in Strategic farmland development, modern abois stt/stx	9/18/2021 10:10 AM
8	Help with housing. It is so high. .	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
9	Consistent water access	9/16/2021 7:10 AM
10	Heavy Equipment /Plow, Harrow	9/15/2021 7:19 PM
11	When farm issues are common like drought or certain infestations.a video on how to deal with the issues from agriculture on their websight would help.	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
12	Cheaper shipping options to support st thomas	9/15/2021 2:48 PM
13	No slaughter facility for poultry	9/14/2021 1:24 PM
14	Tanka for rainwater	9/14/2021 8:13 AM
15	Heavy machinery	9/13/2021 5:00 PM
16	Having a well is very important for my planting	9/13/2021 12:46 PM
17	processing meat into wholesale retail cuts.	9/13/2021 12:01 PM
18	Water barrels	9/13/2021 11:57 AM
19	Showing that they are serious in agriculture sustainably	9/10/2021 3:13 PM
20	Farm prep such as clearing and soil prep from Dept if agriculture	9/9/2021 6:46 PM
21	Water catchment system or reservoir	7/30/2021 2:39 PM
22	processing center to sell abundant harvests such as mangoes, turmeric, ect	7/15/2021 12:09 PM
23	arbitore in STT, that also processes chicken	7/14/2021 9:38 PM
24	Lease	7/14/2021 8:12 AM
25	Commercial kitchen	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
26	Processing plant and marketing. A land and water use plan	6/19/2021 8:07 PM
27	Business/Organizational Support	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
28	Top soil-making compost	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
29	R/o desal-plant for Bordeaux	5/27/2021 1:27 PM
30	money for solar power, grants for projects	5/26/2021 12:09 PM
31	Access to resources	5/26/2021 9:13 AM
32	Access to Additional fair market wholesale buyers	5/25/2021 5:12 PM
33	more tractors and more operators in the Dep. of Ag.	5/25/2021 6:30 AM
34	WATER	5/25/2021 5:50 AM
35	More land to farm	5/24/2021 8:08 PM
36	Seeking robust Cooperative Extension Service (staff, fact sheets, master gardener programming) with resources for home gardeners, food producers and landscape professionals	5/24/2021 10:44 AM
37	Access to Processing Facilities	5/22/2021 6:49 PM
38	Target Marketing	5/20/2021 11:36 PM
39	Punishment or fine severely to those animals owner that don't contain their animals properly and coming to destroy my fence and crops.	5/20/2021 11:56 AM
40	Marketing	5/20/2021 7:27 AM
41	Land!!	5/20/2021 5:57 AM

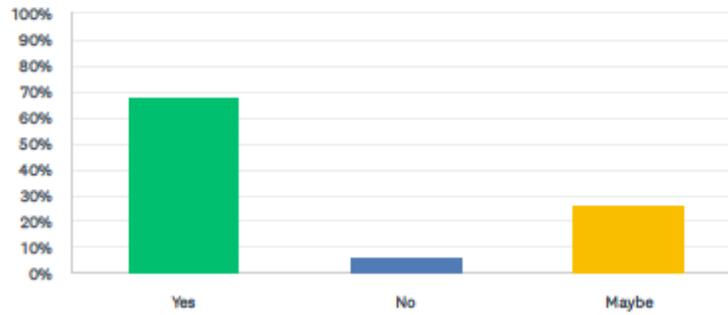
VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

42	Water, clean mulch	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
43	As we are a new business, we could use help with financing equipment to speed up our development. We have applied to USVIEDA but don't have a response from them yet.	5/19/2021 4:43 PM
44	Have always consider allowing others to utilize the available land to cultivate.	5/19/2021 4:14 PM
45	timely land preparation	5/19/2021 11:02 AM
46	Water	5/17/2021 6:47 PM
47	Consistent water!	5/14/2021 10:34 PM
48	Water	5/11/2021 4:44 AM
49	Cooperation supports	5/10/2021 5:14 PM
50	Water.	5/10/2021 9:07 AM
51	Practical Application	5/10/2021 8:25 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q14 Will you be interested in participating in an Agriculture Training Outreach Program?

Answered: 170 Skipped: 7

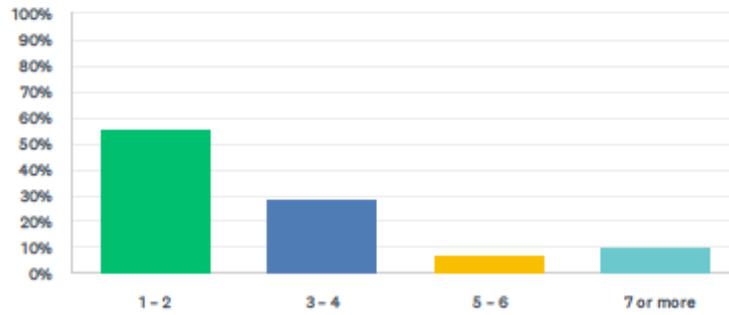


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	67.65%	115
No	6.47%	11
Maybe	25.88%	44
TOTAL		170

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q15 How many hours per week are you willing to devote to a Training Program?

Answered: 163 Skipped: 14

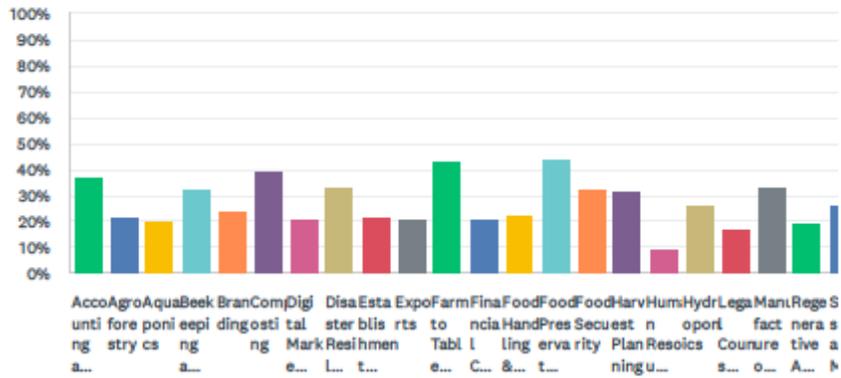


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-2	55.21%	90
3-4	28.22%	46
5-6	6.75%	11
7 or more	9.82%	16
TOTAL		163

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q16 What educational farming subjects would interest you? (Select all that applies)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 5



VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Accounting and Finance for Agribusiness	36.63%	63
Agroforestry	20.93%	36
Aquaponics	19.77%	34
Beekeeping and Bee Management	31.98%	55
Branding	23.84%	41
Composting	39.53%	68
Digital Marketing	20.35%	35
Disaster Resilience	32.56%	56
Establishment of Cooperatives	20.93%	36
Exports	20.35%	35
Farm to Table Organic	43.02%	74
Financial Counseling	20.35%	35
Food Handling & Safety Management	22.09%	38
Food Preservation and Storage	43.60%	75
Food Security	31.98%	55
Harvest Planning	31.40%	54
Human Resource Management	8.72%	15
Hydroponics	25.58%	44
Legal Counseling	16.86%	29
Manufacture of Value-added Products	33.14%	57
Regenerative Agriculture	19.19%	33
Sales and Marketing with Hotels and Restaurants	26.16%	45
Seed Conservation	30.23%	52
Soil Care / Soil Erosion	47.67%	82
Solar System	48.26%	83
Supported Agriculture (C.S.A.)	18.02%	31
Sustainable Agriculture	47.67%	82
Water Catchment Systems	49.42%	85
Other (please specify)	12.21%	21
Total Respondents: 172		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	What grows best throughout the year, when to plant and in what conditions ie; acidic soil, needs partial shade or full sun. Also organic pest and disease control methods.	10/20/2021 4:38 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

2	supply chain	9/23/2021 7:19 PM
3	pricing products	9/20/2021 11:47 AM
4	None of the above	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
5	Grants and Fundraising	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
6	Pests and pesticide use n options	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
7	Irrigation system	9/15/2021 3:54 PM
8	Irrigation system	9/15/2021 3:34 PM
9	Cloning and grafting	9/14/2021 10:38 AM
10	Hillside planting	9/13/2021 5:00 PM
11	Relevant Recordkeeping training	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
12	Relevant Recordkeeping training	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
13	Wells system	9/10/2021 3:13 PM
14	Survey stuck..	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
15	Specialty Crops	6/4/2021 12:12 AM
16	Provision Grounds	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
17	Fish Farming	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
18	I don't need any of the above	5/25/2021 6:30 AM
19	Water conservation and management	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
20	Retirement and succession planning for farmers	5/10/2021 9:07 AM
21	Water Supply System Technology	5/10/2021 8:25 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q17 What changes would you like to see in funding towards Farming and Farmers?

Answered: 129 Skipped: 48

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	direct funding	11/3/2021 5:48 PM
2	Better fencing, improve road greatet eater reserves utilizing the waste water stream	11/3/2021 6:01 AM
3	Better fencing, improve road greatet eater reserves utilizing the waste water stream	11/2/2021 9:05 PM
4	Funding opportunities for female farmers should be expanded and easily available and accessible.	10/24/2021 9:35 AM
5	I would like to see a range as to what other farmers are charging or recommended pricing	10/20/2021 4:38 PM
6	More funding should be given to help expand	10/10/2021 6:30 AM
7	More assistance with paperwork. Farmers are bust farming !	10/4/2021 11:13 AM
8	More grants after national disasters	9/29/2021 9:36 AM
9	To have more personnel at the Agriculture Department to help individual Farmers as needed. They would be hired and given a wage. The Farmers could match the salary per hire.	9/29/2021 8:12 AM
10	Everyone is treated equal	9/29/2021 7:54 AM
11	Help in production funds	9/29/2021 7:35 AM
12	Establishment of a cooperative wholesale market	9/24/2021 6:34 AM
13	we could do well with grants	9/23/2021 10:13 AM
14	we could do well with grants	9/23/2021 10:11 AM
15	Increase in local grants and consistent support for timely land preparation services.	9/23/2021 8:00 AM
16	The fundings should be use for training, water source , and technical assistant	9/22/2021 10:55 AM
17	More funding for professionals level staff and other staffers in the VIDA.	9/20/2021 11:47 AM
18	I don't have any opinion on this	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
19	More focus A greater commitment from government towards food security for the Vi. 25% local food dependency by 2027. An Ag plan that focuses on the greater good of the entire Vi. Restructured Dept of Ag, training in new technologies applied to farming, re install soil and water division	9/18/2021 10:10 AM
20	Give the privilage to have a market for livestock	9/18/2021 8:43 AM
21	Farmers need more assistance with clearing land and soil preparation, they also need more grant programs available.	9/18/2021 8:11 AM
22	Establishment of a system where Virgin Islands farmers could lease land in foreign locales like Dole, Del Monte and Chiquita do. Which would expand our economic base as farmers and increase income to VI farming industry	9/17/2021 6:10 PM
23	Individual assessment of farmers to see what they can offer	9/17/2021 4:29 PM
24	More funding. More employment.	9/17/2021 3:37 PM
25	More educational programs	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
26	Educate and assistance. Educate the ones that may not know little to nothing that they may become successful in this business. Building up one another.	9/16/2021 7:11 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

27	Mandatory sale of local products before imports	9/16/2021 7:10 AM
28	New equipment	9/15/2021 8:17 PM
29	A better funded Department of Agriculture by the Legislature of the VI.	9/15/2021 7:19 PM
30	More assistance.	9/15/2021 6:18 PM
31	Some type of subsidy to qualified vendors tied to them being able to sell their produce to the public at a cheaper price. Also maybe certain produce growing motivators where they get a small discount if they buy certain number seedlings from agriculture. Or two bucks off a month on seedlings to certain types of farmers. Back yard farming support. Funds to create A seed swapping event or a platform to host education and zoom support sessions once a quarter. Farming can be stressful with all the local challenges...	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
32	Grants to assist in farming and sustain long term farming.	9/15/2021 3:54 PM
33	Grants to assist in farming and sustain long term farming.	9/15/2021 3:34 PM
34	More support towards land ownership and stewardship. Our farmers need to own the lands that are good for crop production to make sustainability an option	9/15/2021 2:48 PM
35	No comment	9/15/2021 12:32 PM
36	More seedlings ready available	9/15/2021 8:28 AM
37	Increased budget for the VIDA, Annual local funding for competitive grants for farmers	9/14/2021 10:45 PM
38	More grants for fencing of farmland to help against deer goats mongoose and other farm predators	9/14/2021 2:43 PM
39	More resources available for new farmers within the community. A new farmer is completely lost in this territory.	9/14/2021 1:24 PM
40	They need to deal with the locals better and stop depending on importing produce we have the land here on island	9/14/2021 11:42 AM
41	Hire more tracker drivers to get the job done with other farmers, and more slips to purchase at the fairgrounds Monday through Friday. We need GRANTS not LOANS to put us in more debt NOOOO!!!!	9/14/2021 11:22 AM
42	More subsidies for farmers and It should not be income based	9/14/2021 11:03 AM
43	The funds that are granted not just go to the bigger named farmers but back yard farmers as well	9/14/2021 10:57 AM
44	Help new farmers. I don't have tax records so I can't get money or help	9/14/2021 8:13 AM
45	increase the funding amount	9/13/2021 5:17 PM
46	Accessibility and ease of applications. Funding towards growth and directed towards farmers needs. Funding in the form of grants.	9/13/2021 5:00 PM
47	I would like to see where we can establish two major crops that can be developed and shipped abroad.	9/13/2021 4:03 PM
48	I don't borrow money so not really sure	9/13/2021 3:22 PM
49	Greater funding, Timely notification of funding, wider distribution to more farmers	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
50	Greater funding, Timely notification of funding, wider distribution to more farmers	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
51	Funding that would be a start	9/13/2021 2:17 PM
52	Consistency	9/13/2021 1:49 PM
53	Stop talking about it and let's ALL come together and make it happen. Money can make a lot of positive things happen in our community. Everyone must eat every day!	9/13/2021 12:46 PM
54	Fund young local farmers	9/13/2021 12:29 PM
55	The change in funding I would like to see would be to put more into sustainable for farmers and education of the population of such and so more to assist farmers especially new ones to get a	9/13/2021 12:23 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

jumb start.Educational jump start so that common standard of production is maintained; which can foster accountability.

56	I have never received funding. Nevertheless, if I did I would first be sure that I have a 4000 gallon water capacity along with irrigation (drip system)	9/13/2021 11:57 AM
57	Financial assistance towards supply and equipment necessary for sustaining and production	9/11/2021 11:25 AM
58	Grants	9/10/2021 7:52 PM
59	N/A	9/10/2021 4:50 PM
60	That farmers get more help education out reach towards younger generation. Take into consideration we're not getting any younger someone has to take the touch.	9/10/2021 3:13 PM
61	Would love to see equipment and other assets distribution take course equal and just between all farmers	9/10/2021 1:50 PM
62	Better notification of programs , grants and resources	9/10/2021 12:20 PM
63	I think the appropriation of funding should focus on what is needed to bring about cohesive sustainable farming in the Virgin Islands by providing equipment, fencing from Deer and other vandals, a curriculum in our schools to teach our children techniques and the importance food production. Funding should also address how global warming will affect food production and necessary "greenhouses" or cultivation methods should be taught to farmers. Funding should be considered to address food preparation and exporting.	9/10/2021 11:27 AM
64	Support for grant applications	9/10/2021 8:02 AM
65	Hire trauned and qualied personnel that have the capacity to function.	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
66	Hire trauned and qualied personnel that have the capacity to function.	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
67	Farming subsidies	9/9/2021 6:30 PM
68	Investment in increasing production so we can import fewer vegetables and herbs. Incentivize restaurants and grocery stores if they buy and use local they will get some sort of benefit.	7/30/2021 2:39 PM
69	The rules for application for grant programs in Puerto Rico. Example : Regrow Program Of Departamento de la Vivienda Gobierno de Puerto Rico	7/30/2021 1:37 PM
70	We need to sell our produce.... at a profit... any help in that regard.	7/29/2021 9:48 PM
71	None	7/17/2021 3:44 PM
72	NNA	7/16/2021 5:42 AM
73	I would like to see funds that Dept of Ag recieves utilized in a way that will give farmers an outlet to sell produce as well as a processing center that could be used for huge crops such as mangos (for possible export). The funds seem to be there, just not utilized efficiently and consistently	7/15/2021 12:09 PM
74	More accessible information as to what funds or help is actually available. One can't seek or receive help when one can't find the answers. As to what funds or help may be available.	7/14/2021 1:37 PM
75	Timely land prep	7/14/2021 12:06 PM
76	The ability to obtain a lease so that you can participate in programs and apply for grants and loans	7/14/2021 8:12 AM
77	None at this time	7/14/2021 8:10 AM
78	No comment at this time	7/14/2021 6:48 AM
79	More support in awareness and marketing	7/13/2021 11:58 PM
80	I would like to see funding projects actually happen. It seems like there's talk but not to much action	7/13/2021 10:34 PM
81	Government subsidies for imigation projects.	7/13/2021 7:15 PM
82	More funding for smaller farms.	7/13/2021 6:40 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

83	Increase so the dept of agriculture can be properly staffed with the experts needed to move agricultural industry forward	6/19/2021 8:07 PM
84	FUNDING FOR LAND PREPARATION EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL UTILIZE SKILLS OF ELDER FARMERS THROUGH A PAID EDUCATIONAL/APPRENTICE PROGRAM BEGINNING WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS.	6/7/2021 11:27 PM
85	More grants available to Farmers	6/4/2021 1:01 AM
86	I would like the idea of funding and resources available to farmers. Little information is available online.	6/4/2021 12:55 AM
87	I would like to know more about funding towards farming and farmers on how also to overall those for the purpose of helping farmers like us. We would like also to know if you're are giving scholarship grants to the Farmers who are willing to study agriculture w/different/specific specialization so we will be part of the system	6/4/2021 12:03 AM
88	Pay us for our time	6/3/2021 5:25 PM
89	Assistance on small Farmer startups	6/3/2021 5:02 PM
90	Young Farmer incubator or grants. Classes on Farm Business	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
91	N/A	6/2/2021 2:26 PM
92	Technical support for existing farmers who cannot fill out forms and applications properly and follow up assistance going forward	5/28/2021 11:26 AM
93	More grants and less loans	5/27/2021 7:44 PM
94	Investment in a long term water sustainability facility and the necessary infrastructure to provide consistent water for farmers in the Bordeaux community in order to truly boost production. No more idle talk.	5/27/2021 1:27 PM
95	We desperately need ANY financial help and funding. It has been almost impossible to get and money upfront in order to finance projects.	5/26/2021 12:09 PM
96	I agree with many of the STX farmers who voiced concerns in the meeting on 5/19. Many farmers here are competing against each other with the same crops in the same VIDA fairgrounds market or selling on roadside individually. That's an important part of small farm culture here and in many locales, however, if the Ag Task Force plan would focus on creating some wholesale outlets for farmers to sell into also, more farms would be encouraged to produce a greater quantity if they are assured their crop can be sold. This could take many forms. One that has been suggested repeatedly (at least in the past 10 years I've been a part of the community) is if there was a centralized processor/Value-add producer and/or distributor for farms to sell directly into. I strongly believe this shouldn't be a government entity but a private one. Just look at how quickly beverage producers Leatherback and Mutiny were able to start operation and now widely distribute product in the territory and beyond. We need to attract a business with the experience to take highly perishable local produce, and transform it into USVI based products with a longer shelf life that can be sold in our stores and beyond. Also, eliminating produce from the VIDA fairgrounds market that has been shipped into territory is essential to supporting Local Farms, and consumers of Local foods.	5/25/2021 5:12 PM
97	Make it more accessible	5/25/2021 6:38 AM
98	The Dep. of Ag. should have more equipment and operators	5/25/2021 6:30 AM
99	1.) I would like to see funding go to Framers and not to Administration. 700% to farmers 30% administrative. All these surveys and meetings "where's the water & financial assistance?" 2.) Water catchment, 3.) Desalination water,	5/25/2021 5:50 AM
100	I would really like for farming to be taken way more serious then it is, I've been farming for 16 years and I herd lot of folks talk about the growth of agriculture and haven't seen anything up to now	5/24/2021 8:08 PM
101	Increased funding and demonstration/information regarding reliable crops for our climate; technical assistance for traditional and aqua/hydroponic farmers; BMP for water and soil conservation and soil building; BMP for pest management and fertility; support to coop market outlets, etc.	5/24/2021 10:44 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

102	I think it starts with education... knowing the benefits of local, organic food will help people want to farm more and support us.	5/22/2021 8:23 PM
103	I would like to see more investment in processing plants for farmers.	5/22/2021 6:49 PM
104	Agricultural inspection on STT, not just STX. How we supposed to ship out of STT and STJ?	5/21/2021 11:32 AM
105	Set aside funding for beginning farmers, disadvantaged farmers and indigenous farmers.	5/20/2021 11:36 PM
106	I would Love to see the funding make it to farmers,heavy equipment to get our roads correct,more youth and outside people involvement, such as teaching children to grow bush tea in preschool. How to plant a tree in kindergarten How to plant,care,harvest and the values of the food nutritionally taught. No government rip offs,we all must eat, we must move forward.	5/20/2021 4:00 PM
107	Concentrate on helping small and struggling farmers that are trying to do their best at this Industry instead of only helping those that are already established and have lots of machinery and tools to operate their farms just to get your department some branding. Please help farmers that desperately need your help to survive and operate a successful farm.	5/20/2021 11:56 AM
108	Increase so more people can benefit	5/20/2021 7:27 AM
109	For the department of agriculture to have a larger budget to operate	5/20/2021 5:57 AM
110	Fund the building of more dams and catchment ponds. Water resource management, water table and well studies.	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
111	More grant programs	5/19/2021 8:43 PM
112	more direct support for the farmers	5/19/2021 7:43 PM
113	Grantee Loans	5/19/2021 7:14 PM
114	More education on how to access the funding. Who is eligible? Assist with soil & water conservation. Personell to assist farmers with paperwork after major storm. Invest in community gardens as well.	5/19/2021 6:47 PM
115	We have applied to USVIEDA for assistance – either with a loan or an incentive. We are a start up. We're waiting to hear back from them. The faster we can get up and running, the earlier we can hire more employees and get into full production.	5/19/2021 4:43 PM
116	Support for growth and island self sustainability.	5/19/2021 4:14 PM
117	More programs that help to augment current systems. Quick land preparation tum around. Access to supplies	5/19/2021 11:02 AM
118	More	5/18/2021 7:22 PM
119	More outreach	5/17/2021 6:47 PM
120	Install necessaryinfrastructure ( water, catchments, fix roads,, work with Farmers to develop infrastructure for a Farmer to be succesful	5/14/2021 10:34 PM
121	I first Ned to know what is available	5/11/2021 12:29 PM
122	Fund the Dept of Agriculture with skilled and trained staff and increased positions and LEADERS with enforcement abilities.	5/11/2021 5:56 AM
123	Providing fund to develop a water system	5/11/2021 4:44 AM
124	More available	5/10/2021 5:14 PM
125	More Grants	5/10/2021 4:20 PM
126	I would like to see funding period. VI farmers have no credit/financial institutions available to them.	5/10/2021 3:36 PM
127	After hurricane Maria, unlike for other businesses and homeowners, there was absolutely no federal assistance available for farmers who have lost infrastructure such as buildings sheds and certain kinds of equipment. Not only were we advised to apply for SBA disaster recovery loans, we were completely ineligible for same. So spending more time in professional development for the people who serve farmers seems like it might be useful - or more	5/10/2021 9:07 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

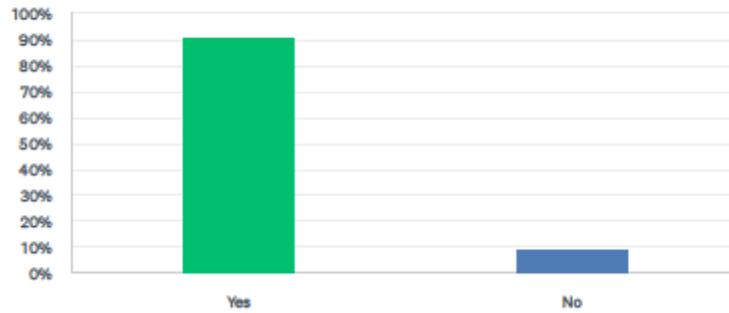
accountability that they truly are informed enough to actually help farmers with relevant and applicable programs and advice.

128	That the people who work for Agriculture get in the field at least 75% of the week to meet with the Farmers outside of the their offices.	5/10/2021 8:25 AM
129	Reasonable prices on fertilizer and timely equipment call out to the land	5/10/2021 8:24 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q18 As the Task Force continues to develop the USVI Agricultural Plan, may we contact you or visit your Farm in the future?

Answered: 164 Skipped: 13

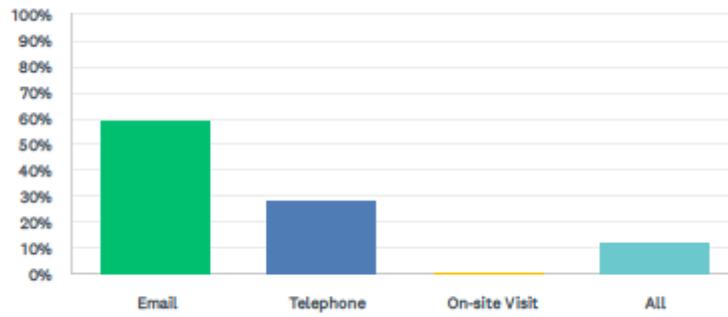


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.85%	149
No	9.15%	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>164</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q19 Please select your preferred contact method?

Answered: 165 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Email	58.79%	97
Telephone	28.48%	47
On-site Visit	0.61%	1
All	12.12%	20
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>165</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q20 Do you have any comments or questions regarding the VI Agricultural Plan?

