Janell and Rick George thought they were buying a few chickens to add fresh eggs to their meals. Oh, how wrong they were. A “few chickens” has turned into a backyard business of sorts for the Wood County couple who now consider themselves “chicken people.” If you own chickens, you understand; if you don’t, read on.

“We started our backyard flock in the spring of 2017. That was with 15 chickens, a mixed flock. I picked the flock out carefully, so I’d have a colorful egg basket,” explained Janell. “My favorite out of all of them was the Silkie.”

A Silkie is a bantam chicken. They’re smaller than your average chicken; they also look quite a bit different. The breed has fluffy feathers that feel like silk to the touch, hence the name. Another trait is their easy-going manner, making them perfect poultry pets. Within a few months of starting her backyard brood, Janell was looking to expand her Silkie line.

“We just fell in love with the Silkies,” she said. That sent the family on a trip to what Rick calls “the Super Bowl” of chicken shows, the Ohio National.

“This is the biggest poultry show around. There are more chickens at this show than your average chicken show. There can be up to 11,000 chickens at this show,” explained Janell.

The couple looked at a lot of Silkies, which come in seven different colors like black, white and partridge, and watched as the birds competed to be best of show. They also made some key contacts with the who’s who of the Silkie world.

“We met Sara Batz. She’s become one of our mentors. She breeds Silkies and put us in contact with Bobbi Porto out of Florida. She had the colors we liked, and we purchased several Silkies,” said Janell.

The new chicks were an instant hit not only with Janell and Rick but also their five-year-old son Clayton.

“This was an opportunity for him to learn responsibility and caring for a living thing,” stressed Janell. “Clayton helps take care of the birds. He’s learning there’s a circle of life, and he helps with their care. He’s out here with us picking up feathers, cleaning cages and scooping up poop.”

Training the birds became a family affair. Even though Silkies are naturally laid back, they still need to be worked with on a daily basis.

“In order to show a chicken, you have to bathe it before it goes to a show. They have to get used to being handled,” explained Janell. “They have to get used to being put in a tub. We have to trim their toe nails. We trim their beaks. We practice putting them in and taking them out of their show cages. You need to be able to put your hand in the cage, pick up your Silkie and hold them in your hand easily, without fuss. That’s what the judges expect.”

Not knowing if genetically they had a good line of Silkies, they opted to take a chance and took their flock to their first chicken show.

“Our friend Leslie Johns said, ‘Bring all your Silkies. It doesn’t matter what they look like. Let the judges look at them, and from there, you can decide which birds are show quality.’ To our surprise, at that show Clayton won reserve champion in the junior show,” said Janell.

The win was proof they had a good foundation flock, and it set them on their path to breeding silkies of their own. They called their new venture Blue Line Silkies of West Virginia.

“What you look for in chickens is the SOP or the Standard of Perfection. The American Poultry Association (APA) and the American Bantam Association have SOPs for each breed. That’s what you’re looking for. It deals with everything from comb size to wattles to what the feet are supposed to look like and what the feathers look like, even how they hold their wings,” said Rick.

Over the past year, their flock has flourished. But don’t ask them how many birds they have.

“We don’t answer that question,” laughed Rick.

Janell chimed in, “You never answer that because chicken math is a true thing. When you think you’re done hatching, you go, ‘Oh, they’re still laying eggs. Let’s hatch them.’ You just never know how many you’re going to end up with.”

The couple currently have a coop full of Silkies. For them, it’s the perfect size flock.

“It’s something for us that’s very relaxing,” explained Rick. “Janell’s job in sales is a little bit hectic. My job in law enforcement can be very hectic and stressful. It’s nice to come out here and work with the chickens. Each one has a different personality. Some of them will follow you around like a dog. They want to be right beside you. Others will go off and do their own thing. It’s comical to watch them. We have most of them named.”

Cesar, Ned Pepper, Baby Girl, Blondie, Peep, Spartacus, Rebel, Ringo and the rest of the flock landed with a family that just happens to be crazy for chickens.
2020: Working Towards a Better Agricultural Future

A turn of the calendar calls for revision of individual ideals and new goals to avoid any complacency we may have fallen into over the holidays. Business organizations typically use end of the year to honestly reflect on the previous 12 months. For state agencies, we must continue to find ways to better serve the people of our great state, as well as implement new policies which save taxpayers' dollars. My staff and I typically come into the new year with many goals, but reviewing all of those would require a multi-page document. Instead, let's touch on a few priorities for the WVDA in 2020.

