Farming helps Veteran Heal Wounds

Eric Grandon is a success story, not the kind where a man makes millions of dollars and runs a major company, but rather a man rediscovering his passion for life. He has agriculture to thank.

Army Veteran Eric Grandon of Clay County credits farming and the Veterans to Agriculture program for giving him a new lease on life after suffering severe post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) following his military service. Calling work on his farm “serene,” this year Grandon will plant sorghum, peppers, tomatoes, squash, zucchini, cucumbers, green beans, cauliflower, corn, rainbow carrots and lettuce. He will sell his haul to the Kanawha and Clay County Farm to School programs.

Grandon, his wife Mary, and 4-year old daughter Abigail live on 95 acres of rolling land in Clay County where he now farms full time. It’s his sanctuary and a way to make a living thanks to the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture program.

It’s a big change from growing up in Ripley.

“I hated working in the garden. After Mary and I were married, I still hated to work in the garden,” he laughs.

At 19, Grandon joined the Army. He was stationed in California for a time. Just before the start of Operation Desert Storm, he was deployed to Turkey and spent most of the next two and a half years in the Middle East. When he returned home to Ovapa and Sugar Bottom Farm, he knew something was wrong. So did Mary.

“He didn’t want to socialize. He was on guard. He seemed lost and it was hard for him to talk about what he’d been through,” explains Mary.

Grandon left the Army in 1995 and joined the West Virginia National Guard. He went to college and became a physical therapy assistant at Charleston Area Medical Center. He was also getting counseling and coping. It wasn’t until September 11 that everything changed.

“On 9-11, the first thing I said when I saw that plane hit was, ‘I know I’m going back.’ I spent a year in Iraq, Najiriyah, and while I was there my mission was to get myself killed. It had already started boiling inside me,” he says.

After his tour of duty, he retired from the Guard and continued to work at the hospital, going through what he calls “the motions.” However, his mind wouldn’t let him forget the things he saw in the Middle East.

“I started a downward spiral. I was hospitalized in 2008. I had a horrendous flashback in 2011 that left me totally disabled,” says Grandon.

For the next two years, Grandon spent a lot of time looking out the picture window in his home and wondering the property not knowing what he was going to do or how he’d continue.

Former Ag Commissioner Gus Douglass Passes Away at 88

Former Agriculture Commissioner Gus R. Douglass passed away after a fall at his home March 19. He was 88. Commissioner Douglass’ long career with the WVDA started as an assistant commissioner in 1957 under then-Commissioner John T. Johnson. He went on to be elected Commissioner in 1964 and was elected 10 more times to lead the WVDA for 44 years. He worked tirelessly over the years promoting West Virginia’s rural initiatives, whether it be fairs and festivals or developing the WV Grown Program for West Virginia’s then-budding agribusiness sector.

One of Douglass’ first acts as Commissioner in 1965 was starting a state meat inspection program after witnessing potentially hazardous products entering the state.

DOUGLASS, cont. on page 2
West Virginia prepared if avian influenza reaches state

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is prepared if avian influenza (AI) shows up in the state. "We have dealt with AI in West Virginia in the past and we’ve incorporated what we’ve learned into our current emergency response plan," said Dr. Plumley. "Our poultry farms are very strict when it comes to biosecurity and we test every flock before they are moved.

West Virginia previously dealt with AI in 2002 and 2007. However, safeguards developed and refined following those incidents are no guarantee against AI today because of the way the disease appears to be spreading. The disease appears to be moving eastward in wild bird flyways, which makes cases in domesticated poultry difficult to predict and prevent. In the most recent incident, AI was first detected in Washington State and most recently in Kansas.

AI is not a threat to human health, but it is an enormous threat to the economic well-being of the U.S. poultry industry because of the implications the disease has on international trade. Foreign markets are quick to shut down U.S. agricultural imports at any sign of disease, despite geographic distances between incidents and this country’s top-quality animal health system.

A great deal of that system is found at the state level. And just because AI is spreading doesn’t mean that the efforts of agriculture agencies are for nothing.

"We hope the public takes actions to protect their chickens and is prepared to act quickly if flocks have to be quarantined or destroyed," said WVDA Agriculture Commissioner Walt Helmick.

"The steps we take certainly minimize the spread of these diseases, and the speed we can react to something is a critical factor in the amount of control we can exercise," said Dr. Plumley.

