



## MONONGALIA TECH CENTER TO GET INTO LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION WITH NEW HIGH TUNNEL

**Charleston, W.Va.** – Monongalia County Technical Center (MTEC) students hope to be growing and supplying local food to school cafeterias when construction of a high tunnel on school property is completed.

A groundbreaking ceremony will be held Tuesday, October 6 at 2:30 p.m. at the school, located on Mississippi Street in Morgantown. The high tunnel was donated to MTEC by the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA).

Nancy Napolillo, director of the school, looks forward to another means of hands-on learning for her students.

“There is so much opportunity here, from our Pre-K students up, to learn about growing your own food, about nutrition, and construction and research and science,” said Napolillo. “Once it is constructed, many of our MTEC programs will be utilizing it to enhance their individual curriculums.”

Commissioner Helmick also sees great potential in the project.

“We want to educate our youth about the potential of growing our own food, keeping our food dollars in state,” said Commissioner Helmick. “It seemed a natural fit to place the high tunnel at MTEC where they have a Pro-Start program for one, and many other educational programs that can benefit from management of the project.”

The high tunnel is one of a number WVDA is planning to construct throughout the state to encourage students to consider agriculture as a profession, to demonstrate the ability of West Virginia to produce its own food, and as a way to encourage healthy eating habits.

MTEC plans for the tunnel to be growing fresh produce by next spring. For more information on the high tunnel project, contact MTEC at 304-291-9240.

###