Our Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program saw a lot of success this past year, most notably through the agro-therapy project with the Woody Williams VA Medical Center. To expand on these type of training opportunities, the WVDA is working with higher education partners to develop what will be known as the Veterans Education and Training Series (V.E.T.S.). Beginning in the Spring of 2020, the training series will be offered in abbreviated sessions throughout the state. They will cover various topic areas, eventually leading to certification upon completion. The goal is to deliver a successful veteran training series that continues to benefit our service men and women.

The Department is working with our livestock producers to modernize our state's industry. This includes providing animal identification readers to each livestock market in West Virginia, which is part of a federal mandate to enhance disease traceability by 2023. The good news is West Virginia is further along than many states, ensuring the quality of the beef coming from our cattle farmers will remain high.

We are also working on bringing changes to the graders program which includes training more field staff and extending their responsibilities at no additional cost to the taxpayers. To protect an industry that brings in hundreds of millions of dollars each year to our state, we must work on enhancing the resiliency of our herds. Tapping into new international markets, as well as expanding local opportunities, requires protecting the reputation our cattle farmers have worked so hard to establish.

Supporting the FFA community in West Virginia is crucial to our state's future. With record numbers of memberships over the last two years, we must ensure the resources are available for these future leaders. This includes bringing Cedar Lakes, the home of WV FFA, into the twenty-first century. The Department has worked tirelessly with the Ripley community to preserve this facility, but much more must be done. We also must work on getting vocational agriculture teachers in every school that has student interest. FFA is no longer training just future farmers but the next leaders of our country. It is time we do everything possible to support these vital programs.

Over the past three years, I am extremely proud of everything my staff has accomplished. My administration came in with a positive attitude that was not going to accept complacent tendencies of the past. We listened to our staff, filled much needed positions, promoted or recruited the right people into leadership roles and have worked with the Legislature to correct erroneous regulations. Despite all that has been accomplished, we know the work isn't done. In 2020, we promise you we are going towards a better agricultural future. We hope you all will join us on this journey.

Kent A. Leonhardt
West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture

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UNDERSTANDING FSMA PRODUCE SAFETY RULES – AGRICULTURE WATER

In the December issue of the Market Bulletin, we underscored why the FDA’s Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule (PSR) is going to be a game changer in terms of how we will be growing produce in West Virginia. Every grower, regardless of size or exemption status, can potentially cause a food illness outbreak, and so all growers must take individual responsibility for prevention of food safety outbreaks.

In the next series of articles, we will attempt to simplify some of the ‘seemingly complex’ food safety rules to help raise awareness and encourage action in managing food safety risks. Please remember however, these articles do not replace attending a food safety training to learn about the ‘whole-farm’ approach to managing food safety risks.

In this article, we will examine the agriculture water rule – Subpart E of the FSMA PSR (Produce Safety Rule), which was approved in 2015. Water used during the production, harvesting, packing and holding of fresh fruits and vegetables, where the water is intended to or likely to contact ‘covered’ produce (produce likely to be eaten raw), represent a potential pathway for contamination with human pathogens. For this reason, Subpart E of the PSR outlines requirements for microbial quality standards, testing agricultural water sources, inspecting distribution systems and postharvest water monitoring, so that when agricultural water makes contact with produce – whether in the growing, harvesting, packing or holding phases of production – the risks associated with agricultural water are reduced. (These standards are covered in depth at an approved food safety training – see http://epay.wvsto.com/WVU/WVUANREvents/Default.aspx.)

Agriculture water continues to be associated with produce-related foodborne illness outbreaks. For this reason, growers are supportive of implementing practices to reduce risks associated with agricultural water, but many growers have publicly voiced concerns that the PSR Water Rule (2015) was difficult to understand and costly to implement. Growers across the United States have many different water sources and irrigation systems; growers can draw their water from municipal sources, ponds, rivers, wells or other sources such as springs. Because their water can come from a variety of sources, the costs of testing and inspecting distribution systems and maintaining microbial quality standards can be expensive. Nationwide, the FDA estimates that water testing may cost producers about $37 million annually, but it could substantially reduce the use of contaminated agricultural water and the risk of foodborne illness. For individual small farms, that could mean spending about $1,000 each year for testing. While reducing foodborne illnesses trumps any costs, we know that $1,000/year can significantly eat into the profits of small farms. Growers want to know that the money and time they are investing in water monitoring and testing is cost-effective and useful in helping them make water management decisions that reduce produce safety risks.

