

# SUPPORT HB 323

Topic: Local Food and Farming Infrastructure Grant Program; increases grant for certain projects

Bill Patron: Delegate Sam Rasoul (D – Roanoke)

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## Reasons to support HB 323:

- Supporting local farms and value-adding food and agriculture businesses across Virginia means more access to local food, stronger local economies and communities, and resilience against disruptions to food supply chains, as has occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- There was broad bipartisan support to establish the grant program; authorizing legislation HB 2068 passed unanimously out of the House and Senate in the 2021 General Assembly session.
- The bill is already having positive impact. In the inaugural round in 2021, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), the administering agency, [awarded eight projects](#) totaling \$160,000 for farmers market improvements and equipment for meat processing, goat dairies, community canneries, and produce aggregation.
- The larger cap will expand program scope and impact and support more significant investments.

## Overview:

[HB 232](#) increases from \$25,000 to \$50,000 the cap amount of a grant that may be made to a political subdivision for projects that support local food production and sustainable agriculture.

[HB 2068](#) of the 2021 General Assembly established the Local Food and Farming Infrastructure Grant Program and authorized the awarding of grants to political subdivisions from the Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Fund in amounts up to \$25,000 to support infrastructure development projects that support local food production and sustainable farming for farmers markets; businesses or organizations that manage the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of food products from local and regional producers and locally owned processing facilities.

VDACS is implementing the Local Food and Farming Infrastructure Grant Program as Infrastructure Grants under the AFID program. More information on the VDACS Infrastructure Grants and how to apply can be found online [here](#).



**Virginia Association for  
Biological Farming**

Francesca Costantino  
[labela\\_francesca@yahoo.com](mailto:labela_francesca@yahoo.com)  
<https://vabf.org/>



**Virginia Conservation Network**

[vcn@vcnva.org](mailto:vcn@vcnva.org)  
(804) 644-0283  
[www.VCNVA.org](http://www.VCNVA.org)

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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit [www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker](http://www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker). VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.