



**Media Contact:**

Crescent Gallagher  
Communications Director  
304-380-3922  
[cgallagher@wvda.us](mailto:cgallagher@wvda.us)

January 7, 2019

---

## WVDA Soliciting Vendors for Winter Blues Farmers Market

---

**Charleston W.Va.** -- The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is now taking applications for vendors who wish to participate in the Winter Blues Farmers Market. The market will take place Saturday, Feb. 16, 1-5 p.m. at the Charleston Coliseum and Conference Center. The Winters Blues Farmers Market originally took place in 2009 as a way to increase access to fresh foods outside the growing season.

“The Winter Blues Farmers Market is a great event that highlights West Virginia food and agriculture-based artisan and crafted products,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “As innovations allow farmers to extend the growing season, climate is becoming less of a factor on what and when we can eat locally. This is a great opportunity for producers to showcase their businesses.”

Applications are available on the WVDA’s website at <https://agriculture.wv.gov>. Vendors in years past sold everything from just-bottled maple syrup to heirloom popcorn, farm-fresh eggs to goats’ milk soap. Producers will also have fresh vegetables grown in greenhouses and high tunnels in the middle of winter. Craft items must use materials produced or grown in West Virginia. Booths are \$75 per vendor.

“We have to get folks to start treating agribusiness like any other. Part of that is an awareness that agricultural products are available even in the colder seasons,” Leonhardt said. “We hope to expand on past successful markets and have an even larger group of vendors this year.”

Last year’s Winter Blues featured 59 vendors, thousands of shoppers and \$36,000 in sales. All the money went straight to the producers. This year, organizers hope to feature even more West Virginia Grown products.

-more-



For questions or more information, contact Connie Tolley at 304-558-2210 or [ctolley@wvda.us](mailto:ctolley@wvda.us).

*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.*

###