In response to growers’ concerns, the agriculture water rule is currently ‘on hold,’ allowing more time for the FDA and industry stakeholders to work to better understand growers’ challenges in implementing the requirements under Subpart E, and to work collaboratively to develop practical solutions to meet fruit and vegetable growers’ production needs while protecting public health. The FDA and stakeholders are using this extended time to consider all of the regions of the country and how agricultural water is used, and is reconsidering how risks may vary between regions. In addition, climate and geography are emerging as important components in agricultural water and food safety, and stakeholders are evaluating how more frequent weather events, natural disasters and changing seasonal weather patterns will likely impact the agriculture rule.

So what does this mean? The FDA does not expect growers of covered produce to implement Subpart E until further notice, or until the new compliance dates come into effect (large farms - January 2022, small farms - January 2023, and very small farms - January 2024). Many farms currently have water testing programs in place, and the FDA encourages farms to continue testing their agricultural water in the manner the farm feels is appropriate, to help understand their water quality and maintain market access by meeting buyer and audit

(Continued on page 3)
requirements. Any records related to voluntary water testing are not subject to the records requirements of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule.

Growers who are not testing but are interested in better understanding the quality of their water may want to begin testing for quantified generic E. coli. For surface water sources, a good recommendation for growers that are just beginning is to test three times per season (once before they start using the water and other tests during periods when they are using the water source). The goal is to begin the process of understanding water quality and how it might change over time. Growers should also follow Good Agricultural Practices to protect and maintain water quality: this includes inspecting their water source and distribution systems to assess risks that could impact water quality; for example, by surveying the land around the water source, or assessing activities happening upstream that may impact quality (e.g., operations that allow animal access to the water source such as grazing cattle).

References:

West Virginia Grown
Rooted in the Mountain State

BARBOUR
- Siddler Farm
BERKELEY
- Cox Family Winery
- Geazer Ridge Farm
- Kitchen's Orchard & Farm Market
- Mountaineer Brand
- Raw Natural
- Sister Sue's
- Taylor's Farm Market
- US Veteran Produced
- West Virginia Pure Maple Syrup
- West Virginia Veteran Produced
- Wildflower
BRAXTON
- Mary's K9 Bakery
- Oh Edith/Little Fork Farm
BROOKE
- Family Roots Farm
- Bethany College Apiary
- Eric Freeland Farm
CABELL
- Appalachian Apiiculture
- Down Home Salads
- Good Horse Scents
CLAY
- Legacy Foods
- Ordinary Evelyn's
DOUGLASS
- Sweet Wind Farm
- Ryan Farms
FAYETTE
- Butcher's Apiary
- Almost Heaven Specialties
- Daniels Maple Syrup
- Five Springs Farm & Farm Springs Farm Guesthouse
- Up The Creek
- Wild Mountain Soap Company
GREENBRIER
- Arbaugh Farm
- Sloping Acres
- Hero Honey Valley View Farm
- TL Fruits and Vegetables
- Mountain State Maple
- Daniels Maple
HAMPShIRE
- Kismet Acre Farm
HARDeY
- Buena Vista Farm
- Wardensville Garden Market
HARRISON
- Rimfire Apiary
JACKSON
- Maddox Hollow Treasures
- Out of This World Salsa
- Sassy Gals Gourmet Treats
KANAWHA
- Angelos Food Products LLC
- Hamilton Farms
- Hemshaw Farms
- Lem's Meat Varnish
- T & T Honey
- Larry's Apiaries
- Vandalla Inc.
LEWIS
- Lone Hickory Farm
- Smoke Camp Craft
- Old Oaks Farm
LINCOLN
- Hill n' Hollow Farm & Sugarworks
- Wilkinson Christmas Tree Farm
- Simply Hickory
- Estep Branch Pure Maple Syrup
- Ware Farms
MARION
- Holcomb's Honey
- Rozy's Peppers in Sauce
MARSHALL
- Hazel Dell Farm
MINERAL
- Indian Water Maple Company
MONONGALIA
- The Kitchen
- Neighborhood Kombuchery
MONROE
- Spangler's Family Farm
- Bee Green
MORGAN
- Glasscock's Produce
- Mock's Greenhouse and Farm
NICHOLAS
- Kirkwood Winery
- Woodbine Jams and Jellies
OHIO
- Fowler Farm
- Grow Ohio Valley
- The Blended Homestead
- Moss Farms Winery
- Rock Valley Farm
- Windswept Farm
- Zeb's Barky Bits
PENDLETON
- M & S Maple Farm
- Cool Hollow Maple Farm
- Cool Hollow Maple Syrup
- Rocky Knob Christmas Tree Farm
POCahONTAS
- Brightside Acres
- Brush Country Bees
PRESTON
- Mountainead Apiaries
- Me & My Bees
- Riffle Farms
- Valley Farm, Inc.
- The Vegetable Garden
PUTNAM
- SyCAMore Farms & Primitives
- Gritt’s Farm
- Gritt’s Midway Greenhouse
RALEIGH
- Bailey Bees
- Appalachian Kettle Corn
- The Farm on Paint Creek
- Daniel Vineyards
- Shrewsbury Farm
RANDOLPH
- The Bryer Patch
- WV Wilderness Apiaries
RITCHIE
- Turtle Run Farm
ROANE
- Christian Farm
- Grandma’s Rockin’ Recipes
SUMMERS
- Sprouting Farms
TAYLOR
- A Plus Meat Processing
TUCKER
- Mountain State Honey Co. LLC
- R&A Honey Bees LLC
TYLER
- Cedar Run Farm
- Creekside Farms
- Uncle Bunk’s
UPSHUR
- Mountain Roaster Coffee
- Lucky Lucy Farm
- Zul’s Frozen Lemonade
WAYNE
- Elmcrest Farm
- Stillner’s Apiaries
- Lovely Creations Handmade Soaps
WEBSTER
- Williams River Farm
- Custard Stand Food Products
- Spillman Mountain Farm Products, Inc.
WETZEL
- Thistledew Farm
- Wetzel County Farmers Market
WIRT
- Stone Road Vineyard
WOOD
- In a Barn!
- Stomp n’ Grounds Craft Coffee
- Oldham Sugar Works
WYOMING
- Tarbilly’s BBQ
- Appalachian Tradition

AG SAFETY DAYS
FEB 4 - 5, 2020

WVDA Annual Ag Safety Days are scheduled for February 4-5, 2020 at the WVU Kearneysville Tree Fruit Research and Education Center. The event is designed to educate our agricultural community in safety regulations, provide helpful safety information and materials, assist in compliance with federal and state guidelines for pesticide use and handling and to provide a free opportunity for licensed pesticide applicators to earn recertification credits for their licenses. Registration is free but required. For more information or a registration form, contact Jessica Stricklen at (304)558-2209 or by email at jstricklen@wvda.us.

Join the growing list of WV Grown companies today!
Email wvgrown@wvda.us or visit our website at agriculture.wv.gov for application packet.
2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION READERS
The Department has been working on providing animal identification readers to each livestock market in West Virginia. This is part of a mandate from the federal government to enhance disease traceability by 2023. West Virginia is farther along than many states ensuring the quality of the beef coming from West Virginia cattle farmers will remain a high quality.

WVSU LAVENDER COLLABORATION
The Department announced a new project with WV State University to grow lavender on the state farms. The goal of the project is to develop and further research the viability for the crop in the state.

GROWING HEMP INDUSTRY
The Industrial Hemp industry saw a tremendous growth in 2019, more than quadrupling the numbers of acres grown versus the previous year. The WVDA saw an equal increase in the number of applications for the 2020 growing season which now is anticipated to be the largest growing season for the industry since legalization.

BUZZ FOOD AID
The Department’s Agriculture Business Department Division aided Buzz Foods of Kanawha County to start work on their new slaughter facility. This new enterprise will provide access to additional markets for West Virginia beef, as well as increase the availability of locally sourced beef to consumer.