Agritourism Operators Target of WVU Extension Survey

If you’re an agritourism operator, the West Virginia University Extension Service is seeking your input through a survey intended to get a current snapshot of the state of the industry. The survey will address several key metrics and seeks to understand what sort of enterprises exist, the economic impact they have, challenges they face and ideas for future support programs. The survey can be found at bit.ly/1FTainR.

"We need to know where we are to determine the needs of the industry, and to demonstrate the economic impact of agritourism activities," said West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick.

"Agritourism is an emerging way for farmers to diversify income and make a direct connection to local consumers — but we need feedback from operators to be able to tailor our programs to be as effective as possible," said WVU Extension Service Agriculture Economics Specialist Dee Singh-Knights.

The study is a collaborative effort between the WVU Extension Service, West Virginia State University and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture.

For additional questions regarding the survey, please contact Dee Singh-Knights at 304-293-7606 or dosingh-knights@mail.wvu.edu.

DOUGLASS, cont.

His eye was also always on the next generation of potential farmers. He had deep roots with the state FFA organization and served both as state and national FFA president, the only West Virginian ever elected to the national post.

Calling his tenure, "an honor I did not foresee," Douglass announced he would not seek re-election in 2011 and retired to his farm in Mason County when his term ended in January 2013.

GRANDON, cont.

A chance meeting with former U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller in the fall of 2011 set him on a new path. He went to Washington to talk about the need for a program where veterans support veterans. Rockefeller put Grandon in contact with James McCormick, the director of the West Virginia Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture program. It’s aimed at getting veterans back to work, helping them recover by starting their own agribusinesses. That first phone conversation lasted four hours.

“It just clicked. It was like he and I were brothers,” according to Grandon.

McCormick convinced Grandon to give farming a try with some help from the state Department of Agriculture. Not long after, Grandon attended his first agriculture conference.

“He went to that first Farm to Farm conference and I’ve never seen him so excited,” says Mary. “He came back and I had to laugh because he’s the person who never wanted to work in the garden and now he’s all excited about building a fence around the garden.”

Grandon took more classes and attended more seminars to learn the basics of farming. In 2013, he and Mary, with the help of McCormick, planted their first crop — sorghum.

“I got a taste of farming and it was so serene, so...serene is the word I’m looking for,” explains Grandon.

The first harvest was nothing to brag about. In fact, Grandon isn’t ashamed to call it a “pitiful crop.” However, he says it saved his life.

“As a soldier, you’re trained for one thing. A farmer is trained to do the exact opposite, to bring life back into the earth,” says Grandon.

Last year’s crop was a lot more successful. Along with sorghum, he also grew peppers, tomatoes, squash, zucchini, cucumbers, and green beans. Grandon made contacts within the Clay County Farm to School program and sold most of his crop to the school system. This year he’s expanding the garden to include 1,500 pepper plants, two types of cauliflower, corn, rainbow carrots and eight different types of lettuce. All that will go to the Farm to School programs in Clay and Kanawha Counties.

Grandon is itching to get back out in the garden. “I get up every day and I have something to do that I love!”

The Grandons are by no means making money from their farming venture. They sunk nearly $500 into a greenhouse and another $11,000 into a new barn. However, Grandon hopes to change that with this year’s harvest. As for future plans, they include building a high tunnel and raising chickens.

Not only does the former soldier spend hours in his garden, he’s also become the unofficial spokesman for the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture program. He spreads the word about his story and how working with the earth has helped heal his wounds and given him purpose once again. "This has changed my life 100 percent,” explains Grandon. “If we can save one life, it’s well worth it. It’s done that for me.”

For more information on the West Virginia Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/Veterans-and-Warriors-to-Agriculture.

Livestock Auction Market Public Hearing Scheduled

West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick has announced a public hearing at 10 a.m. on April 20, 2015, to receive comments on the issuance of an operating permit for Wade’s Poultry and Small Animal Auction in Alderson. The hearing will be at the West Virginia Department of Agriculture’s (WVDA) Guthrie Agriculture Center near Sissonville, in Building 2, Room 202.

Marion Wade will be the operator and the market is to be housed at the old Alderson Livestock Market facility.

If you would like to comment about the issuance of this permit, you may appear in person at the hearing, or submit written comments no later than April 15, 2015, to: Walt Helmick, Commissioner of Agriculture, WVDA, 1900 Kanawha Blvd., E., Charleston, WV 25305.

WV Cattle Women invited to attend Region 1 American National Cattle Women Meeting

The Region 1 meeting of the American National Cattle Women (ANCW) will be held June 12-13, in Pittsburg, PA. The PA CattleWomen’s President, Kelsey Morgone invites all cattle women to the 3rd Annual Region Meeting even if they are not a member the group. “We are very excited to be hosting this year’s regional meeting and we welcome all cattle women in the area to attend! We will welcome any new and interested ladies,” Morgone said.