Answered: 121 Skipped: 56

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	good job!	11/3/2021 5:48 PM
2	Land and water plan is needed. Un check development is going to take agri. Land	11/3/2021 6:01 AM
3	Land and water plan is needed. Un check development is going to take agri. Land	11/2/2021 9:05 PM
4	Not at this moment	10/20/2021 4:38 PM
5	Not yet	10/10/2021 6:30 AM
6	I need more details about what it includes before asking a question	10/4/2021 11:13 AM
7	Administration needs to be more active	9/29/2021 9:36 AM
8	Where will it start? Who is involved?	9/29/2021 8:12 AM
9	Water is a big problem. Water situation	9/29/2021 7:54 AM
10	Sounds good	9/29/2021 7:35 AM
11	Will you post the town hall meeting I unfortunately missed it	9/24/2021 6:34 AM
12	This presentation was more of an academic effort verses and agricultural presentation which was frustrating to the grass root farmer	9/23/2021 7:19 PM
13	The question is not related to the development of the plan, but rather the funding of the plan. There were past plans that were not funded. Government funding is the key.	9/23/2021 8:00 AM
14	Yes. The plan should involved the introductions of Agriculture to school system from a very early age, with consistency from one level to the higher grade	9/22/2021 10:55 AM
15	Much success with this project	9/20/2021 11:47 AM
16	No	9/18/2021 10:57 AM
17	To date there have been no "farm" visits. Seem like only "academia" are the architects of this plan. If farmers input is so important why aren't there farmers on this advisory council. Seems like absolute sense to have people with the most skin in the game have seats at the table. There are farmers in the Vi with just as much education and qualifications as the academia currently at the table that have never gotten dirt under their fingernails much less do farming. An insult to us that we are not represented @ the table.	9/18/2021 10:10 AM
18	What is it	9/18/2021 8:43 AM
19	None at this time	9/18/2021 8:11 AM
20	Yes. Why the emphasis on politicizing cannabis production in USVI when the USVI is under federal law and cannot legally plant cannabis as it is still a schedule I controlled substance? And no one on cannabis board has any FIRST HAND experience involving legal cannabis production?	9/17/2021 6:10 PM
21	This is much needed to develop farming on this rich agricultural island	9/17/2021 4:29 PM
22	No	9/17/2021 3:37 PM
23	Yes, what areas? And what are some of the programs available for future commercial farmers?	9/16/2021 8:50 AM
24	Nope	9/16/2021 7:10 AM
25	No	9/15/2021 8:17 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

26	Are the planners agriculturist or political appointees?	9/15/2021 7:19 PM
27	No	9/15/2021 6:18 PM
28	Is the plan set.... are they coming with a preset agenda? what is the plan supposed to be achieving?	9/15/2021 3:55 PM
29	I would like to have my own farm land other than my back yard farming and to have agriculture department continue to assist farmers with rich soil.	9/15/2021 3:54 PM
30	I would like to have my own farm land other than my back yard farming and to have agriculture department continue to assist farmers with rich soil.	9/15/2021 3:34 PM
31	Not at this time	9/15/2021 2:48 PM
32	Not at this time	9/15/2021 12:32 PM
33	When is it going to seriously start?	9/15/2021 8:28 AM
34	Like other producers, I am trusting that this process will lead to increased concrete support and progress for the agricultural industry.	9/14/2021 10:45 PM
35	No	9/14/2021 7:28 PM
36	Would like to be notified about grants and other programs available. Thank you	9/14/2021 3:20 PM
37	None	9/14/2021 2:43 PM
38	I would love a copy	9/14/2021 1:24 PM
39	Not at this time	9/14/2021 1:18 PM
40	No	9/14/2021 11:42 AM
41	PLEASE USE THE MONEY ON THE LOCAL FARMERS AND DEVELOP PROPER BUILDINGS WITH BATHROOMS ON THE AGRICULTURAL FAIR GROUNDS AND NOT IN YOUR POCKETS!!!!	9/14/2021 11:22 AM
42	None	9/14/2021 11:03 AM
43	N/A	9/14/2021 10:57 AM
44	No	9/14/2021 8:13 AM
45	No	9/13/2021 10:24 PM
46	What is the mission of the VI Agricultural Plan?	9/13/2021 5:00 PM
47	Not at this time.	9/13/2021 4:03 PM
48	None at this time	9/13/2021 3:22 PM
49	When is the implementation date? Would the the farmers and the public be given an opportunity to review the plan before implementation	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
50	When is the implementation date? Would the the farmers and the public be given an opportunity to review the plan before implementation	9/13/2021 2:48 PM
51	None at this time	9/13/2021 2:17 PM
52	None	9/13/2021 1:49 PM
53	Don't waste my time, give me what I need to be productive thank you God bless	9/13/2021 12:46 PM
54	I would like to know if any land is available for young farmers.	9/13/2021 12:29 PM
55	No	9/13/2021 12:23 PM
56	waste of time!! vi depts. unable to implement existing program much less any new ones	9/13/2021 12:01 PM
57	Don't discount farmers with multiple jobs. FT farming is not profitable enough to make payments on some owned lands	9/13/2021 11:17 AM
58	No	9/10/2021 7:52 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

59	N/A	9/10/2021 4:50 PM
60	Lord I pray that there's serious consideration into what you're set out to do because it will have a serious effect on all of us not taking it serious.	9/10/2021 3:13 PM
61	No	9/10/2021 1:50 PM
62	I have not seen the plan. I only heard of it. Overall I hope that the plan is an effort to improve the present status quo. I hope that it identifies how the department of agriculture can better provide needed assistance to the local farmers. (i.e land preparation, seedlings, etc.). I hope that it addresses long term land preservation, organic farming, the business or farming, specialty crops, exporting, etc. I hope it is comprehensive but achievable.	9/10/2021 11:27 AM
63	Happy to assist with plan	9/10/2021 8:02 AM
64	No	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
65	No	9/9/2021 8:55 PM
66	Are there any policy guidelines for the development of Virgin Islands Agriculture	9/9/2021 6:30 PM
67	Where can I get more information?	7/30/2021 2:39 PM
68	Please, we need federal support in Puerto Rico.	7/30/2021 1:37 PM
69	no	7/29/2021 9:48 PM
70	No	7/17/2021 3:44 PM
71	NO	7/16/2021 5:42 AM
72	Not at this time	7/15/2021 12:09 PM
73	No	7/14/2021 1:37 PM
74	no	7/14/2021 12:06 PM
75	I understand that there is a plan as always and with every administration, however the VI agriculture department needs to be more encouraging , supportive and assistive of all small farmers and not just their friends and family. Instead of gossiping degrading and using other tactics to keep farmers down. We need help in cultivating and developing the land through funding and that entails a allowing us to have a lease.	7/14/2021 8:12 AM
76	Not at this time.	7/14/2021 8:10 AM
77	No	7/14/2021 6:48 AM
78	Na	7/13/2021 11:58 PM
79	What are the plans for information sharing?	7/13/2021 7:15 PM
80	No	7/13/2021 6:40 PM
81	Need more info.	6/28/2021 3:30 PM
82	No	6/19/2021 8:07 PM
83	PLEASE KEEP THE COMMUNITY INVOLVED IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLAN	6/7/2021 11:27 PM
84	Not yet	6/4/2021 12:55 AM
85	I want to study Agriculture course but it will have to be free	6/4/2021 12:03 AM
86	How will we be paid for attending the training? I own and lease farmland Distinguish support from professionals Markets and beginner program Timely service of land preparation and DOA assistance with purchases Contracting/protection from import infiltration of our markets Availability and cost of materials Special programs/ and labor skills Programs geared toward beginners Agro Tourism Programs	6/3/2021 5:25 PM
87	We are so happy to see this work! We support you all the way!	6/3/2021 4:57 PM
88	Let's go!	6/2/2021 2:26 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

89	Can I have a copy of this plan?	5/28/2021 11:26 AM
90	No	5/27/2021 7:44 PM
91	I'll have questions when we meet	5/27/2021 1:27 PM
92	What is it? When does it start? Who is eligible? How to apply? When is deadline?	5/26/2021 12:09 PM
93	Planning is nothing without follow through	5/25/2021 5:12 PM
94	Where can I find information on it?	5/25/2021 6:38 AM
95	We need less talk and more action	5/25/2021 6:30 AM
96	How will it help Farmers? These Islands are not the big that a survey is needed. Stop wasting funding with all these unnecessary actions. USVI knows what the farmers need it's been the same thing for over 20 years WATER & real support from the Department of Agriculture. Place farmers in some of the decision making positions so real change can be made. Person's who know what is truly going on in the agricultural environment in the Virgin Islands	5/25/2021 5:50 AM
97	I hope this plan is not a bunch of talk like previous years	5/24/2021 8:08 PM
98	There are greater opportunities for collaboration in training and education that can be explored.	5/22/2021 6:49 PM
99	What is the VI Agriculture plan? How do you see it?	5/20/2021 4:00 PM
100	I just hope that this task force is design to help struggling farmers and not just to those established farms.	5/20/2021 11:56 AM
101	Is the plan inclusive of small back yard farmers	5/20/2021 7:27 AM
102	Will this be lost after a next administration get into office	5/20/2021 5:57 AM
103	To expand farming in the territory, where will we get and store enough fresh water to irrigate all these crops.	5/19/2021 8:52 PM
104	No	5/19/2021 8:43 PM
105	when you are offering classes or training can you incorporate a class for the people who have other jobs besides farming. I do backyard farming but i have a full time job too, its difficult to attend a class at 10 am on the week days	5/19/2021 7:43 PM
106	too many	5/19/2021 7:14 PM
107	How does the plan impact or benefit Backyard farmers?	5/19/2021 6:47 PM
108	We are bringing new high technology growing to the USVI in a climate controlled warehouse. This is a very efficient and sustainable system and it fits in with the Vision 2040 plan. We hope to get support from the USVI government and USDA. We will create internships for USVI University students. Our pledge is to hire 100% local and train our employees in the system.	5/19/2021 4:43 PM
109	Please remember that not all farmers are crop farmers. Don't forget your livestock community.	5/19/2021 4:35 PM
110	Not at the moment, but eager to hear back.	5/19/2021 4:14 PM
111	Not yet	5/18/2021 7:22 PM
112	Id like to hear more	5/17/2021 6:47 PM
113	Too many plans, too many studies! It is way past time the work should be done. It not that complicated	5/14/2021 10:34 PM
114	I would like to be part of it	5/11/2021 12:29 PM
115	There are hundreds of plans sitting on shelves in the VI. I hope this is not one of them. If you want truthful answers don't ask for names and emails and addresses!	5/11/2021 5:56 AM
116	I don't believe it's enough farmers on task force	5/11/2021 4:44 AM
117	No not at this time	5/10/2021 4:20 PM
118	When will our Government show they are REALLY concerned about Agriculture by investing more money into the Department	5/10/2021 1:00 PM

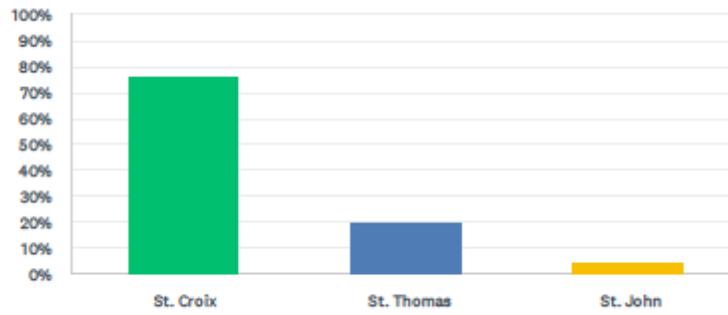
VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

119	Thank you for offering me the opportunity to contribute to the process.	5/10/2021 8:25 AM
120	No	5/10/2021 8:24 AM
121	no	5/10/2021 8:21 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q23 On which island is your Farm located?

Answered: 164 Skipped: 13

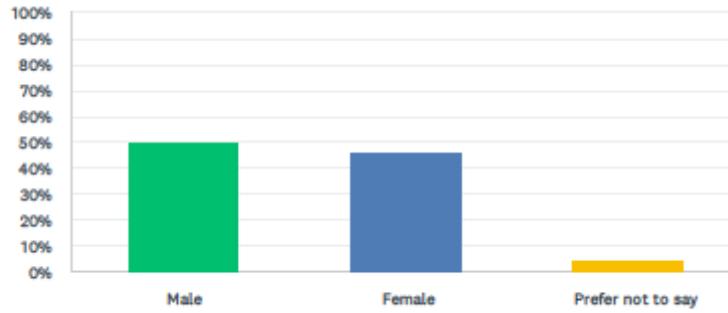


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
St. Croix	75.61%	124
St. Thomas	20.12%	33
St. John	4.27%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>164</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

### Q26 What is your gender?

Answered: 166 Skipped: 11

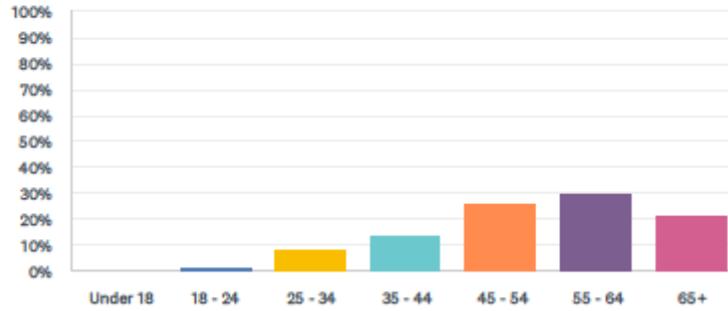


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	50.00%	83
Female	45.78%	76
Prefer not to say	4.22%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>166</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q27 What is your age range?

Answered: 170 Skipped: 7

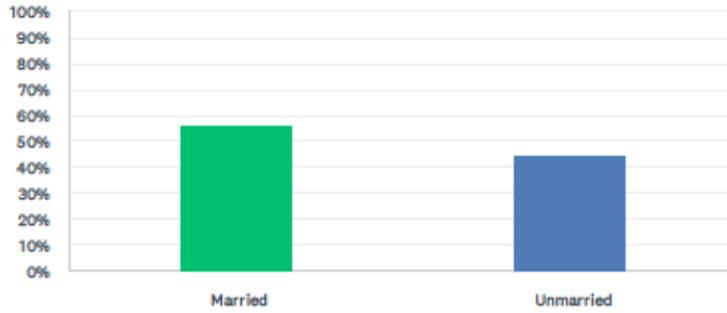


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.00%	0
18 - 24	1.76%	3
25 - 34	7.65%	13
35 - 44	13.53%	23
45 - 54	26.47%	45
55 - 64	29.41%	50
65+	21.18%	36
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>170</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q28 Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?

Answered: 153 Skipped: 24

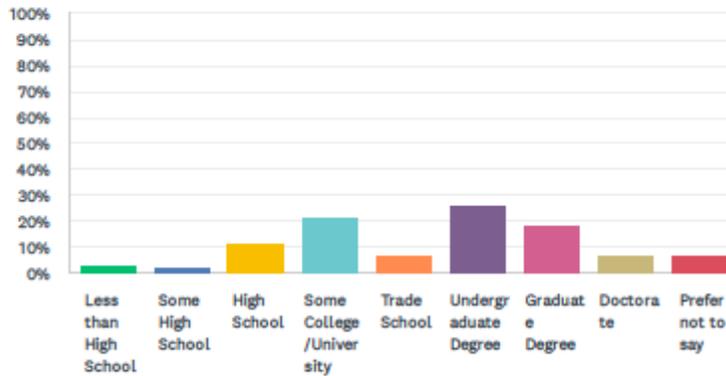


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Married	55.56%	85
Unmarried	44.44%	68
TOTAL		153

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q29 What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

Answered: 162 Skipped: 15

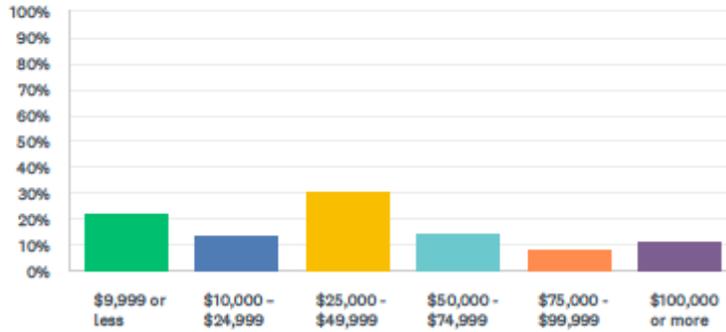


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than High School	2.47% 4
Some High School	1.85% 3
High School	11.73% 19
Some College/University	20.99% 34
Trade School	6.17% 10
Undergraduate Degree	26.54% 43
Graduate Degree	17.90% 29
Doctorate	6.17% 10
Prefer not to say	6.17% 10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>162</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FARMERS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q30 What is your annual income range? (Optional)

Answered: 118 Skipped: 59



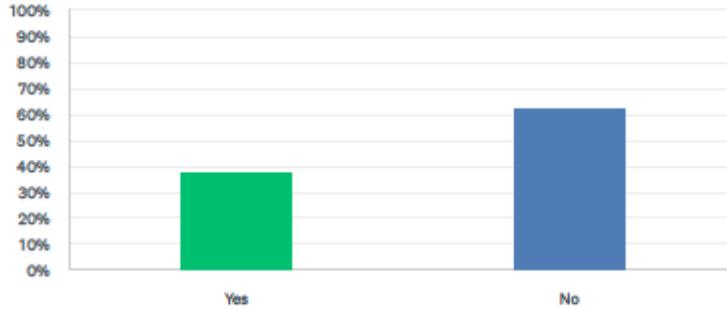
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
\$9,999 or less	22.03%	26
\$10,000 – \$24,999	13.56%	16
\$25,000 - \$49,999	30.51%	36
\$50,000 - \$74,999	14.41%	17
\$75,000 - \$99,999	8.47%	10
\$100,000 or more	11.02%	13
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>118</b>

**Appendix C: Final Results of the VI Agricultural Plan Community Engagement Survey**  
*(Omitted are pages 37-46 and 48-56, which contained personal information such as name, telephone numbers, and email addresses)*

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

**Q1 Are you aware of Act No. 8404 (Bill No. 33-0736), which the Legislature approved to develop a territorial agriculture plan?**

Answered: 239 Skipped: 7

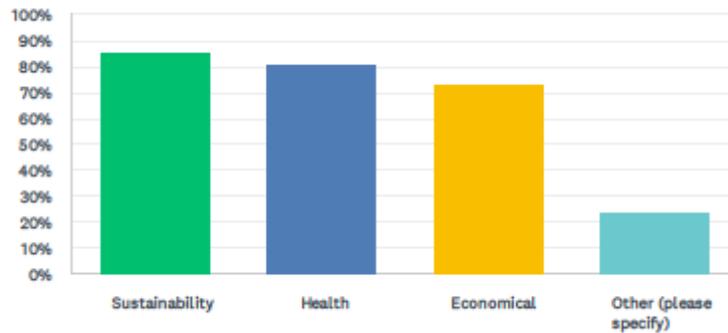


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	37.24%	89
No	62.76%	150
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>239</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q2 Why is local farming produce essential to you? (select all that applies)

Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Sustainability	85.31% 209
Health	80.82% 198
Economical	73.06% 179
Other (please specify)	23.67% 58
Total Respondents: 245	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	quality of food	7/13/2021 5:53 PM
2	Food Security	7/6/2021 5:07 PM
3	Fresher foods taste better.	6/30/2021 4:46 PM
4	Independent	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
5	Food impacts everything in how we are as social beings.	6/28/2021 2:03 PM
6	Ability to feed ourselves	6/23/2021 8:35 PM
7	Sovereignty	6/23/2021 2:52 PM
8	freshness	6/23/2021 11:10 AM
9	Local pride, and easy to monitor and predict	6/22/2021 5:32 PM
10	community and individual self sufficiency	6/22/2021 3:03 PM
11	supporting local farmers	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
12	None	6/22/2021 12:41 PM
13	Because out of ALL of any international travels, as a native NYer I am APPALLED at the ridiculously expensive cost of food in the USVI supermarkets in comparison with the lack of accessibility to fresh, local and affordable products. It's a travesty.	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
14	VI PRIDE To grow food associated with our region	6/22/2021 11:46 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

15	cultural importance	6/22/2021 10:46 AM
16	less transportation means less global warming	6/22/2021 9:50 AM
17	Culture	6/22/2021 9:34 AM
18	Cultural Preservation	6/22/2021 9:06 AM
19	Local produce is fresher than imported produce	6/22/2021 8:37 AM
20	The year 2020 has shown any wealthy and poor nations how fragile dependency can be. Depending on one or two main sources of revenue streams can be dangerous and devastating. Local farming is essential to me and many other because it allows me/families to sustain themselves, sail any surplus strengthen the local economies while having access to healthy local grown produce.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
21	Reduced packaging	6/21/2021 9:19 PM
22	Supplemental to imports	6/21/2021 8:58 PM
23	Variety	6/21/2021 8:56 PM
24	Helping the farmers make a living by doing what they love.	6/21/2021 5:51 PM
25	95 % of our food is imported and we need to do everything to encourage the residents to grow food.	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
26	Employment for VI high school graduates and UVI grads - keep talent on-island	6/21/2021 5:27 PM
27	common sense	6/21/2021 4:34 PM
28	Freshness and quality are very important to me.	6/21/2021 4:32 PM
29	Supporting our local producers specifically	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
30	Resilience	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
31	organic	6/21/2021 4:23 PM
32	manufacturing, mechanically oils/lubrications, recycling and reuse industry, jobs	6/21/2021 4:22 PM
33	security, access to fresh produce	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
34	culturally important- food and music are essential to any culture	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
35	healthier fresh producer and less dependability of imported food.	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
36	Island pride	6/17/2021 9:59 PM
37	Food security	6/17/2021 9:44 PM
38	Land improvement	6/17/2021 12:21 PM
39	Supporting our farmer neighbors	6/17/2021 12:17 PM
40	Education and opportunity	6/17/2021 11:53 AM
41	Knowledge	6/17/2021 11:44 AM
42	Not interested in food that has been shipped all over the world.	6/14/2021 3:29 PM
43	Food security and independence	6/14/2021 3:28 PM
44	Resilience in times of disaster.	6/14/2021 8:41 AM
45	Commerce - good for local economy	6/14/2021 8:31 AM
46	Reduced carbon emissions	6/14/2021 8:29 AM
47	Cultural	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
48	environmental concern	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
49	Better quality food	6/5/2021 7:39 AM

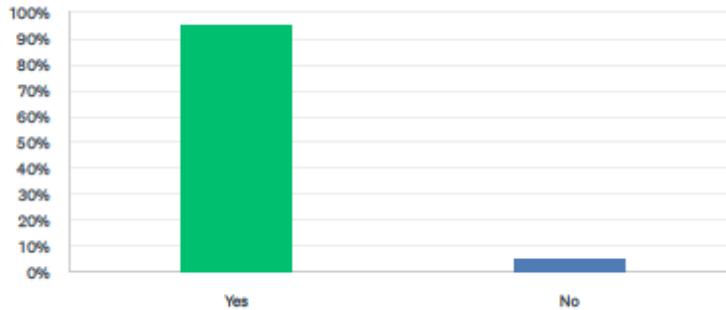
VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

50	Future generations of farmers needed	6/4/2021 7:51 AM
51	Supermarket produce has no shelf life and spoils very quickly.	6/3/2021 2:10 PM
52	Support local farmers	6/2/2021 9:55 PM
53	Lower carbon pollution because importation of food has been reduced.	6/2/2021 8:48 PM
54	Support for local farmers especially organic	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
55	Self sufficiency	5/27/2021 10:43 PM
56	I know where it is produced and who is producing it.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
57	It can make the VI a world leader in agriculture in the Caribbean.	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
58	Independence	5/20/2021 4:59 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q3 Is there a need to increase the number and quality of farms locally?

Answered: 243 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	95.47%	232
No	4.53%	11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>243</b>

#	WHY/WHY NOT?	DATE
1	So there is more fresh food available. Many fresh food items that are shipped here are often near to spoilage.	8/6/2021 9:40 PM
2	We will have a healthier society that can sustain itself.	7/14/2021 11:09 AM
3	Too much food is imported and isn't as tasty or healthy after such long transportation and excess packaging. More local farms means better and healthier food.	7/6/2021 5:07 PM
4	Adds value to our Agricultural sector	6/30/2021 10:21 PM
5	Not sure	6/30/2021 4:46 PM
6	Beyond sustainable living is the power of self determination.	6/30/2021 12:07 AM
7	Some amount of self-reliance.	6/29/2021 5:49 PM
8	We should all be farming at some level; our families should learn how to grow their own herbs, greens, fruit trees/vines, and how to barter amongst their neighbors.	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
9	Variety of foods and sustainability.	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
10	We import everything.	6/28/2021 2:03 PM
11	It is becoming a forgotten practice and its such an important piece of keeping our culture alive.	6/28/2021 11:45 AM
12	Yes, too many of our resources are imported	6/25/2021 10:50 AM
13	We need to produce enough food to feed ourselves and create jobs.	6/23/2021 8:35 PM
14	because our reliance on imported goods will come back to bite us	6/23/2021 7:41 PM
15	Choices	6/23/2021 11:10 AM
16	We import lots of fresh produce that can be grown here is the were more farmers.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
17	Sustainability	6/23/2021 8:45 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

18	We should not have to rely on produce grown outside the territory. We have the ability to grow enough produce to feed our population.	6/23/2021 8:06 AM
19	Increase local agriculture, educate potential new farmers, increase variety of products.	6/23/2021 5:14 AM
20	Current local production way below par	6/22/2021 5:32 PM
21	So we get fresh harvest and variety of fruits & veggies	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
22	Increasing local farms can help to increase a more health conscious community by producing healthier food choices.	6/22/2021 3:03 PM
23	In order to have more local products available for sale	6/22/2021 1:19 PM
24	I believe residents should be consuming food grown in their own backyard because it minimizes health issues.	6/22/2021 1:19 PM
25	The island is in need of local produce to help the economy. Local supermarkets, especially on St. Croix, are expensive and the produce is frozen and of poor quality	6/22/2021 1:06 PM
26	Local foods without pesticides are better for your health and fresh	6/22/2021 1:00 PM
27	I'm actually not sure how well the local farms meet the local demand for produce.	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
28	To make agriculture more efficient; to practice economy of scale and expose local farmers to modern techniques that may increase their profitability	6/22/2021 12:54 PM
29	No reason	6/22/2021 12:41 PM
30	Again, because on an Island with such Rich resources, there is NO reason why there is such a small and Expensive organic selection at the supermarkets. If I could I would ONLY shop at local farms and spend probably 20% of my shopping at the ridiculously expensive USVI supermarkets.	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
31	Locally produced food is healthier and taste better	6/22/2021 12:05 PM
32	We have had to close our senapol cattle farm because the abittoir was closed for a long period of time and DOA did not help us find alternatives (e.g., transport to PR)..	6/22/2021 11:49 AM
33	There is nothing like fresh produce.	6/22/2021 11:46 AM
34	There are not enough local farms	6/22/2021 11:27 AM
35	I do not feel farming is a viable sustainable product for the VI. Not enough land or interest to make a difference	6/22/2021 10:46 AM
36	Self sustaining food and business for the community	6/22/2021 10:45 AM
37	We need to produce food to reduce dependency from external sources, and increase food security if any disruption occurs in food supply.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
38	It appears that we import too much.	6/22/2021 10:39 AM
39	To be able to feed ourselves and produce quality foods in quantities that can sustain us. Reduce the risk of cyber attacks	6/22/2021 10:31 AM
40	We should be able to sustain ourselves locally, but more importantly, I would like fresh produce that is not wilted and full of chemicals. To be able to purchase same, we need a rich number of farms.	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
41	Access to fresh healthy fruits and vegetables	6/22/2021 10:21 AM
42	Quality of food and economic development	6/22/2021 10:11 AM
43	I think the local farms could use more support	6/22/2021 10:04 AM
44	Increasing the number and quality of farms locally will allow the opportunity to feed more people in reaching the goal of self sustainability, keeps the cost affordable, and may foster exportation of large crops.	6/22/2021 9:52 AM
45	I am undecided but that was not given as a choice. I need to knoe more to decide/	6/22/2021 9:50 AM
46	Because it is best to do	6/22/2021 9:38 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