AUCTIONEERING MODERNIZATION
Commissioner Leonhardt worked with the auctioneers in West Virginia to modernize the rules and regulations surrounding the industry during the 2019 Legislative Session. Improvements included updating definitions, changing of application period, bringing online auctions under the regulation and allowing additional testing throughout the year.

HUNTERS HELPING HUNGRY INCREASES FOOD DONATIONS
The Department worked with the WV DNR, as well as the Governor’s One Shot Committee to the donations to WV food banks through Hunters Helping the Hungry program. During the 2018 hunting season, 685 deer were designated to the program resulting in 24,378 pounds of venison.

VETERAN AGRO-THERAPY
Commissioner Leonhardt partnered with the Woody Williams VA Medical Center in Huntington and Senator Shelley Moore Capito to bring a $400,000 VA Agro-therapy pilot-project to West Virginia. The project has now hosted six groups of veterans with seventeen completing the program.
FOOD BANK FUNDING INCREASED
Commissioner Leonhardt worked with West Virginia’s Food Banks to secure increased funding to handle additional food commodities through the federal government’s Emergency Food Assistance Program. Foodbanks received an estimated $7.9 million worth of commodities in FY 2019.

FRESH FOOD ACT PASSED
Commissioner Leonhardt worked with the West Virginia Farm Bureau to pass the “Fresh Food Act” which mandates all WV institutions source five percent of their beef, poultry and produce commodities from in-state producers. The Fresh Food Act’s goal is to increase locally sourced foods by creating an established market through state institutions.

From the VET
National Poultry Improvement Plan

The National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) is a voluntary program that was established in the early 1930’s to provide a cooperative industry, state, and federal program through which new diagnostic technology can be effectively applied to the improvement of poultry and poultry products throughout the country. The development of the NPIP was initiated to eliminate Pullorum Disease caused by Salmonella Pullorum which was rampant in poultry and could cause upwards of 80% mortality in baby poultry. The program was later extended and refined to include testing and monitoring for Salmonella typhoid, Salmonella Enteritidis, Mycoplasma Gallisepticum, Mycoplasma Synoviae, Mycoplasma Meleagrisid and Avian Influenza. In addition, the NPIP currently includes commercial poultry, turkeys, waterfowl, exhibition poultry, backyard poultry, and game birds. The technical and management provisions of the NPIP have been developed jointly by industry members and state and federal officials. These criteria have established standards for the evaluation of poultry with respect to freedom from NPIP diseases.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture encourages all poultry producers to become NPIP certified. If you have interest in becoming a NPIP participant, contact Connie Shoemaker at 304-538-2397 or cshoemaker@wvda.us. To learn more about the NPIP program, visit www.poultryimprovement.org.visit https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/lab-info-services/nahin/ct_national_animal_health_laboratory_network.

FFA EXCEEDS ENROLLMENT RECORDS
FFA saw record enrollment for the second time in as many years. During the 2018-19 school year, FFA membership grew to 6,469 members through 83 local chapters, exceeding last year’s record by 1,100 students.

Mountain State Maple Days

Feb. 22 & March 21, 2020

Locations & Times TBA

Join one of our maple houses for a pancake breakfast, tapping demonstration, or to learn more about this growing WV industry.

See a Potential Invasive Pest?
Send us a photo with your name and contact info to bugbusters@wvda.us or (304) 558-2212.

Veteran of the Month: Kevin Renick

When a farmer has a shovel in his hand, opportunity is probably not foremost in his mind. But when friends and neighbors continue to stop by and ask “can I get some of that?” sometimes the light bulb turns on.

That’s exactly what happened to Kevin Renick, owner of Renick’s Valley Compost.

“I basically got into it by composting my own horse manure for my own use and then people started stopping by to get some,” Renick said.

Realizing the potential of the nearby WV State Fairgrounds and the poultry industry in the Greenbrier Valley, he figured he had an economical supply of manure and litter that could be turned into high quality, all-natural fertilizer.

“It has to be fresh so I can keep heat in it. Three years after I put it together, it’s ready to use as compost,” he said.

Although the composting process, which kills weed seeds and pathogens, is probably done “cooking” before that, Renick says he’s trying to stay ahead with his production.

