

Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture
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Agriculture Commissioner Kent Leonhardt Touts First 100 Days in Office

Charleston, W.Va. – West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt touts the first 100 days in office as a success but only the beginning of things to come. Since taking over January 16, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture has found costing savings, met with various stakeholders, developed a new division, made key hires and became a national leader for veterans to agriculture.

“When we took over in January, we wanted to hit the ground running with our ideas. The team we put in place has worked tirelessly since that day to put those plans in motion,” stated Commissioner Leonhardt. “We have some lofty goals, but West Virginia needs big, innovative thinking if we ever want to turn the Mountain State around.”

- In February, the department announced the development of a new division, the Agriculture Business Development Division. This division is tasked as an agribusiness incubator with the mission to expand agriculture based businesses and develop agriculture as a whole in West Virginia.
- In March, the department announced a reduction in the vehicle fleet by 23 which will save the tax payers thousands of dollars. Additionally, the department relaunched the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program with the mission to help West Virginia’s veteran population transition from the military to civilian life.
- In May, the department announced the hiring of the Cedar Lakes Conference Director, Agriculture Business Development Director and the new State Veterinarian.
- Commissioner Leonhardt and his staff have attended over 100 stakeholder meetings, workshops and other events since January to promote West Virginia Agriculture.

“Our role is not to be the state growers, but to be facilitators of public-private partnerships to help existing and new producers expand their operations. We want to find new markets, connect people who have aligned missions and start new and repair old relationships,” stressed Deputy Commissioner Joe Hatton. “It is a new day in agriculture and the department is excited to be leading the charge.”

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