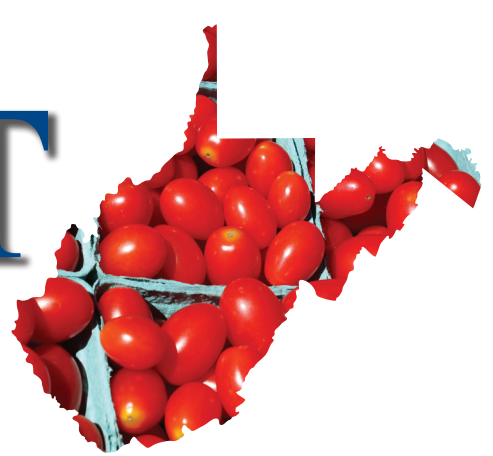


THE MARKET Bulletin

WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE



Kent A. Leonhardt, Commissioner

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Joseph L. Hatton, Deputy Commissioner

www.agriculture.wv.gov

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Kent's Reflections



Now that the State Fair of West Virginia has ended, the department and I have a chance to reflect. First and foremost, thank you to the dozens of WVDA personnel who played a role in a successful fair. Our staff worked day in and day out checking animals as well as promoting our state's agriculture industries over a two-week period. Secondly, thank you to the Fair Board of Directors and the CEO Kelly Collins. You all were simply a pleasure to be around and worked tirelessly to make the fair an experience everyone will remember. Lastly, thank you to everyone who visited us during the fair. From shopping in our country store to bringing animals to be shown, you made the fair a roaring success. If you didn't make it out to the fair this year, I suggest you put it on your calendar for next summer.

To start this month's reflection on a high note, our West Virginia Country Store was a huge success. Sales topped \$60,000! We know the store was a big hit because we had customers who came back a second and third time. The most important thing our store provided was a venue for our producers to sell their products as well as gain exposure to in and out of state travelers.

The country store was a success, but it was our youth that stole the show. I am so unbelievably proud of our Honorary Commissioners of the Day (see story on page 4). Maeva is making a big impact through her elementary school's high tunnel. Elizabeth, a former poultry festival teen queen, wants to be the first female Commissioner of Agriculture. Emily learned how women in agriculture are a growing force. Julianna showed her award-winning heifer. Devin met FFA and 4-H members who are changing

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Hops and Dreams

Jonathan Ward comes from a family of miners. He spends his days underground making a living, but he wants to harvest more than just coal. The Raleigh County native purchased Lost Ridge Farm in Fairdale two years ago. His crop of choice – hops, the main ingredient in beer.

"My business partner was the one who got me into this. He also worked in the coal industry. One day we had a layoff. He came over and we got to talking. He said 'Let's look into this hops thing.' It kind of took off from there," says Ward.

Between time with his family and his shifts at the mine, Ward did a lot of research and crunched a lot of numbers, learning all he could about the hops industry.

"Hops just seemed like a really good back-up plan for me. The craft beer industry is just booming right now. It's going to continue to boom. Take Michigan for example. They have hundreds and hundreds of acres of hops up there. Their economic revenue from hops is \$2.1 billion dollars!"

However, Ward likes to point out this is not a get-rich quick scheme. There's a lot of hard work involved. Unlike most crops, hops need some infrastructure to reach their full potential. Ward built a grid trellis system in his front yard using telephone poles, cables and twine.

"It's basically a straight-line system. We've integrated side cables to keep the poles square and not leaning. It is really strong. We get some high winds down here, and I don't want it to move," explains Ward. "I started out with 50 plants last season. We



planted early and within a month they were 6 inches out of the ground. That spurred me to buy 50 more plants. It's just amazing how fast they grow."

With lots of help from his wife Tiffany and his brother-in-law, Ward put an additional 180 plants into the ground this spring.

"There are hundreds of varieties of hops. The difference between them is their acid levels. I've got three types," explains Ward. "Cascade is the workforce hop. It's medium to low acid that's used in everything from light ale to an IPA. Centennial hops are a little heavier. It's about 9 percent acid. It's an IPA hop. Zeus is highly acidic, about 15 percent. You can really taste the hop in the beer. They make good stouts."

On average, each plant produces 2.2 lbs. of hops. It takes about 10 ounces of hops to brew 10 gallons of beer. Last season, Ward sold his first crop of hops to Red Hill Brewing Company in Concord, North Carolina. He hopes to continue that partnership. This year he's also in talks with Weathered Ground Brewing, just down the road in Cool Ridge.

