

Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture
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NEWS RELEASE

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WEST VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE ADVISORY BOARD TO RELAUNCH

Charleston, WV - Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt announced the relaunch of the West Virginia Agriculture Advisory Board. The board was established with the founding of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) to develop a strategic plan for agriculture in the Mountain State. In the past, the met quarterly. However, it has been inactive for several years.

"Agriculture will and must be a part of West Virginia's effort to grow and diversify our economy. The Governor shares that same vision. We are glad he decided to help relaunch this board," stated Commissioner Leonhardt. "The hope is to establish a steering committee to come up with some out of the box thinking."

The state agriculture advisory board consists of the governor, the commissioner of agriculture and the director of the cooperative extension service of West Virginia University, ex officio. As well as developing a strategic plan for agriculture in West Virginia, the board is tasked with finding inefficiencies and duplication of agricultural services. A steering committee will be appointed by the three members of the board as dictated by West Virginia code.

"The goal, since we took over in January, has been to bring public and private partners together to grow agriculture in West Virginia. We held over 150 stakeholder meetings around the state, and we have found that too many organizations and people are working in silos. We can do so much more if we just start working together for a common goal," continued Leonhardt.

The board's first meeting will be July 31st, 2:00 p.m. at the Governor's Conference Room in the Capitol. An agenda will be posted and the meeting will be open to the public.

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