

**Wayne C. Barnes, Chairman**  
**VIRGINIA PEANUT BOARD**  
**July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024**

The Code of Virginia allows for an excise tax to be paid by the producer on every pound of peanuts sold. This excise tax is collected and remitted by the first handler to the Virginia Department of Taxation. The Department of Taxation transfers the funds monthly to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, which houses the Peanut Fund. The excise tax rate is \$0.25 per hundred or \$5.00 per ton. This rate was approved by the Virginia General Assembly in its 2021 legislative session and will be in force for 5 years beginning with the 2021 crop. This money is used by the Virginia Peanut Board through agreement with the Virginia Peanut Growers Association to staff an office, conduct promotional activities, and fund research projects on behalf of and to benefit Virginia's peanut growers. These promotional activities are conducted by the Association and in conjunction with other organizations.

The Association and Virginia Peanut Board work closely with several organizations at the national level. The American Peanut Council serves as the organization that brings together all segments to address relevant issues to the peanut industry. The APC also participates in US Department of Agriculture Foreign Agriculture Service funding programs to promote US peanuts in foreign markets. About 30% of the US crop is exported each year with the most important markets being Mexico, Canada, and Europe. The Board has maintained its membership with the council for many years and paid \$2,837 as its pro-rata share of the grower segment dues. The Virginia Peanut Growers Association alternates with the North Carolina and South Carolina associations for Board seats on the APC Board of Directors. Typically, the Association's Executive Secretary serves on the APC Board of Directors and APC Executive Committee.

The Virginia Peanut Board also maintains a close working relationship with the National Peanut Board. The NPB was created in 2000 as the national checkoff entity responsible for promotion and research programs to benefit all US peanut producers. The National assessment is \$3.55 per net ton. The National Peanut Board is the industry leader in searching for new uses for peanuts and peanut butter as well as spending a great deal of resources on peanut allergies. Each peanut state has a member and an alternate serving on the NPB who are elected by the state growers' association. The current Virginia member is Paul Rogers, III of Wakefield and the alternate is Westley Drake of Newsoms.

In the past year, the Virginia Peanut Growers Association has dissolved its official partnership with the Virginia-Carolina Peanut Promotions. We continue working with the NC and SC Growers Associations but have absorbed the promotional efforts and activities into our own organization. At the beginning of 2023, the Executive Secretary of the VPGA, Dell Cotton, announced his retirement and we began the search for someone to take his place. Caitlin Joyner was selected as the new Executive Director and started in September. Caitlin worked with Dell until his official retirement in January 2024. We have completed many promotional activities throughout the year. Our peanut sample packs are placed in all of the Welcome Centers throughout the state and are delivered to all of the Congressional offices each month. We distribute over 100,000 sample peanut bags in a year between those partnerships and other events. We ran billboard advertising on the Eastern Shore along route 13 in Accomac and Northampton counties, as well as on route 58 and 460. We had an educational booth and sponsored a recipe contest at the Virginia State Fair. We also did a promotion with the Richmond

Flying Squirrels as well as continued our partnership with VCU Basketball. We ran printed advertisements in Cooperative Living magazine as well as the Morning Ag Clips and Tidewater News. VPGA also launched its own social media pages and worked on building content and gaining followers on those pages. We continued to partner with organizations like Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom, Virginia Farm Bureau, and the Virginia Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to promote peanuts with various audiences.

The Peanut Production Contest was once again held for the 2023 crop. Farm Credit was a trophy sponsor. The state winner was Joseph D. Johnson of Southampton County with 6126 lbs. per acre on 665.1 acres. We celebrated a state record average yield of more than 4800 lbs. per acre.

Association funds were allocated to Virginia Tech researchers at the Tidewater Agricultural Research Station for research projects in the amount of \$63,444. The funds were approved in March to be completed in the 2024 crop year. A list of the research projects is included this report. The Association is also responsible for reviewing research proposals to be recommended for funding by the National Peanut Board. In December 2023, the VPGA recommended projects totaling \$28,500 to be allocated by Virginia from the National Peanut Board.

The Association again partnered with North and South Carolina to provide a weather hotline for use at harvest and throughout the growing season. The advisory is sourced from the climate office at NC State University. We also partner with NC and SC on a website and a joint newsletter: the V-C Peanut News. The newsletter is published 3 times per year and provides updates on marketing and research for growers of the tri-state region.

Peanut acres have remained in the 28,000-29,000 range in the past few years. The USDA projected acres to be 24,000 in 2024, however we have reason to believe it will be closer to 28,000 as it has been in recent years

Discussions are ongoing on new promotion and education programs that can be undertaken on behalf of and to benefit our producers and the Virginia peanut industry.

## **BUDGET AND FINANCES**

The Board's contract with the Virginia Peanut Growers Association is composed such that the entire Peanut Fund is transferred to the Association on a monthly basis, to be spent under the guidance of the Board.

Virginia Peanut Growers Association Budget – (Virginia Peanut Board – Approved)

	<b>2023-2024 Budget</b>	<b>Expended</b>
VPGA (Staff, Office, Promotions, Travel, etc)	\$ 305,882	\$ 286,432
American Peanut Council	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,837
Research	\$ 55,000	\$ 60,040
Insurance	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,369

**RESEARCH PROJECTS**

- Is the high oleic content causing high chemical retention in the seed, germination loss and poor crop stand? - Dr. Balota \$14,562
- Efficacy of seed treatment and in-furrow fungicides against Rhizopus seed rot of peanut.  
Dr. Langston \$20,949
- Innovative agronomic practices to improve nutrient and integrated pest management in Virginia type peanuts for the upper Southeast coastal plain.  
Dr. Frame \$ 27,933

**YEAR END FUNDING LEVEL – VA PEANUT BOARD**

Balance of Peanut Fund (VDACS)	6/30/23	\$ 262.06
Revenue	(7/1/23 – 6/30/24)	339,597.87
Expenditures (to Association & Richmond)		320,000.00
Interest Earned		1,538.56
Annual Administrative Fees		2,419.00
Ending Cash Balance	6/30/24	\$ 18,979.49

**MEETING AND ATTENDANCE**

	<u>March 6, 2024</u>	<u>June 17, 2024</u>
Wayne C. Barnes	P	P
Ernest L. Blount	P	
Michael J. Marks	P	
Donna N. Jones	P	P
Andrew Darden	P	P
Joey Doyle	P	P
John Crumpler, II	P	
Robert C. Rogers	P	P

*Wayne C. Barnes*  
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 Virginia Peanut Board