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Weed-Free Straw and Forage Certification Program Opens

Charleston, WV - The West Virginia Associated Crop Growers Inc. (WVACG) has announced the availability of a weed-free straw and forage certification for 2018. This new program offers West Virginia growers a chance to add value to straw and forage crops free of invasive, noxious weeds.

“Many developers and land managers use certified mulches as part of their soil erosion control program. Certification assures that invasive species are not being introduced to these remote sites,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “We encourage farmers to take advantage of these programs.”

The WVACG is the official seed certification agency for West Virginia. Working in conjunction with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA), WVACG has been approved for certification of weed free straw by the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA). The NAISMA assures uniform participation and consistent standards by states and provinces.

“Ensuring contractors have access to the highest quality mulching straw is vital in preventing the spread of invasive seeds during mulching operations. Straw that helps reduce the spread of invasive, noxious weeds is a benefit,” said WVDA Plant Industries Director Tim Brown.

Interested producers must submit an application to WVACG, field inspections to verify weed-free status for a list of 62 species of invasive plants, as well as comply with labeling and storage standards. Application forms and cost information is available at: <https://www.wvacg.org/>.

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For more information, contact WVACG at 304-293-8822 or jkotcon@wvu.edu.

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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