47	More training of existing farmers	6/22/2021 9:34 AM
48	To be able to sustain our food products and eat healthier.	6/22/2021 9:27 AM
49	Keeping it local, improves economy, increased food security, less food miles from farm to plate therefore less fossil fuels and emissions, more connection to season and culture when buying locally	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
50	Food costs are high in the Virgin Islands, particularly for imported fresh produce. By supporting local farmers and large/small agriculture - you are contributing to community health and also preserving cultural foodways. Moving the community away from packaged, imported food to fresh local produce would benefit everyone. We should encourage this in the schools and communities as well.	6/22/2021 9:06 AM
51	to make best use of natural resources	6/22/2021 9:06 AM
52	The better their quality, the better the produce selection for us. Revenues increase for farmers in the long run.	6/22/2021 9:04 AM
53	So we can sustain ourselves	6/22/2021 8:48 AM
54	Local farms should be able to supply local produce year round	6/22/2021 8:37 AM
55	We should have food stands with local produce everywhere. On many food stands the produce is imported from other islands.	6/22/2021 8:29 AM
56	To produce more of the food supply	6/22/2021 8:01 AM
57	existing farms need to be managed, production will increase	6/22/2021 7:15 AM
58	What are you going to do when produce stops shipping from PR, or mainland? – Who are you going to call, ghost busters?	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
59	More locally grown food diversifies the economy, reduces shipping costs and packaging and tastes so much better	6/21/2021 9:19 PM
60	we need to grow more food within the territory	6/21/2021 9:18 PM
61	Health, economics	6/21/2021 9:13 PM
62	There is always a need, but does the terrain and landscape afford its viability?	6/21/2021 8:58 PM
63	Not sure if we need 'more' farms, but distribution and marketing and variety of foods grown could grow	6/21/2021 8:56 PM
64	need better efficiency	6/21/2021 8:37 PM
65	More choices and more consistent food supply.	6/21/2021 8:27 PM
66	Better quality; food supply not impacted by external forces	6/21/2021 8:10 PM
67	To ensure that the entire island benefit from the produce.	6/21/2021 8:04 PM
68	For sustainability	6/21/2021 7:50 PM
69	better manage what we already have	6/21/2021 7:35 PM
70	Being able to feed ourselves	6/21/2021 7:21 PM
71	To assist in reducing fresh produce cost at the register and to have the freshest and healthiest options for our community.	6/21/2021 5:58 PM
72	Health benefits and you would know where the foods comes from.	6/21/2021 5:51 PM
73	For sustainability	6/21/2021 5:51 PM
74	The vast majority of food is shipped in, leaving us vulnerable at the end of the US supply chain and especially after disasters.	6/21/2021 5:27 PM
75	So tht we become self sustaining	6/21/2021 5:24 PM
76	We need to produce our own food so we can survive if something happens to the supply chain	6/21/2021 5:18 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

77	To provide more opportunities for local farmers and businesses to grow and benefit the VI community as a whole.	6/21/2021 5:16 PM
78	We need to be able to independently provide food supplies for the Islands without the great dependence we have on import.	6/21/2021 5:13 PM
79	Food Security & Health - Nutritional value of the food	6/21/2021 5:06 PM
80	Food security is critical	6/21/2021 4:49 PM
81	For variety of produce and sustainability, also to avoid monopoly	6/21/2021 4:46 PM
82	Local farms are beneficial to the locals health wise, and efficient.	6/21/2021 4:46 PM
83	Small numbers of small farms cannot meet local demand for products	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
84	Quality is most important for everyone to live as long as they can and as healthy as possible which will inevitably save money for every one person in the long run.	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
85	For mass production and being able to possibly export	6/21/2021 4:40 PM
86	To be able to provide fresh produce. Those bought in the stores are of poor quality	6/21/2021 4:36 PM
87	The produce in the supermarkets are subpar and not always the freshest, but the prices are the highest. It is unfair to the consumers.	6/21/2021 4:32 PM
88	It is important to be able to rely on yourself to provide for your needs. In this case, the Virgin Islands needs to be able to provide for itself agriculturally instead of depending on exports.	6/21/2021 4:30 PM
89	Increasing by just 1%, the amount that we produce locally is shown to have exponential economic benefits	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
90	To be self sufficient and to have food that is palatable and cost less	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
91	Increases food productivity & cuts food shortage; Organic food are Best!	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
92	Creates income to local farmers and aids in providing healthy local options for community members, rather than purchasing produce from other parts of the country.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
93	To provide local consumers with fresh produce	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
94	We need locally grown food - for our economy, health & wellbeing, and survival.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
95	We need to be more independent	6/21/2021 4:26 PM
96	Small farms in St Thomas and St John will be unable to compete with agricultural products from the states. Therefore we need to increase our agricultural base in St Croix, but also expand our supply lines to include PR, DR and S. America.	6/21/2021 4:25 PM
97	we need to grow as much food as possible	6/21/2021 4:23 PM
98	There are only a few	6/21/2021 4:23 PM
99	diversification; and also industries that can use the left over materials to create new things	6/21/2021 4:22 PM
100	There is need to increase the number and quality of farms locally in order to increase our food security. Much of our food is imported and we have the land available here. It don't make sense for us to be spending so much of our money importing food when we could invest it here locally.	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
101	Do we know how many farms there are and the quality of what they produce? This seems not as simple as yes and no.	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
102	We must have access to fresh produce that has not travelled many miles for prolonged periods of time	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
103	we need more food production and much of our ag lands -if left fallow, will become developed	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
104	We should increase our homegrown brand to ensure the survival of the culture.	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
105	Because more farms will provide our community options of fresh produce.	6/21/2021 4:19 PM
106	Fresher produce, and gives directly back to the local economy.	6/21/2021 4:18 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

107	More diversity of meat and aquaculture.	6/21/2021 4:17 PM
108	An increase of local farms creates opportunities to generate more revenue	6/21/2021 4:15 PM
109	would also say to increase back yard and container gardening as well.	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
110	currently there is limited produce either local or imported, which is generally poor quality and overpriced	6/19/2021 12:29 PM
111	Farmers should be able to provide fresh seasonal foods all year round with support from community	6/17/2021 9:59 PM
112	To offset the waste we import to the VI (Food and packaging waste)	6/17/2021 9:44 PM
113	the food we eat is deteriorating the body, we need to eat more natural, from the ground to the pot	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
114	self reliance for our families and the territory	6/17/2021 7:57 PM
115	So that the territory need not to import vegetable etc from puerto rico to sustain the needs of the islands	6/17/2021 3:43 PM
116	For sustainability.	6/17/2021 1:05 PM
117	Because it's important to know where and how our food is being grown. It creates more jobs for locals, as potential to lower the cost of food locally for produce at restaurants and grocery stores, it puts in in a position to export more, we can create more entrepreneurs that are into creating bi-products (ex. cosmetic, powder supplement, etc.)	6/17/2021 12:50 PM
118	Food security; reduce imports	6/17/2021 12:28 PM
119	Farm son st Thomas are smaller so in order to be economically viable for the area as a whole we will be more farms	6/17/2021 12:21 PM
120	There is a lot of good land which could be farmed here. Importing much of our food is ridiculous, expensive, and does not always give us healthy food.	6/17/2021 12:17 PM
121	We have an aging farmer population.	6/17/2021 12:06 PM
122	For the production of local produce and fresh and healthier meats/fresh fish	6/17/2021 12:05 PM
123	Yes it will provide an opportunity for residents to eat fresh locally sourced foods	6/17/2021 11:53 AM
124	Because you are importing 97% now!	6/17/2021 11:35 AM
125	We are paying people who don't look like us millions of dollars a year for subpar produce, why?	6/14/2021 3:29 PM
126	To keep monies local; food security (covid, hurricanes, etc)	6/14/2021 3:28 PM
127	To have local healthy affordable food	6/14/2021 1:49 PM
128	So that the majority of produce available in grocery stores is locally grown. Expand farmer stands.	6/14/2021 8:41 AM
129	So we don't HAVE to rely on off island produce.	6/14/2021 8:39 AM
130	Food would be better quality and have a lower environmental impact. It might also create jobs not associated with the tourism industry or government.	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
131	Capacity is limited and the farming leaders are aging.	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
132	during pandemic we had empty shelves ad for healthier options.	6/12/2021 3:21 PM
133	Food from outside VI expensive	6/12/2021 7:48 AM
134	Obvious	6/11/2021 8:16 PM
135	We need to stop importing so much of our food by producing food locally.	6/11/2021 4:43 PM
136	there is only one that i know of on st john	6/10/2021 9:19 AM
137	Quality is a bigger issue than number for me. Right now the support for more farmers is lacking but even those that are farming do not getter help needed to establish a pipeline to the market. Example, abattoir shut down for three years and reopen last year and already close again.	6/8/2021 6:15 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

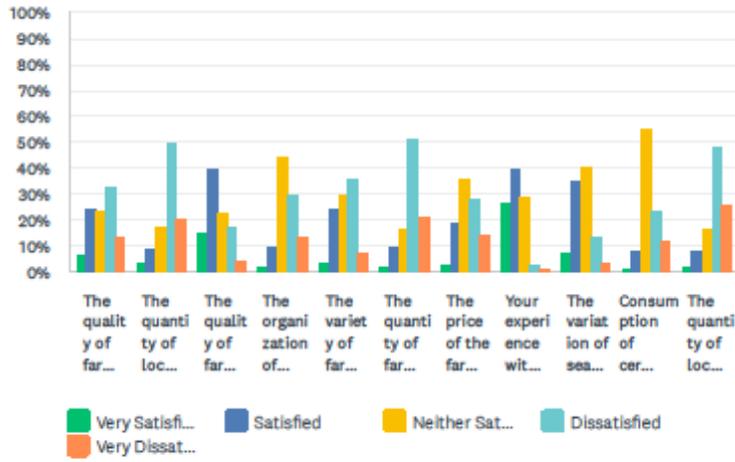
Lack of maintenance repairs and procurement procedures in place to address emergency repairs.

138	Having your source closer to home. Not distance afar.	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
139	Local in season food tastes better and has higher nutrition. Local farming provides sustainable jobs.	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
140	Need more, better stocked neighborhood sales outlets	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
141	Not unless there are any labs to ship a lot off island	6/4/2021 7:26 PM
142	Unsure - would be nice to help build capacity of existing farms before breaking ground on new ones	6/4/2021 7:51 AM
143	Very inconsistent now. Difficult to do well.	6/4/2021 7:12 AM
144	Bringing revenue to local and indigenous VI farmers	6/3/2021 6:22 PM
145	So we can share our insights on growing our own food	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
146	More employment, fresher food.	6/3/2021 2:10 PM
147	To supply the islands with fresh produce regularly	6/2/2021 9:55 PM
148	On St. John we are very limited in what we can get from local farmers	6/1/2021 4:15 PM
149	Cut down on dependence on imports	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
150	We lack any real farming on STJ	5/27/2021 10:43 PM
151	Better start from the inside, rather than from the outside	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
152	More farms means there will be a broader availability of locally grown food	5/27/2021 9:06 PM
153	Absolute Need to assist farmers to have better production quality and quantity by providing timely services needed and workshops to show them how to make substantial earnings	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
154	To be self sufficient	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
155	In order to provide food security for the territory, more food production of all varieties is necessary.	5/20/2021 5:40 PM
156	It's part of our cultural heritage! We have lot's of undeveloped land and the perfect climate to produce over 200 crops high in demand!	5/20/2021 4:59 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q4 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?

Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



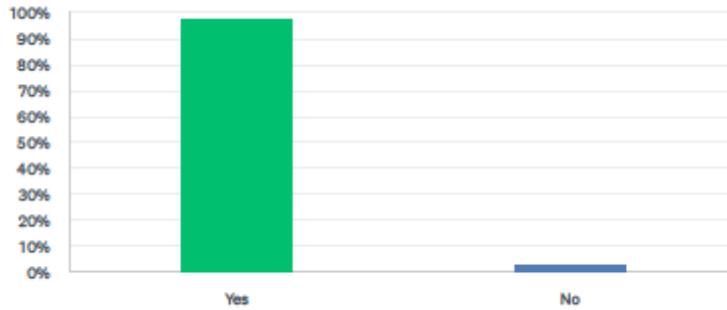
VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
The quality of farm produce available in the local markets and grocery stores	6.15% 15	24.18% 59	23.77% 58	32.79% 80	13.11% 32	244	3.23
The quantity of local products found in the local markets or grocery stores	3.67% 9	8.98% 22	17.55% 43	49.39% 121	20.41% 50	245	3.74
The quality of farm products offered directly by Farmers	15.16% 37	40.16% 98	22.95% 56	17.62% 43	4.10% 10	244	2.55
The organization of local markets or abattoirs (slaughterhouses)	1.69% 4	10.13% 24	44.73% 106	29.54% 70	13.92% 33	237	3.44
The variety of farm products offered by Farmers	3.35% 8	24.27% 58	29.29% 70	35.98% 86	7.11% 17	239	3.19
The quantity of farm products found in the grocery stores	1.63% 4	9.39% 23	16.73% 41	51.43% 126	20.82% 51	245	3.80
The price of the farm products	2.47% 6	18.93% 46	35.80% 87	28.40% 69	14.40% 35	243	3.33
Your experience with local farmers	26.86% 65	40.08% 97	28.93% 70	2.89% 7	1.24% 3	242	2.12
The variation of seafood by Fishermen	7.47% 18	35.27% 85	40.66% 98	13.28% 32	3.32% 8	241	2.70
Consumption of certified local poultry products	0.84% 2	7.95% 19	55.23% 132	23.85% 57	12.13% 29	239	3.38
The quantity of local products found in the grocery stores	1.65% 4	8.26% 20	16.53% 40	47.93% 116	25.62% 62	242	3.88

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q5 Is there a need for agriculture education initiatives in the community?

Answered: 243 Skipped: 3

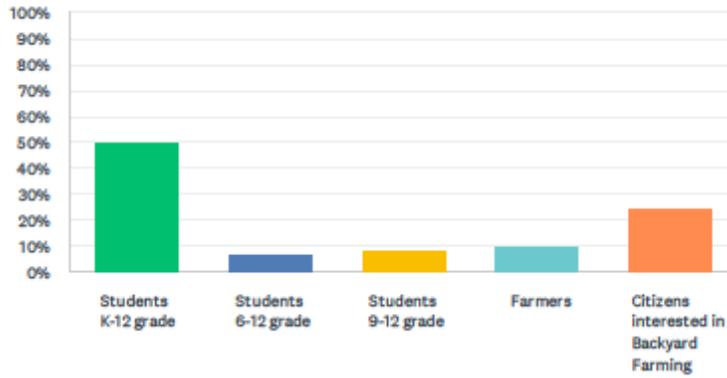


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	97.12%	236
No	2.88%	7
TOTAL		243

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q6 If yes to the question above, which groups should be the focus?

Answered: 241 Skipped: 5

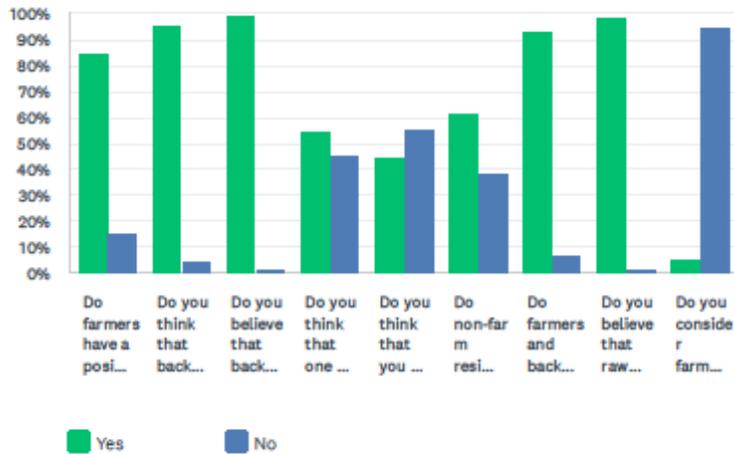


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Students K-12 grade	50.21%	121
Students 6-12 grade	6.64%	16
Students 9-12 grade	8.30%	20
Farmers	9.96%	24
Citizens interested in Backyard Farming	24.90%	60
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>241</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q7 Select the option of yes/no that best represents your perspective of the agriculture industry? (Specify detailed comments for the option you select)

Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



	YES	NO	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Do farmers have a positive impact on the local economy?	84.90% 208	15.10% 37	245	1.15
Do you think that backyard gardening can have a positive impact on local food security?	95.10% 233	4.90% 12	245	1.05
Do you believe that backyard gardening has a positive impact on an individual's health?	99.17% 240	0.83% 2	242	1.01
Do you think that one can earn a living from producing vegetables in their backyard?	54.77% 132	45.23% 109	241	1.45
Do you think that you can successfully produce vegetables without any form of assistance?	44.58% 107	55.42% 133	240	1.55
Do non-farm residents have a significant impact on agriculture production locally?	61.80% 144	38.20% 89	233	1.38
Do farmers and backyard farmers play a critical role in protecting the environment?	93.03% 227	6.97% 17	244	1.07
Do you believe that raw agricultural products and related initiatives should be included in agriculture?	98.28% 229	1.72% 4	233	1.02
Do you consider farming to be a nuisance in your community?	5.33% 13	94.67% 231	244	1.95

#	COMMENTS FOR "DO FARMERS HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY?"	DATE
1	Of course I feel that farmers could be better supported by local government agencies.	6/30/2021 12:07 AM
2	Homegrown food is vital and always welcome	6/28/2021 10:37 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

3	Local organic Food is the answer to all our problems.	6/28/2021 2:03 PM
4	small	6/23/2021 8:35 PM
5	Money spent with farmers stays in the economy,being further spent by the farmer instead of going off island.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
6	They earn and not dependent on the government	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
7	More locally produced food reduces our reliance on imported foods and the keeps the profits within the community.	6/22/2021 3:03 PM
8	It presents an opportunity for the VI to become more independent and sustain itself when it comes to food.	6/22/2021 1:57 PM
9	Mostly looks like Rastafarians selling mangos	6/22/2021 1:19 PM
10	Money stays local, supporting other local business/government	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
11	Small, but positive.	6/22/2021 12:54 PM
12	YES and They need to be supported More. Farmers are the Future of sustainability and can empower the Youth to find Pride and Purpose in their relationship with the land	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
13	They could, but don't currently.	6/22/2021 11:49 AM
14	Too small of an impact to make a difference	6/22/2021 10:46 AM
15	They need to have a positive impact on the local economy, I think it is not reflected yet, but definitely needs to be done.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
16	Sejah farms is great.	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
17	It is not a large impact, but it is important and should be increased.	6/22/2021 10:04 AM
18	I do not know the answer to most of these questions but I do not know is not a choice	6/22/2021 9:50 AM
19	Culture yes. economy no	6/22/2021 9:34 AM
20	Absolutely, the money stays in local economy	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
21	To build community health and sustainability, local farmers are critical. They can also contribute to the tourism economy by providing produce to restaurants and villas.	6/22/2021 9:06 AM
22	They would if they were given proper assistance that would increase their production.	6/22/2021 9:04 AM
23	The stores don't sell their products	6/22/2021 6:10 AM
24	Although the impact may be small, there are many issues to consider. Local produce is scarce, expensive, and only a handful of farmers can grow it. Local farmer cannot compete against imported procure, however, that is not a reason to increase prices out of the blue. It is understood that local farmers need to offset their expenses, but local government ,ay create balance where local produce could be affordable and produce in larger quantities.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
25	sector not large or coordinated enough	6/21/2021 9:01 PM
26	Not enough.	6/21/2021 7:33 PM
27	Not enough produce is being produced	6/21/2021 7:21 PM
28	a greater impact is needed	6/21/2021 5:24 PM
29	Too small of a market share	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
30	They provide food closer to you or the grocery store which will have food be fresh and fresher longer for the consumer.	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
31	Not enough farmers, their products are not the best and they are expensive	6/21/2021 4:36 PM
32	Local farmers provide fresh produce, and the money generated from each sale can be rotated within our community.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
33	under-reported but also very small	6/21/2021 4:20 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

34	farmers engaging in schools could increase yield, interest and positive impact	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
35	people wants to buy more natural foods, that is a huge positive impact on the local community	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
36	but we should increase the impact	6/17/2021 7:57 PM
37	Could be more if agriculture is developed/improved	6/17/2021 12:28 PM
38	I would like them to. I don't think they have enough of an impact currently.	6/14/2021 8:39 AM
39	There aren't enough yet to influence tourism focused economy	6/14/2021 8:29 AM
40	Absolutely nessesary for keeping money in our economy	6/14/2021 7:02 AM
41	Scale is limited.	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
42	The foot print is to small.	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
43	Local sustainable jobs	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
44	Living on STT I see very little local produce.	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
45	Builds a sense of community and well being.	6/4/2021 7:12 AM
46	When their are farmers,who have enough to sell,its usually once or three times a year	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
47	When purchasing from farmers, the money stays local rather than going to a corporation	6/2/2021 9:55 PM
48	Pretty much only way to procure organic food	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
49	Most of the produce found here is usually imported.	5/27/2021 10:43 PM
50	Supply and demand. Demand greater for fresh local produce than supply.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
51	Yes. Their hard work and diligence assists in the health of the community first and foremost	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
52	Fresher food at better prices	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "DO YOU THINK THAT BACKYARD GARDENING CAN HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON LOCAL FOOD SECURITY?"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	All able body humans should have the option of having a small pot of land to grow foods if they so choose.	6/30/2021 12:07 AM
2	Absolutely; especially in times of disaster. Irma and Maria showed us how dependent we are on imported foods and lack the basic know-how for sustaining ourselves collectively	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
3	It's very important especially during a pandemic, you will be able to provide for your family and neighbors.	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
4	Essential for food security and for mental, social and spiritual well-being.	6/28/2021 2:03 PM
5	There needs to be incentives. just like everyone has cistenrs people should have food in they're yard	6/23/2021 7:41 PM
6	For every garden grown by a backyard grower, 4-6 people (or more) are fed.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
7	There are things that they need to buy from other sources too	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
8	Reduces reliance on imported food. Often quality of imported produce is subpar and expensive.	6/22/2021 3:03 PM
9	It makes that individual more independent when it comes to food.	6/22/2021 1:57 PM
10	Not sure about relationship between backyard gardening and local food security	6/22/2021 1:19 PM
11	If there is proper collaboration and unity.	6/22/2021 1:00 PM
12	The more local knowledge, the better we can recover from disasters, especially when distribution chains are disrupted	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
13	Not by itself.	6/22/2021 12:54 PM
14	YES. Its called returning to the Source and our Original way of living. Agricultural programs should be in Radical recovery and education of a connection with the land for everyone --	6/22/2021 12:18 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

especially those caught in governmental dependence, receiving assistance, etc. Basic produce should be FREE. Grown by the people and consumed by the people as Mother Nature intended.