Regardless, he doesn’t add anything to speed the process.

“I try to do it all naturally. It’s mother nature controlled.”

Renick says his compost is “super neutral,” with a pH of 6.7. It includes horse and cow manure, along with chicken and turkey litter. He recommends it be mixed with an equal part of dirt. He sells two-pound bags at stores and will deliver large loads.

“I have not had any complaints. The high tunnel greenhouse guys love me. It’s good for crops in the field to germinate on the back porch. It’s great for hemp farmers when they start plants,” he said.

Now about six or seven years old, his business has continued to grow. He wholesales sacks to feed stores and other locations in Monroe, Greenbrier, Pocahontas and Raleigh counties. He tries to add one or two retailers a year in a way that doesn’t put them in competition with others selling his product and in a way he can sustain.

“Don’t get in over your head. Don’t promise more than you keep up with,” he noted.

Renick grew up on a farm and did farm labor as summer jobs. He graduated from Greenbrier East High School in 1987 and then “went and played for Uncle Sam.” He was a Security Specialist in the Air Force for seven years and was stationed in Aviano Air Base in Italy, and later Great Falls, Mont. He was discharged with a rank of E4. Of his enlistment, he says it was “just an opportunity to serve.”

You can find Renick’s Valley Compost off Spring Creek Station Road in Frankford, or visit www.facebook.com/renicksvalleycompost.

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Ads for the Market Bulletin

To subscribe to The Market Bulletin, email marketbulletin@wvuda.org or phone 304-558-2248.

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### Classified Announcements

**January 2020**

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**Apian Events**

**Barbour Co. Beekeepers Assoc.,** Monthly Meeting, 4th Thursday, 6 p.m., WV Co. Ext. Office, 1711 Pennington St., Elkins, 26241.

**Clay Co. Beekeepers Assoc.,** Monthly Meeting with beginning/intermediate, 2nd Monday of each month, 6:30 p.m. Big Otter Comm. Bldg., Big Otter WV.

**Kanawha Co. Beekeepers Assoc.,** Monthly Meeting, 5th Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Co. Ext. Office, 1714 W. 6th St., Charleston, 25305.

**Preston Co. Beekeepers Assoc.,** Monthly Meeting, 3rd Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Preston Co. Ext. Office, 344 Ckir. Kingwood, WV.

**Upcoming Events**

To subscribe to The Market Bulletin, email marketbulletin@wvuda.org or phone 304-558-2248.

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**Horse Sales**

Board horse, $350, Kimberly D’Arco, 14961 Standing Lane, Charleston, 25312, 984-0945.

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**Plant Sales**

No medical postal, nursery stock, plant sales; all agricultural unless tested for germination. Contact: SASE. Denny Cantery, 2857 Seneca Trail S., Roncoverte, 24979, 645-6370.

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**Miscellaneous Sales**

No riding habits or other clothes; appliances or furniture; antiques or crafts; hand power tools or equipment; food processing or preservation item; equipment; grass seed, hay, salt; pet food and kitty litter; wheels; any kind of background checks. Please request AKC as herding or working can be accepted.

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**Goat Sales**

Kiko, 10%, 19 buck, proven breeder, $100. Canaan, 5200 Seven Mile Rd., Apple Grove, 25502, 576-2514.

**Cheese**

Buddin, 2, colts & 2, grown, $7,000/or trade. Ronald Lynch, 8348 New Hope Rd., Bluefield, 24701, 598-7652.

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** Classified Ad Deadline**

February 2020... Phone-in ads for the February issue must be received by 12 noon on Monday, January 13. Written ads for the February issue must be received by 1 p.m. on Tuesday, January 14.

March 2020... Phone-in ads for the March issue must be received by 12 noon on Thursday, February 13. Written ads for the March issue must be received by 1 p.m. on Friday, February 14.

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All bee colonies must be registered with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture.

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**Classified Ads**

**Phone:** 304-558-2225

**Fax:** 304-558-3131

**Email:** marketbulletin@wvuda.org

**Mail:** 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, E., Charleston, 25317, 25309, 389-0988.

**Ads for the Market Bulletin**

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**AD DEADLINES**

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**APAI Apian Events**

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**Apian Events**


Contact Ben Fancher, benfancher@gmail.com.