"I'm really liking the same county/same brewery business concept with Weathered Ground Brewery. I think it's going to be huge for the area," stresses Ward. "There's not many places in West Virginia you'll be able to go and get fresh brewed beer with fresh, locally grown hops, especially with both coming from the same county. That's almost unheard of in West Virginia."

Looking out over his hop yard, Ward spots his wife and their two young daughters, 2-year-old Maezlyn and 6-month old Oakleigh, heading towards him.

"I'm pumped. This is basically everything I've put my hard work into for the past two years. My ultimate goal is doing this as my full-time job, getting out of the mines. This is for them," he points at his children. "I want them to have opportunities, the opportunity to stay here, stay in West Virginia."

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the face of agriculture. Lastly, Sophie proved that students with Down syndrome can have a big future in farming. Without a doubt, each young person represented hope for our state and the future of agriculture.

Speaking of the future of agriculture, the youth who competed in the livestock shows made us reflect on the educational programs we have in our state. It is time to start a real conversation about the impact and funding of programs like FFA and 4-H. These programs are proven to teach necessary skills essential for successful careers. I can't tell you how many times I have heard WVDA staff members refer to their days in FFA and 4-H. We must expand these current programs while creating more educational opportunities through new initiatives.

Opportunity is the keyword for an untapped group of farmers and producers. To figure out how we can help this group, our veterans, we must move our Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program forward. To do that, we held our first stakeholder meeting during the fair. Up to this

point, we have had various discussions and meetings about our program, but this was the first time we could get all the stakeholders in the same room. Veterans expressed their concerns while being connected with great organizations like Soldiers for Life. We made the day even more productive by signing a trademark agreement with the Homegrown By Heroes brand. This gives our veterans a competitive edge they did not have before.

Unfortunately, I must end this reflection with some sad news. Right before the start of the state fair, our Director of Regulatory & Environmental Affairs Division Herma Johnson passed away. She was with the WVDA for almost 44 years. Herma will be sadly missed, but she will forever be in our hearts.

Until next month,
Semper Fi *Kent*

West Virginia Department of Agriculture Welcomes New State Veterinarian

Please welcome Dr. James Maxwell to the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) as the new state veterinarian and director of animal health. Dr. Maxwell comes to the WVDA after working for 16 years with the Florida Department of Agriculture (FDAC) where he served in several different roles.



in Veterinary Medicine from Colorado State University.

Dr. Maxwell has seen a little bit of everything during his time as a veterinarian. One of the roles he had with the FDAC was the Bureau Chief of Animal Disease Control. In that position, Dr.

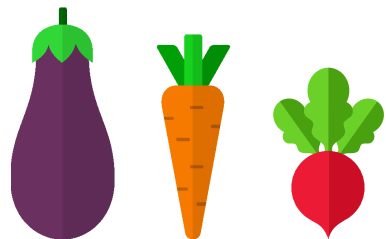
Maxwell maintained operational oversight of more than 70 personnel statewide and occasionally acted as Florida's state veterinarian.

Dr. Maxwell was also a field veterinarian, laboratory staff veterinarian and laboratory director

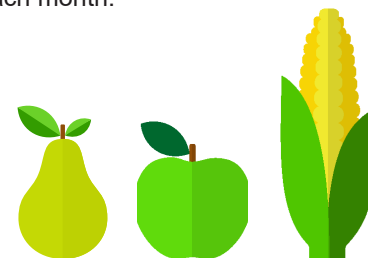
for two animal disease diagnostics labs during his time with the FDAC.

He's no stranger to West Virginia. While in veterinary school, Dr. Maxwell worked a summer as an extern at Oak Hill Animal Hospital alongside his brother. Dr. Maxwell's other brother earned a forestry degree at West Virginia University. All three Maxwell brothers have now spent time working in the Mountain State.

Starting in October, Dr. Maxwell will become a regular in the Market Bulletin. "Tips from the Vet" will provide vital information for the health and safety of our farm animals each month.



Little Farmer



Mason McClure may be small but his goals are lofty. "I want to be a farmer when I grow up," says the 6-year-old from Shrewsbury. "I'm going to buy me some property and get me some animals." And he's well on his way.