15	a some things grow very well here	6/22/2021 10:46 AM
16	Sure, it is a way to increase food security and it needs some organization to have a bigger impact.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
17	We should be able to produce our own.	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
18	Absolutely! The more food and gardens being grown, the more food security and knowledge is being exchanged within community	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
19	some of the unused farmland owned by the gov. should be turned into small garden plots and rented to individuals rather than just large plots to one!	6/22/2021 7:15 AM
20	Investing in backyard farming can set the trend like of 1st and 2nd world wars. Americans used their backyard to grow produce that's scarce due to lack of farms labor. Learning from history is a good skill.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
21	Locally grown products can be shared or bartered and information exchange is enhanced	6/21/2021 9:19 PM
22	I think everyone needs to know how to grow their own food	6/21/2021 9:18 PM
23	Yes, residents should be encouraged to grow food in limited spaces such as containers and school garden should be reinstated.	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
24	Not everyone will do it and it will have limited scope	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
25	Consumers would know exactly where the food is coming from.	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
26	Provides a healthy and productive activity to members of the community old and young. Can be used as a teaching moment for the younger generation to learn valuable tips and tricks about our local produce and essential our culture.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
27	In times of natural disasters, back yard gardeners can save our lives.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
28	we could do more, but it too is too small	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
29	crucial. container home and school gardening essential if we are to succeed.	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
30	gardening is great but not economical and can not support a significant portion of the demand	6/19/2021 12:29 PM
31	the backyard farmers will be a guide to others to show them they can grow and eat healthy fresh food they grow	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
32	even a few plants can make a difference	6/17/2021 7:57 PM
33	Backyard gardening will also help the territory to sustain the need of uts community	6/17/2021 3:43 PM
34	Not only for our own consumption but also to understand the work of farmers and value them more	6/14/2021 7:02 AM
35	I'm going to say no because people have to work regular jobs [many time ls more than one] and it is not easy to grow the amount of food you need to feed a family doing it only part time. Many people also do not have that much land in their backyards or even have a backyard. They can certainly supplement with fruit trees and a few annuals but we need real infrastructure to feed the masses. We can do it!	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
36	Health benefits and ongoing g access to produce staples would be beneficial	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
37	Increase availability and variety	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
38	Every yard could try to grow fruit trees and vegetables.	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
39	Yes. We need a text amendment to the VI code to allow "commercial" horticulture in residential zones.	6/3/2021 3:57 PM
40	Yes but many will not backyard garden and rely on farmers	6/1/2021 4:15 PM
41	Every little bit helps	5/31/2021 8:33 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

42	I believe every home should be part of economic development by providing value added products to the economy for sale. ie. sugar cake , dried sorrel.etc	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
43	Most definitely. It will allow individuals to be responsible for what goes in their body, it will teach the farmers what are the befits of the produce they consume and it could possibly create a stream of income as well	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
44	We won't be entirely dependent on imported foids	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
45	Backyard gardening is imperative to local food security and to building/sustaining community ties.i	5/20/2021 5:40 PM
#	COMMENTS FOR "DO YOU BELIEVE THAT BACKYARD GARDENING HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON AN INDIVIDUAL'S HEALTH?"	DATE
1	Having immediate access to vegetables, medicinal herbs, and fresh food is definitely a positive way to impact one's health. Backyard gardening without the use of toxins/chemicals would certainly provide an environment to enhance one's health.	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
2	Because you are eating healthy foods that you have planted	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
3	Gardening provides positive impacts on both physical and mental health.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
4	They will enjoy the fruits of their labor	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
5	Food is fresher and free of industrial agricultural chemicals.	6/22/2021 3:03 PM
6	If you have the knowledge and skills equipped. That means that person would have some type of idea on how to keep their body healthy.	6/22/2021 1:57 PM
7	Yes, definitely. With all the hormones and additives in foods these days. Our health is compromised.	6/22/2021 1:00 PM
8	Locally raised produce has more nutrients than produce created at quantity for profit and then needing to be harvested early for shipment	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
9	Obviously. Aside from an increase in vegetable & fruit consumption – just the contact with the earth can understanding of seasonal planting can help in a myriad of ways for physical, mental and spiritual health. It is the Only way forward after this destructive Industrial Age.	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
10	Of course, having access to healthier food and also as an exercise.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
11	If we grow it, we will eat it and that's way healthier.	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
12	for those who are retired and have time.	6/22/2021 10:10 AM
13	Positive for many reasons: fresh, nutritional food; physical activity need to grow and harvest; stress relief	6/22/2021 10:04 AM
14	it depends on pesticides used	6/22/2021 9:50 AM
15	Absolutely. Connection to the food you eat is essential. Growing your own food is good for the body, mind and spirit. Cultivating a relationship to the land and food is something that has been lost and is detrimental to society	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
16	Yes, also building more community gardening opportunities for youth and in the Housing Communities. Create safe outdoor spaces.	6/22/2021 9:06 AM
17	Assuming that one uses rain water and non pesticides, backyard farming can increase healthy behaviors and trends for youngsters to adopt healthy eating habits and budget expenses.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
18	it is healthier to eat right out of the garden	6/21/2021 9:18 PM
19	Both mentally and physically	6/21/2021 8:27 PM
20	I have been doing it for years and encouraging others to do the same.	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
21	Planting makes individuals more aware of what is being consumed. Nothing process just natural.	6/21/2021 4:46 PM
22	Too many other factors to isolate home gardening as having impact	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
23	No added preservatives or anything else that hurts our overall well-being.	6/21/2021 4:44 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

24	I do my backyard gardening and my produce taste so much better	6/21/2021 4:36 PM
25	If one eats what they grow they are aware of the benefits to be derived from these produce	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
26	Would enhance to likelihood of an individual making healthier decisions about food consumption.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
27	Yes if they eat their home grown food.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
28	this is the main benefit-	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
29	fresh fresh and more eager to consume healthy food.	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
30	Have to be cleaned and preserved properly	6/19/2021 4:34 AM
31	you are eating clean, healthy food it will have a positive on ones health	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
32	It's good exercise. Studies show being outside has a positive impact on your health.	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
33	Organic and local connected to island microbes and enhances freshness	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
34	locally grown, fresher.	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
35	Exercise associated with gardening	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
36	I grew up with a big garden in the yard. As a kid I sold vegetables to neighbors from my wagon.	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
37	Only grow the products that you feel are good for your health	6/4/2021 7:26 PM
38	Homegrown is accessible, nutritious and more flavorful than grocery store.	6/4/2021 7:12 AM
39	Having a lil home garden is great,you try to learn from your garden experiences.	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
40	Knowing no harmful practices	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
41	Home grown. Produced yourself. Fresh and healthy.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
42	Without a doubt. People will know exactly what they are consuming	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
43	The individuals know more or less what they are consuming (fertilizer and pesticides)	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "DO YOU THINK THAT ONE CAN EARN A LIVING FROM PRODUCING VEGETABLES IN THEIR BACKYARD?"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	I do not know.	8/6/2021 9:40 PM
2	If that is their goal.	6/29/2021 5:49 PM
3	A modest living can be earned, but I don't believe one that can sustain a single person, much less a family. However, I do believe that if neighbors partnered, organized, and strategized efforts, they can decrease food expenses.	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
4	You can trade or sell your fresh vegetables.	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
5	The cost of living is much much greater than what we will make from backyard gardening.	6/23/2021 8:35 PM
6	I am already doing that on 1/3 acre	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
7	They can sell the extra harvest	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
8	If done right, with proper marketing and community support; you can make a humble living from agriculture.	6/22/2021 1:57 PM
9	Terrain not suitable	6/22/2021 1:19 PM
10	It depends on what the personal goal and purpose is for growing in the backyard.	6/22/2021 1:00 PM
11	Unless the land/home is owned and perhaps with grants to develop solar energy, the costs of energy and rental would be too high to make up for wholly with a small plot	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
12	Maybe if the things grown in the garden were turned into value-added products.	6/22/2021 12:54 PM
13	Of course! That is how we Used to do. My neighbor may not have tomatoes but can repair my car so BAM. I'm living and so is she.	6/22/2021 12:18 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

14	Depending on size and commitment of resources	6/22/2021 12:05 PM
15	But it can help offset bills	6/22/2021 11:46 AM
16	It depends on the size, but could help to increase earnings for a family.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
17	If supported by the community and given financial incentives by the VI Government	6/22/2021 10:39 AM
18	If provided with resources to include equipment and water	6/22/2021 10:31 AM
19	Those into farming for self would definitely be able to.	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
20	I think it can be an important supplement to one's income	6/22/2021 10:04 AM
21	Prices are high in the VI. If someone lives a more basic lifestyle then yes, you can make a living with back yard farming. The key is having the knowledge to reduce farming inputs and maximize the space you have.	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
22	It is possible; however, it won't get you the latest Lexus or VMW. So one must be realistic. Education would be the best investment. Backyard farming could be fomented as a hobby and a healthy practice.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
23	if they produce enough and their is a market	6/21/2021 9:18 PM
24	The better question would be can it sustain living wages independent from any other streams of income.	6/21/2021 8:58 PM
25	Hard to earn a living, but can supplement income	6/21/2021 8:27 PM
26	Depends if cost of living is very low. Also, geographically island may be too small as an sole source for financial stability with other competitors..	6/21/2021 7:33 PM
27	The Ag Dept. needs to encourage people to so by having visible campaign	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
28	It depends on how large is the backyard garden.	6/21/2021 4:49 PM
29	supplemental income	6/21/2021 4:46 PM
30	Too small a scale	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
31	They can make their own money.	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
32	Monies generated from backyard vegetables is certainly not enough to live off of in our economy. The overall cost of living in the Virgin Islands is far to high for one to rely on backyard farming as the sole source of income.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
33	Yes, there may need to be support so that back-yard farmers can easily aggregate.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
34	Yes and no because it is possible to make a living with it but for the amount of work you putting in and the money you getting back isn't balanced.	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
35	supplemental income, definitely, not a living	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
36	not totally . perhaps supplement their income and reduce their cost of purchasing groceries.	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
37	have you ever gardened vegetables. too much time, money, and education required for too little of a return	6/19/2021 12:29 PM
38	Growing healthy vegetables, there is too much lost to earn a living	6/19/2021 4:34 AM
39	if you focus on growing a lot of one crop that is always in need like cucumbers pared with other creative ideas you can earn a nice living	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
40	Perhaps not a full living, but can contribute to their income.	6/17/2021 12:17 PM
41	Can happen but need to encourage the community to purchase locally	6/17/2021 12:06 PM
42	if not a living some supplemental income or items to trade.	6/14/2021 3:29 PM
43	I'm not sure but I'm optimistic	6/14/2021 3:28 PM
44	If grown efficiently.	6/14/2021 8:41 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

45	My dad did	6/14/2021 7:02 AM
46	I've seen YouTube videos of folks with hydroponics farms producing great quantity with very little space. If I had space I would try.	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
47	Supplemental income stream	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
48	Earn some but not enough to live here	6/11/2021 8:16 PM
49	Not sure really	6/11/2021 4:54 PM
50	Supplemental	6/11/2021 4:24 PM
51	Just as a small farm	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
52	Supplement, but not earn their entire income	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
53	Excess produce can be sold to neighbors, but it would be hard to survive on the limited, seasonal income.	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
54	Depends on how much income is needed	6/4/2021 7:26 PM
55	With todays hydroponic technology, we don't need huge spaces to be able to grow significant quantities of high quality foods.	6/3/2021 3:57 PM
56	Once,I use to sell tea bush from my lil home garden,I was so proud of it,but in dry season it was hard to manage.	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
57	What happened to the Coop?	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
58	A collective backyards growing similar crops and marketing them collectively.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
59	I absolutely think so. With knowledge and education it could empower people to see the potential earning power they could have	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
60	People rather fresh food and are willing to pay.	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "DO YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN SUCCESSFULLY PRODUCE VEGETABLES WITHOUT ANY FORM OF ASSISTANCE?"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	I do not know.	8/6/2021 9:40 PM
2	But assistance would help. Many of the seeds sold at the major retailers are expired or are not for these regions. The instructions for growing are not always relevant to our region. Local education that is based on experienced farmers from the USVI and Caribbean would help a lot.	7/6/2021 5:07 PM
3	Assistance in understanding how to plant complementary produce would be helpful. I've read up on box gardens, planting certain types of flowers/plants to help manage pests, but I don't have a good enough understanding. I am certain if I carved out time and had room for trial and error I could do it on my own. Having assistance, however, could be the starting point needed to be successful and establish a sustainable backyard garden.	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
4	Once being taught of how to effectively manage water and best time to plant seeds, root crops etc. one can be successful without assistance	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
5	aside from google no assistance required i think	6/23/2021 7:41 PM
6	As an individual feeding only my family, yes; to sustain a grand scale farm, no.	6/23/2021 2:52 PM
7	I would need some education on best practices to be successful with some vegetables.	6/23/2021 11:10 AM
8	Assistance from Agriculture Department? Assistance includes internet, friends, other farmers and WATER assistance is sometimes needed.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
9	Just learn the basics	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
10	Farmers and gardeners can benefit from new and innovative techniques/processes from agricultural research.	6/22/2021 3:03 PM
11	It matters what type of assistance. If you're doing it on a small scale, the person should be able to maintain their garden with little to no problems. On the other hand, farmers who are trying to provide for the whole community will need some type of assistance and support.	6/22/2021 1:57 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

12	Problems with terrain, water, and insects that eat the plants	6/22/2021 1:19 PM
13	If it is planned properly and assistance from Agricultural Department for guidance. Finances would have to be evaluated.	6/22/2021 1:00 PM
14	I'm personally not good at growing produce	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
15	What is intended by 'assistance' training, economic, helping hands??? I, personally have successfully ge-grown bought vegetables in a hydroponic garden in my apartment in Brooklyn... so no assistance needed other than Mother nature and Our Sun.	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
16	small personal batch but not to sell	6/22/2021 12:05 PM
17	N/A	6/22/2021 11:49 AM
18	I have grown vegetables and fruits and would like classes on ways to improve my harvest	6/22/2021 11:46 AM
19	education for home growers is important	6/22/2021 10:46 AM
20	No, it is not easy. I tried last year on my backyard, and was able to produce some tomatoes, okra, cucumbers, but quality and quantity were too variable. I think assistance is critical to motivate and have an impact on local production.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
21	I'll definitely need guidance.	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
22	Not until you become an established farmer.	6/22/2021 9:52 AM
23	I think experience and knowledge is essential for successful production. So yes I think some sort of assistance in the form of education is needed for beginner growers. Pest and disease pressures are higher in our climate so an understanding of how to deal with that can increase success rate.	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
24	For myself and a few others.	6/22/2021 9:04 AM
25	It is difficult but not impossible	6/22/2021 8:48 AM
26	Without financial assistance yes but organic sustainable farming education, support and resources needed.	6/22/2021 8:29 AM
27	Assistance from who?	6/22/2021 6:10 AM
28	Of course, land, water, and sunlight. Plants grow by themselves, I haven't seen a person trying to stretch pants in order to grow. :)	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
29	I know how to grow some items but need more education on the subject	6/21/2021 9:18 PM
30	No endeavor is successful without some sort of assistance; most often it is our friends and family who assist us most	6/21/2021 7:58 PM
31	I am doing so now. It is very disappointed that when you go to the AG Dept on St. Thomas the very seldom have anything for purchase so you cross the street and go to Bryan Plants. I want to support the Ag Dept. but they need to support us. This would be great opportunity for AG Dept to engaged with the people who got into gardening since COVID. That is an opportunity for AG Dept. and the new gardeners.	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
32	If I put my mind to it I would be able too.	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
33	Might not have the knowledge to	6/21/2021 4:40 PM
34	I am a beginning backyard gardener and can use all the help I can get. My garden is struggling right now.	6/21/2021 4:32 PM
35	Farming is fast becoming a lost trade form for my generation. There is not enough information given to young kids about the value of farming, much less the actual skill set it takes to farm.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
36	It's possible, but some assistance is not unusual.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
37	While I successfully grow vegetables in my yard, it would be great to have workshops etc. to increase my knowledge	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
38	I have done it before	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
39	Answer pertains so me personally. Not the collective "you".	6/21/2021 4:17 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

40	lack mod dependable water supply water /irrigation	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
41	not enough time, money, or water	6/19/2021 12:29 PM
42	Kniewledge is power	6/19/2021 4:34 AM
43	you need assistance in some form it may be with seeds, equipment, and a lot of education	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
44	I rely on YouTube and books for my info	6/17/2021 7:57 PM
45	Every farmers who especially stating their farm should get a full assistance or support from the government. And to encourage them also to continuously do their interest and shared it with their family.	6/17/2021 3:43 PM
46	Small quantities yes.	6/17/2021 1:05 PM
47	But not commercially.	6/17/2021 12:28 PM
48	Costly to set up	6/14/2021 8:29 AM
49	Having assistance increases productivity and quality of goods one can market	6/14/2021 4:58 AM
50	I did it on my patio during lockdown. It was very fun and rewarding but I had a lot of time to research because I was out of a job. The only thing that hampered me was insects so a little help in learning how to keep them at bay without harsh chemicals would be nice.	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
51	Help needed to get started and resource available when challenges emerge	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
52	No mainly due to Lack of consistent water supply and iguana ad deer population.	6/12/2021 3:21 PM
53	here	6/11/2021 8:16 PM
54	In small amount.	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
55	But I could do better with assistance!	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
56	I have a family tradition of gardening, but I am always interested in new methods.	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
57	I personally can, but I would recommend having assistance available. Either through government sponsored educational programs or through consulting services offered by local, established farmers	6/3/2021 3:57 PM
58	I've ask for a grant,but was told that the time for application was ip!	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
59	Not on a large scale. Water is an issue	6/1/2021 4:15 PM
60	Personally not a good plant keeper. "Gangrene Thumbs "	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
61	Infrastructure have to be in place. Besides land , labor, education (skill, knowledge) Capital is nesa	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
62	With YouTube and social media someone can definitely learn the tricks of the trade and self educate	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
63	Some	5/21/2021 9:43 PM
64	I have the land and do research.	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "DO NON-FARM RESIDENTS HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION LOCALLY?"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	I am not aware of how non-farm residents would have a significant impact on local agriculture production. Perhaps our consumption levels?	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
2	Everyone loves to eat fresh produce	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
3	Supply and demand. Consumers drive the market.	6/28/2021 2:03 PM
4	Only in their requests for produce.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
5	With good advertisement and encouragement	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
6	Without demand, the farms have no support. Buying local takes education efforts though.	6/22/2021 12:55 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

7	Grocers and consumers creating a market for farm products.	6/22/2021 12:54 PM
8	Yes, they are consumers.	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
9	Yes, they are consumers, and if food is locally produced that could be a market strategy for restaurants and other venues.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
10	Yes, because the demand for local produce is there	6/22/2021 10:31 AM
11	I'm not really sure.	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
12	They are the market for the goods.	6/22/2021 10:04 AM
13	"significant" was not defined	6/22/2021 9:50 AM
14	Yes. Many of the people I know in the territory grow some sort of produce, fruits, veggies. It not only allows them to relax and enjoy the process but provides them with satisfaction in consuming/sharing something they have grown themselves. Pure life if you know what I mean Kelly bean!	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
15	purchase demand	6/21/2021 4:46 PM
16	May take up ag land for other purposes	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
17	I don't know	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
18	Don't know	6/21/2021 4:32 PM
19	Absolutely!!! They are the consumers	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
20	They are the consumers and therefore contribute to the economic well being of the community	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
21	Non-farmers within the community play a huge role in the agricultural industry. Afterall we become the consumers once the produce is harvested, so without us it presents a huge dent in potential sales	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
22	I do not have a means to assess this question. They may not, but it's possible that they can have a significant impact - this can be a positive impact, by helping build a sustainable marketplace.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
23	Only if they buy food at farmers markets	6/21/2021 4:25 PM
24	again, production is too small to be significant	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
25	non-farm residents purchase items from resident farmers.	6/21/2021 4:19 PM
26	purchase locally and demand more local	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
27	if they buy the produce	6/19/2021 12:29 PM
28	Do not know	6/19/2021 4:34 AM
29	yes they buy the farmers products	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
30	gardening for personal use makes an impact	6/17/2021 7:57 PM
31	I don't know.	6/17/2021 1:05 PM
32	Especially as models for urban gardening take off, and techniques/technology improves	6/14/2021 3:28 PM
33	They are important to the sustainability fo the farmers	6/14/2021 11:11 AM
34	They're the demand	6/14/2021 7:02 AM
35	not aware of non-farm resident numbers.	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
36	They support local farms by buying local goods	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
37	Community support of local agricultural is important	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
38	They buy the produce.	6/4/2021 7:12 AM
39	If you mean residents who don't live on a Ag zoned parcel, yes. If you are talking about people who have no interest farming, then not so much.	6/3/2021 3:57 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

40	We share technique with each other, and learn how to maintain our crops ,by using each others experience	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
41	"MarketWomen" types	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
42	I'm not sure	5/27/2021 10:43 PM
43	The fact that citizens prefer to purchase local produce from farmers shows that people actually care to eat healthier and support local farmers	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
44	They are the ones consuming. Farmers produce based on what is being consumed.	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "DO FARMERS AND BACKYARD FARMERS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT?"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	Farmers should be informed in how their practices can negatively impact the environment. Many people believe that because they are growing something it is "environmentally friendly" this is not always the case. Farming can have such a big benefit for the island so I think it is important that we know what that is and help farmers become more sustainable.	7/6/2021 5:07 PM
2	Absolutely. We lower our carbon footprint when we minimize importing food. The trees planted gives us oxygen in the environment. Farmers who choose not to use chemicals/toxins help our coral reefs.	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
3	Everyone would have a better mindset of food production	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
4	It's hard to be a grower and not respect the environment.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
5	They need to learn to able to lead	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
6	I'm sure they do. If not, they should. In order to get any produce from nature, you have to take care of it.	6/22/2021 1:57 PM
7	The more people rely on the land, the more incentive they have to protect it, particularly in a small community such as the territory	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
8	YES> BINGO> Now, Let's design some courses to educate4 the masses on why this is true. You can even point to the changes in the atmosphere worldwide over 2020 as lockdown had people all over the world;d growing their own food and gardens and helping replenish the growth that concrete jungles have stripped from our land. When humans are breathing better...we will live better....	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
9	important, but not critical	6/22/2021 11:49 AM
10	Yes. One way is reducing food packaging (mainly plastics) from food that is imported. Also, food waste could be recycled as compost to improve soils and improve soil fertility. Water management needs also to be considered to protect the environment.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
11	It's important that both groups are aware of the appropriate practices that conserve the land/protect the environment to minimize negative impacts of farming on the local ecosystems.	6/22/2021 10:04 AM
12	All land and the creatures that inhabit it are interrelated. The type of farm management plays a critical role in its effects on the surrounding ecosystem, water quality, soil. There are ways to farm successfully that will conserve soil, improve water quality, create habitat for wildlife, and have a positive impact on teh residents of the VI. Techniques of regenerative and sustainable agriculture must be made available to residents to ensure the health of the community and our resources for today and the generations to come.	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
13	Yes, but this is a tricky question. Anyone who owns their own land will make sure that it remain in good condition, mostly for economical purposes so cutting a few things and peeling the parcel for a handful of dollars could be very tempting.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
14	Especially if grown organically and for retention of top soil	6/21/2021 9:19 PM
15	That is one another reason why I have garden. Also, I have plants for the pollinators too.	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
16	farmers more than backyard farmers due to scale of operation	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
17	No foreign foods	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
18	Yes and No. It depends on their farming and management practices	6/21/2021 4:29 PM

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19	For a Caribbean island we lack the agricultural aspects that have long been our way of life. We have become so reliant on mainland business industries and tourism that we have forgotten our roots. Farmers cultivate the land, and their plants provides homes and food (unfortunately) to the local wildlife, as well as the community. The plants also play a role in the air quality throughout the community.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
20	Both for good and bad. Misuse of fertilizers, pesticides and tilling practices, can decimate the environment. Still more animals will live on and around a farm then will be in and around the city.	6/21/2021 4:25 PM
21	they could, with additional training and support	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
22	reduction of imported produce	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
23	agriculture typically harms the environment. there are more damaging uses of land but that does not make farming beneficial	6/19/2021 12:29 PM
24	the plants attracts the insects	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
25	they know how to control pests & diseases, prevent erosion, improve soil, compost, reuse materials	6/17/2021 7:57 PM
26	Only if they follow appropriate farming methods	6/17/2021 12:21 PM
27	Rooftop gardens, etc	6/14/2021 3:28 PM
28	Pesticide use, runoff, diversion of water, land use change all have adverse effects on local environment	6/14/2021 8:29 AM
29	They should. We should all play our part in lessening our footprint on the land as much as possible. I'm not saying go live in the bush but there are alternatives to harsh chemicals and stripping the soil. Making a profit is all well and good but if it comes at the price of leaving our children a tore up environment then is it really worth it?	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
30	using the soil for production and health protects the envirmment	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
31	If you're growing good food, you might care a lot about the environment	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
32	100%. We will need educational services so people can learn about how what they put in the ground (fertilizer, etc.) can affect the land and water around them just as much as it affects their plants.	6/3/2021 3:57 PM
33	Yes, it helps us keep our culture alive	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
34	They should	6/2/2021 9:55 PM
35	Less to import, less packaging, less pesticides/herbicides, etc. bee pollination	6/1/2021 4:15 PM
36	Every little bit helps	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
37	Storm water runoff and erosion of our fertile topsoil. Resulting in damages to our marine environment.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
38	Taking care of the land in masses is critical to a healthy environment and community	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
39	As long as they follow the proper practices...protect the pollinators and minimal pesticide use. Use organic means.	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "DO YOU BELIEVE THAT RAW AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND RELATED INITIATIVES SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN AGRICULTURE?"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	I do not understand this question.	7/6/2021 5:07 PM
2	Absolutely, along with training on how to use/transform some of the raw products (cotton, sugarcane, etc.) into consumable form.	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
3	phrase this question more eloquently as it is a confusing question.	6/23/2021 7:41 PM
4	That's a weird question. The phrase "raw agricultural products" implies it's part of agriculture. What are raw agricultural products?	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
5	It will lower the cost of the products rather than imports	6/22/2021 4:04 PM

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6	I'm not sure I fully understand what raw agricultural products or related initiatives includes	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
7	Do not understand the question.	6/22/2021 12:54 PM
8	I don't understand the question.	6/22/2021 11:49 AM
9	Sure, it is important to be conscious about the benefits of consuming fresh products. Now, if there is a surplus, it also needs to be addressed to be able to give some value added or transforming those products.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
10	This would impact health and healthy lifestyles. I could easily become a vegetarian.	6/22/2021 10:39 AM
11	"raw products" needs a definition	6/22/2021 9:50 AM
12	Yes, one must a t lead try to incorporate such products. There is no guarantee that they will succeed, but trial an error can help a lot to weed out useless programs and other things.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
13	what do you mean by raw agricultural products?	6/21/2021 9:18 PM
14	Depends on the damage that would cause the environment and community	6/21/2021 5:58 PM
15	This question is not worded clearly.	6/21/2021 5:27 PM
16	But there still needs to be "value added" processing done so that the income generated increases.	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
17	Just think so	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
18	Presuming it makes sense. Research needs to be done to drive the decision with data.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
19	No Comment	6/21/2021 4:25 PM
20	Have to be cleaned and protected	6/19/2021 4:34 AM
21	Hemp would be good	6/14/2021 8:29 AM
22	Why not?	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
23	what ever the market requires	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
24	Doesn't all food start off raw?	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
25	And preserved/fermented products as well	6/4/2021 7:51 AM
26	What are raw agricultural products? animals?	6/4/2021 7:12 AM
27	Honey	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
28	Not sure	5/28/2021 12:40 PM
29	Do not understand the questions. First what is agriculture and what is farming.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "DO YOU CONSIDER FARMING TO BE A NUISANCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	Farming is vital in every community and around the world.	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
2	?	6/23/2021 7:41 PM
3	Do you like to eat, where do you think your food comes from?	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
4	On the bright side it will encourage other people to do the same	6/22/2021 4:04 PM
5	food security is incredibly important and farmers contribute to that	6/22/2021 12:55 PM
6	The only Nuisance is the leeching, destructive, pillaging forms of gentrification and appropriation of land for selfish means ... that is the nuisance. When non natives Arte allowed to buy up ACRES of land and Not cultivate it – Not use it for community and just let it sit?? this is The most destructive thing for the island, the territory, the land... Farming is not a 'thing' is IS How Humans have Survived. Looking forwards to seeing USVI be a pioneer in your education the masses on the importance of farming and eating with the land you live on.	6/22/2021 12:18 PM
7	It is wonderful to ave but too small to make an impact one way or another	6/22/2021 10:46 AM

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8	No. In my particular case we are living in a residential area. Now, probably for people that are living close to livestock farms it could be, but we need to understand that as a community we need to be able to reduce our dependency from external food sources.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
9	cows and goats in the road, animal noises at night	6/22/2021 9:50 AM
10	Farming can be a nuisance if chemical inputs are high. This will directly effect the health of residents and the quality of water in surrounding areas. A reason it is essential to manage farms without high chemical inputs.	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
11	Never. My father was a farmer and although I am not, I still love growing things. There are many benefits in growing things. Therapeutics, economical, self-sustain, healthy eating, etc.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
12	How can farming be a nuisance? It should be essential part of community and our wellness.	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
13	My community is a farming community	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
14	No. Its an economic activity which has a positive and significant impact on the lives of all.	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
15	its a necessity in the community not a nuisance	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
16	Feral chickens, agricultural runoff	6/14/2021 8:29 AM
17	Please send people who say yes to this to NYC. This is a crucial part of our culture	6/14/2021 7:02 AM
18	This is a dumb question. Who doesn't want fresh of the vine/tree/bush/plant produce? Some of the crap we import from the States is half rotten by the time it gets to the stores.	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
19	But roaming chickens are a pest. Need to have an island plan to control	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
20	farming is the life of man,	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
21	I love farm!	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
22	Good relationships with neighbors are always important. Respectful boundaries and limits on activities that might be disruptive are important.	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
23	Although roaming animals can be.	6/4/2021 7:12 AM
24	Not in the least. Animal husbandry might be a nuisance to some, but agricultural or horticultural farming is NOT a nuisance and can be done with very little impact to the surrounding community.	6/3/2021 3:57 PM
25	Miss our milk	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
26	Animals husbandry and its proximity to residential area have to be considered.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM
27	Absolutely not especially if done in an organized fashion	5/22/2021 7:43 AM

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Q8 Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding the VI Agriculture Plan?

