



**VIRGINIA CORN BOARD
FINAL MEETING MINUTES**

Mechanicsville, VA
December 18, 2025

I. Attendance

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Board Members Absent</u>
L. Hayden Eicher, Chairman	Shannon Ellis
Wesley S. Marshall, Vice Chairman	Wallick Harding
E. Phillip Hickman, III	Raymond Keating
Savannah McQuarrie	Elizabeth Cooper
Wanda Lambert	David Jennings
Phil Egolf	
<u>Staff & Guests</u>	
Dr. Olga Walsh, VT	Ms. Joy Harris, VDACS
Dr. Hunter Frame, VT	Mr. Taylor Hubbard, VGPA
Ms. Kendra Ricks, NCGA	Ms. Rebecca Starett, USGBC
Mrs. Laura Maxey-Nay, VDACS	Mr. Ryan LeGrand, USGBC

- II. Call To Order and Roll Call**– Chairman Eicher called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the annual funding meeting. He thanked the group for their service to the Virginia Corn Industry and for taking time to attend the meeting.
- III. Reading and Approval of Minutes** – *It was moved by E. Hickman and seconded by W. Marshall to approve the minutes of the 2-5-25 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.*
- IV. Financial Report** – Laura Maxey-Nay presented the Financial Report as follows:

Virginia Corn Board
FY 25 Year End

	Balance as of:	June 30, 2024		\$ 1,049,103.47	
	Receipts as of:	7/1/2025		\$ 300,846.49	
	Interest as of:	7/1/2025		\$ 30,742.02	
	Total Balance as of:	7/1/2025		\$ 1,380,691.98	
	Projects for FY 2024-25	Allocated	Expenses	Balance	Out of FY26
	1 Agriculture in the Classroom Funding 2024	\$13,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	\$ -	
	2 National Corn FY2025 Funding Request	\$48,000.00	\$ 48,000.00	\$ -	
469045	3 Reiter: Utilizing Cover Crops to Offset Fertilizer	\$26,504.00	\$ 26,503.78	\$ 0.22	\$ 0.22
469114	4 Frame: Utilizing Cover Crops to Offset Fertilizer	\$22,000.00	\$ 10,398.35	\$ 11,601.65	\$ 7,480.48
323279	5 Eductional Program - Agriculture, Food and Culture	\$7,000.00	\$ 6,828.01	\$ 171.99	
	6 Corn Commodity Education to Enhance VALOR	\$7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ -	
469038	7 Identifying Corn Xylem Fluid Nutrients Important	\$17,240.00	\$ 15,381.62	\$ 1,858.38	\$ 1,858.38
	8 U.S. Grains Council Base Funding	\$103,232.00		\$ 103,232.00	\$ 103,232.00
548239	9 On-Farm Evaluation of Corn Production Strategies	\$10,000.00	\$ 916.00	\$ 9,084.00	\$ 3,614.81
	10 Agronomy Career Development Event, Crops	\$10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	
469034	11 Weed Management in Corn 2024	\$21,738.00	\$ 21,738.00	\$ -	
469044	12 Evaluation of the effect of protein hydrolysate	\$10,829.00	\$ 4,639.42	\$ 6,189.58	\$ 3,274.85
	13 Empowering Corn, VCPA and VCB Partnership for	\$149,000.00	\$ 149,000.00	\$ -	
469008	14 Integrated Management of tar spot of corn	\$35,426.00	\$ 29,682.98	\$ 5,743.02	\$ 5,743.02
469033	15 Evaluation of Subsurface Drip Irrigation in Virginia	\$18,200.00	\$ 9,160.22	\$ 9,039.78	\$ 7,780.48
469046	16 Implantable 3D Printed Plant Sensors: Continuous	\$20,500.00	\$ 9,434.24	\$ 11,065.76	\$ 9,900.55
469164	17 Corn Hybrid Evaluations, Management Research and Overall Corn Extension Program	\$ 49,235.00	\$ 42,397.32	\$ 6,837.68	\$ 6,837.64
469050	18 Investigating a new corn disease in Virginia	\$19,155.00	\$ 16,841.87	\$ 2,313.13	\$ 1,916.15
	Totals	\$588,559.00	\$ 421,421.81	\$ 167,137.19	\$ 151,638.58
	Operating Expenses		823.02		
	Other (Board Travel)		1,339.91		
	Total Expenses		\$ 423,584.74		
	Total Balance on 1-Jul-25			1,380,691.98	
	Less Total Expenses			(423,584.74)	
	Less Reserve Funds			(\$ 300,000.00)	
	Funds Available for Allocation			\$ 657,107.24	

Balance as of:	1-Jul-25	\$ 1,016,352.49
Receipts as of:	Nov. 11, 2025	\$ 36,703.91
Interest as of:	Nov. 11, 2025	\$ 8,979.81
Total Balance as of:	Nov. 11, 2025	\$ 1,062,036.21

