

West Virginia Department of Agriculture

Walt Helmick, Commissioner



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NEWS RELEASE
February 4, 2016

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SPONSORING FOOD SAFETY CLASSES DURING SMALL FARM CONFERENCE

Charleston, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) will sponsor a variety of food safety classes in conjunction with the West Virginia Small Farm Conference, to be held Feb. 25-27 at the Charleston Civic Center.

- The “Better Process Control School” will kick off ahead of the conference on Wednesday, Feb. 24. The two-day class starts at 8 a.m. in room 202 and is aimed at producers who make specialty products that are sealed in jars or cans. Cost is \$150 for West Virginia residents and \$250 for out-of-state residents. Lunch is not included either day, but numerous restaurants are within easy walking distance of the Civic Center. Contact Teresa Halloran at 304-558-2210 or thalloran@wvda.us for more information.
- The one-day “Good Handling Practices / Good Agricultural Practices” (GHP / GAP) class will also be held Feb. 24. It starts at 8:30 a.m. in room 203 and is an introduction to farmers on how to harvest, clean and store fresh produce in a safe manner. Although valuable in and of itself, the course is also the first step in a voluntary audit program required by larger wholesalers and retailers of their food vendors. Cost is \$40 and includes materials and lunch.
- For the first time, the WVDA-sponsored slate of classes will feature “Food Safety Investigation” instructor training. This train-the-trainer course is aimed at agriculture and science teachers, Extension agents, or others who want a curriculum they can use to teach food safety principles. It will be held in Parlor B on Thursday, Feb. 25 starting at 8:30 a.m. The \$35 cost includes lunch.

Deadline for registration is Feb. 19 and space is limited. Visit <http://www.smallfarmcenter.ext.wvu.edu/events/conference> for more information and an online registration link. Hotel and restaurant information can also be found at that site.

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