

THE MARKET BULLETIN

“TELLING THE STORY OF WEST VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE”

KENT A. LEONHARDT, COMMISSIONER

www.agriculture.wv.gov

JOSEPH L. HATTON, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

November 2018

WEST VIRGINIA GROWN

join the movement!

“Having that West Virginia Grown logo is a way to tell folks we are grown and certified right here in West Virginia. We’re located in Wheeling and folks from other states like Ohio and Pennsylvania see our products and immediately know we are a West Virginia product. That’s something to be proud of.”

ERIC BLEND, OWNER

The Blended Homestead, Wheeling, WV



Contact: WVDA, Business Development Division, (304) 558-2210 or wvgrown@wvda.us

West Virginia Grown is growing. The branding program for all things agriculture-related in West Virginia kicked off a membership drive in October. The goal is to reach out to agribusinesses and their affiliates and bring them into the program.

West Virginia Grown has been around since 1986 helping participants market and develop their individual brands. When Commissioner Kent Leonhardt came into office in 2016, he knew he wanted an update and worked closely with Agriculture Business Development Director Cassey Bowen and her team on a rebranding. It started with a public campaign to choose a new West Virginia Grown logo and collecting comments on how the program could better serve its members. West Virginians spoke out loud and clear, and the new logo was released in April 2018.

“What eventually emerged as the winner was a logo somewhat reminiscent of the previous one but with a vintage feel, showcasing what many West Virginians find so important - tradition,” explained Bowden.

West Virginia Grown also started from scratch asking longtime members to reapply to the program, providing the most up-to-date information on their agribusinesses.

“This gave us the opportunity to break the program down and retain parts that made sense and make adjustments as needed,” said Bowden. “We also wanted it to be attractive to affiliates, be it grocery stores or restaurants for food distributors, who have expressed great interest in being a partner in the West Virginia Grown brand. Also, very important was making sure we had an up-to-date directory of West Virginia Grown members. Even past members had a chance to look at the program again and say, ‘Yes, I am choosing once

again to be a West Virginia Grown member.”

The benefits of the new program are exciting. “One of the goals during rebranding was for members to really feel like they were getting something out of it,” said Business Development Division Marketing Assistant Director Beth Southern. “So, a variety of benefits were developed. Those who sign on receive a membership certificate upon acceptance to the program. They also have the visible benefits of using the logo and promotion in the Market Bulletin and on the WVDA’s social media platforms. They may also purchase marketing materials at cost from the WVDA along with inclusion in the online searchable database and printed directories. The program has expanded in the sense of being inclusive of agribusinesses. For example, if a producer is simply looking for a resource for raw materials or is in need of a processor, these are agribusinesses that would benefit by making connections through their program membership.”

Eric Blend, owner of The Blended Homestead in Wheeling says the program offers his two-year-old farm a way to get the word out about his products and where they come from.

“Having that West Virginia Grown logo is a way to tell folks we are grown and certified right here in West Virginia. We’re located in Wheeling and folks from other states like Ohio and Pennsylvania see our products and immediately know we are a West Virginia company. That’s something to be proud of.”

Evelyn McGlothlin joined the West Virginia Grown program years ago. She just recently updated her information and signed on with the new program.

We are
WEST VIRGINIA GROWN

BERKELEY

SISTER SUE'S · TAYLOR'S FARM MARKET

BROOKE

FAMILY ROOTS FARM

CLAY

ORDINARY EVELYN'S

FAYETTE

BUTCHER'S APIARY

GREENBRIER

SLOPING ACRES

JACKSON

MADDOX HOLLOW TREASURES

LEWIS

LONE HICKORY FARM · SMOKE CAMP CRAFT

LINCOLN

WILKERSON CHRISTMAS TREE FARM

MARION

HOLCOMB'S HONEY

MONROE

SPANGLER'S FAMILY FARM

MORGAN

GLASCOCK'S PRODUCE

NICHOLAS

KIRKWOOD WINERY

OHIO

THE BLENDED HOMESTEAD

PUTNAM

TASTE OF COUNTRY CANDLES

RALEIGH

BAILEY BEES · THE FARM ON PAINT CREEK

RANDOLPH

THE BRYER PATCH

WETZEL

THISTLEDEW FARM

WOOD

IN A JAM!

