



**Media Contact:**

Name: Crescent Gallagher  
Title: Communications Director  
Phone: 304-380-3922  
Email address:  
[cgallagher@wvda.us](mailto:cgallagher@wvda.us)

March 19, 2018

---

## WVDA SEEKING GROWERS FOR 2018 STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL SALE

---

**Charleston, WV** - The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is seeking fresh, West Virginia grown strawberries for this year's West Virginia Strawberry Festival. The department is hosting a "Strawberry Market" planned during the festival on May 18th and 19th.

"West Virginia has such diverse terrains and climates throughout the state. This event is a great opportunity for West Virginia's farmers to showcase the variety of crops that can be grown locally," said West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. "For residents of the area, it's a reminder of West Virginia's agricultural heritage."

Sponsored by the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA), the festival, and the City of Buckhannon, the sale is open to any West Virginia grower who can deliver berries to the sale. Berries can also be entered in the "Sweetest Berry" contest and auction next door to the sale.

"At one time, the Upshur County area grew a surplus of strawberries that were shipped out of state following the festival. One report from the Upshur County Historical Society notes that more than 1,500 gallons of berries were shipped to Pittsburgh," Leonhardt said. "Over the years, that supply was replaced by berries from large-scale, out-of-state producers."

The early timing of the festival has been problematic for growers who have a difficult time getting ripe berries in mid-May. However, the increasing prevalence of high tunnels, low-cost, unheated greenhouse structures, makes fresh berries in mid-May a more practical proposition than in the past.

Interested growers should contact event organizer Buddy Davidson at 304-541-5932, or [bdavidson@wvda.us](mailto:bdavidson@wvda.us).