Projects for FY 2025-26		Allocated	Expenses	Balance
1	AITC Curriculum Connections	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00	\$ -
2	AI-Powered 3D Sensors for Monitoring NPK	\$ 18,392.00	\$ 374.26	\$ 18,017.74
3	Agronomy, Crops & Proficiency Award	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ -
4	Experiential learning: Crops Judging	\$ 10,000.00		\$ 10,000.00
5	Integrated management of tar spot of corn	\$ 35,500.00	\$ 9,542.91	\$ 25,957.09
6	Utilizing Cover Crops to Offset Fertilizer	\$ 26,904.00	\$ 7,160.18	\$ 19,743.82
7	Corn Commodity Education to Enhance	\$ 7,500.00		\$ 7,500.00
8	Cultivate the Future: FY2026 Request For	\$ 56,001.00		\$ 56,001.00
9	Comparing group 30 insecticide seed	\$ 17,036.00	\$ 6,744.31	\$ 10,291.69
10	On-Farm Evaluation of Corn Production	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 2,286.99	\$ 7,713.01
11	Utilizing Cover Crops to Offset Fertilizer	\$ 25,089.00	\$ 11,900.90	\$ 13,188.10
12	Rapid Determination of Cover Crop Biomass	\$ 13,800.00	\$ 3,045.50	\$ 10,754.50
13	Advancing Innovation and Sustainability: A	\$ 169,500.00	\$ 169,500.00	\$ -
14	Weed Management in Corn 2025	\$ 26,084.00	\$ 5,183.08	\$ 20,900.92
15	Team Funding: Base Funding: \$14,500;	\$ 49,500.00		\$ 49,500.00
16	growth and yield of corn grown in normal and	\$ 9,500.00	\$ 754.64	\$ 8,745.36
17	Herbicide-resistant weed management in corn			\$ 21,539.00
17	2025	\$ 21,539.00		
18	Data-Science for grain marketing decision	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 3,236.72	\$ 6,763.28
19	Research, and Corn Extension Program	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 18,977.08	\$ 31,022.92
Totals		\$ 576,845.00	\$ 259,206.57	\$ 317,638.43
Operating Expenses			\$ 3,000.05	
FY 26 expenses			\$ 151,638.58	
Other (Board Travel)			0.00	
Total Expenses			\$ 413,845.20	
Total Balance on Nov. 11, 2025				1,062,036.21
Less Total Expenses				(413,845.20)
Less Unspent Allocated Funds for Fiscal Year 2025-26 Projects				(\$ 317,638.43)
Less Reserve Funds				(\$ 300,000.00)
Funds Available for Allocation				\$ 209,779.47

A motion was made by E. Hickman and seconded by W. Lambert to approve the Financial Report as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

- I. **Old Business**- Chairman Eicher asked for old business items for discussion; H. Eicher discussed the delay of the presentation of recognition plaques for past board members. The recognition ceremony is rescheduled for the March Virginia Grain Producer Association's meeting at Land of Promise Farm.

- II. **U.S. Grains and Bioproducts Council**– R. LeGrand discussed new funding opportunities and timelines. They also spoke about markets which include China, Canada, Mexico, and the EU. He went into detail about Agribusiness trade missions in Tiawan, Mexico, and Peru, which have been ethanol focused. Although funding restrictions exist, there is continued engagement with China and Mexico. The board also received additional headline updates which included: USMCA reviews. trade deals and frameworks, expansion and global reach, as well as new partnerships with the department of energy and the federal aviation administration which are heavily focused on ethanol. R. Starett discussed delegate and A-team funding, roles, and activities. She discussed membership classes and a breakdown of funding, as well as check-off staff and main points of contact. She also informed the board that ethanol is now a separate membership class.

- III. **Area Reports**- Each member of the Board reported on the 2025 corn crop conditions and outcomes in their respective areas of the Commonwealth. Overall, all regions had an excellent corn crop except for the southern region of the Eastern Shore. Soybeans were below average yields.

- IV. **Virginia Tech Research Update** – Dr. Hunter Frame opened with thanking the Board for their letter of support for his funded projects. He provided an update on the cover crop-biomass studies and the biological/biostimulants studies.

Dr. Olga Walsh reviewed her team's projects and activities including variety trials, corn silage trials, and drone research. Updating the VT Corn and Small Grain Management Website. Dr. Walsh thanked the Board for their support.

- V. **Virginia Grain Producers Association**– Taylor Hubbard reported their success in connecting with producers and advancing the interest of the industry. VGPA successfully initiated regional growers' events and roundtable events with state government officials. VGPA reported an increase in online presence for the Board with Facebook page and website managed by the Association on the Board's behalf. A new Board logo was created. Hubbard reported that their first year's Farmer Leadership program was a success. The Board commended the Association for their increased presence nationally and statewide.