This summer, Mason harvested a garden full of vegetables. As he walks through the 20 x 8 plot, he spouts off the names of each plant like an old pro. "We've got cucumbers, squash, some bell peppers and some banana peppers, zucchini. Then I've got Roma tomatoes and beefsteak tomatoes and I've got some cherry tomatoes. Over there's where I had my carrots and broccoli."

Mason's mom Brooke says it all started with a toy. "We got him a little play barn. He used to set out all the animals that came with it. Then he told us the next thing he needed was a garden."

Mason spent the winter deciding what to plant, visiting the Winter Blues Farmers' Market in Charleston back in February with his family to pick up some ideas. And as spring arrived, he made it clear he was very serious about his garden. "Me and the family, we built this garden because I wanted to farm. We went down to the farmers' market and got all kinds of vegetables. Me and Paw Paw dug up the whole backyard to get this garden."

Brooke wasn't sure how committed Mason would be once everything was in the ground. "I thought he might get bored with it, and I'd end up being the one to take care of it. But every morning he wakes up, looks out the window and he'll say, 'Let's see what we can harvest today!'"

Not only did Mason plant the vegetables, he also tended to them. He kept up with the

weeding and watering. Harvesting was by far his favorite.

"I love watching the vegetables grow. Almost every day I see something ready to pick. It's fun!" Mason's project didn't just stop at growing



the garden. His plants yielded more veggies than the family could eat, so he decided to set up a farm stand in his front yard. The neighbors came flocking to buy his produce. Sherry Bradberry

was one of his first customers. "What nice tomatoes, Mason! I'll take two and give me some cucumbers as well."

Not only did the farm stand give Mason a chance to perfect his salesmanship, it also served as a math lesson. "Ok! That's a dollar for each tomato and a dollar for the cucumbers. That makes...um...three dollars, please." For those neighbors who couldn't make it to the farm stand, Mason made home deliveries using his kid-sized John Deere tractor.

Mason is already looking forward to a bigger garden next year. For now, he'll keep harvesting those vegetables.

“Look...
I see another
zucchini
popping up!”





Apples to Onions? It's All in Season!

Did you know West Virginia ranks 9th in the country when it comes to apple production? September is prime apple time in the Mountain State. Serve up some apple-inspired dishes this month to wow your family and friends. We have a couple suggestions. Meanwhile, the gifts of the garden just keep on giving. From onions and peppers to squash and cabbage, take advantage of that fresh produce to create some mouth-watering dishes!

Roasted Vegetables

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| 1 small butternut squash, cubed | 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme |
| 2 red bell peppers, seeded and diced | 2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary |
| 1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed | ¼ cup olive oil |
| 3 yukon gold potatoes, cubed | 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar |
| 1 red onion, cubed | salt and pepper to taste |

Preheat oven to 475° F. In a large bowl, combine the squash, red bell peppers, sweet potato and yukon gold potatoes. Separate the red onion quarters into pieces, and add them to the mixture.

In a small bowl, stir together thyme, rosemary, olive oil, vinegar, salt and pepper. Toss with vegetables until they are coated. Spread evenly on a large roasting pan.

Roast for 35 to 40 minutes in the preheated oven, stirring every 10 minutes or until vegetables are cooked through and browned.

Creamy Apple Slaw

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| ¼ cup sour cream | 3 apples, peeled, cored, diced |
| ½ cup white sugar | 2 stalks celery, chopped |
| 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar | 3 green onions, thinly sliced |
| 2 tablespoons dry ranch dressing mix | salt and pepper to taste |
| 1 8 ounces shredded cabbage and carrots | |

Whisk sour cream, sugar, vinegar and ranch dressing mix together in a large bowl; fold in cabbage mix, apples, celery and green onion. Toss mixture to coat; season with salt and pepper. Cover bowl tightly with plastic wrap and chill until flavors blend, 20 minutes to 4 hours.



Old Fashioned Apple Dumplings

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| 1 recipe pastry for double-crust pie | ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg |
| 6 large crisp apples, peeled and cored | 3 cups water |
| ½ cup butter | 2 cups white sugar |
| ¾ cup brown sugar | 1 teaspoon vanilla extract |
| 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon | |

Preheat oven to 400° F. Butter a 9x13 inch pan. On a lightly floured surface, roll pastry into a large rectangle, about 24 by 16 inches. Cut into 6 square pieces. Place an apple on each pastry square with the cored opening facing upward. Cut butter into 8 pieces. Place 1 piece of butter in the opening of each apple; reserve remaining butter for sauce. Divide brown sugar between apples, poking some inside each cored opening and the rest around the base of each apple. Sprinkle cinnamon and nutmeg over the apples.

