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## WVDA and Partners to Host Mixers Promoting Producer/Buyer Relationship

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**Charleston, WV** - The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA), in partnership with Eastern West Virginia Community & Technical College, West Virginia University Extension Services and Blue Ridge Community & Technical College, will host two Ag Action Network Producer/Buyer Mixers in April. The events are free to attend.

“If we are going to tap into the local food movement in West Virginia, we have to get everybody on the same page. The biggest hurdle is understanding what markets exist and the demands within them,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “We encourage all interested parties to attend and be a part of the conversation.”

The goal is to encourage buyers and producers to work together to satisfy the demands of local restaurants and institutions with the ultimate goal of increasing the number of products used from in state producers. The first mixer is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the South Branch Inn, 1500 US Hwy 220, Moorefield, 26836. Those interested may register by emailing Tina Metzger at [tina.metzer@easternwv.edu](mailto:tina.metzer@easternwv.edu).

The second mixer will be held the following day, Wednesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College, 13650 Apple Harvest Drive, Martinsburg, 25403. Those interested may register by emailing Morgan Seeley at [mseeley@blueridgectc.edu](mailto:mseeley@blueridgectc.edu).

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“With a renewed emphasis on the local and regional food movement, more consumers not only want to know where their food comes from, but maintain healthier diets. The pair of mixers have been organized to help introduce producers to potential buyers, discuss the benefits of a regional food movement and share challenges from both the producer and buyer viewpoint,” said Executive Director of Eastern West Virginia Community & Technical College’s Institute for Rural Entrepreneurship and Economic Development’s Biz Launchpad Tina Metzger.

For additional information or questions, please contact WVDA Marketing Specialist Nathan Bergdoll 304-538-2397 or [nbergdoll@wvda.us](mailto:nbergdoll@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.*

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