Region 1 Director, Kayla Alexander, is looking forward to meeting more West Virginia CattleWomen this year, as the group’s attendance is growing at the regional meetings. "We hope to see many attendees from West Virginia!”

Activities will begin on Friday, June 12. Dinner will be at 5:30 p.m. at a local downtown restaurant with the ANCW Business Meeting starting later that evening. Saturday morning will start off with a tour of the Pittsburgh Strip District and lunch. The afternoon meetings will kick off after lunch with a variety of speakers and discussions. You do not have to be a member of your state’s CattleWomen's Association or the ANCW to attend. Meeting will commence around 3:30 p.m.

For registration information, hotel and final agenda details will be available after May 1. For more information contact PA State President and Meeting Coordinator, Kelsey Morgone at kmorgan4@yahoo.com or Tracy Fitzsimmons at 304.558.2210 or tfitzsimmons@wvda.us.

The Pittsburgh Strip District and lunch. The afternoon meetings will kick off after lunch with a variety of speakers and discussions. You do not have to be a member of your state’s CattleWomen's Association or the ANCW to attend. Meeting will commence around 3:30 p.m.

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FFA State Sale Hits Fourth Highest Total in its History

The 72nd annual State Ham, Bacon and Egg Show and Sale was one for the record books. In just under three hours, FFA students raised $39,065.50 with their prized pork and eggs. That’s the fourth highest total in the show’s history. The big money went to the grand champions and reserve champions. They are: Megan Martin, Pine Grove FFA, Grand Champion Ham, $6,840; Justin Bassett, Pine Grove FFA, Grand Champion Bacon, $2,400; Curtis Tedrow, Cameron FFA, Grand Champion Eggs, $1,000; Rebeckah Barnette, Pine Grove FFA, Reserve Champion Ham, $2,090; Troy Collins, Tyler FFA, Reserve Champion Bacon, $700; Chelsea Smith, Cabell-Midland FFA, Reserve Champion Eggs, $700.

Martin said she was shocked at winning Grand Champion Ham. “I thought I had a pretty nice ham but I didn’t think I would win!” She plans to use those funds to help pay for college.

This is Tedrow’s first year in FFA, yet he walked away with one of the big prizes. With just 12 chickens in his barn, he chose his winning dozen eggs from two-days of laying. “I can’t figure out my 9th grade year how did I get Grand Champion down here?” He plans to put away his winnings in his college fund.

Over the past seven decades the State Ham, Bacon and Egg Show and Sale has raised nearly $1.3-million for participating FFA members. Overall, 50 hams, 50 bacons and 10 dozen eggs were auctioned by Ronald Morrison Auction Services during the Sale.
Season extending growing methods bring us spring vegetables earlier

Jean Smith, Director, WVDA Marketing & Development Division Director

Spring has finally arrived and most of us are enjoying seeing grass and soil again! April brings the celebration of Easter, National Egg Salad Month and spring vegetables. Many of our producers have invested in high tunnel greenhouses which is providing consumers the ability to purchase locally grown spring lettuces, greens and other vegetables. – Happy Cooking!

Sweet Glazed Chicken Thighs
(Crock Pot Style)

- 2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken thighs
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme, plus more for serving
- ½ cup pineapple juice
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons lower-sodium soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 cups hot cooked rice
- 3 tablespoons sliced green onions

Sprinkle chicken with pepper and salt. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add oil to pan; swirl to coat. Add chicken to pan. Cook 2 to 3 minutes on each side or until browned. Transfer chicken to a 4-quart electric slow cooker coated with cooking spray. Stir pineapple juice into drippings, scraping pan to loosen browned bits. Remove from heat; stir in brown sugar and soy sauce. Pour juice mixture over chicken. Cover and cook on low for 2½ hours. Transfer chicken to a serving platter with a slotted spoon. Increase heat to HIGH. Combine 3 tablespoons water and cornstarch in a small bowl; add to sauce in slow cooker, stirring with a whisk. Cook 2 minutes or until sauce thickens, stirring constantly with whisk.

Place rice on each of 6 plates. Top with chicken thighs and sauce. Sprinkle each serving with green onions.

