



# Virginia Cattlemen's Association Summer Internship

Andrew Tuck

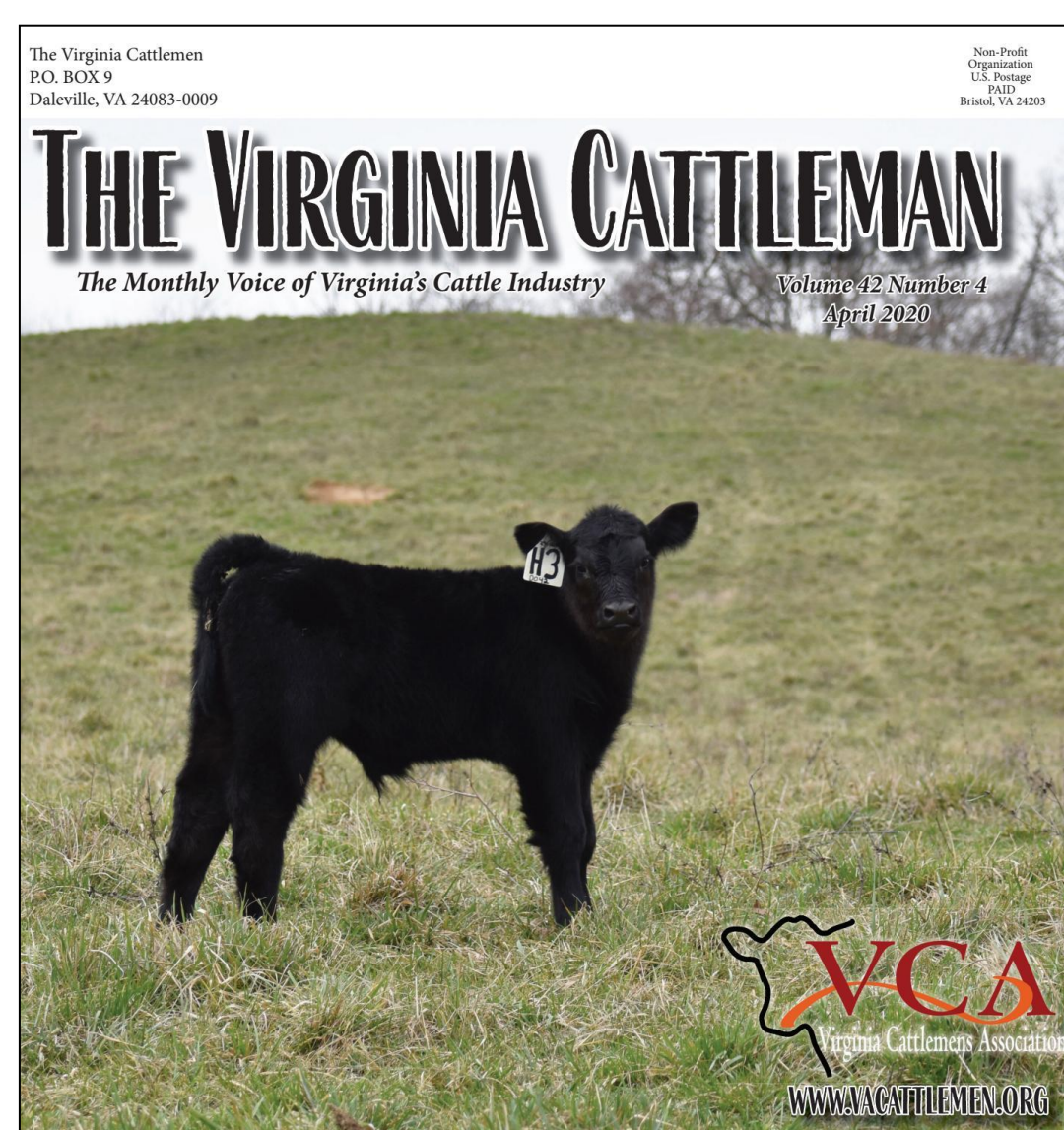
Virginia Cattlemen's Association  
4466 Roanoke Rd Daleville, VA 24083



