



NEWS RELEASE

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FINAL AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT FUND GRANT REPORT PRESENTED BY VIRGINIA TECH'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Orange County, VA – In March 2015, Orange County, in partnership with The Montpelier Foundation, was awarded a \$20,000 Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) grant from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). The grant was awarded to evaluate potential business opportunities in agritourism and hospitality within the grounds of the Montpelier estate. The study was conducted by Virginia Tech's Office of Economic Development (VTOED). Over the past nine months VTOED staff worked closely with a working group made up of various stakeholders. The AFID working group consisted of several high-level county leaders, county department heads, Montpelier executives, regional winery representatives, brewery representatives, hospitality professionals, agricultural professionals, developers and various other consultants. Kat Imhoff, James Madison's Montpelier, President and CEO stated, "I am excited to see a large pool of professionals participate in the study and furthermore captivated by the exciting list of ideas the Montpelier Foundation can reference for future growth opportunities at Montpelier."

VTOED presented their report and final recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors at their regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, January 26th. The report titled, *Assessing Opportunities for Agriculture and Agritourism at Montpelier* was presented by Dr. Scott Tate, Senior Economic Development Specialist for VTOED along with associates Sarah Lyon-Hill, and Elli Travis. During their presentation, VTOED highlighted viable program ideas for specific parcels on the Montpelier estate. Three major recommendations included opportunities for a boutique hotel with event space, a farm brewery, and continual assessment of the agriculture and agritourism concepts listed in the report. Lee H. Frame, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors says, "I look forward to working with Montpelier on the recommendations provided by Virginia Tech to further increase the visitor experience at both Montpelier and Orange County."

The final report can be viewed on the Orange County Economic Development website at www.thinkorangeva.com in the News & Events link: <http://www.thinkorangeva.com/news-events>. For more information, please contact the Orange County Economic Development Office at (540) 672-1238

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