My Favorite Pineapple Upside Down Cake

- 2½ cups sifted flour
- 1 cup sugar (optional)
- 2½ cups packed brown sugar
- 10 maraschino cherries (optional)
- 2 cups crushed pineapple
- 1/3 cup soft margarine
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 egg unbeaten
- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup juice from crushed pineapple

Heat oven to 350°F. Mix flour, sugar, brown sugar and margarine in a large mixing bowl. Add eggs, pineapple juice and vanilla; mix well. Spread 3/4 of the batter in a greased 10-inch flan pan. Arrange cherries over batter. Spoon remaining batter over cherries. Bake 40 to 50 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes; loosen cake from side with a spatula. Turn onto a serving plate. Replace any topping that remains in pan.

In a medium-sized bowl, chop or mash eggs to desired consistency with a fork. Mix in remaining ingredients and stir until well combined.

Ginny Sue’s Egg Salad

The week after Easter is National Egg Salad Week!

- 6 hard-cooked eggs, peeled
- ¼ cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chopped sweet pickles
- ½ tablespoon prepared yellow mustard
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon prepared yellow mustard
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 6 hard-boiled eggs, peeled
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced sweet pickles
- ½ teaspoon prepared yellow mustard
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

In a medium-sized bowl, chop or mash eggs to desired consistency with a fork. Mix in remaining ingredients and stir until well combined.

Spaghetti and Ramps

- Coarse salt
- 1 pound dry spaghetti
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 8 ounces fresh ramps
- 1 to 2 tablespoons crushed red pepper flakes

Bring 6 quarts of water to a boil in a large saucepan over high heat. Add 2 tablespoons salt to water. Return to a boil. Add spaghetti and cook according to package direction, until tender but still al dente. Heat olive oil in a 12- to 14-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add root ends (white part) of ramps to pan and cook, stirring, until tender. Season with red pepper flakes and salt. Add leafy greens from ramps and cook, stirring, until wilted. Drain pasta and add to skillet. Toss gently to coat pasta with sauce. Drizzle with olive oil. Serve immediately.
Family Farms are the Focus of New Agriculture Census Data

97 Percent of All U.S. Farms are Family-Owned; USDA Reports

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reports that family-owned farms remain the backbone of the agriculture industry. The latest data come from the Census of Agriculture farm typology report and help shine light on the question, "What is a family farm?"

"As we wrap up mining the 6 million data points from the latest Census of Agriculture, we used typology to further explore the demographics of who is farming and ranching today," said NASS Statistics Division Director Hubert Hamer. "What we found is that family-owned businesses, while very diverse, are at the core of the U.S. agriculture industry. In fact, 97 percent of all U.S. farms are family-owned."

The 2012 Census of Agriculture Farm Typology report is a special data series that primarily focuses on the "family farm." By definition, a family farm is any farm where the majority of the business is owned by the operator and individuals related to the operator, including through blood, marriage, or adoption. Key highlights from the report include the following five facts about family farms in the United States:

Five Facts to Know about Family Farms
1. Food equals family – 97 percent of the 2.1 million farms in the United States are family-owned operations.
3. Local connections come in small packages – 58 percent of all direct farm sales to consumers come from small family farms.
4. Big business matters too – 64 percent of all vegetable sales and 66 percent of all dairy sales come from the 3 percent of farms that are large or very large family farms.
5. Farming provides new beginnings – 18 percent of principal operators on family farms in the U.S. started within the last 10 years.

"Whether small or large - on the East Coast, West Coast, or the Midwest - family farms produce food and fiber for people all across the U.S. and the world," said Hamer. "It's due in part to information such as this from the Census of Agriculture that we can help show the uniqueness and importance of U.S. agriculture to rural communities, families, and the world."

The 2012 Census of Agriculture Farm Typology report classifies all farms into unique categories based on three criteria: who owns the operation, whether farming is the principal operator's primary occupation, and gross cash farm cash income (GCFI). Small family farms have GCFI less than $350,000; midsize family farms have GCFI from $350,000 to $999,999; and large family farms have GCFI of $1 million or more. Small farms are further divided based on whether the principal operator works primarily on or off the farm.

To access all the data products from the Census typology report, including Highlights, infographics and maps, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

Applications Available for 2015 West Virginia Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Applications are due to WVDA by the close of business Friday, April 10, 2015.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is now accepting project proposals for the 2015 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). Deadline is close of business Friday, April 10, 2015.

“Our Department is proud to offer grant monies and resources to help expand the specialty crop industry in our state,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick. “This program allows our agriculture industries the opportunity to expand, develop new tools for their agribusineses and continue to move agriculture forward. I have asked the selection committee to maximize utilization of these program funds, and I look forward to seeing the innovative ideas that will emerge from these projects.”

