

Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture
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NEWS RELEASE

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WVDA TO HONOR 2017 WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AT STATE FAIR OF WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston, WV - tapping maple trees for sweet water or raising a herd of cattle, this year's four honorees work hard to make their agribusinesses a success. Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt will recognize this year's recipients at a reception on August 13 during the State Fair of West Virginia.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture began honoring Women in Agriculture in 2010. Since then 42 women, including this year's honorees, have been recognized for their significant contributions to the agriculture industry.

"Now more than ever, women are pursuing opportunities in agriculture at a higher rate than their male counterparts. From traditional livestock operations, to floriculture, agribusiness, agritourism and specialty crop operations, women are strongly leading in many emerging agricultural fields. This is a chance to honor their hard work, entrepreneurial spirit and innovation," said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt.

AMY MARTIN

LOVERS LANE FARMS/

MOUNTAINVIEW VETERINARY SERVICES

HARDY COUNTY

Amy grew up on a poultry, beef and crop operation in Old Fields. Early on, Amy was actively engaged in beef cattle marketing operations through the South Branch Valley Livestock Exchange. She also worked full-time as a broiler service technician for Pilgrim's Pride Corporation. Mrs. Martin and her husband Bill operate Lovers Lane Farm, one of the largest family diversified agricultural operations in the state of West Virginia.

Amy soon noticed the need for additional professional veterinary services and amenities in the cattle-rich Eastern Panhandle. Working with Doctors Isaiah and Anna Smith, Amy opened another branch of Mountain View Veterinary Services, providing a full line of competitively priced animal medicines and vaccines as well as bulk and custom feeds, minerals and supplements. Amy is widely known through the surrounding counties for her knowledgeable and dependable customer service.

Amy's future goals include implementing the use of computerized record keeping and data analysis that will ultimately improve the efficiency of not only the farm's herd, but those of her customers.

Amy resides in Moorefield with her husband and sons Will and Wyatt.

PAMELA YOST

PLEASANT VALLEY FARM

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

MONONGALIA COUNTY

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Pam began her agriculture career at an early age when she gathered black walnuts to sell. She used the money to purchase a horse. Knowing that she wanted a career in agriculture, Pam attended WVU and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Natural Resources and a Master's in Agriculture Economics.

Pam is the 4th generation to operate Pleasant Valley Farm. Charolais cattle, horses, backyard poultry and hay are her current enterprises. Pam also enjoys gardening and donates the garden and orchard surplus to the local food pantry. A Watershed Economist with NRCS for 27 years, Pam utilizes her expertise to benefit rural and agricultural communities by managing several different kinds of water resource infrastructure projects in WV through the Small Watershed Program. Among her list of accomplishments is the Dunloup Creek Voluntary Floodplain Buyout located in Fayette County which is used as a national model.

Pam serves as a board member, treasurer, and public information chair with the Monongalia County Farm Bureau, is a member of the Monongalia County Fair Board and secretary of the Barn Committee and a member of the FFA Advisory Committee for University High School. Pam also serves as a WV Envirothon judge.

Pam resides on the family farm and enjoys gardening, canning, quilting and sewing.

BETTY HICKEY

VALLEY BEND FARM
MARSHALL COUNTY

At a young age, Betty recalls working alongside her father on the family farm, in operation since 1760. The family dairy operation was dismantled in the 1990s but with the help of her son and the support of her daughter, Betty has transformed the acreage into produce production and an agritourism destination. Sweet corn is the predominant vegetable. Betty is also known for her ability to produce the hard to find WV63 tomato variety from seed. Her U-pick pumpkin patch features 20-plus varieties of pumpkins and gourds and is a field trip destination for local Head Start programs and Sand Hill Elementary School students.

Betty became a Master Gardener in the first class held in West Virginia. She served as the director of the All-American Rose Garden at the Hare Krishna's Palace of Gold for 28 years until retirement in 2011. Under her direction, the garden was awarded the "High Maintenance Award" for 10 consecutive years. Betty was involved in 4-H as a child and the Marshall County Fair remains an important part of her summer. An active member of the Community Educational Outreach Service, Betty works diligently to promote the organization.

Betty resides in Wheeling.

BRITNEY FARRIS

FAMILY ROOTS FARM
BROOKE COUNTY

Following her graduation from Waynesburg University, Britney moved back to the family farm which has been in the Hervey family since 1775. She is the 7th generation to manage the farm and established the Family Roots Farm brand in 2012 with 40 maple taps. The operation has expanded into an agritourism destination with more than 1,000 maple taps, six acres of produce, a one acre u-pick strawberry patch, a crop of sweet sorghum and two high tunnels. Produce is marketed directly to customers at farmers' markets, fairs and festivals. She also offers a small-scale CSA to customers. Many doors have opened for Family Roots Farm after winning the International Maple Sugar Award in 2015.

Britney began managing the Brooke County Farmers' Market in 2015, expanding the number of vendors and doubling the customer base. She assists with the Brooke County Agriculture Day for all 5th graders in the county. This two-day event reaches approximately 230 students. She is also actively involved with the Brooke County Kids Garden.

Britney resides in Wellsburg with her husband, Charlie.

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