## About VCA

VCA consists of 3 branches: Marketing, Policy, and Member Services

- Marketing- VCA promotes the Virginia cattle industry and coordinates a cooperative feeder cattle marketing program
- Policy- VCA presents cattlemen's views to local, state, and federal legislature and advocates for the Virginia cattle industry
- Member Services- VCA provides its members with industry news, webinars, and other educational opportunities to benefit and improve cattle operations in Virginia



VCA's monthly newsletter to members and producers.

## The Internship

My internship began on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022. I worked 40 hours per week for 11 weeks. Throughout the internship, I attended board meetings as well as marketing, policy, and member services meetings to be exposed to the inner workings of VCA and to learn how it is designed to serve Virginia cattle producers. Some of my main responsibilities as an intern were to conduct research for VCA Verified, VCA's upcoming third-party verification program to verify cattle with specific marketing claims. I researched the costs associated for a case study to travel to several midwestern states to explore and improve cattle marketing in Virginia. I also assisted with member management and represented VCA at sales and local cattlemen's association meetings.



Virginia is primarily a cow-calf state that produces feeder calves.

## My Project

The purpose of this project is for the development of a mobile app designed to communicate market trends and opportunities, VCA events, and policy updates impacting the cattle industry in Virginia. An app for VCA members would allow access for producers to promote and advertise their cattle. Also, news updates would be beneficial for producers to make decisions based on policy changes. The development of an app would effectively showcase events and opportunities offered for cattle producers that would help benefit their operations.

Development of a mobile app for VCA:

1. Research- I began by researching current apps that are available from other states' cattlemen's associations to know what information they offer
2. Prioritization of App Features- Through online research and communicating with cattle producers, I prioritized what needed to be included in the app
  - Membership Portal
  - Upcoming Events/ Deadlines
  - Upcoming Sales- VCA Feeder Cattle Sales, Seedstock Sales
  - Market Reports- CME Feeders, CME Live Cattle, VDACS Market Reports, VCA Sale Results
  - Weather
  - Industry News
  - Virginia Cattlemen's Insurance Agency
  - VCA Verified
  - VCA Foundation
  - VCA Store
  - About VCA

3. Meetings with App Development Companies- I met with app development companies to discuss features they are able to include, timeline of the project, and pricing. Companies included Entrision, Bushel, and Agency Roots

4. Grant Proposal- I wrote a grant proposal for the Virginia Cattle Industry Board that highlights the purpose of the project, measurable outcomes, a project plan with a timeline for each step, and a budget

5. Grant Approval- The grant was recently approved and VCA will receive funding for the project

6. Development- VCA, along with a selected app development company, will design and develop a mobile app in the upcoming months