– West Virginia Grown membership list processed as of October 19, 2018

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Kent's Reflections — WANTED: Charitable Hunters

As fall arrives, so does the time-honored tradition of hunting. Those who have been patiently waiting can finally celebrate the start of deer season. From the early settlers of our region, to the 350,000 plus individuals who hunt each year, hunting is a pastime that has been woven into the very fiber of West Virginia's heritage. Regardless if you participate in the activity or not, most of our state's residents have eaten a hunter's spoils. Ask any West Virginian and they will tell you hunting has made its mark on the people of the Mountain State. The same can be said for our aptitude to help West Virginians who have fallen on hard times. Mountaineers have always shown they are quick to respond when disaster strikes. This year, we are asking all hunters to combine passion with charity by considering donating a kill to the Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH) program. Let's kill two birds with one stone.

This season will mark the 27th consecutive year the Division of Natural Resources (DNR) has operated the HHH program. The program was established in 1992 and has been supported by the Governor's One Shot, Inc. since 2008. The Governor's One Shot is tasked with privately raising funds to pay processors to ensure there is no cost for hunters who wish to participate. Since its inception, hunters and participating processors

have donated 25,702 deer towards the cause. What this means for our state is our two area food banks, through the HHH program, have been able to collect 979,549 pounds of highly nutritious meat for some of our neediest families. In terms of meals, we estimate 1,318,115 times a West Virginian did not go hungry.

As the Governor's One Shot continues their effort to raise funds, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) and the DNR are looking to match their commitment by expanding this already successful program. Our hope is to highlight a lesser known initiative, as well as those individuals who make this program thrive. Beyond publicity, we know the HHH's reach is only limited by two things: deer donated and counties covered by a processor. If we can accept more deer into the program, as well as increase our ability to process those deer, we can expand HHH's mission. If we want to help feed more families, we need additional hunters and processors to step up to the challenge. Our effort is only limited by our manpower, a challenge other charitable initiatives know too well.

If you feel a charitable spark, here is how to get involved. Hunters who decide to participate in the program must take their deer to a participating processor. Once a deer is designated as a HHH donation, it

will be ground, packaged and frozen. From there, the Mountaineer Food Bank and Facing Hunger Foodbank will pick up the venison and distribute it through their statewide network of 600 charitable partners. There is no cost to those hunters who participate. If you are a processor, you just need to reach out to the DNR and/or the WVDA and ask to get involved. From there, we can help those businesses work through the process of becoming a certified partner. These agencies stand ready to assist those who wish to give back this holiday season.

To all hunters, we ask while you pursue your passion think about giving back to those who desperately need assistance. Not only will you be helping control the deer population, you will also be providing a high quality, fresh food to families who may miss their next meal. Help us expand a program that is a clear win-win for our state. One more time, let's prove West Virginians will always step up to help our most needy; become a Hunters Helping the Hungry partner today!

Semper Fi,



Farm to School Program Expanding

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture is teaming up with the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and the WVU Extension Service to put more fresh food choices on school cafeteria menus. The program is called Farm-to-School and 60 West Virginia farms are already enrolled. The goal of the partnership is to bring even more farms on board. A USDA Farm-to-School Implementation Grant totaling \$91,540 will help make that happen.

"Increasing the availability of fresh, nutritious, local food in our schools is a win on many fronts," said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. "Farm-to-School can help expand market opportunities for farmers, spur economic growth in our communities, as well as help fight back

against rising health care cost. West Virginia is facing some serious problems. It is time we look for creative solutions to resolve those issues."

Instead of leaf lettuce from California, participating schools would source their greens from a local grower. Fresh strawberries picked right off the vine here in West Virginia would make their way on to cafeteria trays. Students will be able to see and taste the difference in their school lunches.

A press conference and stakeholder meeting kicked off the Farm-to-School initiative on October 12. In attendance were Commissioner Leonhardt, West Virginia Superintendent of Schools Dr. Steve Paine, WVU Extension Service Associate Dean Jennifer Williams and WVU Extension's

Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Director Ronnie Helmondollar.