Answered: 144 Skipped: 102

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	No	8/15/2021 10:45 AM
2	no	8/10/2021 10:39 AM
3	It is a great idea to develop a plan. In this way, the community can be educated. There will be more positive outcomes.	7/14/2021 11:09 AM
4	This sounds like an exciting initiative and may help us get funding and grants to our farmers here in the USVI.	7/6/2021 5:07 PM
5	None to offer right now.	6/30/2021 12:07 AM
6	No.	6/29/2021 5:49 PM
7	No	6/29/2021 5:19 PM
8	Nothing at this time	6/29/2021 5:13 PM
9	I would like to see agriculture have different community activities or harvest festivals for children, teens, adults and the senior citizens. Maybe seasonal competitions of the largest soursop, pumpkin, etc. , the fastest coconut peeler, etc. , best outdoor cook, etc., education on herbs in our territory that are natural remedy for many ailments.	6/28/2021 10:37 PM
10	No	6/28/2021 2:03 PM
11	no	6/28/2021 11:45 AM
12	if the gov't cannot provide basic services i.e. abattoir/marketing the best plan in the world will be a wasted effort.	6/28/2021 7:30 AM
13	The VI has a lot of wastelands just idling that can be used to produce more local products instead of having to import foods that we can grow ourselves.	6/25/2021 12:58 PM
14	N/A	6/25/2021 10:50 AM
15	It is a great initiative that is needed in the territory.	6/23/2021 8:35 PM
16	what is it	6/23/2021 7:41 PM
17	Everyone should have an opportunity to learn more about farming whether in your backyard or commercial farming. I would love develop skills in effective farming.	6/23/2021 12:13 PM
18	no	6/23/2021 11:10 AM
19	It would be helpful if the plan is implemented regardless of political appointees.	6/23/2021 9:10 AM
20	We should be able to feed our selves from the produce grown and cultivated by our local farmers.	6/23/2021 8:06 AM
21	Hope the VI Government will create and fund a plan to assist the development of local agriculture.	6/23/2021 5:14 AM
22	No	6/22/2021 9:30 PM
23	NO	6/22/2021 5:37 PM
24	Implementation should be real	6/22/2021 5:32 PM
25	Prepare flyers. Set up meetings. Form committees. Conduct seminars. And give assistance to those in need.	6/22/2021 4:04 PM

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26	As I type on this laptop, I do not have any questions.	6/22/2021 1:57 PM
27	No	6/22/2021 1:19 PM
28	no	6/22/2021 1:11 PM
29	This has been a long time waiting and it would be good to see it actually thrive, grow and successfully add to the community.	6/22/2021 1:00 PM
30	Would like to see some of the past initiatives re-explored and revitalized if new markets or economic potential can be found. Would particularly like to see a revitalization of the aquaponics/hydroponics initiative and some exploration of greenhouse farming. This would also be interesting to encourage among backyard farmers. Would like to see some value-added advancements for the mango harvest and bringing the results to market. I'd also like to see some creative thinking and free enterprise find a way to convert the water byproduct from the wastewater treatment plans into water that can answer local farmer's biggest concern. I understand the water byproduct on St. Croix is already processed to the point where it can be used for agriculture.	6/22/2021 12:54 PM
31	No	6/22/2021 12:41 PM
32	Children are easier to teach than adults. I've taught after school programs to increase kids knowledge of farm, growing food from seeds. they will get excited, it's empowering to them to grow their own food. It's not the burden that adults feel it is	6/22/2021 12:05 PM
33	Will the AG Station (e.g. Coral Bay, St. John) be provided with the resources needed to offer seeds/plants/food for animals? The supplies are currently so limited.	6/22/2021 11:46 AM
34	A copy of the agricultural plan should be made public on a website.	6/22/2021 11:27 AM
35	no	6/22/2021 10:45 AM
36	I think that it is important to include the aquaculture/mariculture component. We are surrounded by the sea, and the potential for producing seafood is huge, but most of all is necessary to boost food security and economy. Even though there are limitations (feed, infrastructure, etc) and concerns with the environment, we could do aquaculture in a sustainable and responsible way. Also, the agriculture plan needs to include ways to deal with the surplus of products (i.e. mango) to have value added products; and also make a link with other organizations to reuse food waste.	6/22/2021 10:44 AM
37	Making local food more accessible and affordable.	6/22/2021 10:31 AM
38	No	6/22/2021 10:22 AM
39	I love the idea of encouraging/empowering locals to start some kind of farming.	6/22/2021 10:21 AM
40	no	6/22/2021 10:11 AM
41	none	6/22/2021 10:10 AM
42	none at this time	6/22/2021 10:04 AM
43	no	6/22/2021 9:38 AM
44	Think culture and community cohesion more than economy.	6/22/2021 9:34 AM
45	Sustainable, Regenerative Agriculture is an essential element for a healthy community and environment. It increases food abundance, ensures food security and conserves and enhances soil, water and air quality for our future generations.	6/22/2021 9:23 AM
46	No	6/22/2021 9:06 AM
47	na	6/22/2021 9:06 AM
48	Share the infprmation in more places. Use all social media outlets that young and old use. The radio and newspaper is not cutting it if you want to reach the yonger generation. Make it fun and informative.	6/22/2021 9:04 AM
49	no	6/22/2021 8:48 AM
50	No	6/22/2021 8:37 AM

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51	Stop importing fruits and vegetables from other places. Provide Gardners and Farmers what they need to be productive. Positive Nelson stop BING around and work.	6/22/2021 6:10 AM
52	I am not involved in the agricultural plan nor I understand it well. What I can say is that if the VI government intends to subsidice farming, they better be accountability of some sort. At the same time, I do not see a complete stop nor major local farming competition/production to accommodate the needs of the territory regarding produce, so there must be a combination of import/local produce that provide people high quality produce within reasonable prices.	6/22/2021 2:51 AM
53	I think more support has to be given to the farmers. The farmers need a better supply of water for their produce and animals - promises are made and not kept.	6/21/2021 9:18 PM
54	N/A	6/21/2021 8:58 PM
55	Are teachers being trained to teach Ag in the classroom? Not to my knowledge. Ag education degrees?	6/21/2021 8:37 PM
56	Educate community about the importance of growing and eating locally grown food, and make locally grown food AFFORDABLE.	6/21/2021 8:14 PM
57	I am concerned about the use of hybrid products and their effect on the environment. I hope sustainability for us means farming in the most eco-friendly ways and not with the use of harmful pesticides and GMO seeds.	6/21/2021 8:13 PM
58	NA	6/21/2021 8:04 PM
59	No	6/21/2021 7:50 PM
60	Yes, how do you see this plan differ from the EDA's Vision 2040 Plan?	6/21/2021 7:35 PM
61	Need to build back and/or repair the different schools for kindergarten, junior, and high schools children, and properly incorporate agriculture for each district of schools to include large strong green houses and large domes for indoor gardening. While outdoor for strategically planting fruit bearing trees etc. Could be a last period class. Also could be charter buses for this class to each district "gardening/agriculture class", if each school does not incorporate such a class. To me it would be wiser to create large planned grounds of agriculture areas in each district to travel to for children from apx. 5th grade up. Then mini gardens on each school ground for smaller children from kindergarten to 5th grade. Have children from k -5th grade focus on simple gardening. Such as peppers, tomatoes, corn, pumpkin, peas. At Least 5 survival garden items standard for long term curriculum for generations. -J	6/21/2021 7:33 PM
62	No	6/21/2021 6:09 PM
63	Local island farmers and farms should be supported and encouraged by any initiative to improve the lack of local fresh produce.	6/21/2021 5:58 PM
64	For sustainability, farming needs to be acknowledged, and farmers need to be supported primarily by having a market for their produce year round.	6/21/2021 5:51 PM
65	I would like to recommend as this plan is developed that community engagement is conducted to get the community involved ( not only on social media). Additionally, back yard gardeners as has role to play as this plan is developed. I have shared this survey with family and friends because food security is critical. I saw first hand what occurred in 2017 after the hurricanes. If I can assist, please contact me. Best wishes as the committee proceed.	6/21/2021 5:29 PM
66	Yes. What is it?	6/21/2021 5:27 PM
67	A first step in the right direction.	6/21/2021 5:24 PM
68	No	6/21/2021 5:20 PM
69	Farmers need to receive actual Government assistance to be successful. The bordeaux farmers need water. Nelson needs to stop talking and get the programs off the ground. If we can't feed ourselves we are failing as a community. We can't depend on the outside because natural disasters and pandemics disrupt the supply flow. A people without vision shall perish with empty bellies.	6/21/2021 5:18 PM
70	We need to establish and support local large-scale farming and agriculture for the sustenance of the Virgin Islands!	6/21/2021 5:13 PM
71	No	6/21/2021 5:08 PM

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72	Not yet	6/21/2021 5:06 PM
73	No	6/21/2021 5:03 PM
74	One or two farmers should be part of the board.	6/21/2021 4:49 PM
75	No	6/21/2021 4:46 PM
76	Simply just to say that farmers, or backyard farmers the land is there and it's better to occupy it rather than leaving it go to waste plus it can be very beneficial to the community and maybe even abroad.	6/21/2021 4:46 PM
77	Be realistic in expectations. Never going to be totally self sufficient in food production, especially without any value added processing done locally. Identify markets and products where local producers can have an impact and focus on those. Emphasize that agriculture is more than just farming, which is hard work, and you'll be bale to attract more younger people into it. Develop infrastructure to support ag. Convince farmers to be more self-sufficient and not rely on government for full support. Encourage entrepreneurship with grants or low interest loans.	6/21/2021 4:45 PM
78	No	6/21/2021 4:44 PM
79	Have a registry for backyard farmers.	6/21/2021 4:43 PM
80	No	6/21/2021 4:40 PM
81	Backyard gardens need to be encouraged. People who are willing to do large scale farming should be assisted. There are persons I this community who have several acres of government land on lease for farming and doing nothing. This should be revisited and those persons who are really interested in farming should me gone the property to do so	6/21/2021 4:36 PM
82	N/a	6/21/2021 4:30 PM
83	I believe its an important first step in revitalizing the agricultural section in the Virgin Island. Hopefully these plans are implemented and come to fruition, thus reducing on food insecurity.	6/21/2021 4:29 PM
84	This plan should be taken seriously & can help/assist with our economy & provide a postive impact to all	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
85	One comment, or rather concern that haunts my mind are the numerous projects this islands has started and never completed. I hope that this agricultural plan isn't yet another failed venture or money scam by our government.	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
86	It's about time!!!!	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
87	I am eager to collaborate. We have a small research project in collaboration with Morgan State University focusing on the use of blockchain technology to create a market for farmers and backyard gardeners to aggregate and sell their produce locally, using a smart contract. Please contact me or my student, Travis Hamlin travishamlin@gmail.com	6/21/2021 4:28 PM
88	in addition to expanding agriculture aspects, expand the business areas that can use byproducts and debris from agricultural produce	6/21/2021 4:22 PM
89	How do I help?	6/21/2021 4:22 PM
90	No	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
91	None at this time	6/21/2021 4:20 PM
92	No	6/21/2021 4:19 PM
93	No	6/21/2021 4:15 PM
94	lets start teaching in grade schools, make it mandatory. address critical water supply infrastructure and offer tax incentives and impose taxes when locally grown harvest is sufficient so farmers make a fair return on investment.	6/21/2021 4:00 PM
95	Intentional, strategic, and developed farming is what the VI needs in order to offer produce to the community in scale. Backyard farming is a great for the community and produce variety, but its not a solution which will offer quality produce at a reasonable price.	6/19/2021 12:29 PM

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96	Youth involvement I lacking and might be the most important part of everything	6/18/2021 1:43 AM
97	Yes, we need balanced representation on these planning initiatives	6/17/2021 10:31 PM
98	No	6/17/2021 9:59 PM
99	There are areas within the VI where one can grow flowers and trees that cannot feed humans but growing food is prohibited by the HOA. This should be looked into and addressed all land owners should have the right to grow their own food.	6/17/2021 9:44 PM
100	the plan needs to cover all aspects of agriculture, many farmers do not have adequate water supply others need access to heavy machinery to cut the grass, others need help picking the crops, these are some of the real needs of the farmers in St. Thomas	6/17/2021 9:42 PM
101	I believe that the VIDA, is on the right track of helping out seasoned farmers, what i want to tell them also is to focus on the new farmers who are very willing to give up every just to do farm, by givjng the a land of their own to cultivate, water system to use and those who are renting should gi e atleast give a financial support	6/17/2021 3:43 PM
102	Thought K-12 should become the focus of agriculture education the growth of the industry is impossible without farmer education, which should include guidance on the cooperative business model.	6/17/2021 12:28 PM
103	There is a need for marketing assistance I produce more than I can easily sell and while I have a good production of bananas I see that local stores import them	6/17/2021 12:21 PM
104	I would like to become more involved. Recently moved to the island and now have an acre of land. It is cleared but not good soil. Need help figuring out what would be best.	6/17/2021 12:17 PM
105	I hope that the plan is inclusive of the many organization and groups who can support the larger goal, including supporting innovative and disruptive strategies to improve the industry.	6/17/2021 12:06 PM
106	Yes	6/17/2021 11:53 AM
107	Keep us updated on everything...and open up more lines of communication between everyone...it's a village ting and it all ah we! Rastaman seh suh	6/17/2021 11:44 AM
108	Need financial incentives and assistance for farms of all types.	6/17/2021 11:35 AM
109	We have been NOT focusing on agriculture for too long it needs to be the MAIN focus. We can't live unless we eat, last I checked.	6/14/2021 3:29 PM
110	I hope that we examine models elsewhere, and learn from their successes/mistakes. Especially in locales with which we share attributes- tropical, developing, majority non-white, island dynamics, etc.	6/14/2021 3:28 PM
111	No	6/14/2021 1:49 PM
112	What can we do to support it!?	6/14/2021 8:31 AM
113	Initiatives should begin in schools and within the community to encourage greater participation in agriculture. Encourage citizens to grow their own food and provide a farmers market where bartering and sales of produce is encouraged and supported.	6/14/2021 4:58 AM
114	We need more access to free training. I only found out about the beekeepers training when it was booked up.	6/14/2021 4:15 AM
115	Please work on securing our future and food security. I am certainly not an expert but greater minds can surely come together and figure out how to feed our people without depending so much on the mainland. Even if we start with baby steps and make a 3, 5, 10 and 20 year goal for ourselves in expanding our local food supply that would be wonderful.	6/14/2021 12:14 AM
116	Very needed. Blessings on the outcome!	6/13/2021 12:51 PM
117	No	6/13/2021 5:12 AM
118	teaching in schools will help motivate parents as well.	6/12/2021 3:21 PM
119	None	6/11/2021 4:54 PM
120	I have not read it but we need to get serious. Systems need to be out in place to protect against droughts.	6/11/2021 4:43 PM

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121	No	6/11/2021 4:37 PM
122	This Plan should consider financial planning and technical sustainability relative to water, energy, and marketing efforts. Additionally, value-added products for export could support jobs. But, most importantly, none of this effort will matter when marketing assistance is below par. Current Department support has not moved one "new" pound of local meat into the local stores. The apparent pipelines set up are designed to make some livestock farmers fail. And, even when you get an audience to discuss innovative ways to move your agricultural product or to exit the farming business, you get empty promises and zero follow up. In fact, you are told that you are "harassing" the powers that be. Go figure!	6/8/2021 6:15 PM
123	Thanks for this effort	6/6/2021 12:16 AM
124	some sought of one on one conversation need to be had. Some ideas can't be conveyed like this or town hall meeting. Discussions needed too.	6/5/2021 5:33 PM
125	Consider supporting processing local feeds- freezing fresh fruits in season, provide freezer space during the year as the goods are sold. Dehydration and production of flours and sugars from local crops.	6/5/2021 10:07 AM
126	Support for the planting of fruit trees could take the form of attending a short class on how to plant and care for the tree followed by giving participants a free tree, and bags of good soil and organic fertilizer. Also as a public service, kids could provide free planting if the trees for those that would like the help.	6/5/2021 7:39 AM
127	Sustainable farming must be encourage as the climate continues to change. What happens if and when boats aren't able to deliver food to the island? Farms are critical but SO overlooked.	6/5/2021 6:52 AM
128	No	6/4/2021 7:26 PM
129	No, thank you	6/4/2021 7:51 AM
130	DO IT!! Food security is my one fear living in VI's.	6/4/2021 7:12 AM
131	Im a teacher at VIMSIA. Another teacher and I are finishing up a "sustainable farming and eco tourism" end session. We're nearing the end of it but future ag initiatives would fit in beautifully with this type of end session.	6/3/2021 6:22 PM
132	We have been planning on submitting a proposal for a text amendment to the VI Code. The existing code was adopted in the early 70s from a small town on the East Coast. It was supposed to encourage industrial development, but that has obviously failed (thank god) and we need to focus on making sure our community is able to feed itself, rather than rely on continuous shipments from the states. Currently, per the territorial planner, horticulture (aka gardening or growing in pots) is NOT permitted by right in most zones. If we were to allow people to establish "commercial" horticulture operations in residential areas, people can have additional income from a legal source. A large amount of food can be grown in a very small area with proper techniques, but only if there is a change to the VI zoning code!	6/3/2021 3:57 PM
133	I'd like to apply for a grant to help me buy stuff for my lil home garden,can you help me apply for a grant here on st.jonn?	6/3/2021 2:30 PM
134	Marijuana and hemp should be included in any agriculture plan.	6/3/2021 2:10 PM
135	Fishermen should be included since they are also important food producers and have regular markets where they sell to the public and restaurants.	6/2/2021 9:55 PM
136	33% of our landfill contains organic matter according to the the most recent waste characterization study, it is the highest amount of "waste" that could be diverted into compost. However we need land and will power to make this happen. Please consider a community large scale project for St. Thomas and St. Croix.	6/2/2021 8:48 PM
137	Please hurry to implement	5/31/2021 8:33 AM
138	The plan needs to include water source protection to ensure that the surrounding environment critical to our survival can flourish as well.	5/28/2021 11:23 AM
139	Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture needs to be reorganized to meet the needs of the farmers. Dept. of Agri .Probably with the UVI provide more assistance. Provide infrastructure for agriculture and Farmers to be successful. ie Capital,water, land prep(terraces). Variety trails, demonstrations plots. Value added processing.	5/27/2021 9:10 PM

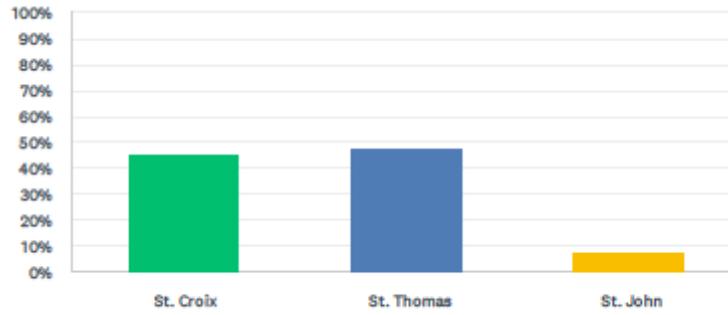
VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

140	No.	5/27/2021 6:00 PM
141	It is IMPERATIVE that the VI community become sustainable in building a healthier community & economy, to provide jobs, to become a major Caribbean world leader, to create an amazing agricultural tourism hub and to create wealthy farmers! THIS NEEDS TO BE DONE NOW	5/22/2021 7:43 AM
142	Should have happened sooner.	5/21/2021 6:40 AM
143	No	5/20/2021 5:40 PM
144	Female farmers do not get supported by the department of agriculture. They are all masculinist	5/20/2021 4:59 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q11 On which island do you reside?

Answered: 234 Skipped: 12

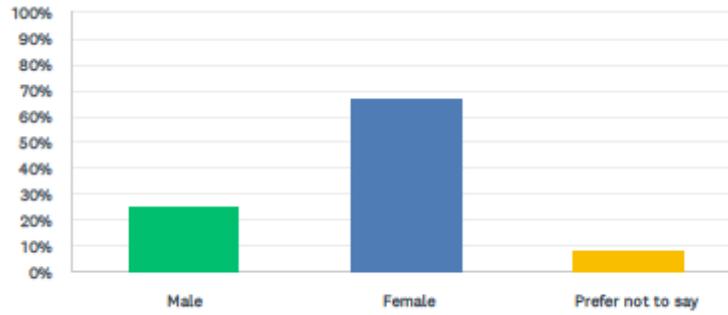


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
St. Croix	45.30%	106
St. Thomas	47.44%	111
St. John	7.26%	17
TOTAL		234

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

### Q14 What is your gender?

Answered: 233 Skipped: 13

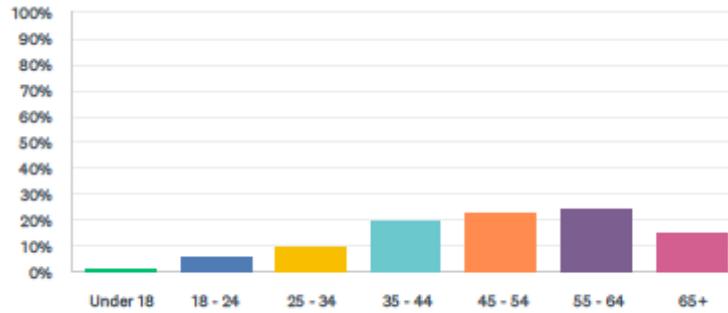


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	25.32%	59
Female	66.95%	156
Prefer not to say	7.73%	18
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>233</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q15 What is your age range?

Answered: 236 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	1.69%	4
18 - 24	5.93%	14
25 - 34	9.32%	22
35 - 44	19.92%	47
45 - 54	22.88%	54
55 - 64	25.00%	59
65+	15.25%	36
TOTAL		236

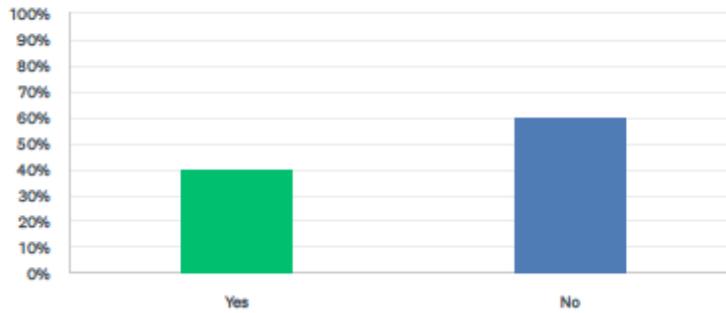
**Appendix D: Final Results of the VI Agricultural Plan Food Retailers and Restaurateurs Engagement Survey**

*(Omitted are pages 21-22 which contained personal information such as telephone numbers and email addresses)*

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q1 Are you aware of Act No. 8404 (Bill No. 33-0736), which the Legislature approved to develop a territorial agriculture plan?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

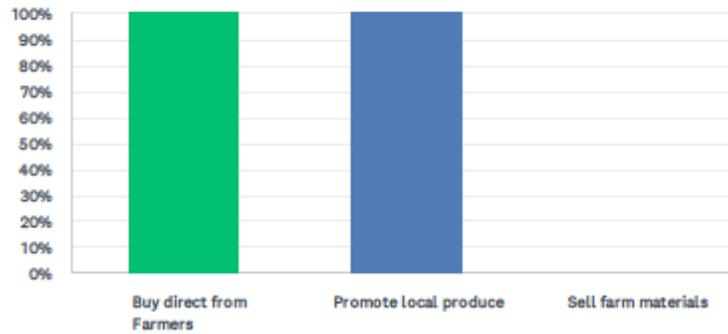


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	40.00%	2
No	60.00%	3
TOTAL		5

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q2 How does your establishment support local Farmers? (select all that applies)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 2



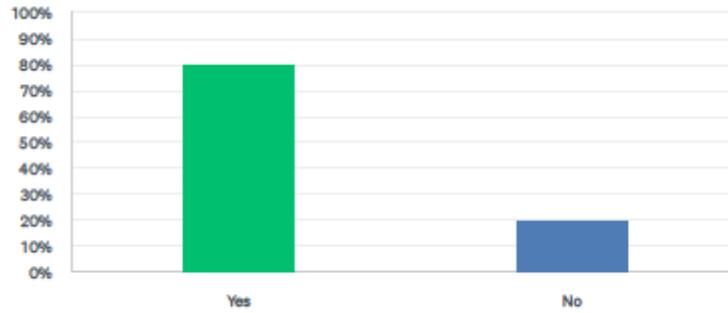
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Buy direct from Farmers	100.00% 3
Promote local produce	100.00% 3
Sell farm materials	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 3	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Business Advisory/Training Services	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
2	St. Thomas Cooks is a new business in the planning stage. When operational we will want locally produced vegetables and herbs, and locally caught fish.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

### Q3 Do you purchase any local agriculture?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



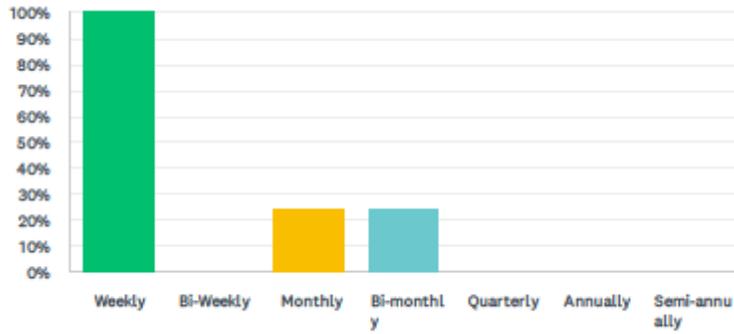
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	80.00%	4
No	20.00%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5</b>

#	WHY/WHY NOT?	DATE
1	I want to support growing locally.	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
2	Looks and tastes better	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
3	We will because it helps the local economy.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
4	no time	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

### Q4 If so, how regularly?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Weekly	100.00%	4
Bi-Weekly	0.00%	0
Monthly	25.00%	1
Bi-monthly	25.00%	1
Quarterly	0.00%	0
Annually	0.00%	0
Semi-annually	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 4		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q5 What is the quantity of local agriculture produce do you purchase?

