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WVDA Now Accepting Farmers Market Vendor Permits

Charleston, WV - The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is now accepting farmers market vendor permits as established in Senate Bill 375. The legislation passed during the 2018 Legislative Session and went into effect June 8th of this year. Rules regulating the manufacturing and sale of acidified cottage foods are currently out for public comment until July 27th.

“The intention was to create an avenue for entrepreneurship. We hope the allowance of direct sales for certain acidified foods will be a boost to our small producers,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “Advocates have been working on this issue for several years.”

Those producers interested in obtaining a permit must pay a \$35 fee, pass an initial inspection and follow several other regulations. The following products, but not limited to, are applicable for this permit: pickled products, sauces, salsas, fermented products, acidified fruits and vegetables and all farm and food products that are required to be time or temperature-controlled. Commodities such as breads, cakes, candies, honey, tree syrup, apple butter, molasses, standardized, nondietary jams and jellies and dehydrated fruits and vegetables are exempt from this permit. Selling fresh, uncut product does not require a permit.

“Our top priority is to ensure a safe, reliable food system. Throughout this process, we have worked with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, local health departments and numerous stakeholders to come up with rules and regulations for producers. The goal was to find a compromise between good government and economic development,” Leonhardt said.

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Those producers who have already obtained a 2018 food establishment permit from their local health department do not need to pay for a farmers market vendor permit this year but must still submit a registration form with the WVDA.

For a registration form or more information, contact the WVDA at farmersmarkets@wvda.us or 304-558-2227.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture protects plant, animal and human health through a variety of scientific, regulatory and consumer protection programs. The Commissioner of Agriculture is one of six statewide elected officials who sits on the Board of Public Works.

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