"Fifty of our county school system utilize farm-to-school initiatives, which include everything from sourcing fresh produce from a local farmer to utilizing a high tunnel to teach students how food is grown," said Paine. "Farm-to-school is having a tremendous impact on the Mountain State."

For more information on the Farm-to-School program, contact Cindy Bailey at cbailey@wvda.us or 304-558-2210.



**NATIONAL
FARM to SCHOOL
NETWORK**

West Virginia Grown, continued

Coming in 2019 will be a West Virginia Grown directory starting with a print catalog version that will eventually be an online searchable database. It will provide the names of the agribusinesses, contact information and where their products can be found.

"This directory will be an extremely important resource for folks simply wanting to buy West Virginia Grown products or restaurant and retail establishments who are looking to incorporate local items in their places of business," said Bowden. "The need for this printed directory, as well as the online version, will help keep our agribusinesses in the forefront and easily findable."

The directory will also feature affiliated businesses like grocery stores, retail shops, chefs and restaurants to connect agribusinesses to those who can use their products.

"The glory of the directory is that it connects the buyer directly to the source," explained Bowden. "If a chef is looking to source West Virginia maple syrup, that information is right at his or her fingertips. We're hoping it will help develop relations like these that need to flourish to continue growing our local food markets. The directory will be a comprehensive listing of West Virginia agribusinesses with contact information, product listings, locations, season availability and much more. This will enable consumers to

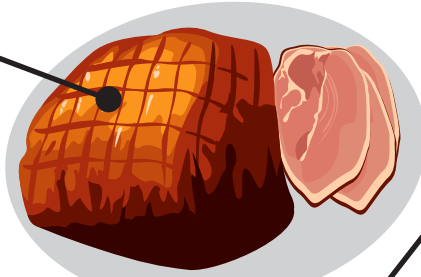
have all the information they need to make their purchasing decisions."

If you're an agribusiness, sign up for the West Virginia Grown program today. The directory will be printed in early 2019 so it is important for agribusinesses to complete membership applications now to be included. Also, during the membership drive, members will be featured on the Growing West Virginia Grown page here in the Market Bulletin. To apply, go to <https://agriculture.wv.gov/divisions/marketinganddevelopment/Pages/WV-Grown-Program.aspx>.

