

Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture  
**KENT A. LEONHARDT**



304-558-3550

agriculture.wv.gov



Facebook: West Virginia Department of Agriculture



Twitter: @WVDeptofAg

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**December 5, 2017**

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

## **WVDA ENCOURAGES FARMS TO PARTICIPATE IN 2017 AG CENSUS**

**Charleston, W.Va.** – The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is encouraging all farmers and farm operations to participate in the 2017 Census of Agriculture. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) began mailing the survey in late November.

“The census allows the USDA and WVDA to get a clear picture on the status of agriculture in our state. Several funding streams are also dependent upon this data,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “Producers should participate. It matters to West Virginia.”

The census will be mailed in several phases through December. Farm operations of all sizes, which produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2017, are included in the census. The census is the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every state and county in the nation.

“Reporting on the upcoming 2017 Census of Agriculture will give West Virginia producers the opportunity to shape programs and initiatives that benefit young and beginning farmers as well help expand access to resources for women, veteran and minority farms,” said West Virginia State Statistician Charmaine Wilson. “Census data is often used to aid producers who wish to diversify into new markets or who want to grow specialty and organic crops.”

Producers can respond to the census online or by mail. The deadline to respond is February 5, 2018. All information will be kept confidential and will only be used for statistical purposes.

For more information, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) or call (800) 727-9540.

###