Jeff Ishee: And now on to the final question that I'll be answering spontaneously for this very interesting educational event that you're conducting. What are some emerging trends, opportunities, and challenges that you see developing within the next five to 10 years? Well, as we go into the year 2019, there's a lot of excitement about industrial hemp. We are seeing this not only here in Virginia, but also here in the eastern United States. Take for instance the bluegrass state of Kentucky, they recently put out a news release that they have now pre-approved 42,000 acres for industrial hemp production in 2019.

Jeff Ishee: I have no idea what that number is here in the Commonwealth of Virginia, but (laugh) I don't think it's anywhere near that number. But I can tell you in talking with Virginia farmers, I've been asked specifically a lot of questions, Hey Ishee, where can I buy hemp seed? , when do you plan it? How do you harvest it? What fertilization rates do you use? There's a lot of questions including marketing. Do you market the seed? Do you market the fiber? , there's just a million questions and it's one thing I know that Virginia Cooperative Extension is involved with is answering all these questions and doing the research so Virginia farmers can get involved in this very interesting, , we call it a new crop, but it's really an old crop and it's been growing here in Virginia for over 300 years. , they stopped production back in the 1920s and 30s and 40s and it weeded itself out so to speak, but now industrial hemp is back.

Jeff Ishee: And another question I have been asked, and quite candidly, the question is, do I consider this to be a gateway crop for commercial marijuana production in Virginia? My answer to that is, yes. Backing up and looking at the big picture, how many states now have legalized either medicinal or recreational marijuana? And I think it's coming. It's just a matter of time. When that will occur, whether it be in 2025, 2030, who, who knows the answer to that question, but I do think that we will see commercial marijuana production here in the Commonwealth of Virginia. And quite candidly, for a small acreage landowner, you couldn't ask economically for a better crop. It's certainly in high demand, I don't endorse it, never have used it, I didn't inhale as, (laugh) Bill Clinton said, but there really is a lot of interest and there's a lot of money being invested in commercial marijuana production across the United States and I believe that will eventually come to Virginia.

Jeff Ishee: Opportunities for the younger generation, they need to think outside the box. As we've seen the traditional farming activities, if you can scale the efficiency for those, you're in good shape. But long term, with the introduction, and this is going to be a fascinating topic that could truly change global agriculture is this trend we're seeing with cultured meats. Some people call it ‘fake’ meat. It's a very controversial topic. If you're not familiar with the topic, from my understanding, and research, and interviews, numerous interviews that I've done with, people in the know, cultured meat is a manufactured meat product.

Jeff Ishee: The final product scientifically is meat but it was never part of a living animal. And I can see where there's a certain percentage of our society that will buy into this as clean meats as no animal had to die to produce this meat, no manure had to pollute the streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Can’t you see that marketing effort? It's coming. And if you're not familiar with cultured meats, there is a huge amount of money being invested into the technology, and I believe that this could literally change global agriculture. So, what if you don't need cattle? Well, if you don't need cattle, you don't need feed, you don't need pasture. There's so many questions about where this technology is going.

Jeff Ishee: Challenges, what challenges do I see, it's probably the number one challenge is how do we romance the next generation to be involved with production agriculture? We have got to make it appealing. We've got to be talking with the millennial generation. We need to get them involved, whether it's at the local food and farmers market, whether it's with the CSA, we've got to get them involved, and that is the only way that we will maintain our, our traditions of agriculture here in the Mid-Atlantic region and here in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Jeff Ishee: So, those are some of the challenges that I see, some of the emerging trends, some of the opportunities I wanted to say thank you so much for involving me and this educational effort. It has been my honor to participate. And if you ever have a need to contact me, we're on the internet at onthefarmradio.com and also virginiafarming.com. So have a great day. I'm Jeff Ishee.