

West Virginia Department of Agriculture

Walt Helmick, Commissioner



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Department of Agriculture Cutting Ribbon on Huntington Aggregation Center Tuesday

Charleston, W.Va. – The first of several regional aggregation centers for West Virginia farmers will open on Tuesday, June 28, at 11 a.m. in Huntington, West Virginia Agriculture Commissioner Walt Helmick has announced.

The facility is located at the former West Virginia National Guard (WVNG) Armory at 800 Virginia Ave. on the city's west side. The project is a partnership between the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) and the WVNG.

The purpose of the facility is to assist West Virginia's small farmers and to re-commercialize agricultural industries that once were common in the Mountain State. It will help diversify the economies of surrounding counties by providing farmers with more marketing options.

The center - which will serve farmers from Jackson, Mason, Putnam, Lincoln, Wayne and Cabell Counties - currently houses a multi-purpose root crop processing and packaging line, a black walnut sheller and a honey extractor. Plans are to expand the center in the future to include cleaning and packing lines for leafy vegetables and tomatoes.

The root crop line will be used to process potatoes being grown through the Potato Demonstration Pilot Program, a joint effort of WVDA, the West Virginia Conservation Agency and the Western and Guyan Conservation Districts.

The event is open to regional media and the public. Commissioner Helmick will be joined by numerous West Virginia farmers, wholesale buyers and purchasing agents along with city, county, state and federal officials at the event, including Third District Congressman Evan Jenkins, WVNG Adjutant General James Hoyer and Huntington Mayor Steve Williams.

For more information contact Butch Antolini, WVDA Director of Communications and Marketing, at 304-558-3708 or by email at bantolini@wvda.us.

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