

Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture
KENT A. LEONHARDT



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WVDA ANNOUNCES COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE FOR A DAY CONTEST

Charleston, W.Va. – Ever wonder what it would be like to be West Virginia’s Commissioner of Agriculture? Students from across the state now have a chance to find out. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) has announced a competition for students ages 9-18 to serve as honorary Commissioners of Agriculture during the State Fair of West Virginia. The contest will run from July 5th through August 2nd.

“We have to inspire more of our young people to pursue careers in agriculture,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “Every year, the average age of our farmers increases. Our nation must do something to replace the aging farmer with a new generation.”

To enter the contest, students can submit their presentations to the [West Virginia Department of Agriculture website](#) or to (jensmith@wvda.us). The theme for this year’s contest is “Local Food: Why it Matters”. Acceptable forms for entry are the following: audio visual presentations such as photography or videos and written essays and poems, short stories and academic papers. All submissions must be received by August 2nd.

“The hope is, if students see all the aspects of agriculture first hand, it may open up their eyes to careers they never knew existed,” stated Department of Education Agriculture, Science and Natural Resources Cluster Assistant Director Jason Hughes. “This is a great opportunity and I hope our students, especially FFA and 4-H members, take advantage of it.”

Those students who are chosen to serve as Honorary Commissioner of Agriculture, will be given an encompassing tour of the State Fair of West Virginia. They will meet with Commissioner Kent Leonhardt, take part in events during the fair and meet various staff from every division of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. Additionally, any winning submissions will be showcased in the September edition of the *Market Bulletin*.

For more information or to submit an entry, contact Jennifer Smith jensmith@wvda.us or 304-558-3708.

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