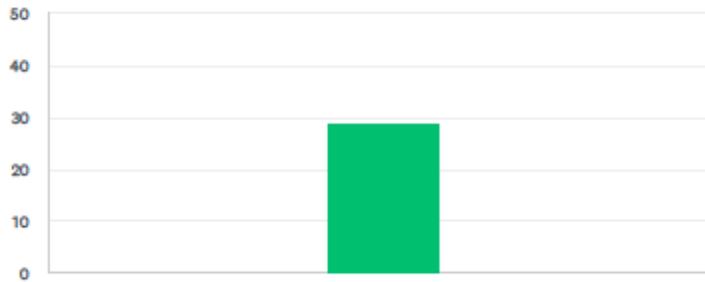
Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Depends on what we are purchasing and the need. Anywhere from small purchases up to cases of produce.	8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	Mangoes, lettuces, avocado, plantains, passionfruit.	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	1 - 3 lbs.	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	Do not know yet.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	As much as possible. I try to fill what I need each week at my cafe.	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q6 What percentage of your inventory is sourced from local farmers in the VI?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	29	144	5
Total Respondents: 5			
#			DATE
1	30		8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	10		8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	3		8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	76		8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	25		6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q7 What percentage of your inventory sourced from local farmers would you like to achieve?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

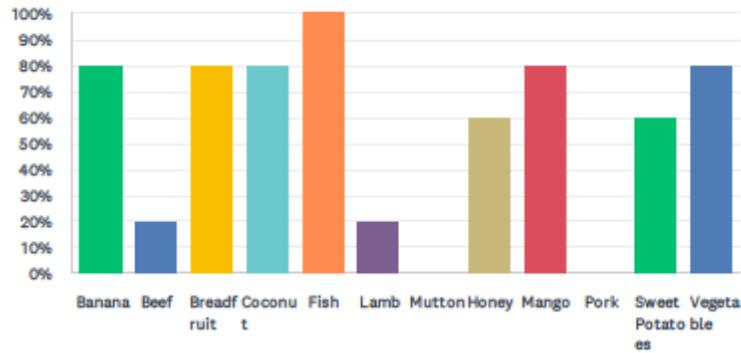


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	72	361	5
Total Respondents: 5			
#			DATE
1	75		8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	96		8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	50		8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	75		8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	65		6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q8 What local produce have you purchased, sold or prepared in your establishment? (select all that applies)

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



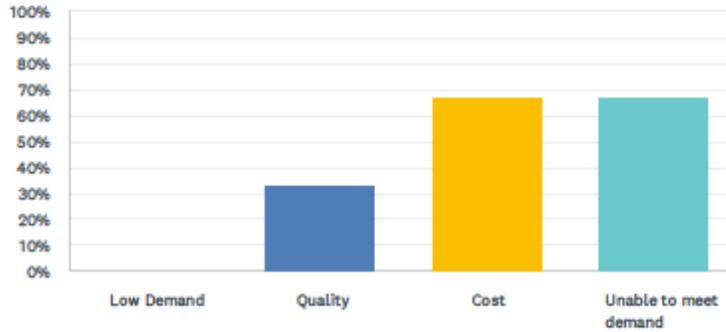
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Banana	80.00% 4
Beef	20.00% 1
Breadfruit	80.00% 4
Coconut	80.00% 4
Fish	100.00% 5
Lamb	20.00% 1
Mutton	0.00% 0
Honey	60.00% 3
Mango	80.00% 4
Pork	0.00% 0
Sweet Potatoes	60.00% 3
Vegetable	80.00% 4
Total Respondents: 5	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Lettuces	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
2	Herbs and chicken, if available.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q9 What makes it difficult for you to purchase and sell local farm produce or meals? (select all that applies)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Low Demand	0.00% 0
Quality	33.33% 1
Cost	66.67% 2
Unable to meet demand	66.67% 2
Total Respondents: 3	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Connecting with the sources and what is available.	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
2	does not apply	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
3	Not knowing the sources.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
4	My need changes from week to week, it's not a "standard order" type of purchase	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q10 What would encourage you to purchase or increase or initiate the purchase of local produce?

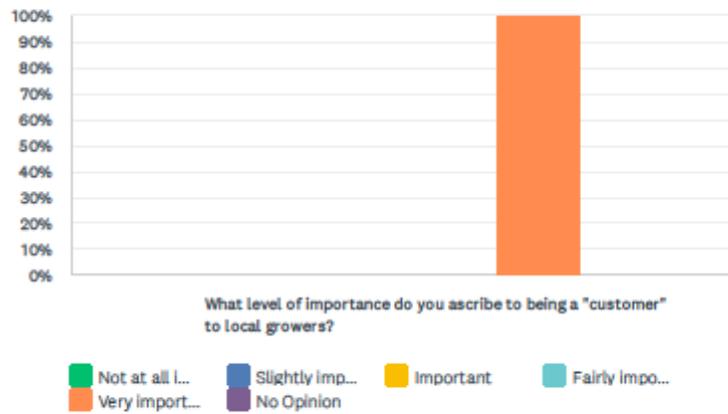
Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	consistency, cost, quality, quantity	8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	Finding the products and suppliers	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	More competition.	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	Being able to reliably find what I need, once or twice a week.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	a listing at the end of each week with what is available to order for the following week, so I can base my menus around availability, AHEAD of time, not try to make it work last minute	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q11 Using the scale of 0= Not at all important, to 5= Very Important, please rate the following aspects of the agriculture industry in the Virgin Islands on your business operations?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	FAIRLY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	NO OPINION	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
What level of importance do you ascribe to being a "customer" to local growers?	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	0.00% 0	5	5.00

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q12 What would motivate you to source more of your inventory locally?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	consistency, cost, quality, quantity	8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	Being able to connect with the farmers more. I struggle to find meats and dairy. Happy to learn about any product or farmer and support them	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	n/a	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	Reliable sources at competitive prices, and easy access to them.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	ordering ahead, delivery (when possible) reasonable cost	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q13 What challenges have you faced getting produce imported from off-island?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	cost and time	8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	Quality and consistent sourcing are big issues.	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	n/a	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	N/A	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	it's usually half alive. many times hard to find. it's not local	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q14 How concerned are you about a supply chain problem based on a natural occurrence (e.g., hurricane or a phenomenon that results in economic shock (e.g., strikes, business closure of a producer or shipper)?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	VERY! As an island community, we have the ability to be sustainable should tragedy strike, but right now we would feel the impact almost immediately.	8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	The pandemic has shown us that the islands need to be more self sustaining in agriculture	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	Even more concerned amidst the increasing development of COVID variants we're seeing here, today.	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	Disruption of the supply chain by whatever cause is not desirable.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	always a concern. usually, can't control it.	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

### Q15 What are the advantages to sourcing off-island?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Cost, knowing the product is regulated under FDA (and others), not everything is available or can grow on-island	8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	Finding a wider variety of ingredients.	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	That's a business model question and a good one. Depends at least on market conditions and business objectives.	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	Reliability	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	different product's that aren't available to grow here	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q16 What are the disadvantages to sourcing off-island?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Lack of economic growth for our farmers and the island; does not encourage local farming; the impact that shipping/fuel does on the environment and our oceans.	8/26/2021 11:26 AM
2	Its not true to where we live. Salmon should not be a staple fish on an island surrounded by fish.	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
3	Same as above.	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
4	Potential price fluctuations. Products not as fresh as locally grown.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	expense not eco friendly	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q17 Do you have any comments or questions regarding the USVI  
Agricultural Plan?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I hope it is crazy successful and we can drive a farm to table initiative.	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
2	I think a plan is imperative - I think it must make sense to the people and must be transparent.	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
3	Would like to receive more information about it.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
4	I do not.	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q18 What is the name of your establishment?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Island Edge Culinary	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
2	Small Business Development Center	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
3	St. Thomas Cooks, to open in early 2022.	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
4	Cafe Christine	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

### Q19 What is your address?

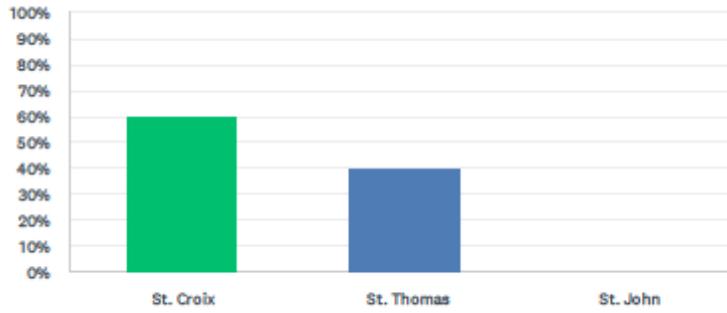
Answered: 4 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	6910 Great Bay; 00802	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
2	6300 Peter's Rest, Suite 4, Christiansted, VI 00820	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
3	P. O. Box 6696, St. Thomas, VI 00804	8/21/2021 12:38 PM
4	company street, christiansted	6/18/2021 10:48 AM

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q20 On which island is your business located?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0

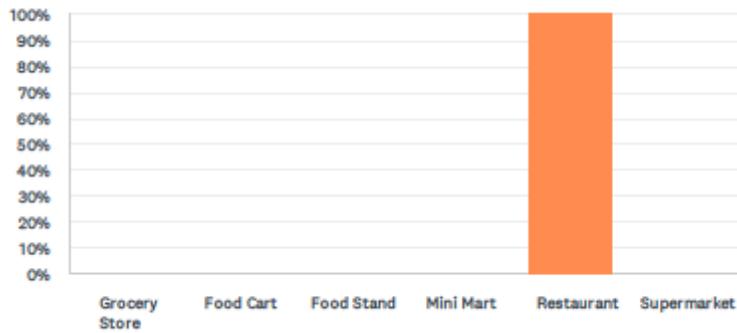


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
St. Croix	60.00% 3
St. Thomas	40.00% 2
St. John	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>

VIRGIN ISLANDS FOOD RETAILERS AND RESTAURATEURS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Q23 What type of food or retail industry do you operate?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 2

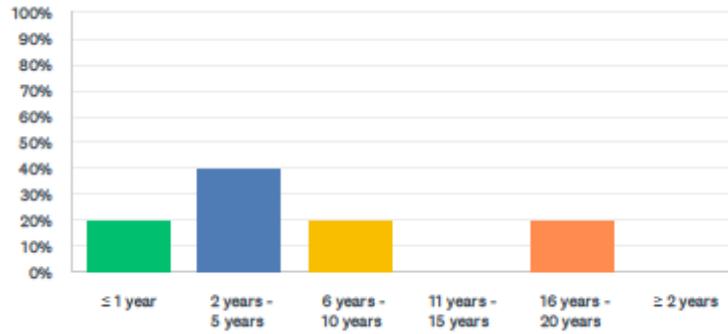


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Grocery Store	0.00% 0
Food Cart	0.00% 0
Food Stand	0.00% 0
Mini Mart	0.00% 0
Restaurant	100.00% 3
Supermarket	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 3	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Private chef and caterer	8/22/2021 10:36 PM
2	Business Advisory Services	8/21/2021 1:52 PM
3	Cooking school	8/21/2021 12:38 PM

### Q24 How long has your business been in operations?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
≤ 1 year	20.00%	1
2 years - 5 years	40.00%	2
6 years - 10 years	20.00%	1
11 years - 15 years	0.00%	0
16 years - 20 years	20.00%	1
≥ 2 years	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5</b>

Appendix E: Activities Flyer and Promotional Notices



## FOOD SECURITY TOWN HALL MEETING

The VI Agricultural Plan Task Force is pleased to present three island Town Hall Meetings, designed to engage Farmers & Stakeholders to determine their priorities and aid in the formulation of a comprehensive territory-wide agriculture plan.

Join us!

St. John

Monday, May 17, 2021  
Giff Hill School  
Upper Campus  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

St. Croix

Wednesday, May 19, 2021  
University of the Virgin Islands  
The Great Hall  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

St. Thomas

Thursday, June 3, 2021  
UVI Administration &  
Conference Center  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

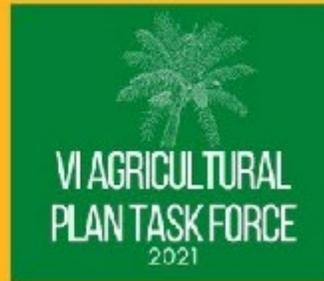
Register to join in-person: 340-693-1003

Join online via Zoom: [bit.ly/VIFarmers](https://bit.ly/VIFarmers)

✉ [agplan@doa.vi.gov](mailto:agplan@doa.vi.gov)

🌐 [doa.vi.gov/ag-plan](https://doa.vi.gov/ag-plan)

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY



## LET YOUR VOICES BE HEARD!

**We invite you to participate**

Food sovereignty is our right, and as we formulate a comprehensive Agricultural Plan outlined in Act 8404, your input will help ensure all future agricultural programs are community-led and support our needs!

This survey takes approximately 7 minutes to complete. Start now by scanning the QR code on your mobile devices or visit [bit.ly/VIAgComSurvey](https://bit.ly/VIAgComSurvey) (this link is case sensitive)



[agplan@doa.vi.gov](mailto:agplan@doa.vi.gov)



[doa.vi.gov/ag-plan](https://doa.vi.gov/ag-plan)



# FOOD SECURITY VIRTUAL TOWN HALL MEETING II

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



## Why are we meeting?

The Virgin Islands Agricultural Plan Task Force committed to Farmers and Stakeholders presents:

## Preliminary VI Agricultural Plan

This platform provides participants with the opportunity to share feedback and insights of the Plan recommendations on Food Security and Sovereignty within our Territory.

### JOIN ON-LINE VIA ZOOM

SCAN QR CODE



ZOOM MEETING ID

946 3309 6097

URL TO JOIN ONLINE

[Bit.ly/AGTownHall2](https://bit.ly/AGTownHall2)

### JOINING IN-PERSON?

- ▶ Seating will be limited due to COVID-19 restrictions
- ▶ Participants must appropriately wear a face covering during the duration of their time onsite
- ▶ To secure a seat, call 340-693-1003

For more information:

[agplan@doa.vi.gov](mailto:agplan@doa.vi.gov) | [doa.vi.gov/ag-plan](https://doa.vi.gov/ag-plan)

### In-Person Locations:

#### ST. CROIX

University of the Virgin Islands  
The Great Hall

#### ST. JOHN

Cleone H. Creque  
Legislative Conference Room

#### ST. THOMAS

University of the Virgin Islands  
Administration & Conference Ctr

**Appendix F: Food Security Town Hall Participants Comments and Questions**

**VI Agricultural Plan Task Force  
Food Security Town Hall Meeting - St. John  
17-May-21**

**PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS:**

1	<p>I was growing corn, beans and I've been doing more terracing again, which I was doing in 1974. I am on 1/3 of an acre but the deer eats everything, I'm going to put a fence and grow more. In the case of water, I get more dishwater. So, I have a couple of cups on all the plants there and they're coming around. Everybody got to be conservative about water and try to redirect shower water. However, you can use that day-to-day water for plants, and you'll get something to eat. Pigeon peas. Dasheen, Tanya, I'm working on this because I've got no idea if the food they shut down, I will be good for about two months.</p>
2	<p>I can say that no leaf leaves my yard, it is used for compost. The farmers in the State call leaves Brown Gold. If you look across the street from the junction in that little walkway by the baseball field, it's got leaves high for about 40 yards. We should be using all the leaves. I used to have some teenagers with big bags, six of them walking up and down the road, picking up leaves, taking from my yard, other people's yards. Also, I understand that the mango leaves make the best compost. Mango leaves can also be used for tea. You need to look on Google and see what lemongrass tea can be used for. It's good for more than just smell it. So, I'm Googling everything I'm putting in my mouth and my dog's mouth.</p>
3	<p>I really want to recognize all of you sitting here tonight. Those listening in to really need to take the opportunity very seriously to provide input to the plan. What of the thoughts I have is that although we've had times before to put a plan together, this is the first time, to my knowledge, that the actual initiative, was mandated by the legislature of the Virgin Islands, which means to me it should make a huge difference. That's a big message.</p>
4	<p>In the past we've had plans and the challenges expressed tonight are not new ones. One of the challenges for me has always been that the Department of Agriculture has generally not been funded sufficiently to address the issues we've heard tonight. One of my hopes, my expectation and I hope the panel agrees, is that because the mandate will come from the legislature of the Virgin Islands and I really love that is that in response to this mandate, there will be in response support to the Department of Agriculture and the whole industry or farming.</p>
5	<p>I was asked to serve of the Subcommittee on Education and Training. I'm happy to be here. I find that that's a very, very key area to focus on. What we discuss tonight or any other night there is not going to any sustaining of agriculture unless we have our youths involved; K-12 and beyond. So, we are taking our mandate in the subcommittee very, very seriously. I think the last thing on my mind is that I'm also pleased about the fact that this panel that has been put together, the task force, is inclusive, diverse. We've had agriculturist perhaps only task force, but we are so much more than just agricultural personnel. Island Green, with all its innovative ideas, needs to be on board. Dr. Harris from the School of Business, I am so pleased to have the school of business represented. One of the missing links for the past decade is that we have been looking and performing as a business. Through initiative, I expect to look at everything coming together, the technology, the business aspect and getting the youths involved, not just today but for many years to come.</p>

6	<p>Island Green wrote a grant about one year ago with regards to the Urban Agriculture, Innovation and Productivity Grant. We worked with former Senator Allison Degazon at the time on developing part of that grant. Something that came up was irrigation for farmers and access to how to effectively deal with pest. So, I was wondering if the School of Agriculture, can assist. One of the things the senator mentioned at the time was getting cisterns for farmers. If there was a grant or some way to get or give low cistern to farmers. That is one at was one issue that they had, that she had a solution that would help with the irrigation issue for them. So, it was just a comment from our grants. I can share with anybody else in the group as well. But that was something that stood out in my mind that I was like, that's something that probably even Island Green probably try to write a grant for or that or in conjunction with the School of Agriculture. So, if it's something that the school can do and then get with the farmers and say, do you have an irrigation issue, can we get you this cistern. This will be something huge. You know, even a thousand gallons or something like that. It's extremely hard to get water from what I've been told, and this grant will be extremely beneficial</p>
7	<p>Does the Department of Agriculture have regular communication to get information out to the farmers?</p>
8	<p>I would speak a little bit. I think that the main issue has to do with access to land to do agriculture. If you don't have the land in your family, or if you're not fortunate enough to be able to pay \$50K or 60K dollars for land, or \$100K for several acres, I think in the future and in trying to bring people into farming, somehow on St. John, where the park may have is approximately 60 percent, and then 40 percent, or maybe 50 percent of the land might be owned by four or five different families. So, the land that goes to the mass is minimal.</p>
9	<p>I grew up a little bit with farming because we had to do this. My dad went in the hills to farm, I don't know whose land it was he was planting on, but we had to do this to survive. It is not like that anymore and people are doing this because they want to do it. Yes, there must be a business viewpoint to it. My little education is in hotel and restaurant management, truly and therefore there must be a balance as to why anybody do anything or the incentive will not be there, I think. The water will always be a problem. Dry season comes the same time every year. You must plan for storage and to be able to disperse accordingly. That's not going to change people with people from the Virgin Islands. There is going to be a need to help farmers to be able to acquire property.</p>
10	<p>Commissioner, thank you for being here and thanks. One of the things is that we are from a restaurant and resort business, and we have a little garden ourselves and we get the produce from Josephine. But I have to say is that more than 50 percent of our produce come from the mainland, Florida. And I know I go to St. Croix and on my way back, my bag is full of cucumbers, anything I get from the Grantley Farm. Well, one of the challenges that I see from St. Croix is the transportation. There's no transportation. You know if we want to buy the fish from there no transportation. If the government and the Agriculture Department can do something maybe a discounted transportation, so we can get produce and the farmers can make more money, because this is a demand in St. John. So, I think that it is always a good promotion for the farmers where they can earn more, and St John can get the local produce. Unfortunately, there is not enough that's been done. So that's my small request. I think maybe to be consistent to ship maybe once a week.</p>
11	<p>Also, maybe something like, the Mango Melee Festival, a small version of that can happen in St. John. This can get the community involved, the kids involved, and they can see what the farming is. That's my request.</p>
12	<p>The history, our history is very important. One of the causes for the rebellion in 1733 was a serious drought. The people were in fear of losing their lives because of the drought. In 1990, 30 years ago, anybody here who was only 5 or 10 years old, maybe don't remember NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, before NAFTA, we were getting boats here from all over the Caribbean and NAFTA cut that out.</p>

**VI Agricultural Plan Task Force  
Food Security Town Hall Meeting - St. Croix  
19-May-21**

**PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS:**

1	<p>Better late than never that we are here tasked with developing a territorial agricultural plan. I have quite a bit to say, but regarding the people within this forum, I'm going to limit myself to just one currently. And that is basically what has been impeding our development of our industry for quite some time. And that is our agency that's responsible for the development of the industry. We often don't talk about farmers, but we need to talk of a broader part, which is an agricultural industry, and the Department of Agriculture is responsible for the development of the industry. What I would like to see this task force begin to do is look at the department and all the divisions that was put in place for the purpose of enhancing, supporting, and having food security, the number one. By and large, all of this should be food first, and I'm hearing that from the task force, which I am very pleased with. Now we look at it. But what I'm trying to get at is that the Department of Agriculture needs to be redeveloped, restructured, revamped. The entire department needs to be overlooked in a way that is going to meet the needs going forward of the agriculture industry in the territory, not just delivering water, not just the abattoir and not just doing some seedlings, because at this point, this is where the Department of Agriculture has been boiled down to this and this is not a one-time thing that happened, but rather it has happened over a period of time. And I would say in the last 50 years and today we have the lowest support, even though there are farmers who are or individuals who are trying to get into the industry, they are only thinking of farming, and which is the base of the development of the industry.</p>
2	<p>If we look at every division within the Department of Agriculture there for a specific purpose, one of those divisions that are not there presently is soil and water conservation that has been eliminated approximately 12 years ago. And that is quite needed so that we can begin to look at how to access more water and to assist those farmers even within a specific area, how they can get access to water, and the development and the development of the soil to raise the livestock or for food for proper production. Now, today, the department does not have an agronomist, for everyone who won't understand what an agronomist is, an agronomist is an individual who is engaged in the development of food for livestock and human. So, you're talking about an individual who will understand how to grow food presently today. Also, the department does not have a hockey culture which makes it difficult for any farmer who is growing crops to come to the department and make it possible to ask specific questions. There's no entomologist at the department either. All of this is used from the university. The university itself is strong in its staffing and that's another subject. But I'm going to stick to the department. There's no plant pathologist. We talk about disease, pests, and the entomologist. There's none of that during our dry season.</p>
3	<p>Although I'm a farmer here in St. Croix and I'm also have a doctorate in forestry and natural resources from Georgia, where I studied natural resource, recreation, and tourism with a focus on agroecology and heritage of the Virgin Islands. And I'm first, I'm just happy that there is the program. So, congratulations on that. And I wanted to ask, sir, is your question about what can the government do?</p>
4	<p>We need to address the realm of water conservation and soil conservation. The fact that our trees are not respected, and our trees are not treasured. Without trees, without the canopy, we cannot have water conservation at its purest form. We cannot have soil conservation in its purest form.</p>

5	<p>We have an advantage with certain fungus and moles that may grow among plants but during the rainy season for most farmers, we want to know why the plants are not surviving. The weeds are so there is no plant pathologist at all. There is no one involved in the department to even at a university concerning plant pathology. In addition, we are looking for a robust livestock industry. There is no livestock, animal husbandry to create or to maintain a standard of livestock that is available that could be available for community. Right now, the department needs to look at not just farmers, but how it can also serve its community. It needs to do a better outreach than it's doing presently for us to really encompass the. Pertaining to health, social and economic development in the past, we have seen. Where the Department of Agriculture is always at the bottom of the totem pole helps. Public safety and education have always taken front seat and the Department of Agriculture or Agriculture has taken a back seat. Agriculture is public, safety is health and is education, everything that we do is a derivative of the agricultural industry. What we need to look at? We are being maintained, sustained by other agriculture. So, our income and our economic base is based on what's coming in. We need to put a twist on that. If we can revamp and develop the Department of Agriculture to look at food first and to create an economic and social development for which there. So, I'm hoping that in the task force that this will be forefront and prominent in the development of the plan.</p>
6	<p>I want to thank the university again for this town hall. It's important that we have town hall meetings that are going to be effective. A hurdle is how this was all captured in the media. I'm included on efforts for agriculture and I'm the chairman of the Education Committee. So, what I want to add to this discussion is how we can bring the requisite focus on the issue of education. How do we really look at developing the ecosystem of engaging of education? The Career Education Board? I served on the board. We have just had a meeting today. And again, I mention that because those are the two board of Education that are responsible by statute for the compilation of curriculum so that as we encourage students to pursue fields of agriculture, that they can get additional information and explore what we're learning. And we're challenged on this account on a number of areas where right now, as we speak in our schools, we don't have a comprehensive K-12 agricultural curriculum. We have teachers who are doing the best that they have. But there's no confidence on that. This why bring people to work on committee hearings and have meetings is important. And I'm going to try my best to get to bring that and to the performance. The farmers will really be being a part of that process so they can give us information in terms of the workforce development.</p>
7	<p>A few things that I want to mention is what we do at the farm. One of the main things that Mr. Nelson mentioned is a school program. And so, we have real contracts with the government here to deliver over 12 different fruits and vegetables, greens. We work with about 15 to 20 different farmers, not sourcing those. And from our fields, there are some specific things that are related to the government process. It's one of those is the contracting that just explained it to the categories of farm to school within the categories that provide procurement there and a separate section from the grocery store. They have lettuce from a large supplier, and they have letters from farm to school program, which is intended to be a market for local farmers, competitors. But that's what we've seen at times, is that some of them are awarded to importers. Even when we had a bill that was lower amount and that has been an issue, for stuff that's imported, not from the farms, and we could supply that. So, it's been it's resulted in some turbulence in the market, which some of us had invested to expand our operations based on supplying both districts in the territory.</p>
8	<p>This is happening haphazardly, and it needs to be addressed where those lands are under complete control of the Department of Agriculture, where the commissioner is the one that is responsible for extending and managing the land. One of the things that's been happening over the last 20 years is that lands are being pulled away from the department, especially in the last six years. Land have been just arbitrarily taken out state then by quitclaim that the people of the Virgin Islands have no use for this land.</p>