- VI. **National Corn Growers Association** – Kendra Ricks reported on NCGA's recent activities. She stated that corn farmers are facing a dire economic outlook. For the fourth year the cost of production is exceeding farming income- cost is \$4.81 and average price is \$3.90, for a loss of \$0.91 per bushel. With USDA forecasting a massive 16.8 billion bushels corn crop, of which more than 2 billion bushels will head to stocks, prices continue to decline and we are anticipating more farmers entering financial distress later this year. Loan defaults, bankruptcies, and consolidation have a disastrous ripple effect on the rural economy. Farmers need urgent action from policymakers, and the time is

now. The most effective way to help farmers dig out of this economy is through market expansion. There is no silver bullet to move two billion bushels of grain, but the most immediate opportunities are:

1. Growing domestic ethanol demand
2. Increasing high-value foreign market access for corn and corn products.

Legislators must include the Nationwide Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act (S. 593/HR 1346) in must-pass legislation this year. Each 1% increase in the avg. blend rate can generate an additional 486 million bushels of corn demand. This is good for everyone: farmers, consumers, and the environment. Thinking longer term, NCGA is working on strategies to achieve higher blends of ethanol in liquid fuels.

NCGA Priorities in Law:

- Crop Insurance Affordability
- Double MAP / FMD
- ARC / PLC Improvements
- Corn floor price removed
- Mandatory Base Acre Update
- Conservation Practice Standards
- Investments paid for with cuts to nutrition programs

In the 2024 Cycle, CornPAC was able to contribute a record \$508,500 to candidates who support NCGA priorities. To date, CornPAC has already committed \$287,000, or 70%, of its 2026 election cycle budget to champions in D.C. CornPAC will reach more than 97 districts and 34 states by the 2026 election. CornPAC has raised more than \$105,250 in additional funds for Congressional champions through hosting fundraisers with industry partners.

2025 Outcomes:

- Mexico rescinds 2023 Decree banning GM corn after US wins biotech case
- Increased ethanol access in the US-UK, Japan trade deals
- Launch of On Deck leadership program
- 2026 RVOs set conventional ethanol at 15b gallons
- EPA provides summer waivers for E10 and E15
- Sept. MAHA report does not target pesticides
- NCGA's work on the EPA ESA Core Maps (American Chaffseed - plant) reduced mitigation-affected corn acreage by 99.9%.
- House and Senate Ag Appropriations bills earmark funding for aflatoxin and vomitoxin (AMCOE)
- Congressional Review Act overturns harmful CARB ACC II Waiver
- One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA):
- Retains and improves key tax incentives most important to corn farming operations.
- Includes key Farm Bill priorities
- Extends 45z to 2029; limits foreign feedstock, and eliminates iLUC
- Funding for trade promotion programs (MAP/FMD) doubled

VII. Annual Report – L. Maxey-Nay presented and distributed the Virginia Corn Board Annual Report that had been written for fiscal year 2024-25 and indicated that the report will be submitted to the Commissioner of Agriculture’s office for publication on the VDACS website.

W. Lambert moved, and W. Marshall seconded a motion for the Board to accept the report as presented. Motion passed.

VIII. Financial Disclosure Statements: L. Maxey-Nay made the Board aware of their responsibility to complete their Financial Disclosure Statement. She explained to the group that they would be receiving an e-mail from the Ethic Council after January 1, 2026, with instructions for completing the form online. She explained the critical importance of them completing the statement.

IX. Handbook- L. Maxey-Nay updated the Virginia Corn Board’s Handbook to include an updated Board Member contact list.

W. Marshall made a motion to approve the Handbook with discussed edits, S. McQuarrie seconded, and the motion passed.

X. Other New Business- L. Maxey-Nay created a new SharePoint website to house Board documents and grant proposals and reports.

XI. Nomination & Election of Officers for 2026

Chairman

The floor was opened for Chairman nominations.

W. Marshall nominated Hayden Eicher to serve as the Board’s Chairman during the year 2026. E. Hickman seconded the nomination and moved for the nominations to be closed and Hayden Eicher to be elected by acclamation. Motion passed.

Vice Chairman

The floor was opened for Vice Chairman nominations.

W. Lambert nominated Wes Marshall to serve as the Board’s Vice Chairman during the year 2026. E. Hickman seconded the nomination and moved for the nominations to be closed and Wes Marshall to be elected by acclamation. Motion passed.

U.S. Grains Council – Representatives

The floor was opened for discussion regarding Virginia’s representation at the U.S. Grains Council in 2026.

W. Harding moved and Lambert seconded the motion for Hayden Eicher to be the first Virginia delegate on the U.S. Grains Council in 2026 and for Phillip Hickman. Motion passed.

- V. **Next Funding Meeting** – The Board will hold its next funding Meeting on Wednesday, February 4th at Farm Bureau, West Creek. The Board will continue to give Project Leaders up to 15 minutes to present their current project report and their next funding cycle project proposal. Presenters should expect to be physically present at the meeting.
- VI. **Public Comment** – Chairman Eicher asked for public comment. There was none
- VII. **Adjournment** – There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:27 pm.

The motion was made by W. Lambert and seconded by E. Hickman to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.