Clay Co. Beekeepers Assoc., Monthly Meeting with beginning/intermediate, 2nd Monday of each month, 6:30 p.m. Big Otter Comm. Bldg., Big Otter WV.

Contact Ben Fancher, benfancher@gmail.com.

Kanawha Co. Beekeepers Assoc., Monthly Meeting, 5th Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Co. Ext. Office, 1714 W. 6th St., Charleston, 25305.

Contact Ben Fancher, benfancher@gmail.com.

North Central WV Beekeepers Assoc., Monthly Meeting, 3rd Monday, 6 p.m., Harrison Co. Parks & Rec. Ctr., Clarksburg, WV, Contact Hudson Snyder, 261-213-2695; secretay.phila@gmail.com.


Potomac Highlands Beekeepers Assoc., Monthly Meeting, 3rd Thursday, 7 p.m., Bank of Romney, 1200 Alberton Lane, Romney, 26787.

Contact Ben Fancher, benfancher@gmail.com.

West Central WV Beekeepers Assoc., Monthly Meeting, 4th Saturday, 1 p.m., Commission on Aging Bldg, 110 Madison Ave., Spencer, WV, Contact Paul Kraush, 384-0750, 69575181@yahoo.com.

WV Beekeepers Assoc., Spring 2020 Conference, March 20-21, Randolph County AFRC.
Soup it Up!

What’s better on a cold, January day than a hot bowl of soup? This month we’re featuring three soup recipes to warm you up during the long winter nights. The hearty hamburger soup calls for ground beef. Why not switch it up by substituting ground venison, giving this classic soup a new twist. The broccoli cheddar soup is based on a famous chain restaurant recipe. Let us know if you’ve made any of these recipes! If you have a recipe you’d like to share, send it to marketbulletin@wvda.us.

**Broccoli Cheddar Soup**

- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1/2 chopped onion
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups chicken stock

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Saute onion in hot butter until translucent, about 5 minutes. Set aside. Whisk 1/4 cup melted butter and flour together in a large saucepan over medium-low heat; cook until flour loses its granular texture, adding 1 to 2 tablespoons of milk if necessary to keep the flour from burning, 3 to 4 minutes. Gradually pour milk into flour mixture while whisking constantly. Stir chicken stock into milk mixture. Bring to a simmer; cook until flour taste is gone and mixture is thickened, about 20 minutes. Add broccoli, carrots, sauteed onion and celery; simmer until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Stir Cheddar cheese into vegetable mixture until cheese melts. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

**Zuppa Toscana Soup**

- 1 pound bulk mild Italian sausage
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 4 slices bacon, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 large diced onion
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic

Cook the Italian sausage and red pepper flakes in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat until crumbly, browned, and no longer pink, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and set aside. Cook the bacon in the same Dutch oven over medium heat until crisp, about 10 minutes. Drain, leaving a few tablespoons of drippings with the bacon in the bottom of the Dutch oven. Stir in the onions and garlic; cook until onions are soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Pour the chicken broth into the Dutch oven with the bacon and onion mixture; bring to a boil over high heat. Add the potatoes, and boil until fork tender, about 15 minutes. Heat the soup to medium and stir in the fresh spinach and the cooked sausage; heat through. Mix the spinach into the soup just before serving.

**Hamburger Soup**

- 1 1/2 lbs ground beef
- 1 minced onion
- 4 minced carrots
- 3 celery ribs, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup barley
- 1 (28oz) can diced tomatoes
- 2 cups water
- 3 (10oz) cans beef broth
- 1 (10.75 oz) can condensed tomato soup
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon parsley
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

Ground black pepper to taste

Heat a large soup pot over medium-high heat and crumble in ground beef. Cook and stir until beef is evenly browned and no longer pink. Drain and discard excess grease. Stir in onion, carrots, celery and barley. Pour in diced tomatoes, water, broth and tomato soup. Season with bay leaf, parsley, garlic, thyme and pepper. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and cover. Simmer for 2 hours, stirring frequently. Remove bay leaf before serving.

