



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

www.usda.gov/strikeforce

VIRGINIA

Virginia Fast Facts - 2015

State's Child Poverty Rate:	14.5%
State's Overall Poverty Rate:	10.9%
StrikeForce State Since:	2013
Number of StrikeForce Counties:	51
Total Outreach Events:	298
Number of Community Partners:	15
Total USDA Projects:	3,016
Total USDA Investments:	\$349.8 million

Contacts

Contact us to be a partner, or to learn more about StrikeForce opportunities:

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Some of Our StrikeForce Community Partners

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

Currently, 85 percent of our country's persistent poverty counties are in rural America. More than one third of rural Americans, and one in four rural children live in poverty. Kids growing up in families earning twice the poverty threshold are nearly three times as likely as other children to have poor health, are more likely to finish two fewer years of school, and are more likely to earn half as much money in their adult lives.

Growing the economy by investing in rural communities and increasing opportunities for families is key to our Nation's future. In 2010, Secretary Vilsack established USDA's StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address the specific challenges associated with rural poverty. Since then, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 1,500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than \$23.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across more than twenty states. In 2016, StrikeForce expanded to include Florida, Missouri, Montana, and Ohio. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 970 counties in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America's economic future.

StrikeForce At Work

Virginia "Kids Outside" Educates Youth

Virginia Department of Forestry hosted an educational field day and invited students who were enrolled in the Summer Enrichment Program administered by Grayson County Public Schools. This 2-day event offered students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience while learning the importance of natural resources and conservation. NRCS and FSA joined forces with Virginia Department of Forestry joined forces with New River SWCD to provide staffing and instruction to support the event. Students were informed of the various types of soils, the importance of soils, and conservation practices used in agriculture to prevent soil erosion. Attendees were also able to create their own soil profile which they were able to take home with them after the event. The students hiked through the forest while discussing forest management and the forest's role in our ecosystem and strapped on waders to collect aquatic species in the creek. Afterwards, the students identified the various species and their contribution to the stream and their indication of water quality.

Additionally, numerous USDA agencies participated in Virginia State University's Small Farms Day. The more than 600 participants learned about the variety of USDA resources available from a variety of agencies. Also, FNS continued to expand their summer feeding sites at multi-family housing facilities, thanks to a partnership with RD.