Give Thanks

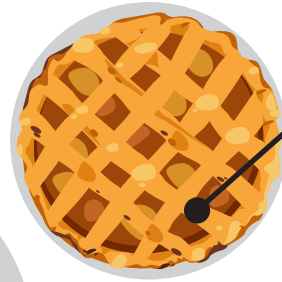
Ham –

WV PORK PRODUCTION IN 2017
TOTALED 1.3 MILLION LBS



Turkey –

WV FARMS RAISE MORE THAN 3.7
MILLION TURKEYS EACH YEAR

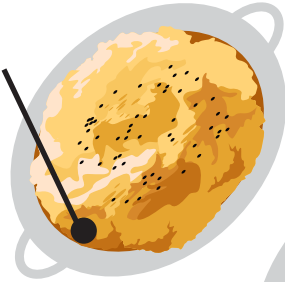


Apple Pie –

WV RANKS 8TH IN THE
COUNTRY IN APPLE
PRODUCTION

Potatoes –

MOUNTAIN STATE DAIRIES
PRODUCE 134 MILLION LBS.
OF MILK TO MASH
THOSE POTATOES



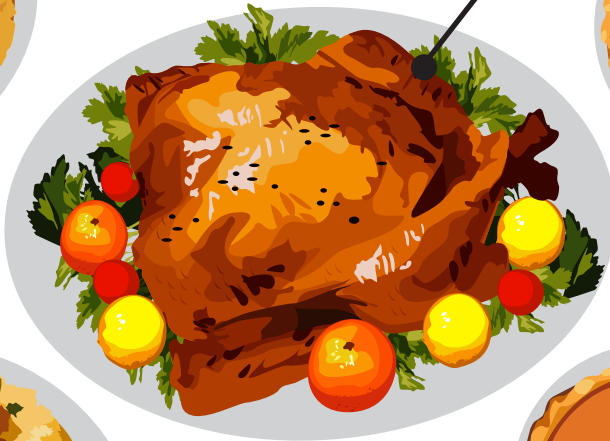
Stuffing –

THE EGGS THAT GO INTO
YOUR STUFFING -
WV PRODUCES 287.1 MILLION



Pumpkin Pie –

THE BIGGEST PUMPKIN AT THIS
YEAR'S WV PUMPKIN FESTIVAL
WEIGHED IN AT 1,576 LBS



PRODUCE SAFETY: MANAGING WILDLIFE AND DOMESTICATED ANIMALS

Domesticated and wild animals are important to consider in the produce production cycle because they can carry human pathogens and spread contamination throughout your growing areas. Damage through contamination, damage to plants and field aid such as cover plastic mean extra costs and expenses.

Animal impacts include migratory birds, above and below ground animals (rabbits, feral cats, ground hogs, racoons), domesticated animals (dogs, guard llamas) that can serve in a guard capacity around produce fields and working livestock (horses and oxen) are integral to production.

Fencing provides limited protection and may not be economically feasible. Elimination of wildlife and domesticated animals in the fields can never be totally eliminated, however, the following steps can be taken to minimize contamination.

1. Assessment-Two types of assessment are required under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) guidelines-pre-plant and pre-harvest. The goal is to look at patterns, areas of concern (water sources, adjacent land uses), evaluation of corrective actions in place and identification of additional steps that can be taken to minimize contamination.

2. Corrective actions (based on assessment)-May include co-management practices, perimeter barriers such as fences and buffers, production area rows for working animals and waste management, decoys, fencing and netting, deterrents and relocation. It is critical that you follow state and local laws and utilize other resources such as NRCS conservation

and management practices.

3. Record keeping-documentation of your management practices as well as observation of their impact are required under the FSMA rule. Remember, the goal and expectation is minimization of potential contamination not total elimination. Identification of risk through assessment and corrective actions based on the assessment and your individual farm goals provide compliance with the FSMA rule.

For more information about the Produce FSMA rule and the implications for your produce operation, attend one of the following upcoming WV Grower Trainings.

Source: <https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/sites/producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Tab-5-Wildlife-V1.1.pdf>

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DATE	LOCATION	REGISTRATION
NOV. 8, 2018	WVU Extension Service Center, Keyser, WV	http://epay.wvsto.com/WVU/WVUANREvents/Nov-8-2018-PSA-Mineral-Co-Office-P45.aspx
NOV. 10, 2018	Milton Pumpkin Park, Milton, WV	http://epay.wvsto.com/WVU/WVUANREvents/Nov-10-2018-PSA-WV-Pumpkin-Park-P47.aspx
DEC. 6, 2018	Marlinton Wellness Center, Marlinton, WV	http://epay.wvsto.com/WVU/WVUANREvents/Dec-6-2018-PSA-Marlinton-Center-P48.aspx

Pies and Pumpkins

It's time to dig in to a Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings. But what about the other 29 days of the month? This month's recipes include a homemade chicken pot pie and pumpkin French toast that's sure to tempt your taste buds. We've also included the winners of this year's WV Pumpkin Festival Bake-Off. Katie's Pumpkin Bread comes to us from Katie King of Hurricane. She took first prize in the bread category. The winning pumpkin roll/log entry comes to us from Mary McClure of Barboursville for her cream cheese confection. Congratulations!



Chicken Pot Pie

1 pound chicken breasts halves, cubed	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup sliced carrots	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 cup frozen green peas	1/4 teaspoon celery seed
1/2 cup sliced celery	1 3/4 cups chicken broth
1/3 cup butter	2/3 cup milk
1/3 cup chopped onion	2 (9 inch) unbaked pie crusts
1/3 cup all-purpose flour	

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

In a saucepan, combine chicken, carrots, peas and celery. Add water to cover and boil for 15 minutes. Remove from heat, drain and set aside.

In the saucepan over medium heat, cook onions in butter until soft and translucent. Stir in flour, salt, pepper, and celery seed. Slowly stir in chicken broth and milk. Simmer over medium-low heat until thick. Remove from heat and set aside.

Place the chicken mixture in bottom pie crust. Pour hot liquid mixture over. Cover with top crust, seal edges, and cut away excess dough. Make several small slits in the top to allow steam to escape.

