



WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ANNUAL REPORT

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AGRICULTURE
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The mission of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture is to protect plant, animal and human health and the state's food supply through a variety of scientific and regulatory programs; to provide vision, strategic planning and emergency response for agricultural and other civil emergencies; to promote industrial safety and protect consumers through educational and regulatory programs; and to foster economic growth by promoting West Virginia agriculture and agribusinesses throughout the state and abroad.

Kurt A. Leebhardt

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WVDA ANNUAL REPORT

COMMISSIONER INITIATIVES



COMMISSIONER HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES

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GUTHRIE LABS

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) provides vision and strategic planning to ensure the continuation of an adequate, safe, and wholesome food supply for the citizens of West Virginia. Laboratories under WVDA are a vital part of our mission to protect and promote the agriculture industry in the Mountain State. The work conducted by our trained laboratory staff, although unseen by the average West Virginian, touches the lives of every citizen through human, animal, plant and environmental protection.

WVDA Labs are the front line in food safety through the work we do in monitoring human foods, animal feed, fertilizers, safe water, and animal disease surveillance. Despite the importance of WVDA laboratories, there are a variety of challenges related to existing facilities, including: lack of space, security, safety measures and functionality. The laboratory facilities, originally constructed nearly six decades ago as a military radar base, have reached the end of their useful life. This led to WVDA procuring the services of a design and engineering team to evaluate the current needs and make recommendations for the investigative, programmatic, design, and budgeting process for new facilities. The new laboratory facility will be approximately 42,000 SF with an anticipated total cost of \$80,000,000.

Modernized facilities will result in greater efficiency of agency operations and provide infrastructure for better detection and management of livestock diseases, food-borne illnesses, and other threats to the environment, consumer safety, economic health, and overall health of the public and agricultural operations in West Virginia, the region, or even a national scale. As current facilities age, there is exponentially increased risk of incurring significant repairs and maintenance expenses to maintain minimum operations. As laboratory and related food/safety standards evolve, there is also an increased risk of existing facilities not being able to meet those standards, which would disrupt laboratory operations, jeopardize federal agricultural safety funding, and leave the agricultural community and citizens of West Virginia under-protected from various threats.

WEST VIRGINIA GROWN

Developed in 1986, West Virginia Grown (WVG) was designed to market West Virginia grown and made products to consumers. By placing the West Virginia Grown logo on a product, they are assuring buyers that the product was grown or processed, with quality ingredients, in the Mountain State. In addition to being a marketing and economic development tool, the program's goals are for consumers to easily identify and purchase West Virginia products, thereby supporting and promoting local farmers, producers, manufacturers, agribusiness and agritourism.

Efforts continue to expand and highlight the program, with recent priorities being increasing public awareness and connecting program members with more market opportunities. The program remains a cornerstone of WVDA's efforts to create a more robust local food industry.

WEST VIRGINIA APPLE RECOVERY

West Virginia apple growers faced a dire situation during the 2023 growing season. As contracts fell through, orchard after orchard was left holding millions of pounds of apples with no buyers. Those same apples are now being supplied to hunger-fighting organizations across WV and beyond, thanks to efforts by U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, USDA, WVDA and Farmlink, a non profit organization that works to combat food insecurity. This apple relief program, covered under Section 32 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935, purchased \$10 million worth of apples from a dozen West Virginia growers. The WV rescue is one of the largest harvest produce rescue efforts ever in the U.S. to hunger fighting charities- 40 million apples, 12 million lbs, 285 trucks.

ANIMAL HEALTH

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ANIMAL HEALTH

Animal Health Division's goal is to prevent, suppress and control any communicable diseases of livestock and poultry as mandated by West Virginia law.

MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau (MPIB) continues its emphasis on food safety through our first line of defense – our inspectors. With the use of United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Public Health Information System (PHIS), inspectors observe and review establishments using proven scientific methods. All inspectors are trained to recognize the signs of infectious diseases in livestock and poultry. In addition, they monitor incoming livestock and poultry as well as meat and poultry products for chemical residues/toxicity that might either intentionally or unintentionally threaten our food supply.

In cooperation with Animal Health Division's Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) trained Public Health Veterinarians, WVDA inspection staff ensured that meat and poultry products produced at WV licensed establishments were safe and wholesome for human consumption. For state fiscal year 2022-2023, the inspectors provided daily slaughter and processing inspections at 27 commercial establishments and routine inspections at 24 custom exempt establishments, as well as 318 distributors. Concurrently, inspectors and veterinarians examined 12,213 animals (3,363 cattle, 2,514 swine, 182 sheep, 24 goats, 29 farm-raised deer, seven buffalo, 5,001 chickens, 703 turkeys, 148 ducks/geese, and 242 rabbits). As a result, livestock carcasses and carcass parts totaling 72,993 pounds were condemned as being unfit for human consumption and were prevented from entering the food supply. Conversely, MPIB inspected and passed about 2,964,202 pounds of processed meat and poultry products for sale to consumers in West Virginia.