The scope of projects is deliberately open-ended, but they must deal with specialty crops such as fruits, vegetables, horticultural products, tree nuts, maple syrup, Christmas trees and honey, among others. Products explicitly excluded are livestock, eggs and commodity-type crops such as corn and soybeans, to name a few. A more detailed list of specialty crops can be found at http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/scbgpedefinitions.

All projects must focus on industry-related research, education, improved production or marketing of specialty crops. The program is available to groups and organizations that are qualified to receive grant funding and cannot be used to fund individual farms or enterprises.

The SCBGP is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by WVDA. West Virginia expects to receive approximately $200,000 in 2015.

The Grant Request for Proposals, Application Cover Sheet, Project Proposal Template, and 2015 Grant Application Manual, are available on the WVDA website (www.wvagriculture.org) in both PDF and Word formats. Applications are due to WVDA by the close of business Friday, April 10, 2015.

USDA Seeking 2016 Farm to School Grant Applicants

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is accepting applications for the USDA's 2016 Farm To School grants. Designed to increase the availability of local foods in eligible schools, these grants help new programs get started or can be used to expand existing efforts.

Four different kinds of grants are available:
- Planning grants are for schools or districts just getting started on farm to school activities. They’re designed to help recipients organize and structure their efforts for maximum impact by incorporating best practices into early planning considerations.
- Implementation grants are available for schools or school districts seeking to augment or expand existing farm to school efforts.
- Support service grants are intended for non-profit entities, Indian tribal organizations, state and local agencies, and agriculture producers or groups of producers to evolve farm to school initiatives.
- Additionally, all eligible entities can still apply for funds to support training and technical assistance, such as local procurement, food safety, culinary education and integration of agriculture-based curriculum.

Planning awards range from $20,000 - $45,000 and a 25 percent match of the total project cost is required. Implementation and support service awards range from $65,000 - $100,000 and a 25 percent match of the total project cost is required. Training awards range from $15,000 - $50,000 and there is no match requirement.

Proposals for planning, implementation and support service grants are due no later than 11:59 p.m. EST, May 20, 2015. Letters of intent for training grants are due by 11:59 p.m. EST, April 30, 2015.

To assist eligible entities in preparing proposals, USDA will host a webinar related to the application process on March 25, 2015, 1 p.m. EST.

More information about the grant program, upcoming webinars relevant to applicants, and sample grant applications can be found online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-grant-program.

Walt’s View, cont. from page 1

The only thing the farmer needs to provide is the tractor, fuel, labor and 50 percent of the cost of the cover crop. As you read this, planting is underway.

In addition to funding the pilot program, the WVDA will work with extension personnel from West Virginia University and West Virginia State University to provide horticulture assistance to participating farmers. We will also furnish packaging and marketing at harvest.

Education is a key component of this project as well and the demonstration plots will be used to collect data and hold agriculture field days with farmers, students and other organizations to increase knowledge and support for the program. The data collected will be used to make improvements and gauge the success of the program.

We have also been in discussions with farmers in other regions and intend to launch similar pilot projects in the near future in addition to adding other crops. We must have that diversification in what we produce.

As I’ve said before, as we West Virginians can do many things to help feed ourselves and we believe this effort is in line with our thinking of providing fresh, healthy, locally grown crops for our families to consume.

Aggregation facilities for our farmers is an essential asset and we also continue efforts on establishing canning and other processing and packaging locations across the state.

Thank you all for your continued support in growing Agriculture in West Virginia.
You can find high tunnels all over West Virginia. However, the very first hoophouse just went up in Wyoming County. Better known for its coal fields than its fields of vegetables, one group hopes to make Mullens the center for high tunnel education in southern West Virginia.

Leading the charge is Dewey Houck. He’s the director of the Rural Appalachian Improvement League or RAIL and he has a way of getting things done.

“Farming will work here! We’re going to give it a try,” says Houck.

Houck convinced Vista volunteer Nathan Tauger, a native of Morgantown and recent Vassar graduate, to spend a year in Mullens to help establish an agriculture program that would focus on farming local talent, something similar to the National Civilian Conservation Corp.

“It’s a way to get people who may not have employment now or are going through some difficult times, having trouble finding a job, but want to stay in Wyoming County,” says Tauger. “It’s a way to get them some job skills and do community service and get a living stipend so they can start to develop independently.”

“We’ve got to get something going. We have to have a youth program that has some year around value,” stresses Houck.