Bake in the preheated oven for 30 to 35 minutes, or until pastry is golden brown and filling is bubbly. Cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Pumpkin French Toast Bake

8 eggs	1 loaf thick-sliced bread, cut into 1-inch cubes
1 teaspoon vanilla extract	1/3 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon	1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves	2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg	1 tablespoon butter, softened
1 tablespoon white sugar	
1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin puree	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9 x 13 inch baking dish.

Whisk the eggs, vanilla extract, 2 teaspoons of cinnamon, the cloves, nutmeg and white sugar together in a bowl; beat in the pumpkin until fully incorporated.

Arrange the bread cubes in a single layer in the prepared baking dish; pour the pumpkin mixture over the bread cubes and gently toss to coat.

Stir 1/3 cup of brown sugar, 1/4 teaspoon of cinnamon, butter and flour together with a fork in a small bowl until the mixture is crumbly; sprinkle over the bread cubes.

Bake until golden brown on top, about 30 to 40 minutes.

Katie's Pumpkin Bread with Streusel

Topping:	1 15-ounce can of pumpkin puree
1/4 cup of salted butter, softened	1/2 cup of full-fat sour cream
1/2 cup of dark brown sugar	2 cups of all-purpose flour
1/4 cup of oatmeal	1 tsp. baking soda
1/4 cup of all-purpose flour	1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tbsp. apple pie spice	1 tbsp. cinnamon
Bread:	1 tbsp. nutmeg
1 cup of salted butter, softened	1/2 tbsp. apple pie spice
2 cups sugar	1 tbsp. 100% pure maple syrup
2 eggs	1/2 tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease two 9 x 5 inch baking pans.

Combine streusel topping in bowl until uniform. Place in refrigerator to chill while assembling bread mixture.

In large mixing bowl, cream together butter, sugar and maple syrup. Add the pumpkin puree and sour cream. Mix with electric mixer. Add flour, baking soda, baking powder and remaining spices. Blend with electric mixer on low until uniform.

Divide the mixture equally into both bread pans. Sprinkle the streusel topping onto both bread mixtures to cover the top evenly.

Bake for 60 minutes. Makes two loaves.

Pumpkin Pecan Cream Cheese Roll

Cake:	1 tsp. vanilla
3/4 cup all-purpose flour	1 cup finely chopped pecans
1 tsp. baking powder	Filling:
2 tps. cinnamon	8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice	2 tbsps. unsalted butter, softened
1/2 tsp. nutmeg	1 cup confectioners' sugar
1/2 tsp. salt	1 tsp. vanilla
3 large eggs at room temperature	1 1/2 tbsps. heavy whipping cream
1 cup sugar	
1 cup pumpkin puree	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and line a standard 10x15" or 9 1/2 x 14" jelly roll pan with parchment paper.

To make the cake: In small bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, pumpkin pie spice, nutmeg and salt; set aside.

In large bowl, beat together eggs and sugar until thick, fluffy and light in color. Beat in pumpkin and vanilla.

Add the dry ingredients and mix until just combined. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and spread it evenly. Gently press into batter.

Bake cake for 14-16 minutes, until the top springs back when lightly touched. Remove cake from oven and allow to cool in the pan for two minutes.

Loosen the edges with a knife or spatula. Lightly spray a second piece of parchment with non-stick vegetable oil spray and invert cake onto the prepared second piece of parchment.

Roll the cake up from the short end. Allow it to cool completely.

Filling: Mix the cream cheese and butter until well combined. Add the sugar and vanilla and beat until light and fluffy.

To assemble the cake: Carefully unroll the cake and spread it with the filling.

Re-roll the filled cake with the filling inside, and place it seam-side down on a serving plate. Trim the ends for a clean appearance.

If desired, dust with Confectioners' sugar right before slicing and serving. Store any leftovers in refrigerator.

West Virginia Agriculture: Planning for the Future

The West Virginia Agriculture Advisory Board put out a call to action. They tasked farmers, producers, educators and the general public to voice their concerns and their hopes for the future of agriculture here in the Mountain State. The first step was a public survey in August that more than 500 people completed. Next came a series of 14 stakeholder meetings in October. Four-hundred people attended. The Advisory Board, made up of members of the West Virginia Farm Bureau, WVU Extension Service, WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design, West Virginia State University Extension Service, USDA, West Virginia Natural Resources Conservation Service, West Virginia Conservation Agency and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, listened closely to all the feedback. Now, it's a matter of putting that data together and creating a five-year strategic plan for how to grow the agriculture economy in West Virginia.

