



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity

VIRGINIA

<http://www.usda.gov/strikeforce>

Virginia Quick Facts

StrikeForce state since.....2013
 Number of SF counties:51
 Total outreach events FY13..... 70
 Number of partners..... 15



Contacts

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or learn more:

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Some of Our Partners

- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- VA Department of Agriculture
- VA Department of Conservation and Recreation
- VA Soil and Water Conservation District
- VA Department of Education
- VA Department of Environmental Quality
- VA Cooperative Extension Service
- VA Department of Forestry
- VA Department of Health
- VA State University Small Farm Outreach, Training, & Technical Assistance Program
- Virginia Association of School Business Officials (VASBO)
- Virginia Association of School Nurses
- Virginia School Boards Association

Rural Americans face many unique challenges every day and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides assistance to help rural communities prosper. Unfortunately, 85% of America’s persistent poverty counties are in rural America – and we can’t allow these areas to be left behind.

That is why in 2010, Agriculture Secretary Vilsack launched the StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity (StrikeForce) - a coordinated effort to increase economic opportunities and address the needs of rural communities suffering from persistent poverty. In collaboration with over 400 partners, including other federal agencies, community based organizations, state based agencies and local partners, USDA is providing targeted technical assistance and other support to leverage results.

Since then, StrikeForce has spread to over 700 counties across twenty states and is showing significant results. Since the inception of StrikeForce, USDA has invested more than \$9.7 billion in target areas to support 80,300 projects.

Highlights

One of the positive outcomes of closer collaboration among the StrikeForce agencies produced an innovative partnership to feed hungry kids in the summer at rural housing sites. While brainstorming about ways to increase summer feeding sites, Rural Development (RD) and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) worked on a cooperative venture in which RD's Multi-Family Housing Complexes served as summer feeding sites so children could receive nutritious meals during the summer months. Fifteen rural multi-family complexes served as summer feeding sites and other states are adopting the idea.

In addition, Virginia State University conducted workshops and demonstrations for more than 1,000 small and historically underserved farmers and businesses to increase their profitability and participation in USDA programs. This included a workshop with USDA’s Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to help farmers and small businesses become certified vendors for the government. One other example was the Commercial Vegetable and Berry Day, with almost 600 attendees.