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Market Bulletin Subscriptions

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BONNIE PLANTS WINNER

Congratulations Austin Stevenski! The 4th grader at Pleasant Valley Elementary School in Fairmont is the winner of the 2018-2019 Bonnie Plants 3rd Grade Cabbage Program. Each year, Bonnie Plants delivers cabbage plants to schools across the country. Third graders are tasked with growing their plants at home over the summer break. A winner at each participating school is selected and goes on to the state competition where a grand prize winner is randomly selected. Austin grew a 17 lb. cabbage to claim the prize. He will be honored at an assembly at his school on February 26. He also takes home a $1,000 scholarship. Austin grew a 17 lb. cabbage to claim the prize. He will be honored at an assembly at his school on February 26. He also takes home a $1,000 scholarship from Bonnie Plants.

2020 WV Equine Events Calendar

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture publishes a statewide Equine Events Calendar during the show season. To list your club or organization’s event(s), please fill out the listing form and return it by March 1, 2020. All entries received after the deadline will not appear in the Equine Events Calendar. This deadline will ensure calendar availability by April 1.

Only one event listing per form; if additional forms are necessary, please duplicate. Fill listing form out completely (we must have a complete and accurate address and telephone number). Only the name of the contact person and phone number will be published. All event listings must be held in WV, unless the event is sponsored by a WV Equine Organization. (PLEASE PRINT)

Date: _______________ Time: _______________
Event: ____________________________________________________________
Sponsor: ___________________________________________________________
Place/Location: _____________________________________________________
Contact Name: _____________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________

You can also fill out the form online: agriculture.wv.gov/divisions/marketinganddevelopment/Livestock/Documents/2017_Equine_Form_Final.pdf

Note: If your event date or location changes, please notify us at (304) 538-2397 at least 60 days in advance, so the correct information will appear in the appropriate issue of the Market Bulletin.

Return by March 1, 2020 to:
West Virginia Dept. of Agriculture, Andy Yost, Livestock Marketing Specialist
Animal Health Division, 60B Industrial Park Road, Moorefield, West Virginia 26836
(304) 538-2397, Fax (304) 538-7088; ayost@wvda.us

GARDEN CALENDAR

JANUARY 2020 Source: WVU Extension Service

JAN 1 Increase humidity for houseplants.
JAN 2 Plan garden layout.
JAN 3 Cut poinsettias to 6 inches and place in sunny windows.
JAN 4 Order herb seeds.
JAN 6 Harvest overwintered kale. Create garden map.
JAN 7 Order seed varieties.
JAN 8 Seed tomatoes for early high tunnel planting.
JAN 9 Service power equipment.
JAN 10 Clean garden tools.
JAN 11 Test germination of stored seeds.
JAN 13 Use grow lights for vegetable seedlings.
JAN 14 Gently remove snow or ice from evergreens and shrubs.
JAN 17 Organize a community garden.
JAN 22 Order fertilizer and lime according to soil test results.
JAN 23 Plan spring landscape design.
JAN 24 Order harvest supplies.
JAN 28 Order strawberry plants.

NOMINATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR 2020 AG AND FORESTRY HALL OF FAME

Nominations for induction into the West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame (WVAFHF) 2020 class are now being accepted.

The WVAFHF is dedicated to honoring individuals, businesses, organizations, institutions and foundations who have made outstanding contributions to the establishment, development, advancement or improvement of the agricultural, forestry and/or family life of West Virginia. Selected nominees will be officially enshrined during the WVAFHF Enshrinee Recognition Dinner on July 25, 2020 at Jackson’s Mill State 4-H Camp.

“Our state has a rich history connected to the agricultural and forestry industries. Remembering those who have contributed to these communities is important,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “Showing a little recognition is the least we can do.”

Those who are eligible must have lived in West Virginia, had a long-tenured association with agriculture, forestry, and family life, have made outstanding, direct contributions to those industries and demonstrated the highest standards of leadership and contribution on a local, state, national and/or international level. The WVAFHF is managed by the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, West Virginia Division of Forestry and WVU Extension Service.

Nomination forms can be found at: https://agriculture.wv.gov/divisions/executive/Documents/2020%20AFHOF.pdf.

All forms should be sent to West Virginia University Extension Service, c/o Robin Rupenthal, 809 Knapp Hall, PO Box 6031, Morgantown, WV 26506, or emailed to JOWilliams@mail.wvu.edu and must be received by close of business on Monday, February 24, 2020.

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