The goal is to get 10 local young adults into the program within the next year and teach them the basics of agriculture.

“We hope this will provide them with a base to learn about agriculture and enter into this local food boom that’s happening right now in West Virginia,” explains Tauger.

However before Tauger and Houck can convince anyone to sign on, RAIL has to prove that farming is not only doable but feasible as well. They got a little outside help. During the month of March students from Duquesne University, Ohio State, Northwestern University, Christopher Newport University and Baltimore University sent teams of students to help build a high tunnel and plant vegetables next to the Mullens Opportunity Center.

“This project has the potential to show people in Wyoming County what a high tunnel looks like, how you can do it. We just want them to see one and not just hear about it. That makes it more appealing,” says Tauger.

He calls it “show and tell.”

HIGH TUNNEL. A low-cost version of a standard greenhouse, a freestanding or gutter-connected covered structure, without heating or electrical power, using passive ventilation for air exchange and cooling, and an irrigation system for crop production, also called a “hoophouse.”
Molly McKone is a freshman at Duquesne majoring in elementary education. The Annapolis, MD native gardens as a hobby but building a high tunnel, she admits, is a little out of her expertise. However, she was willing to give it a go.

“I thought this would be a really neat experience for my spring break. I love to see how this will benefit the people of Mullens,” says McKone. “We can be here and do something small for them but yet so big.”

Right beside her, digging holes for the high tunnel’s tool shed posts, was Christy Flynn from Johnstown, PA. The Duquesne junior, majoring in education, calls the trip “a great experience.”

“I’m surprised by how beautiful it is here and the friendly people and the neighborhood. I just wanted to go where I could help people,” says Flynn.

The group from Duquesne did more than just construct and plant. They raised $2,400 to help pay for the high tunnel and vegetables before they left Pittsburgh. That along with another $1,000 donation from a community member covered the entire cost of the project.

“All these things have come together to make good things happen in a community like Mullens. People lived on farms in Wyoming County before the coal mines came here and we can do it again,” says Houck.

The next phase of the plan is to open a farmer’s market in Mullens this summer. Tauger says offering fresh fruits and vegetable grown locally is a big step.

“We have people in this community that really want to see this happen. So it’s just a matter of mobilizing at this point, taking advantage of the momentum and getting people selling food, getting people to want to build high tunnels,” stresses Tauger.

“We don’t have big farms but we can grow specialty crops like mushrooms and paw paws. We can raise goats and do small projects like build high tunnels,” says Houck. “It’s not big, just a small project that can help people earn extra money to help with their livelihood. We can do it here as well as anywhere else in the country. It just takes effort and people who want to do it.”

Houck says they are looking for partners willing to invest in their project and the people of southern West Virginia. You can learn more about the program by contacting the Mullens Opportunity Center at 304-294-6188 or at railwv.org/mullens_opportunity_center.htm.
**All equine require a negative one year Coggins test. All out-of-state equine require a current Certificate of Veterinary Inspection.**
### Apiary Events

#### For Apiary Questions, contact the WVDA's Marketing & Development Division at 304-558-2210

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<tr>
<th>Western Beekeepers Assoc.</th>
<th>Monthly Meeting</th>
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<td>Contact Steve Roth, 242-9867; <a href="mailto:sroth29201@comcast.net">sroth29201@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>Contact Delmuth Kelley, 472-0184</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Central Beekeepers Assoc.</td>
<td>Monthly Meeting</td>
<td>4th Saturday, 1 p.m.</td>
<td>Roane Co. Committee on Aging Bldg. Spencer, W.Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Dale Cunningham, 354-6916; <a href="mailto:janingham46@yahoo.com">janingham46@yahoo.com</a></td>
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### Farm Sales

Advertisements for land must be about farmland that is at least 5 acres (in size) and located in West Virginia. Farmland ads MUST include accommodations (house, barn, hayfield, garden, etc.) but no specifics, i.e., new family, room family, etc. Ads for the sale or rental of farmland are acceptable from individuals, but MUST include the above. Advertisements for hunting land, commercial or city properties CANNOT be accepted.

#### Presto Co.:

- 58 A. house, outbuildings, ponds, springs, well water, good access, very private, 25 min. to Charleston, close to Wood- meadow Lake, $275,000. Dennis Haye, 3369 Summer- ville Road, Parkersburg, 26110; 755-0042.
- 250 A. house, 80 A. meadow & pasture, developed, springs & ditches, ponds, well, shed, outbuildings, $400,000. R. McMillen, 753 Cozort Rd., Mead- ows Creek, 25915.