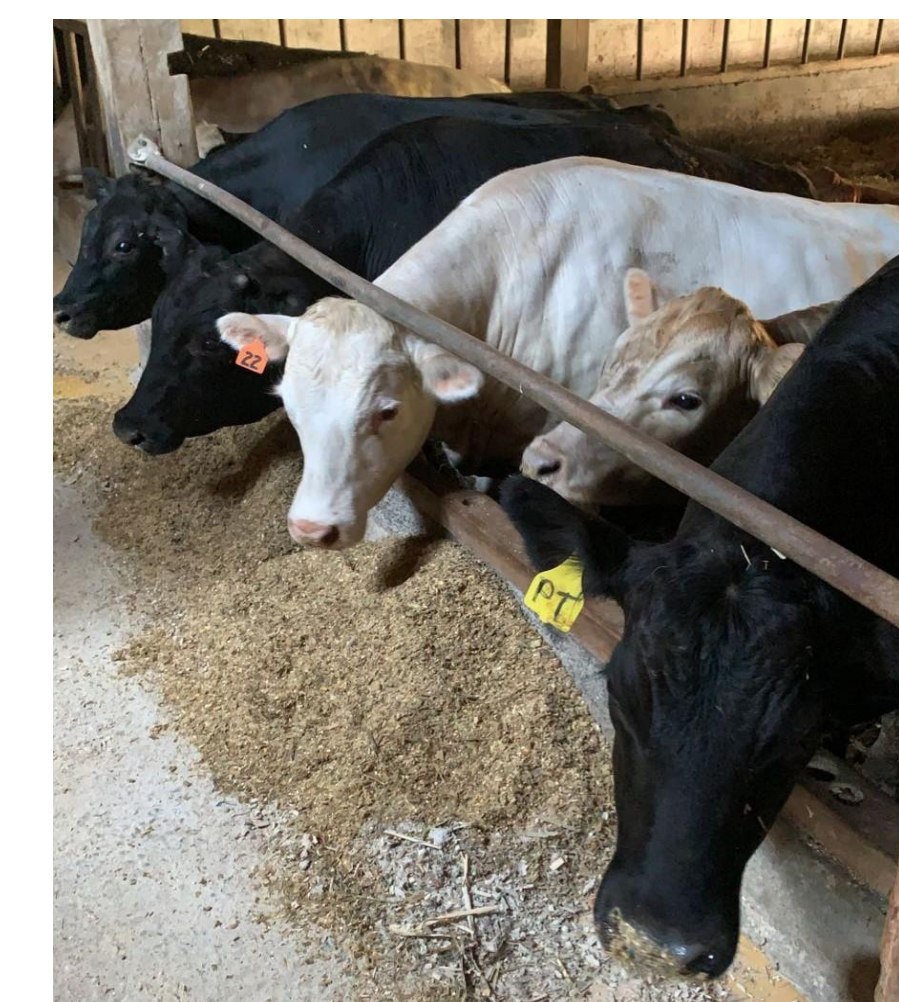
Feeder calves that were marketed through VCA's marketing program.

## Other Opportunities/ Activities

Eastern Regional Junior Angus Show- I represented VCA at the Eastern Regional Junior Angus Show on June 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in Chatham, VA. I spoke with cattle producers about the functions of VCA and the benefits of membership. I also discussed the Virginia Cattlemen's Insurance Agency with interested producers.

Washington D.C. Trip- Executive Director, Brandon Reeves, and the three summer interns, including myself, visited Washington D.C. on July 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. We met with several senators' offices, including senators Thune, Cramer, Hoeven, Kaine, Warner, and Fischer. We also met with several representatives from Virginia, including representatives Good, Cline, and Spanberger, as well as the House Ag Committee. The Cattle Transparency Act, Special Investigators Act, and other challenges that cattle producers are facing were discussed with each office.

Lancaster, PA Trip- I travel with Willie Morris, VCA's Branded Program Coordinator, to Lancaster, PA on August 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. We visited several feedlots that have purchased feeder calves from Virginia that have been marketed through VCA.



Virginia-raised steers that are being fed out in Pennsylvania.



The U.S. Capitol Building during the Washington D.C. trip.

## Conclusion

As an intern for the Virginia Cattlemen's Association, I learned many things and strengthened applicable skills. Going into my internship, I had some knowledge about the marketing aspects of VCA but was able to learn more by having first-hand experience. I had minimal experience with policy and legislative work prior to my internship. Throughout my time with VCA, I learned the importance of staying updated on current issues that affect producers and advocating for the beef cattle industry to legislature. Also, I realized the importance of providing cattle producers with educational programs to make their operations more successful. I enjoyed working with the VCA staff and look forward to seeing where the mobile app project goes in the upcoming months.

## Contact Information

Feel free to contact me at [abtuck01@vt.edu](mailto:abtuck01@vt.edu) with any questions about VCA, my internship, or my capstone project.