"If you combine the online survey with these stakeholder meetings, we have gathered input from over 900 West Virginians. All this data will be fed into a market analysis, as well as input from topic experts, to create our plan.

The goal is to have that ready to be presented to the public in March of next year," said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt.

Several themes stood out in the survey and the stakeholder meetings. One of those is putting an emphasis on the importance of FFA and 4-H programs. With the average age of West Virginia's farmers reaching 60-plus, stakeholders stressed the need to connect young people with the land and farming traditions.

Another common concern was inconsistent enforcement of regulations from county to county and the amount of red tape forced on farmers that prohibits growth. Farmers say they want to comply but agencies need to educate before they regulate to keep them in the loop.

One other theme centered around limited access to slaughter and processing facilities and the need for state inspected meat to be able to cross state lines. Attendees said there needs to be incentives for entrepreneurs who want to start up new slaughter facilities.

"Attendees showed a clear understanding of the problems facing West Virginia agriculture. What we as a government entity want to avoid is arbitrarily picking winning and losers. We

cannot repeat mistakes of the past," Leonhardt said.

The Agriculture Advisory Board has tasked strategic plan contractor Fourth Economy to assemble the data and work with experts in agriculture to find barriers and opportunities in moving West Virginia's agriculture industry forward.

"West Virginia has conducted studies like this for decades. What we got out of those studies was a lot of plans and not a lot of action. We don't want this data to just sit on the shelf and collect dust. We will put forth a collaborative effort that requires schools, farmers, the public and private partners to make it work."

Currently West Virginia produces about \$800 million in agricultural products but consumes on average \$8 billion annually. By investing in agriculture, stakeholders believe that gap can be reduced if we treat farming and production like any other business.

The Agriculture Advisory Board expects to release a final plan for implementation sometime around March of 2019. We'll keep you posted.



Andrea Duke is a master when it comes to making jams and jellies. The owner of In A Jam! has been extra busy since her business took off in 2016. She's gone from selling at farmer's markets to places like Tamarack and Capitol Market. Her passion for preserves started when she was just a child.

"When I was little, I can remember doing this with my two grandmothers who were preservers and canners. That's how they raised their families," said Duke. "I remember going with them to pick strawberries and making freezer jam. It was pretty neat to be raised in that environment. My grandmother, who died last year, was 99. The last thing we did was make blueberry jam."

In A Jam! wasn't Duke's first agribusiness. She started out selling heirloom produce and plants. She grew them in her own greenhouse and then sold them at the farmers' market in downtown Parkersburg. One week, she

didn't have any plants or produce to sell. Instead of missing out on a market day, she picked some berries, made jam and took it to the farmers' market. It was a hit. Not long after, she decided to focus on jams and jellies full time.

"I started out in my kitchen making jams like strawberry, blackberry and red raspberry. Those are flavors everyone loves," explained Duke. "At first, I was selling at a handful of farmers' markets like Parkersburg, Harrisville and Bridgeport."

Those jars of jams and jellies went flying off her table and she realized she had to expand. She went from a handful of flavors to more than 20 and began working in a commercial kitchen space.

"I'm not sure that I have a top seller. All my jams and jellies do well. But people are really curious about the unique flavors like my wild ramp jelly, paw paw butter and heirloom tomato," said Duke.

How she sources her produce is a point of pride.

"I get my ramps from a gentleman who goes to Boone County to pick them. He's a relative of Jesco White," she laughed. "It's true. Other ingredients, like my berries, come from small farms here in West Virginia and Ohio. Using local farmers, being able to support them, is very important to me. It's a big deal."

A new opportunity came Duke's way this year that allowed her to expand even more.

"The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) invited me to a trade show in February. That went great. Now In A Jam! is sold in a lot of West Virginia State Parks," she explained. "That's been a big one for me this year."

Duke also joined the WVDA's West Virginia Grown program.