### Equipment Wants

- **Tractor:** JD 4030, 80 hp tractor, 4,600 hrs., $12,000; NH 848 round baler w/retrofitted 12’ & 2 additional rolls, 3,500. C. Miller, 1818 Brownrow Rd., Renick, 24966; 497-9397.
- **Pasture Equipment:** Pig tractor for sale, excl. cond., $1,500. Carolyn Patrick, 3223 Debbie Clem Rd., Fra- metown, 26623; 364-8296.
- **Lamb BBQ:** 12 p.m. James Pursley, 774 Pacific Road, Ripley, WV; 527-2192. 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. Ritchie Co. Public Library Harrisville, WV. Contact Don Cathell, 454-9695.
- **Lamb Show:** 1 p.m. 1st Monday, 8 a.m. 2nd Monday, 6 a.m. 3rd Monday, 10 a.m. 4th Saturday, 1 p.m. James Pursley, 774 Pacific Road, Ripley, WV; 527-2192. 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. Ritchie Co. Public Library Harrisville, WV. Contact Don Cathell, 454-9695.
- **Lamb Sale:** 4:30 p.m. 1st Monday, 8 a.m. 2nd Monday, 6 a.m. 3rd Monday, 10 a.m. 4th Saturday, 1 p.m. James Pursley, 774 Pacific Road, Ripley, WV; 527-2192. 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. Ritchie Co. Public Library Harrisville, WV. Contact Don Cathell, 454-9695.
USDA requires that cattle be officially identified before crossing state lines.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule states that effective March 11, cattle moved across state lines are required to be officially identified and accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI). Cattle affected by this rule include: sexually-intact beef cattle over 18 months of age, all dairy cattle, and all cattle being moved for shows, rodeos or other exhibitions.

Current exemptions to the rule include: beef cattle under 18 months of age and cattle moving directly to a recognized slaughter establishment.

Official identification is an official ear tag. This can be either a metal NUBS "ear" tag, or a tag that bears a 15 digit identification number printed with B40. The ear tag must also have the official ear tag shield impressed on it. To purchase official ID tags, cattle owners must have a premise identification number.

For more information, contact Jonathan Taylor at 304-254-4022. For information on a Premise ID Number (PIN) contact Shelly Lutz at 304-548-2214.

MASON CO. FFA 7TH ANNUAL FARM CONSIGNMENT AUCTION
April 25, 10 a.m (rain or shine) Item for consignment will be accepted April 24 (9 a.m.) & April 25 (before 9 a.m.) Mason Co. Career Center (behind) Sam Nibert, 675-3039.

BRANFORD MARKETS FARM
June 5 - 9, 9-1
100 Simmons Ave. Branford, WV
Barbara Reichard, 248-8595 branfordmarkets@gmail.com.

room, 5' short wall in camper, several extras, $12,000. Dottie Dunbar, 305 Big Tygart Crk Rd., Milam Farms 26137; 304-257-9120.
Hay, 5' round bales, kept inside, mixed grass, $50/bale. David Fred, 4536 Benaden Dr., Bridgeport, 26330; 592-0897.
Maple syrup, pure WV, $16/lb., $10/lb., $6/lbs. Ed Hartman, HC 72, Box 175C, New Creek, 26716; 335-1060; hartmen@clubwv.com.
Fish for stocking: Bass, 2"-4", $12; blue- 
gill & hybrid bluegill, 3"-5"; catfish, 6"; goldfish, 4"-6", $1; minnows, $12/bag; grass carp, 10'-15', $12/bag; 15'-20', del. av. Fred Hays, P.O. Box 241, Elkview, 25070; 416- 7167.
Butcher seed corn, organic grown: WV63, Ox Heart, Aunt Marthas, 261, Bayard, 26701; 301-501-2565.
Worm Castings: Vermicompost, $28/25 lbs.; worm farm kits, complete, $125. Terry Dan Ressie Virginia Giant Red, Kentucky Yellow, Annie half runner, both $10/100 seed picked
Plus, a wide variety of other early seeds, all ppd. Scott Whitacre, P.O. Box 56, Meathouse Fork Rd., Salem, 26242; 738-3983.
Kerry & Jacoby curry 15 lambs crosses, $15/4 each; 1/2 Suffolk, 1/2 Southdown, $125/4 each; 1/15 & 2/15 Southdown Club; $250/4 each; $500/4 each of our FFA projects. $300/4ea. Justcin McClain, 283 Dry Fork, Salem, 26242; 738-3983.
American Finnsheep 3/12 ram, prov- en sire, good disp., $200, Sandy Zappia, 1077 Ridge River, Garden, 25245; 586-4133.

