

Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture
KENT A. LEONHARDT



304-558-3550

agriculture.wv.gov



Facebook: West Virginia Department of Agriculture



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Contact: Crescent Gallagher
Communications Director
304/558-3708; 304/380-3922 (cell)
cgallagher@wvda.us

WVDA COUNTRY STORE BREAKS RECORD



Charleston, WV - West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) has released the sales numbers for the West Virginia Country Store. The store, which featured West Virginia grown products, was open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during the 10-day State Fair of West Virginia. Total net sales came in at \$61,028.38, a record for the store.

"Couldn't be happier with the success of the store. It was a huge hit with state fair visitors," said West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. "Most importantly, we provided a venue for our producers to sell their value-added products and gain exposure to in and out of state travelers."

In recent years, the store was consigned to a single farmers' market. This year, Commissioner Leonhardt returned the country store to a similar format used by the Gus Douglas administration. WVDA employees ran the store with 35 vendors participating.

"Vendors were extremely happy with the store. Having them sample their products provided a unique, interactive feature which visitors enjoyed," said WVDA Agriculture Business Development Director

Cassey Bowden. "This was a great way for producers to see if they are ready to take their businesses to the next step or explore new markets."

In addition to sampling and wine tasting, the country store hosted the West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association, who spun maple cotton candy, as well as an apiary display to showcase West Virginia's growing honey industry.

"We were glad the country store made a comeback this year. We believe this will add another attraction for our fair visitors," said State Fair of West Virginia CEO Kelly Collins. "We saw a small mid-week bump in traffic as everybody wanted to visit the store."

West Virginia Country Store by the Numbers:

- Total Sales: \$61,028.38
- Total Product Sales: \$36,397.88
- Total Wine Sales: \$24,630.5
- Total Transactions: 3,800 (approx.)
- Average Transaction: \$9.50
- Top sellers: maple syrup (\$7,800), bath & body (\$4,900), condiments (\$3,300), honey (\$3,900), mixes (\$3,900)

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