9	<p>I think here in the islands, one of the main things is just infiltration within the agricultural markets of imported crops. You see it at certain farm stands and a lot of people don't know, which is fine. And I just believe that they should be honest, especially if it's the government facility where they're supposed to only have locally grown crops at the market is if the customer would just have a way of knowing that it's from St. Lucia or from St. Croix that we're maybe not having in the market. But it's just this importation issue, I think, where it confuses customers and that is the primary school program at another level, because at the end of the day, for the small farms to succeed, we have to be a niche of the Virgin Islands, locally produced food that is really respected and protected by our government to help protect the integrity of the local, locally produced market in a lot of ways. And I think just thought about how can I protect the market integrity in the market so that another farmer's Oprah isn't competing with that is imported and brought on a thousand-acre farm in Florida? It happens, but just that general thinking would be helpful in any way of any legislation or anything that's happening to protect us is that nothing is registry farmer, certified organic farmer, the only certified organic farmer. But that's another marketing niche that we want to fill.</p>
10	<p>We hardly hear of any benefits to being organic because it's such a very strong market and then a small market here. So, the farmers that they're beginning to use organics needs support and organic growers, even if they're not certified organic. A lot of people want organic slips like plants to plant and want to know that it's not polluting or any of that. My plans are that we can buy available organic and that gets into all materials. We all know that everything to ship here is more expensive. Farming is such a marginal business. We also need support, not just bulk buying or just making things more available and more affordable for farmers. Now, the thing is the excise tax we're supposed to pay for. I think this needs to be a more streamlined process. If there's any way that there can be more sourcing of materials like we had the hurricane, we all needed fencing. None of us could get fencing. It's hard to get posts. And I know that the commissioner and others fought hard to try to get exposure. There are other things going on out of the control department, agriculture. But this is an example of having like fencing and those kind of things on hand for storms that we can rebuild and must be able to get just the materials around so that we can get our animals away from the crops and off the roads.</p>
11	<p>A lot of people couldn't get fancy materials here, and we had grant programs to pay for it. There were federal programs, but you could not even get materials for us. We had eight thousand feet of fencing that we never could accomplish because we couldn't get materials so effective. So that's another thing. And I think overall, I think agritourism is something that is really underdeveloped here in a huge way. In my research, that is my doctoral dissertation was on the heritage, some heritage tourism in the Virgin Islands, people who are extremely interested in the heritage and learning about agriculture. And that's a great way Sankari becomes a national heritage area, which is basically asking for some legislation that might happen. We need the farms ready to provide a part of the tours and all of that. A lot of times we're not making a lot of the crops, but we do have to adjust over time. We have educational programs. We have food events at the farm that really value add the experience of the farm. And I think that in a lot of ways that can be further supported by the government and programs.</p>
12	<p>I just wanted to add my voice in support of those who are interested in soil and water conservation efforts at higher levels. Some of the research that I'm engaged in is directly related to that. And so, one thing that I've got, its early stages, so not many results yet, but it's the kind of thing that it would be very helpful for us in research to have partners in government or elsewhere or in other institutions to share our results with so that they can be helpful and have interface with policymakers. Farmers, because those are the two kind of target groups for agricultural research usually, so having that kind of relationship, I think it's across the board helpful, but specifically from my research, soil and water would be I would like to see that as well.</p>
13	<p>I prefer not to be online. However, it is very important that the development of the industry also have a plan for the small homebased grower and how they can be an asset to the industry. Currently, a lot of food is grown by back yard "farmers" and they should not be excluded from the process.</p>

14	<p>I'm quite pleased that there's been this team type approach to agriculture here in the Virgin Islands and after what we went through with the pandemic, we're still going through. But during that time, we started realizing how important it is to be able to grow some of your food. And I mean, we started looking at nuts we're doing in our backyard, so to speak, the larger, acreage but things like that where will we store it. Who's going to buy it now that we can't go to the store. So, we must look back at these and start bringing them out. My grandfather my grandfather was a farmer, my uncle. I am constantly talking with a cousin of mine that's in farming but what's happening is that everyone's obviously grown and not interested. I just heard from the senator here that's in charge of the. That funded pre-K from kindergarten that we can start bringing some of these young children to become involved in agriculture, and I think that too many times to they think of agriculture is no hope and they don't want to dig in the soil or feels that's what agriculture is. Really, when you look at the technology that's out there, the science portion of it, and realizing that more and more while we're pushing, you know, someone says, well, I don't want to go into agriculture because I don't want to have to be in the hot sun now. But you know when you start thinking of aquaponics and so forth, they may like it.</p>
15	<p>There are other opportunities, but who takes care of those electronics that runs the aquaponics plant? So, if we can change the mindset of the other before they get into high school, to think that agriculture is not all about this hard work, and we push it into their minds, that can take care of the machinery. The new machinery makes it easier for the farmers to that. A lot of times we talk about IT people that reads the weather stations are based on science, technology that helps the farmers. So, I think if you look at it more comprehensively as far as an educational standpoint, that I think they'll kind of give us some guidance as to where we need to be. Also, how we look at maybe investing in bringing some of these youth to the actual farms. We need to commit to have to get high schools, your community service, maybe, you know, you started around at least once in the year, you go to a farmer's field trip.</p>
16	<p>I think there's one thing that needs to be addressed because it is an impediment especially to those farmers like myself who want government leased land and that is basically acquiring a lease to pay for your operation, and that is that is necessary if the farm is going to any lending institutions, including USDA, we have the procurement process which has oftentimes been stymied by the Department of Agriculture. What I would like to suggest is that land presently under the stewardship of the Department of Agriculture, be set aside for the development of the industry. Notwithstanding the procurement laws of the Virgin Islands, that those land be solely managed by the Department of Agriculture. It gives the department the ability to have its own land management team and that team could determine and assist farmers in some of the things that they do need and ways of implementing soil and water conservation, grazing patterns and for the purpose of for disasters. Presently, the department has one individual, one individual, and that individual got to cover two thousand acres and there is no proper land management development that is within the department itself.</p>
17	<p>I'm really interested in the Department of Agriculture's plans for developing community gardens. I think it would be a great way to get the youth involved and get interested from a young age and get people of all ages in the community involved with farming and all stages of farming. I have my eye on a piece of land that the government owns in boloney that I'm really wanting to partner with people on to create a community garden. It's right at the entrance to the projects in boloney, and I think it would be great to foster community and get people involved and get people doing something positive with their time. And I'm hoping that the Department of Agriculture, this plan will include ways to get the community involved in community gardens and hopefully start training the youth of today to be the farmers of tomorrow. I'm also interested in what the department is planning to do with hemp production, with the growing of hemp and the manufacturing of hemp. I think that would be a really great opportunity for us to develop that market and be able to produce products right here in the Virgin Islands and export them.</p>

18	<p>There are a lot of homeowners or residents who have plants or orchards within the backyard. That is a vital resource that can be added to the Plan and the food security in the territory. The University of the Virgin Islands has been pushing backyard gardens for some time, and most of these individuals were building homes or owners of land or residents have engaged themselves in planting fruit trees, mangoes, avocado, bread, nut, you name it. We need to look at how they can be assisted in getting those products into the market. Whether they are through the marketing division where they are graded and standardized to meet the needs of the community. One of the things I think the task force should look at is being involved with the Bureau of Economic Research, our local economic research, because we'll probably get a better picture of the imports that we have and how we can curtail those things that are grown by our farmers over a period. Now, I am one that is not expecting this task force to create a plan that is going to be so stringent that it cannot happen and what can happen over a period or in phases. So, it's important that we know, what the task force will look at. Partnering itself with economic research to get the input on imports or exports or those things that could really affect the social economic development of the industry and the impact of it once the industry is up and running over a period.</p>
19	<p>A part of the plan must include a systemic approach to water catchment and the ability to distribute the water to farmers equitably</p>
20	<p>Very reason for reestablishing the soil and water conservation division.</p>
21	<p>Mr. Browne has just expressed my concern. I fully agree. This must be addressed going forward. As a matter of fact, the Ag plan should perhaps include means of redressing the traditional loss of land from the VIDA's land bank for farming.</p>
22	<p>Good evening, I do not wish to speak; however, I would like to comment on a hurdle I have noticed facing new farmers. It's difficult to find information online. What services are provided for licensed farmers in the territory? Resources for funding from Federal, Local, and private organizations. Business plan development. Also, the steps for obtaining land for agricultural purposes.</p>
23	<p>Is stable energy being a component of this plan?</p>
24	<p>Good evening, Jackson Rocques-Torcelero, information for federal, local, and private resources are shared via email and our USVI Farming Community list.</p>

**VI Agricultural Plan Task Force**  
**Food Security Town Hall Meeting - St. Thomas**  
**3-Jun-21**

**PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS:**

1	My sister and I love far more and I'm online. One of the biggest major problems is Florida. But that is being dealt with. And I want to say thank you. And it is it has gotten better. I also needed water catchments, tanks, and deep-water irrigation. I'll probably need more after I get all that.
2	We need some serious attention to making sustainable water consistently. Let's rethink what we are looking to make. We live on an island. We shouldn't even be discussing the role of. It really comes from the government.
3	Have been farming since 1981. If you go back to the year, I was doing it longer. And that was because then we had water when I first started. But I didn't have no more than 800 feet into the trail. There is roughly six thousand gallons of water, I bought three one-thousand-gallon tanks every three-to-five-gallon tanks. Back then half of the year of what I'm paying now if I had the same amount of water. I'd make like three thousand dollars a week now it's about thousand dollars. Down in front of me, there's 50 mango trees and thirty-six feet of nothing but lemongrass. And so, the rain literally rolls into this grass and no catchment. The rainfall is only now beginning to pick up a little bit, but we have there need to be a dam to catch the water. It is important to keep track of keeping things normal. The next thing is that the department of agriculture must be regulated where farmers can get water from there and make sure that all that stuff is cut off to meet the dams. There's no money to pay for all these years back. The line down here is now about half.
4	You must try to figure out how to use the money to buy local. Personally, I raise chicken for myself, however it is on a small scale. There is much larger significance this year than last year. And so, this is a little bit about one of the things that I wanted to mention was that. I want to be able to give you good quality input and feedback. And that's what one of the things that I would like to happen is I would like to see what have been already drafted in the Plan? What are the plans that you have already to see what has already been done? How many plans are there across your desk at the Department of Agriculture or at the University. That would be very helpful to know what has been done, what hasn't worked and what has worked on those; the big part of it. Is this going to be an effective plan or is this simply another waste of our time? One of the things that I also wanted to point out is that I feel like I've been farming for about years, not professionally, but by 2021 with all these farmers and myself, I am one of the young farmers here. Having seen what all these professional farmers go through here, where is the profit, seeing these farmers struggle still with some of the same problems on all these islands and seeing nothing being done by 2021 after these farmers have been through droughts, hurricanes, a pandemic by 2020. What I expect Department of Agriculture to have already been an expert in all their problems. And so, at this point, I would love to see some results, see some input from what has been done and where we're headed, where have we seen solutions already rolled out. So, one thing is some basic communication would be good to have just the basic communication that one farmer with the idea that this is happening today to call the Department of Agriculture today, and they said it was a sanitation meeting. A professional commercial farmer in St. Thomas just got the basic communication for us to help you with this Town Hall.

	<p>Another thing that I wanted to mention, I would love to be able to get feedback some more as time goes on and this is the only chance I have. One of the things that I do feel is the need to help the beginning farmers market their produce. I interact with a lot of young people want to get into farming; however, all the problems exist with getting into it as well. And one of the things that is the problem, as you know, is access to farmland and water. And so, I just want you to put into perspective for us to make a living as a young farmer to date in 2020, let's say I have a salary of 60 thousand dollars for me to make fifty thousand dollars in profits, I must sell crop tomatoes of about 20 thousand pounds. So, we need a program like this that's going to really go someplace and give the proper initiative with taking care of our families and paying attention to our problems. What would I like to know is how much farmland has been lost over the past couple of decades? One of the things I would love to see is I'm here for the farmer that sells. You take care of the farmer. They will take care of the farm. A lot of us are uninsured. A lot of us have student debt. Farming should be a student debt forgivable profession. And so that's another thing is it would also be a really good idea. That would be getting farmers and the markets to be good, to help our consumers have more education, to purchase local every time from hospitals to schools should be following through on their commitments that they have promised to buy local. And so that's just a few of my input.</p>
5	<p>First, let me congratulate both the Department of Agriculture and the. University of the Virgin Islands, for, first, taking on the task of attempting to prepare this agriculture plan for the territory. My request on behalf of all of us is that perhaps if what can be extended to us as your students in the public being that you all are educators, you President Hall, an educator, and Commissioner Nelson is an educator, so if you can help us to understand what an agricultural plan is. What I'm hoping is, in fact an outline of what is being considered as an agriculture development plan. That and again, with the background that President Hall you have in economics and. Commissioner Nelson has an accounting that, again, it would also be considered highly of an Economic Development Plan for agriculture. If you can share with us perhaps what the Table of Contents would be, the items that would be highlighted in the Table of Contents of an agriculture plan, what would be some of the subject matters that would be addressed in this agriculture plan? And if I may be so presumptive to say, this is an Agriculture Economic Development Plan. So, what would the subject matter and disciplines be mentioned and addressed in such a plan in the table of contents of such a document and plan? Thank you very much.</p>
6	<p>Just recently that a lot of people were out here about water, and they were all over the mountain and they passed right by the farm, and they didn't say why. I call them down to the farm and showed them the issue because each farmer was part of that.</p>
7	<p>We have a non-profit agricultural organization, like what we started in the early 70s, like 1973 - 74. We became legal 20 years later, like 1994, because of all the issues and pressure was put on the government. So, it is not like this was a policy where water was open, and we just received all the farmers know we should have irrigation where we are. We are doing the same thing what have done 23 years ago. We've been here, I said from the early 70s, fighting and struggling to develop this industry, this agriculture industry at some time. But mostly it's a struggle our government never really committed to develop this industry. And it's yet to be proven. You may give us a little something occasionally, but never really talks to this industry. We need development and money to develop large infrastructure that everybody is talking about. They want to take money, money to build and maintain. They need a bill that will insist on pumps piping, money to properly staff the Department of Agriculture, money to get the proper equipment, the trucks, and the truckloads and all those. All these things cost money. So, a few years back, we go through an initiative up one percent of the budget, 100 percent of the budget to fund the Department of Agriculture. But this one percent for the Department of Agriculture, eventually passed, partially got passed this year. Last year, our annual income fell before the pandemic. Another big request I have is Agriculture needs to allow farmers to build cisterns on their farms.</p>

8	<p>Historically, the Virgin Islands are known for study after study and hired consultants and consulting firms and spend millions of dollars. I would like a commitment that would continue regardless of who's in the government house. I would like to see a plan that continues, and politics is less valuable because that's one of our biggest problems. We have started a program, but because you don't like who in charge the programs are scrapped. You just heard of many years of institutional knowledge. We need the knowledge to stay there, and we need politics to be so focused if we've got a commitment that these plans will stay regardless of who's in charge. I would also like to see more development in the schools. I am very, very happy to now see our university involved in agriculture. That's been long overdue. We also need to when you look at the 20 40 plans, they're talking about a lot of industries. UVI used to have a Tilapia farming but not anymore. Now they're moving backwards, a lot of Agriculture products are there and that type of farming, but to not farmers. I'd like to see a plan where we train our farmers. It's the type of agricultural industry that we would like, not just going outside. Education is very, very important. It's sad to see that we can spend so much money, as you say, with the palm trees and beautify the waterfront is nice. But if we could equally do the same thing in the farming industry. So, what this plan needs are to be continuous. Stop spending lots of money, hiring consultants, hiring teams, paying for it, and then put the plan on the shelf. Bring up the youths in the industry. We need people, tax consultants or professionals who can do the taxes for the farmers, people who can work out a business plan, so they have things that they are being done, but we'd like to see more of is key communication. Communication, every single day. We hear messages about covid, where they're doing all the testing. Well, we would like to equally have these messages from the Department of Agriculture. Thank you.</p>
9	<p>To increase their education. It follows that we have now and the families. Thankfully, in the college area, but also the elementary schools, junior high school, and high school, so we'll have to replace. Bring up we need people also a related industry. We need people, tax consultants or professionals who can do the taxes for the farmers, people who can work out a business plan, so they have things that they are being done, but. We'd like to see more it and key communication. Communication, every single day, we hear messages about covid, where they're doing all the testing. What you need to do is take the vaccine. Well, we would like to equally have these messages for the Department of Agriculture. Thank you.</p>
11	<p>It seemed to me that the government is sabotaging agriculture. You need to have more respect for the families. They need to have more respect for legal food. I hope that this meeting will be able to do something to help us because it's a lot of talk for years. The government needs to fix the reservoir that the farmers. There is a Market Square and there is not a bathroom and still the farmers are charged to be there. There's no sink to wash hands during this pandemic time. The Fire Department was giving away 2 fire trucks and the department of agriculture asked for one and they have one already and it needs to go to We Grow Food. Requesting that the government give free water. There should never be a plan unless it involves the farmers. There are hardly any coconut trees; however, there needs to be a law that any trees plant should be fruit trees. Whatever the Farmers asked for, it should be given.</p>
12	<p>I'm also glad to see that there is a mandate for business models. And I wanted to support the cooperative model for our farmers to work collaboratively. And I think almost every farmer in the Virgin Islands would be classified as a small farm and until we have the educational support and infrastructure that will help us to build cooperatives, we can see that that is one of the business models that we supported. The quality. I know the CES has been doing workshops and support that, I'd like to see that be able to go the next step.</p>
13	<p>Will the plan draft be available for public review before finalizing?</p>

14	How does a younger person not established as a farmer enter the agricultural industry? Are programs available to introduce the younger generation to farming?
15	I would like to see an updated USGS map of our aquifers and see more wells...more ponds will help as well....and regular maintenance of any water infrastructure is critical
16	Please clean and clear all of the existing water catchments on the hillsides for use, including the cisterns.
17	No farmers and no community partners. ok!
18	Will already existing food and farm-related projects be included in your plan?
19	Can we work with landscapers and homeowners to allow land use by farmers... perhaps a tax break? Rather than planting ornamentals, landscapers can mix in food plants. Also, homeowners can get royalties for the use of their land. I have seen this around, but I don't know if there is a governmental policy around this.
20	We have Act 7532 and Act 7162 that mandate k-12 curriculum that needs to be funded
21	I would like to recommend the Task Force look at the following document which takes a holistic view of the food system in preparation for the plan. <a href="https://living-future.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/LFC-1_0_v06.pdf">https://living-future.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/LFC-1_0_v06.pdf</a>
22	Question:/Comment VI Agricultural Plan needs: (1) agricultural census, who is farming, profile, what is being produced, the value of marketing production, 2: soil testing 3: water mapping/water management plan; 3: Educational Programs—need school curriculum that includes agriculture; 4. Beefed up Extension Services 5: Access to Credit; 6. Promotion of Hydroponics/ Aquaponics/Mariculture/ Greenhouse/Vertical Farming. 7. Marketing Plan—Linking Farmers to Restaurants/Hotels/Institutions (schools, prisons, hospital). This Commission is too government top-heavy, need more farmers/ agribusinesses/ supermarket types/ technical experts
22	Without a proper water supply for farmers, no plan will ever work regardless of how well it is written.
23	There should be a massive marketing campaign on educating the benefits of local organic on wellbeing, health, and the environment... and this should be taught in schools... and we need to ensure the food is available for sale... grocery stores need to be included - there needs to be ACCESS to the food (in terms of affordability and availability).
24	How many of the subgroups include existing food and farm organizations?
25	If we had funding for solar power, we could do more indoor hydroponics... Sugar Brown Farms in Wintberg has an incredible model for this... VERTICAL growth is huge for space considerations.
26	Agree water is an issue but must discuss and focus on desalinating water cheaply—with solar/wind renewable energy (desalinating water with fossil fuels is not economical) needs to push drip irrigation systems and hydroponics/aquaponics to conserve water. Rainfall agriculture is not sustainable in an environment where climate change is occurring—facing more irregular rainfall and more frequent droughts.

28	Some of the information you are requesting may be available at <a href="https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/wp-content/uploads/2020-Final-USVI-Snapshot_red.pdf">https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/wp-content/uploads/2020-Final-USVI-Snapshot_red.pdf</a>
29	If we grow food, Virgin Islands farmers alliance, Virgin Islands good food, island food security or St. Croix farmers in action on a subcommittee
30	What kind of communication is the department of agriculture having with the federal government to fund agriculture in the Virgin Islands?
31	Thank you, Mark, for sharing. we also have a full food system assessment that is available
32	There is also a USDA ag census
33	I have visited the agriculture department in estate Dorothea and to tell you the truth, the place looks like an abandoned place. What came to mind is that the Virgin Islands are in no way serious about agriculture. PERIOD
34	Can the government designate the abandoned grocery store building by the airport to indoor vertical hydroponics growing? We would need solar... it could source all the greens for restaurants, charter boats and grocery stores.
35	<a href="https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/usvi.pdf">@Mark Wenner, this is the latest available USDA Ag Census https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/usvi.pdf</a>
36	We waste over 31% of organic materials that is not being diverted from our landfill according to the most recent waste characterization study presented at the UVI Green Technology Center web series on Sustainable Materials Management. What is the GOVI doing to increase the use of composting by back yard farmers and homeowners? There is a 2-million-dollar grant offered to farmers for community composting, but it needs the support by the government with land and the participation of the pubic. Let's not waste our organic materials and produce rich organic compost for our farmers and back yard gardeners!
37	<a href="https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/beginning-farmers-and-ranchers-loans/index?">Does the the VI Ag De provide support to farmers in completing the funding packages from USDA at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/beginning-farmers-and-ranchers-loans/index?</a>
38	We can pass a law to compost... especially for restaurants... if farmers had access to that compost, our crops would benefit immensely. And then education about composting at home is huge too. Teaching children at school to separate and then use their compost for a school garden.
39	That's different to local funding which the law requires.
40	Hydroponic and aquaponic farming is not the future but it is now.
41	How about planting food throughout the old golf course?
42	We have the education; we have the degree however it's the lack of experience that prevents us from getting in
43	The water plant can produce a lot more water if the distribution pipes were in place to the farmers.... perhaps we can add a small surcharge on the water price to subsidize the water delivery to Bordeaux farmers?

44	The government of the Virgin Islands is not serious about developing agriculture. There are islands with less resources that have a more robust agriculture sector.
45	Shouldn't Bordeaux have a designated pipeline rather than trucking?
46	And Agriculture work with WAPA to run under sea portable water lines towards Bordeaux like the water line that is ran to St. John.
47	Can we incentivize more backyard gardens... for full food security a much larger population needs to be involved?
48	<a href="http://livingbuilding.gatech.edu/place-petal">Another recommendation for the plan is that new buildings incorporate land for urban agriculture</a> <a href="http://livingbuilding.gatech.edu/place-petal">http://livingbuilding.gatech.edu/place-petal</a>
49	We can get a water reuse treatment component added to the wastewater.
50	Access to local fresh produce for all VI residents at a fair price should be a top priority. We need to support our farmers.
51	Sugar Brown Farms here. Thank you for holding this forum. We appreciate your time. We will email our thoughts, plans, and sustainability practices to you. Upfront costs for funding have been a huge issue for us as landowners and minorities. Our email is <a href="mailto:sugarbrownfarms@gmail.com">sugarbrownfarms@gmail.com</a> . Mike & Eron
52	We have Advisory committee now
53	This won't work if it is not centered on and in the community and stakeholders on the front line
54	I think this has great potential, but it needs to be balanced
55	He answered my question on whether the plan will be law. the advisory board and the advisory committee enacted are not comparative.
56	Exactly. he didn't answer
57	I love farming but i am not going to knock the beautification of our waterfront area. It's a great addition to our island
58	In my mind beautification and agriculture on our islands can coexist
59	Beautification is also a derivative of agriculture and one in the same.
60	There was not a great representation from the fishermen tonight... we should be including them.
61	We can look to other Caribbean islands that have had better success in food security...
62	I have seen other islands incorporating farm tours with their tourist product where farm tours are offered to the tourists.
63	Catherine. the other Caribbean islands are serious about agriculture. the Virgin Islands treat agriculture as a hobby.
64	I love that idea @John, both departments can mutually benefit from acts as such
65	Thank you to the Task Force for organizing these town halls and for all the farmers participation!
66	Thank you for your work toward the plan and please share the draft as soon as it becomes available

## Appendix G: Farm Ownership Analysis

(Data collected from the 2017 Agriculture Survey of the Virgin Islands)

<b>FARM OWNERSHIP ANALYSES BY FARM SIZE AND NUMBER OF FARMS</b>				
<b>Acreage Mass</b>	<b>Number of Farms/ Farmers</b>	<b>Percent of Total Farms/ Farmers</b>	<b>Total Number of Controlled Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Territory Acres Controlled</b>
<b>LESS THAN &lt;3 ACRES to 9 ACRES</b>				
<3 acres	268		322	
3-9 acres	139		705	
<b>OWNERSHIP TOTALS (&lt;3-9 acres)</b>	407	72.03%	1,027	11.01%
<b>10-99 ACRES</b>				
10-19 acres	77		1,078	
20-49 acres	44		1,297	
50-99	23		1,434	
<b>OWNERSHIP TOTALS (10-99 acres)</b>	144	25.4%	3,809	40.85
<b>100 - 999</b>				
100-174 acres	2		200*	
175-249 acres	5		1,044	
250-499 acres	5		1,950	
500-999	2		1,000 *	
<b>OWNERSHIP TOTALS (100 – 999 acres)</b>	14	2.4%	4,194 Acres	44.98%
<b>TOTAL FARMS/FARMERS AND ACREAGE IN THE TERRITORY</b>	565		9,324 Acres	

\*(Specific total acreage not reported. However, we know the minimum acreage based on two farmers being in the respective categories.)

### **Farm Production:**

1. Over half the farmers have less than 50% of their farms in production. Specifically, fifty-four percent of the respondents have 45% or less of their farms in production. Twenty-two percent have between five and 25% production. Another 16% have between 46 and 75% of their farms in production. Sixteen percent have 76-85% of their farms in production, and 14% of the respondents have 86% or more of their farms in production. *Further analyses will be done to match production with the various farm sizes.*

<b><i>Farm Production</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage of Respondents</i></b>
<b>&lt;5%</b>	18%
<b>5-25%</b>	22%
<b>26-45%</b>	14%
<b>45% or less</b>	54%
<b>46-75%</b>	16%
<b>76-85%</b>	16%
<b>86% or more</b>	14%

## Farm Production Data

ITEM	Total	\$500 to \$1,199	\$1,200 to \$2,499	\$2,500 to \$4,999	\$5,000 to \$7,499	\$7,500 to \$9,999	\$10,000 or more
Field and Foliage .....farm dollars	100	42	11	20	3	10	14
	128,692	7,801	(D) 14	12,278	(D)	19,575	76,518
Vegetables .....farm dollars	215	79	24	46	15	17	34
	1,130,809	23,130	18,119	83,515	41,665	63,122	901,258
Fruits and Nuts .....farm dollars Nursery Crops (including ornamental plants)	259	113	35	42	16	19	34
	544,305	37,235	31,510	45,851	41,890	52,035	335,784
Plants	63	16	7	8	5	6	21
	725,125	4,715	(D)	10,670	23,200	(D)	666,640
Livestock .....farm dollars	164	46	32	37	17	8	24
	649,276	24,305	48,440	99,450	96,250	41,220	341,611
Milk .....farm dollars	2	-	-	-	-	2	-
	(D)	-	-	-	-	(D)	-
Poultry and Eggs .....farm dollars	65	21	18	11	5	3	7
	145,165	6,870	13,119	12,030	213,520	18,750	80,876
Fish and aquaculture products .....farm dollars	4	-	2	-	2	-	-
	(D)	-	(D)	-	(D)	-	-

14 "(D)" indicates completely suppression

## **Appendix H: Review of Laws and Regulations**

### **Agricultural Laws in the VI Code**

The majority of Agricultural Laws are contained in the VI Code, Title Seven “Agriculture” which is broken down into 15 chapters. Title Nineteen, Part VII addresses concerns for Veterinary Health in the Virgin Islands. Finally, there are numerous agricultural laws that exist throughout the VI Code or pertain to the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture.