With slightly wet fingertips, bring one corner of pastry square up to the top of the apple, then bring the opposite corner to the top and press together. Bring up the two remaining corners, and seal. Slightly pinch the dough at the sides to completely seal in the apple. Repeat with the remaining apples. Place in prepared baking dish.

In a saucepan, combine water, white sugar, vanilla extract and reserved butter. Place over medium heat and bring to a boil in a large saucepan. Boil for 5 minutes or until sugar is dissolved. Carefully pour over dumplings. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes. Place each apple dumpling in a dessert bowl, and spoon some sauce over the top.

Slow Cooker Pulled Pork

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| 1 (2 pounds) pork tenderloin | 1 (18 ounce) bottle barbecue sauce |
| 1 (12 fluid ounce) can or bottle of root beer | 8 hamburger buns, lightly toasted |

Place the pork tenderloin in a slow cooker; pour the root beer over the meat. Cover and cook on low until well cooked and the pork shreds easily, 6 to 7 hours. Note: the actual length of time may vary according to individual slow cooker. Drain well. Stir in barbecue sauce. Serve over hamburger buns.

Old Fashioned Onion Rings

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| 1 large onion, cut into ¼ inch slices | 1 cup milk |
| 1 ¼ cups all purpose flour | ¾ cup bread crumbs |
| 1 teaspoon baking powder | seasoned salt to taste |
| 1 teaspoon salt | 1 quart oil for frying |
| 1 egg | |

Heat the oil in a deep-fryer to 365° F. Separate the onion slices into rings and set aside. In a small bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder and salt.

Dip the onion slices into the flour mixture until they are all coated; set aside. Whisk the egg and milk into the flour mixture using a fork. Dip the floured rings into the batter to coat, then place on a wire rack to drain until the batter stops dripping. The wire rack may be placed over a sheet of aluminum foil for easier clean up. Spread the bread crumbs out on a plate or shallow dish.

Place rings one at a time into the crumbs, and scoop the crumbs up over the ring to coat. Give it a hard tap as you remove it from the crumbs. The coating should cling very well. Repeat with remaining rings.

Deep fry the rings a few at a time for 2 to 3 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove to paper towels to drain. Season with seasoning salt and serve.





Honorary Commissioner of Agriculture for the Day

Six students, ranging in age from 9-16, served as Honorary Commissioners of Agriculture for the Day during the State Fair of West Virginia, August 10-19. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) sponsored the contest with the theme "Local Food: Why It Matters." Each student entered an essay, video or photo presentation explaining the importance of locally grown food and how it impacts the state's economy, environment and health.

"We wanted to provide a firsthand experience for students across the state to see what careers in agriculture look like. There was no better way to do that than to shadow my staff and myself during one of our busiest times of the year," stressed West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. "We hope these students took away a new appreciation for our food system after this experience."



Elizabeth Ours

Petersburg High School, Grant County

Elizabeth loves animals. The 16-years-old is a member of FFA and shows livestock at the Grant County Fair. She is a past winner of the Regional Creed and Public Speaking Contests. Her Supervised Agricultural Experience with FFA includes: pigs, strawberries, an aquaponics project and working in greenhouses. Elizabeth is a veteran of the state fair and shared her passion for agriculture with Commissioner Leonhardt.



Maeva Robinson

Rainelle Elementary, Greenbrier County

Maeva, 9, knows what it means to put in a hard day's work. She spends a few days a week after school working in the Rainelle Elementary high tunnel. Her parents built her a greenhouse at home to extend the planting season. She spends her summers working at the farmers' market. Maeva says, "Locally grown food matters because it builds the community and supports a clean environment." Maeva's favorite memory of her Fair experience was visiting the barns and getting up close with the animals.



Devin Price

Weir High School, Hancock County

Fourteen-year-old Devin has grown up on two family farms, one in Doddridge County, the other in the Eastern Panhandle. Devin's favorite thing on the farm are tractors, and he has been researching them since he was little. Devin grows beans, tomatoes, and peppers in his garden. He says, "Local food provides good, sustainable jobs for many members of the community." Devin had the honor of meeting Governor Jim Justice during the fair and taking part in a receiving line honoring FFA and 4-H members.