Sheep Sales
Full American Blackbelly: 1 reg. ram, 2,250 lbs; 1 (15) lambs, all can be registered. Heather Clower, 478-4142; heatherclower@gmail.com.

POULTRY WANTS
Muscovy ducks & drakes, T. Byrne, 2303 Meathouse Fork Rd., New Milton, 26514; 871-2203.

Sheep Sales
Full American Blackbelly: 1 reg. ram, 2,150 lbs; 2,400 lbs; an other lamb; both had singles and twins. Rick Humphreys, 858 Plum Rd., Mannington, 26582; 825-1988; richard.humphreys@verizon.net.

MMAWREN MARKETS FARM
June 5 - 9, 9-1
100 Simmons Ave. Branford, WV
Barbara Reichard, 248-8595 branfordmarkets@gmail.com.

room, 5' short wall in camper, several extras, $12,000. Dottie Dunbar, 305 Big Tygart Crk Rd., Milam Farms 26137; 304-257-9120.
Hay, 5' round bales, kept inside, mixed grass, $50/bale. David Fred, 4536 Benaden Dr., Bridgeport, 26330; 592-0897.
Maple syrup, pure WV, $16/lb., $10/lb., $6/lbs. Ed Hartman, HC 72, Box 175C, New Creek, 26716; 335-1060; hartmen@clubwv.com.
Fish for stocking: Bass, 2"-4", $12; blue- 
gill & hybrid bluegill, 3"-5"; catfish, 6"; goldfish, 4"-6", $1; minnows, $12/bag; grass carp, 10'-15', $12/bag; 15'-20', del. av. Fred Hays, P.O. Box 241, Elkview, 25070; 416- 7167.
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American Finnsheep 3/12 ram, prov- en sire, good disp., $200, Sandy Zappia, 1077 Ridge River, Garden, 25245; 586-4133.

Sheep Sales
Full American Blackbelly: 1 reg. ram, 2,250 lbs; 1 (15) lambs, all can be registered. Heather Clower, 478-4142; heatherclower@gmail.com.

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POULTRY WANTS
Muscovy ducks & drakes, T. Byrne, 2303 Meathouse Fork Rd., New Milton, 26514; 871-2203.
Commissioner Helmick presents $1,000 Bonnie Plants Scholarship to Wheeling student

You don’t need years of skill to have a green thumb. Patrick Childers learned that back on March 24th when he was presented a certificate and a $1,000 scholarship from Bonnie Plants. The now 4th grader at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School in Wheeling was one of 5,000 children across the state to participate in the 12th annual Bonnie Plants Third Grade Cabbage Program.

The children were each given a cabbage plant to take home, nurture and grow. Patrick’s plant weighed in at 10 pounds and was the size of a soccer ball. The goal of the program is to get children interested in agriculture, curious about where their food comes from, and what it takes to grow it. On hand to present the award was state Agriculture Commissioner Walt Helmick and Webster Youngblood from Bonnie Plants. Patrick’s teacher is Lori Buchanan.

For more information on the Bonnie Plants Cabbage Contest visit http://bonniecabbageprogram.com.

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Hay, 4x5 round bales, stored outside. Hay for lease in ’15, 24.5 A. price determined per bale based on est. wt. or $41/ton for all hay harvested/eg. Robert Smith, 1586 Beech Run Rd., Albright, 26519; 965-6370.

Saddle, Wintec Pro Endurance w/ CAIR panels & easy change gullet system, synthetic leathers/girth, wool saddle pad, excel. cond., $700. Marcia Springton, 65 Hwy. Box 112C, Forest Hill, 24935; 466-2227.

D-S livestock equip. wool bag holder stand, excel. cond., $150. Bruce Teets, 2052 Orange Hall Rd., Eglon, 26716; 692-4462.

Anatolian Shep. pups, excel. livestock guardians, $200. Zachary Teter, Rt. 1, Box 68, Berkeley, 26253; 704-9555.

Trailer, ’97, Delta, 20’, gooseneck, stock, new paint, solid floor, inside divider gate, side access, $3,500. Robert Young, 182 Limestone Hill Lane, Moundsville, 26041; 845-8057.

Hand spinning fleece, white & natural colors, Shetland, $10/lb./+/- Linda Zinn, 2162 Skelton Hill Lane, Moundsville, 26041; 845-8057.