Free online public access of the VI Code is available through Lexis Nexis at <https://advance.lexis.com/>

### **TITLE SEVEN - AGRICULTURE**

1. Development of Sustainable Agriculture
  - a. Sustainable Agriculture
  - b. Administration, Fiscal Duties, and Powers
  - c. Fees and Refunds
  - d. Promotion and Protection of the Agricultural Industry
  - e. Restatement of Law, Penalties, and Prosecution
  - f. Virgin Islands Fruit of Choice
  - g. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Fresh Food Access and Farmers’ Market Technology Program
2. Agriculture in the Classroom Leadership Council
  - a. Council established; membership; powers and duties
3. Soil Conservation
  - a. Declaration of Policy
  - b. Definitions
  - c. Creation of district; boundaries
  - d. Creation of Board of Supervisors
  - e. Appointment, qualifications, and tenure of the Board of Supervisors
  - f. Powers of district and supervisors
  - g. Cooperation of government agencies
  - h. Discontinuance of district
  - i. Appropriations authorized
  - j. [Omitted]
  - k. Special Conservation Fund
    - l. Same; administration of Fund; rules and regulations
    - m. Same; assistance to farmers; limits; unexpended balances
    - n. Same; appropriations

- o. Cost-sharing in subsoiling of cropland and pastureland; authority of Government
  - p. Same; requests by farmers; duties of Board and Commissioner
  - q. Same; requirements with respect to subsoiling
  - r. Same; limitations on cost-sharing
  - s. Same; administration by, and powers of, Commissioner
4. [OMITTED]
  5. Fees for Veterinary and Inspection Service [Repealed]
  6. [OMITTED]
  7. Quarantine
    - a. Quarantine regulations for plants, seed, or other organic matter
    - b. Penalty
    - c. Regulation of plant pests – policy
    - d. Inspection; regulations
  8. [OMITTED]
  9. Forests; Forest Management; Technical Services
  10. [OMITTED]
  11. Consumer Services
  12. [OMITTED]
  13. Farming and Fishing
  14. [OMITTED]

**Virgin Islands Agriculture Business Incubator Center**

**TITLE FOURTEEN. CRIMES**

CHAPTER 7. ANIMALS AND BIRDS

**TITLE NINETEEN; PART VII – VETERINARY AND RELATED SERVICES**

63. Veterinary and Related Services
64. [OMITTED]
65. Quarantine
66. Animal Protection and Control
67. Animal Diseases

**TITLE SEVENTEEN**

CHAPTER 5. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- a. § 41F Agriculture in the Classroom Program; Basic Agriculture Education

**TITLE TWENTY-THREE. INTERNAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER**

CHAPTER 3. POLICE REGULATIONS

- VI. TRANSPORTATION OF HORSES AND OTHER ANIMALS

## TITLE THIRTY-TWO

### CHAPTER 21. VIRGIN ISLANDS CASINO AND RESORT CONTROL ACT OF 1995

#### XVI. GOVERNMENT FUNDS

## TITLE THIRTY-THREE

### SUBTITLE 3. FINANCE

#### 111. GOVERNMENT FUNDS

- a. § 3018. Agriculture Revolving Fund
- b. § 3018a. Agriculture in the Classroom Fund

#### Comments

### TITLE SEVEN - AGRICULTURE

#### 1. Development of Sustainable Agriculture

##### a. Sustainable Agriculture

##### i. SHORT TITLE

1. No edit

##### ii. DEFINITIONS

1. EDIT – Definitive definition for Agriculture
2. EDIT definition for sustainable agriculture

##### iii. LEGISLATIVE PURPOSE

1. Review floriculture/nursery industry
2. Plant growing in native stands

##### iv. HORTICULTURE CROPS, NURSERIES, SEEDS/SEEDLINGS, LIVESTOCK BANKS

1. **No edit**

##### v. **Purchase of equipment and supplies for farmers**

1. No edit

##### vi. Responsibilities and Requirements

1. Replace agriculturists with farmers

##### vii. Land management: organic materials recycling program

1. EDIT: Funding for composting program, and add territorial personal component

- a. The Attorney General's office, in conjunction with the Bureau of Corrections, shall provide prison labor to clear government-owned property pursuant to title 5 Virgin Islands Code, § 4509.

##### viii. When agricultural operations do not constitute nuisance

1. No edit

##### ix. Administration

- x. Licenses, certificates, registrations, permits
  - 1. No edit
- xi. Prohibition of development and exclusive use
  - 1. ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS REQ'D
    - a. All VICORP land is prohibited from development and shall be used exclusively for agricultural purposes.
- xii. Fiscal duties – expenditures
  - 1. EDIT – NO APPROPRIATIONS MAY BE MADE.
    - a. With the exception of the Sustainable Agricultural Revolving Fund, no appropriations may be made from the Department of Agriculture's annual budget.
- xiii. Interdepartmental expenses
  - 1. No edit
- xiv. Fees
  - 1. EDIT – REASONABLE NOTICE
  - 2. EDIT – FEES DEPOSITED TO AG REVOLV FUND & HEMP FUND AS APPROPRIATE
- xv. Refund of fees; collection
  - 1. EDIT – INCLUDE MECHANISM FOR COLLECTION AGENTS
- xvi. Promotion of the agricultural industry
  - 1. EDIT – FUND AG PROMOTION & CONFERENCE/EVENTS LIASONS
  - 2. ALTERNATE: FUND VI Ag Council (Food/Farm Advisory) to develop promotion materials and liaise between the Departments and Farmers
- b. Administration, Fiscal Duties, and Powers
- c. Fees and Refunds
- d. Promotion and Protection of the Agricultural Industry
- e. Restatement of Law, Penalties, and Prosecution
- f. Virgin Islands Fruit of Choice
- g. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Fresh Food Access and Farmers' Market Technology Program
- 2. Agriculture in the Classroom Leadership Council
- 3. Soil Conservation
- 4. [OMITTED]
- 5. Fees for Veterinary and Inspection Service [Repealed]
- 6. [OMITTED]
- 7. Quarantine

8. [OMITTED]
9. Forests; Forest Management; Technical Services
10. [OMITTED]
11. Consumer Services
12. [OMITTED]
13. Farming and Fishing
  - a. Definitions need to be updated
14. [OMITTED]
15. Virgin Islands Agriculture Business Incubator Center

## Appendix I: Mandate 1 Legislative Definitions

In NY State, the definition of a “farm operation” is as follows:

- "Farm operation" means the land and on-farm buildings, equipment, manure processing and handling facilities, and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products as a commercial enterprise, including a “commercial horse boarding operation” as defined in subdivision thirteen of this section, a “timber operation” as defined in subdivision fourteen of this section, “compost, mulch or other biomass crops” as defined in subdivision sixteen of this section and “commercial equine operation” as defined in subdivision seventeen of this section. Such farm operation may consist of one or more parcels of owned or rented land, which parcels may be contiguous or non-contiguous to each other.
  - **"Crops, livestock and livestock products"** shall include but not be limited to the following:
    - Field crops, including corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley, hay, potatoes and dry beans.
    - Fruits, including apples, peaches, grapes, cherries and berries.
    - Vegetables, including tomatoes, snap beans, cabbage, carrots, beets and onions.
    - Horticultural specialties, including nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees and flowers.
    - Livestock and livestock products, including cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, ratites, such as ostriches, emus, rheas and kiwis, farmed deer, farmed buffalo, fur bearing animals, wool bearing animals, such as alpacas and llamas, milk, eggs and furs.
    - Maple sap.
    - Christmas trees derived from a managed Christmas tree operation whether dug for transplanting or cut from the stump.
    - Aquaculture products, including fish, fish products, water plants and shellfish.
    - Woody biomass, which means short rotation woody crops raised for bioenergy, and shall not include farm woodland.
    - Apiary products, including honey, beeswax, royal jelly, bee pollen, propolis, package bees, nucs and queens. For the purposes of this paragraph, “nucs” shall mean small honeybee colonies created from larger colonies including the nuc box, which is a smaller version of a beehive, designed to hold up to five frames from an existing colony.
  - **"Commercial horse boarding operation"** means an agricultural enterprise, consisting of at least seven acres and boarding at least ten horses, regardless of ownership, that receives ten thousand dollars or more in gross receipts annually from fees generated either through the boarding of horses or through the production for sale of crops, livestock, and livestock products, or through both such boarding and such production. Under no circumstances shall

this subdivision be construed to include operations whose primary on site function is horse racing. Notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision, a commercial horse boarding operation that is proposed or in its first or second year of operation may qualify as a farm operation if it is an agricultural enterprise, consisting of at least seven acres, and boarding at least ten horses, regardless of ownership, by the end of the first year of operation.

- **“Timber operation”** means the on-farm production, management, harvesting, processing and marketing of timber grown on the farm operation into woodland products, including but not limited to logs, lumber, posts and firewood, provided that such farm operation consists of at least seven acres and produces for sale crops, livestock or livestock products of an annual gross sales value of ten thousand dollars or more and that the annual gross sales value of such processed woodland products does not exceed the annual gross sales value of such crops, livestock or livestock products.

- **“Compost, mulch or other organic biomass crops”** means the on-farm processing, mixing, handling, or marketing of organic matter that is grown or produced by such farm operation to rid such farm operation of its excess agricultural waste; and the on-farm processing, mixing or handling of off-farm generated organic matter that is transported to such farm operation and is necessary to facilitate the composting of such farm operation’s agricultural waste. This shall also include the on-farm processing, mixing or handling of off-farm generated organic matter for use only on that farm operation. Such organic matter shall include, but not be limited to, manure, hay, leaves, yard waste, silage, organic farm waste, vegetation, wood biomass or by-products of agricultural products that have been processed on such farm operation. The resulting products shall be converted into compost, mulch or other organic biomass crops that can be used as fertilizers, soil enhancers or supplements, or bedding materials. For purposes of this section, “compost” shall be processed by the aerobic, thermophilic decomposition of solid organic constituents of solid waste to produce a stable, humus-like material.

- **“Commercial equine operation”** means an agricultural enterprise, consisting of at least seven acres and stabling at least ten horses, regardless of ownership, that receives ten thousand dollars of more in gross receipts annually from fees generated through the provision of commercial equine activities including, but not limited to riding lessons, trail riding activities or training of horses or through the production for sale of crops, livestock, and livestock products, or through both the provision of such commercial equine activities and such production. Under no circumstances shall this subdivision be construed to include operations whose primary on site function is horse racing, notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision, an agricultural enterprise that is proposed or in its first or second year of operation may qualify as a commercial equine operation if it consists of at least seven acres and stables at least ten horses, regardless of ownership, by the end of the first year of operation.

In the State of Florida, the definition of “agriculture” and a “farm operation” is as follows:

- “Agriculture” means the science and art of production of plants and animals useful to humans, including to a variable extent the preparation of these products for human use and their disposal by marketing or otherwise, and includes aquaculture, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture, forestry, dairy, livestock, poultry, bees, and any and all forms of farm products and farm production. For the purposes of marketing and promotional activities, seafood shall also be included in this definition.
- “Farm operation” means all conditions or activities by the owner, lessee, agent, independent contractor, or supplier which occur on a farm in connection with the production of farm, honeybee, or apiculture products or in connection with complementary agritourism activities. These conditions and activities include, but are not limited to, the marketing of farm products at roadside stands or farm markets; the operation of machinery and irrigation pumps; the generation of noise, odors, dust, fumes, and particle emissions; ground or aerial seeding and spraying; the placement and operation of an apiary; the application of chemical fertilizers, conditioners, insecticides, pesticides, and herbicides; agritourism activities; and the employment and use of labor.

In VIC, the following definitions exist:

- VIC 7 § 8b – “agricultural operation”
  - For the purposes of this chapter, “agricultural operation” means any operation devoted to the bona fide production of crops, or animals, or fowl, including but not limited to the production of fruits and vegetables of all kinds, meat, dairy, and poultry products, nuts, nursery and floral products and the production and harvest of products from silviculture activity.
- VIC 33 § 2341 – 2350 – “used actively and solely for agricultural production”
  - Used actively and solely for agricultural or horticultural purposes” is defined as the devotion in a complete and active manner to the production for sale of plants or animals for purposes of human consumption or to the production of products used in the nutrition of plants or animals produced for purposes of human consumption, including but not limited to forage and sod crops; grains and feed crops; dairy animals and dairy products; poultry and poultry products; livestock including beef, cattle, sheep, swine, goats and including the breeding and grazing of any or all such animals; bees; fruits, nuts, berries and vegetables of any kind or variety; aquatic species including, but not limited to, finfish, mollusks, crustaceans, or other aquatic invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles or aquatic plants; or when devoted or meeting the requirements and qualifications for a forestry and/or soil conservation program under an agreement with an agency of the Federal or Territorial Government.

## Appendix J: Soil Conservation

### Section

- § 41. Declaration of policy
- § 42. Definitions
- § 43. Creation of district; boundaries
- § 44. Creation of Board of Supervisors
- § 45. Appointment, qualifications, and tenure of the Board of Supervisors
- § 46. Powers of district and supervisors
- § 47. Cooperation of government agencies
- § 48. Discontinuance of district
- § 49. Appropriations authorized
- § 50–50b. [Omitted.]
- § 50b-1. Special Conservation Fund
- § 50b-2. Same; administration of Fund; rules and regulations
- § 50b-3. Same; assistance to farmers; limits; unexpended balances
- § 50c. Same; appropriations
- § 51. Cost-sharing in subsoiling of cropland and pastureland; authority of Government
- § 52. Same; requests by farmers; duties of Board and Commissioner
- § 53. Same; requirements with respect to subsoiling
- § 54. Same; limitations on cost-sharing
- § 55. Same; administration by, and powers of, Commissioner

#### **§ 43. Creation of district; boundaries**

There is established as a public body corporate and politic, to serve as a governmental subdivision and instrumentality of the United States Virgin Islands and to perform the functions conferred upon it in sections 41–49 of this title, the Virgin Islands Conservation District. The boundaries of the district shall coincide with the legal boundaries of the territory of the United States Virgin Islands, and all lands lying within the boundaries of the territory of the United States Virgin Islands are recognized as lying within the boundaries of the district and entitled to the privilege of participating in the district program for the conservation and development of soil, water, and related resources and proper land use.—Amended July 2, 1965, No. 1475, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 361; Dec. 27, 1973, No. 3506, § 3, Sess. L. 1973, p. 297.

**§ 44. Creation of Board of Supervisors** There is established a Board of Supervisors of the Virgin Islands Conservation District to serve as the governing body of the district and to perform the functions conferred upon the district and the board in sections 41–49 of this title.—Amended July 2, 1965, No. 1475, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 361; Dec. 27, 1973, No. 3506, § 4, Sess. L. 1973, p. 297.

**§ 45. Appointment, qualifications, and tenure of the Board of Supervisors**

(a) (1) The Board of Supervisors shall be composed of eleven members. Six shall be “land occupiers” appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Legislature from a list submitted by the Commissioner of Agriculture in consultation with the Virgin Islands

Conservation District. Three shall be appointed from St. Croix, two from St. Thomas and one from St. John (none of whom may be employees of the Government of the United States or the Government of the United States Virgin Islands). (2) Three members shall be appointed by the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands and confirmed by the Legislature from among the members of the Virgin Islands Planning Board, one from each of the three islands. (3) Two members shall be appointed by the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands and confirmed by the Legislature who have nonagricultural interests, one from St. Croix and one from St. Thomas-St. John. (b) The term of office for Supervisors shall be three years, except that of those first appointed. Of the five Supervisors first appointed from St. Croix, one shall serve for one year, two for two years and two for three years. Of the four Supervisors from St. Thomas, one shall serve for one year, one for two years and two for three years. Of the two Supervisors from St. John, one shall serve for two years and one for three years. A Supervisor shall hold office until his successor has been appointed and qualified. Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term. The selection of successors to fill new or unexpired terms shall be done in the same manner as herein provided for initial members of the Board. Any member who misses four consecutive meetings without notifying the Secretary of the Board of Supervisors prior to the meeting shall be replaced and a new Supervisor appointed. Supervisors may be removed for cause by the Governor. (c) The Board of Supervisors shall designate its officers and may from time to time change such designation. A majority of the supervisors shall constitute a quorum and the concurrence of a majority upon any official matter shall be required for its determination. Supervisors shall receive no compensation for services but shall be entitled to travel expenses and per diem for other expenses necessarily incurred in the discharge of their official duties, as provided by law. The Board of Supervisors may employ and fix the compensation of such officers and employees as they may require. They shall provide for surety bonds for employees or officers who are entrusted with funds, in amounts to be determined by the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, and the premium on such bonds shall be paid from the Treasury of the United States Virgin Islands. The supervisors may perform such acts and promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the execution of the functions of the board as herein provided, except that the board shall not obligate the district for any expenditures in excess of funds available to it through appropriations, allocations, or otherwise. They shall keep a record of proceedings, resolutions, regulations, and orders issued and adopted, and accounts of receipts and disbursements; and they shall furnish to the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands and to the Legislature copies of such documents, instruments, or information concerning their activities as the Governor or the Legislature may request.—Added June 24, 1958, No. 335, § 18; amended Oct. 2, 1959, No. 493, Sess. L. 1959, p. 169; Mar. 17, 1965, No. 1343, § 3, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I. p. 76; July 2, 1965, No. 1475, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I. p. 361; Mar. 3, 1967, No. 1862, § 1, Sess. L. 1967, p. 30; June 4, 1968, No. 2238, § 14, Sess. L. 1968, Pt. II, p. 47; Dec. 27, 1973, No. 3506, § 5, Sess. L. 1973, p. 297; June 1, 1984, No. 4951, § 6, Sess. L. 1984, p. 153; May 8, 1995, No. 6070, § 14, Sess. L. 1995, p. 182.

**§ 46. Powers of district and supervisors** The district and its supervisors shall have the following powers, in addition to others granted in sections 41–49 of this title:(1) to provide for, encourage, and conduct surveys, investigations, and research relating to the conservation and development of soil, water, and related resources, the prevention and control of erosion, the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages, and the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water, and the preventive and control measures and works of improvement needed, and to publish and disseminate information concerning such measures and works of improvements;(2) to provide for, encourage, and conduct demonstrations relative to the control and prevention of erosion, and the conservation of soil and water resources, and to carry out preventive and control measures and works of improvement within the district including engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, changes in the use of land, and measures and works of improvement for the purposes mentioned in paragraph (1) of this section, on publicly owned lands within the district with the consent or

cooperation of the agency having jurisdiction thereof, and on other lands in the district with the consent of the occupier of such lands;(3) to cooperate or enter into agreements with, and to furnish financial or other aid, including labor, machinery, equipment, fertilizer, seeds and other material to, any agency or any occupier of lands, for carrying on erosion control and prevention operations, or measures or works of improvement for any of the purposes mentioned in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this section, subject to such conditions as the supervisors may deem necessary;(4) to acquire property, real or personal, or rights or interests therein; to maintain, administer, and improve such property, receive income from it, and expend such income in carrying out the purposes of sections 41–49 of this title; and to sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any such property;(5) to construct, improve, operate, and maintain any structures necessary for carrying out the purposes of sections 41–49 of this title;(6) to develop for all or any part of the district comprehensive plans for the conservation of soil and water resources and the control and prevention of erosion within the district, as well as for any of the purposes mentioned in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this section, which plans shall specify in such detail as may be practicable the acts, procedures, performances, and avoidances which are necessary or desirable for the effectuation of such plans including the specifications of engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, cropping programs, tillage practices, and changes in use of land; and to publish or otherwise bring the plans to the attention of land occupiers;(7) to act as agent for the United States of America, or the Government of the United States Virgin Islands or any of its agencies, in connection with the acquisition or administration of any soil and water conservation or erosion-control or prevention project within its boundaries;(8) to accept contributions in money, services, materials, or otherwise, from any source, and to use or expend them in carrying on its operations;(9) to sue and be sued; to have a seal, which seal shall be judicially noticed; to make and execute any necessary contracts or other instruments; and(10) as a condition to the extending of benefits, or the performance of work upon lands under section 41–49 of this title, the supervisors may require land occupiers to enter into and perform such agreements or covenants as to the permanent use of such lands as will tend to prevent or control erosion thereon. (11) To implement and administer the Environmental Protection Program established by Title 12, chapter 13 of the Code. —Amended July 2, 1965, No. 1475, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 361; Dec. 27, 1973, No. 3506, § 6, Sess. L. 1973, p. 298.

**§ 47. Cooperation of government agencies** of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands shall cooperate with the district in the effectuation of programs and operations of the district. — Amended July 2, 1965, No. 1475, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 361; Dec. 27, 1973, No. 3506, § 7, Sess. L. 1973, p. 298.

**§ 48. Discontinuance of district** Sections 41–49 of this title shall remain in force and effect for not less than five years after its enactment and for successive periods of five years thereafter, except as amended. At the end of the first five-year period, or any successive five-year period, the Legislature may take under consideration whether the continued operation of the district within the defined boundaries is administratively practicable and feasible. If the Legislature determines in favor of the discontinuance of the district, it shall repeal sections 41–49 of this title in accordance with regular procedure for repealing acts of the Legislature and shall notify the supervisors of the district. Upon receipt of notice from the Legislature that sections 41–49 of this title have been repealed, the supervisors shall terminate the affairs of the district. They shall dispose of all property belonging to the district at public auction and shall pay over the proceeds of such sale to the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands for the account of the Treasury of the United States Virgin Islands and shall render to the Governor a full accounting of such properties and proceeds of the sale. All contracts theretofore entered into, to which the district is a party, shall remain in force and effect for the period provided in such contracts. —Amended July 2, 1965, No. 1475, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 361.

**§ 49. Appropriations authorized** Such sums as may be required for the use of the Board of Supervisors of the district in carrying out any of the purposes of sections 41–49 of this title shall be

provided for by legislative appropriation. —Amended July 2, 1965, No. 1475, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 361; Dec. 27, 1973, No. 3506, § 8, Sess. L. 1973, p. 299.

**§ 50b-1. Special Conservation Fund** The sum of \$30,000 is hereby appropriated out of any funds in the Treasury of the United States Virgin Islands fiscal year July 1, 1964, to June 30, 1965, and entered as a special item in the appropriation of the Department of Agriculture and shall be known as the Special Conservation Fund.—Apr. 1, 1964, No. 1113, § 1, Sess. L. 1964, p. 59; amended Mar. 17, 1965, No. 1343, § 3, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 76; Mar. 3, 1967, No. 1862, § 1, Sess. L. 1967, p. 30; June 4, 1968, No. 2238, § 14, Sess. L. 1968, Pt. II, p. 47; May 8, 1995, No. 6070, § 14, Sess. L. 1995, p. 182.

**§ 50b-2. Same; administration of Fund; rules and regulations**

The Special Conservation Fund shall be administered in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Commissioner of Agriculture after consultation with representatives of the Area Agricultural Conservation Program. —Apr. 1, 1964, No. 1113, § 2, Sess. L. 1964, p. 59; amended Mar. 17, 1965, No. 1343, § 3, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 76; Mar. 3, 1967, No. 1862, § 1, Sess. L. 1967, p. 30; June 4, 1968, No. 2238, § 14, Sess. L. 1968, Pt. II, p. 47; May 8, 1995, No. 6070, § 14, Sess. L. 1995, p. 182.

**§ 50b-3. Same; assistance to farmers; limits; unexpended balances**

An individual farmer eligible for benefits under the Agricultural Conservation Program shall be entitled to receive assistance out of the funds contributed by the Government of the United States Virgin Islands up to such amounts so that the total assistance received under the federal and insular contributions does not exceed \$5,000 in any one fiscal year. Any unexpended balances in the Special Conservation Fund shall remain therein and be carried over for the use in the next succeeding budget period.—Apr. 1, 1964, No. 1113, § 3, Sess. L. 1964, p. 59.

**§ 50c. Same; appropriations** There is hereby authorized to be appropriated in the annual budgets of the Department of Agriculture a special item in such amount as the Legislature may deem appropriate as a contribution to the Special Conservation Fund.—Mar. 8, 1962, No. 827, § 4, Sess. L. 1962, p. 65; amended Mar. 17, 1965, No. 1343, § 3, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 76; Mar. 3, 1967, No. 1862, § 1, Sess. L. 1967, p. 30; June 4, 1968, No. 2238, § 14, Sess. L. 1968, Pt. II, p. 47; May 8, 1995, No. 6070, § 14, Sess. L. 1995, p. 182.

**§ 51. Cost-sharing in subsoiling of cropland and pasture land; authority of Government** The Government of the United States Virgin Islands is authorized to share with farmers in the United States Virgin Islands the cost of subsoiling cropland and pasture land to a depth that will effectively shatter the hardpan to permit better water penetration and increase the water table. —Added June 14, 1960, No. 620, § 1, Sess. L. 1960, p. 141.

**§ 52. Same; requests by farmers; duties of Board and Commissioner** any farmer desirous of obtaining the benefit of Government cost-sharing in subsoiling under sections 51–55 of this title shall submit a request for such through the Board of Supervisors of the Virgin Islands Soil Conservation District. The said Board shall pass upon all such requests and submit its recommendations to the Commissioner of Agriculture for final determination by such Commissioner as to the sharing of costs by the Government. In addition to such other requirements or conditions as may be prescribed by the Commissioner of Agriculture, no subsoiling costs may be shared by the Government under said sections unless the request for cost-sharing and approval by the Commission is made prior to the undertaking of the subsoiling.—Added June 14, 1960, No. 620, § 1, Sess. L. 1960, p. 141; amended Mar. 17, 1965, No. 1343, § 3, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 76; Mar. 3, 1967, No. 1862, § 1, Sess. L. 1967, p. 30; June 4, 1968, No. 2238, § 14, Sess. L. 1968, Pt. II, p. 47; May 8, 1995, No. 6070, § 14, Sess. L. 1995, p. 182.

**§ 53. Same; requirements with respect to subsoiling** To qualify for cost-sharing, subsoiling must be performed only on land which can be benefited by such practice, and where such subsoiling will aid in the increase of the water table. Subsoiling must be performed to a minimum depth of 14 inches and a maximum spacing interval of 4 feet. On sloping land, subsoiling must be done following the

appropriate contours of the land.—Added June 14, 1960, No. 620, § 1, Sess. L. 1960, p. 141. **§ 54. Same; limitations on cost-sharing** The sharing of costs hereunder by the Government shall be limited to the rate of \$5 for each acre subsoiled, regardless of the number of operations on the same acreage. —Added June 14, 1960, No. 620, § 1, Sess. L. 1960, p. 141.

**§ 55. Same; administration by, and powers of, Commissioner** The Commissioner of Agriculture shall administer the provisions of sections 51–54 of this title, and for such purposes is authorized— (a) to cooperate with any other governmental department or agency; and (b) to issue all such rules and regulations necessary to effectuate the purposes and provisions of the said sections.—Added June 14, 1960, No. 620, § 1, Sess. L. 1960, p. 141; amended Mar. 17, 1965, No. 1343, § 3, Sess. L. 1965, Pt. I, p. 76; Mar. 3, 1967, No. 1862, § 1, Sess. L. 1967, p. 30; June 4, 1968, No. 2238, § 14, Sess. L. 1968, Pt. II, p. 47; May 8, 1995, No. 6070, § 14, Sess. L. 1995, p. 182.

# Appendix K: Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture's Current Organizational Chart