Sophie Slack

Hurricane Middle School, Putnam County

Thirteen-year-old Sophie loves to garden. She grows vegetables as well as flowers and aloe and loves to share her harvest with others.

She attends the West Virginia University Extension Service Camp. Sophie's favorite part of the Honorary Agriculture Commissioner for a Day experience was to hand out ribbons to the winners of the ewe show.



Emily Yates

East Hardy High School, Hardy County

At just 15-years-old, Emily Yates is a seasoned pro on the farm. She raises bulls, heifers, hogs, sheep and goats. Emily also grows corn, strawberries, and green beans on the farm. Emily placed 5th in showmanship with her goat at the state fair and showed off her animal to Commissioner Leonhardt during a tour of the barns.



Julianna Rexroad

Braxton County High School, Braxton County

In 2016, 13-year-old Julianna participated in the 4-H heifer project. She showed her registered Limousin heifer at Junior Nationals. Julianna likes working with her grandpa on his 300-acre farm. During the fair, Julianna showed not only a lamb but her prize cow as well.



WV Country Store a Huge Success!

Take an old idea, put a new twist on it and you have the WV Country Store at the State Fair of West Virginia. With more than \$61,000 in purchases over 10 days (August 10-19), the Country Store smashed all previous sales records for the Gus R. Douglass Agriculture Annex.

"We wanted to give visitors to the fair a chance to see and taste the best products made in West Virginia," explained Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. "If we want folks to start eating local, we have to show them there are quality products grown and produced right here at home."

From honey and maple syrup to soaps and salsa, 25 of the 35 vendors who participated in the store sampled their products during the

fair. For Out of this World Salsa, a 3-year-old company, it opened up new opportunities.

"Our experience at the fair was fabulous, wonderful! Not only did we sell a lot of product but for us, we've been able to network with so many people," said Lisa Simmons co-founder of the company.

One of the top selling products at the fair was WV maple syrup, racking up \$7,800 at the cash register. Members of the West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association took turns manning the cotton candy display and handing out syrup samples. The companies worked together to promote the industry as a whole.

"We had two different maple syrups open from two different producers showing folks it's the same product, but there's a distinct, different

taste for each company," explained Rachel Taylor of Frostmore Farm.

The WVDA staff plans to use feedback from the companies and customers at the WV Country Store to improve next year's experience.



Gardening 101: From Seeds to Harvest

WVU Extension Service Master Gardener Martha Ferrell loves the feel of dirt between her fingers. "It's one of those zen things, being one with nature in the fresh air, hands in the soil."

Ferrell was the perfect pick to teach beginning gardening classes for the West Virginia Department of Agriculture.

"We started from the beginning. We talked about the right tools to use in the garden, the appropriate dress from hats to sunscreen, making sure you drink plenty of water to stay hydrated and of course, how to grow plants."

More than two dozen adults took part in the first course at the Guthrie Agriculture Center near Charleston. It began with some classroom basics and then the students got their hands dirty, planting a nearly 5,000 square foot garden at the Guthrie complex.

"We planted everything from tomatoes to squash, zucchini and watermelon. The goal was to give

the students hands-on experience," explained Ferrell. "There's nothing like being outside on a beautiful day, feeling the soil, planting seeds and learning first-hand what you're doing." Ferrell sent each student home with their very own garden in the making. "We planted seeds in recycled egg cartons. It was a small container garden that they could take home with them and if they wanted, start planting," she explained.

Class two focused on pest control, pruning and summer planting. By that time, the WVDA garden was filled with produce ready to pick. A half dozen of the original students returned to reap their rewards, harvesting the vegetables and fruits to take home and enjoy at the dinner table.

"My hope is that these students took with them a love of starting a garden," said Ferrell. "When you're in the garden, you can just let things go and enjoy watching what you plant grow."

Farm Field Day

at Pruntytown State Farm (Taylor County)

September 9
10 am - 2 pm

Come learn and enjoy!

- Tim Blakely of Tim's Hoof Trimming
- Chris Jeffcoat - American Angus Association
- WVDA and WVU Extension staff
- Youth Activities

For more information, please contact Jon Hall, WVDA Senior Farm Manager, at 304-541-5460.



Sponsored by: The West Virginia Angus Association and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture



