



The vision for the Rappahannock Education Farm is to establish a community-owned farm that once established, will be sustainable as a long-term endeavor that provides predictable benefits, year-after-year, to Fredericksburg and the surrounding areas.

The Rappahannock Education Farm will operate as a 501(c)(3) organization that benefits the community in several ways, including:

1. Growing fresh produce for the benefit of lower income residents. This has been identified as a critical need by the Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank. Produce is among the most highly desired commodities for those served by the Food Bank in order to promote proper nutrition and balanced diets. Currently, there is a severe shortage of fresh produce of adequate quality for distribution by the Food Bank.
2. Agricultural Education. The farm will provide instruction, including through workshops, on best practices in sustainable gardening and farming. Programs will be conducted to provide continuing agricultural education to existing farmers, beginning farmers, students, gardeners and other residents of the community. This will be accomplished in collaboration and cooperation with other organizations. Consideration should be given to establishing a program of providing garden plots to members of the community.
3. Community Inclusion. All will be welcome to volunteer their time and talent and to work side-by-side in the many aspects of planting, caring for, and

harvesting the fruits of the land. In addition, a voluntary membership would be established and all invited to join as members.

Land: The Farm will own or lease farmland. This should consist of 10 or more acres that can be farmed. If the land is leased, it should be for a period of not less than 10 years.

Governance: The Farm will be governed by a board of directors that is representative of the organizations and people engaged in this effort. This should include founding board members from supportive entities, such as the Food Bank, churches and others elected by and from among those who join as members. The details and mechanisms for electing board members, and their roles and responsibilities will be defined in the bylaws of the Farm.

Executing the Mission: The board will hire an Executive Director with experience in farm management who will be responsible for managing the Farm in a manner to achieve its mission. The Farm will rely on and encourage the participation of volunteers, including school groups, church groups, civic organizations, colleges and universities and many others.

Inspiration: We are inspired by the exceptional work being done by the Fauquier Education Farm established in 2010, Shalom Farm which serves the Richmond area and similar entities across the country. These farms operate as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organizations and provide education on farming best practices in addition to producing significant volumes of food that are donated to local food banks and other entities to reduce food insecurity.

The Fauquier Education Farm and similar farms have demonstrated by their success that this model works. We propose to learn from these successes as we create a similar entity for our community with the vision of providing a welcoming space where our community can come together around the positive activities of growing and harvesting foods, learning best farming practices and sharing the fruits of the land with those in need.