Duke holds up one of her unique products, heirloom tomato jam, a big seller at farmers' markets.

"Putting that WV Grown sticker on my products gives me a special identity. For me, it's telling everybody that I put extra care and pride into my product," said Duke.

Duke spends less time at farmers' markets these days and more time in the kitchen cooking up her product. In A Jam! is now her full-time job. Her products can be found not just at WV State Parks but in small stores in Virginia, Maryland and 50 locations in West Virginia.

"When I see my products on a store shelf, it's a source of pride. It's surreal," said Duke.

As for her next step, Duke is still trying to decide if she wants to remain where she is or increase her production. But she says one thing will never change, she'll keep those recipes handed down to her from her grandmothers.

"There's history behind these preserves. My friends that are my age, they don't know how to do this. For me, it's keeping the tradition going because this really is an art. I'm doing my part to keep it alive."

Visit In A Jam at inajamwv.com.



Rodeo Champ

"Jackson Smith, you're up," rings out of the speaker system at the West Virginia State Fair. A few seconds later the tiny, rodeo rider busts out of the gate on his sheep. Getting to this point has not been easy for the 8-year-old from Princeton.

"He was born with a cleft lip, a cleft pallet and hearing loss in his right ear," says Jackson's mom Crystal Bennett. "He's had 23 surgeries since he was born."

Jackson hasn't let those surgeries slow him down. At the ripe age of 3, Jackson watched the Professional Bull Riders Circuit, or PBR, on TV and had his sights set on the rodeo ever since.

"He had a little wooden rocking horse he put in front of the TV," explains Bennett. "He would climb on and pretend to be riding a bull. That's how this all started."

After he finishes his ride at the State Fair, Jackson walks out of the ring dressed in his cowboy boots and hat, his riding shirt and a pair of jeans.

"It's just fun to ride horses," Jackson says while kneeling down on the grass just outside of the rodeo ring. "I want to become a cowboy and go to the PBR."

The goal of sheep riding, also known as mutton busting, is to stay on the sheep for four seconds. Jackson said he's fallen off before, but it doesn't really bother him. In fact, not much seems to bother the aspiring bull rider.

"I've pet a bull before, it wasn't scary. It was fun," he says

Bennett says the sheep have run over Jackson before, and he always gets right back up. She enjoys watching her son do what he loves, especially because she has already seen him go through so much.

"He had his first surgery at 4 days old," Bennett continues. "He always bounces right back. I'm so proud of him."

After his successful mutton busting ride, Jackson walks to the other end of the rodeo arena and hops on his horse. He is getting ready for his next event, pole bending.

"I'm getting my mind straight on what I'm about to do." Jackson says with a smile on his face.



Buy the real thing this season...

Support West Virginia Christmas tree growers!



Winter Blues

FARMER'S MARKET

CHARLESTON CIVIC CENTER

FEB. 16, 2019 1-5 PM

GARDEN CALENDAR

November 2018 **Source: WVU Extension Service Garden Calendar**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>NOV. 3.... Remove stakes and trellises.</p> <p>NOV. 5.... Mulch carrots for winter use.</p> <p>NOV. 6.... Fertilize under deciduous trees and shrubs.
Turn compost.</p> <p>NOV. 7.... Water trees and shrubs thoroughly if fall has been dry.</p> <p>NOV. 8.... Remove diseased plant debris from garden.</p> <p>NOV. 9.... Apply lime and fertilizer according to soil test.</p> <p>NOV. 10.. Winterize garden tools.</p> | <p>NOV. 12.. Harvest parsnips.</p> <p>NOV. 13.. Harvest Brussels sprouts.</p> <p>NOV. 14.. Mulch strawberries.</p> <p>NOV. 15.. Mulch thyme plants before winter.</p> <p>NOV. 17.. Turn compost.</p> <p>NOV. 19.. Mulch perennial beds.</p> <p>NOV. 20.. Harvest salad greens from high tunnel.</p> <p>NOV. 21.. Cut hardy chrysanthemums to 2 or 3 inches and mulch.</p> <p>NOV. 23.. Mulch perennial herbs.</p> <p>NOV. 24.. Fertilize houseplants.</p> |
|--|---|