However, their responsibilities did not end with evaluating the health of the food animals. The same inspectors performed sanitation inspections during establishments' work time and randomly sampled meat and poultry products for testing to provide an additional level of confidence for West Virginia consumers. To further ensure the safety of meat and poultry products inspected by the MPIB, 718 tests were completed on meat samples including tests for pathogens such as *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, as well

CAPTIVE CERVID / DEER FARMING

The state's deer farming industry continues to grow, and interest in owning and operating a farm has remained steady. During state fiscal year 2021-2022, there were 31 Class I (breeding farms) and seven Class II (hunting preserves) registered as WV deer farms. To maintain USDA program standards, 41 tuberculosis and 47 brucellosis samples were collected and submitted by WV licensed, USDA Designated Accredited Veterinarians. Forty-five inspections were completed by the three animal health field technicians. In addition, the same field technicians collected 112 chronic wasting disease samples for testing at USDA-approved laboratories.

ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY (ADT)

The program's purpose is the control of disease through the ability to trace an animal from its farm of origin to its ultimate endpoint. Animal Health Division has registered approximately 12,210 premises, with 163 new registrations. Under the federal regulations, both metal NUES tags and 840 Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags are acceptable forms of official identification. The WVDA distributed 11,625 RFID tags to private veterinarians, livestock producers and livestock markets. Multiple National Priority Trace Exercises were conducted by ADT Coordinator and support staff. The office processes dozens of weekly Official Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (OCVI) for both incoming and outgoing interstate movements. These documents are required by states and can become critical for tracking in the event disease traces occur.

ANIMAL HEALTH FIELD TECHNICIANS (AHFTS)

A total of 105,000 animals were inspected for signs of disease at livestock markets, fairs, festivals and on-farm. AHFTs examined cattle, goats, equines, sheep, swine, backyard flock poultry, plus various other animals being shown at West Virginia's fairs/festivals and WVDA-licensed livestock markets to ensure intra- and interstate movement requirements were met and animals with zoonotic diseases that can be transmissible to people were recommended to event-holders for their entrant to be excused from the event. AHFTs conducted 59 honor flock (sheep) and 90 honor herds (goats) certifications that require yearly enrollment or renewal and can now be initiated online. AHFTs also monitor market equine sales to ensure required testing is completed for any arrivals needing EIA (Coggins) test negative documents before they can move interstate.

LIVESTOCK GRADING / USDA AGRICULTURE MARKETING SERVICE (AMS)

A total of 36,929 head of cattle were graded in barn and for board sales at WV livestock markets by USDA-AMS certified livestock graders. Livestock Graders also perform market reporting into the USDA-AMS national database that generates market reports based on USDA standards for market reporting. Grading assessments are also required to be conducted based on national program training and standards.

APIARY

The Apiary Unit conducts statewide hive inspections, performs outreach and education, conducts disease surveillance and response, participates in the annual national USDA APHIS honeybee survey, as well as being the state data steward for Fieldwatch. In addition, the Apiary Unit also regulates colonies and equipment for sales and interstate movement. Honeybee operations are growing throughout the state. As of December 2023, a total of 1,144 apiarists have registered 15,637 colonies. While that represents a decrease of approximately 16% in the number of registered beekeepers compared to last year's reported numbers, the total number of colonies has increased by 8%.

Beekeepers in West Virginia produced a self-reported 180,404 pounds of honey during the 2022 honey production season which represents a decrease as compared to 2021 production (249,436 pounds). This decrease, however, can partially be explained by lack of production data from one of the two top honey producers in West Virginia. Varroa destructor mites continue to be a major concern for beekeepers, as they represent the primary cause for colony loss in West Virginia. WVDA is exploring partnerships around the state and with bordering states to combat honeybee pests and diseases.

POULTRY

Commercial poultry is the state's largest animal agriculture sector with a \$246.3 million annual value of production for 2020 (source: USDA NASS 2022 WV Agricultural Annual Statistics Bulletin). This production is comprised of broiler chickens and turkeys for meat consumption, plus eggs for consumption, and hatching eggs for reproduction. Valuable genetic stock production contributes key inputs critical for industry growth and development. During 2022, broiler production totaled 78.5 million and turkeys raised in WV totaled 3.7 million (source: USDA NASS 2022 WV Agricultural Annual Statistics Bulletin).

Cooperation between WVDA, USDA, and multiple poultry companies in the state is vital for poultry disease surveillance to protect this valuable rural industry and to ensure that foreign markets remain open to U.S. poultry. Avian Influenza (AI) surveillance is ongoing and preparedness activities for rapid response are ongoing by all poultry industry stakeholders. Multiple calls with commercial poultry producers and interagency stakeholders were conducted by Animal Health Division related to HPAI 2022-23 outbreak across North America. These efforts are essential for maintaining international trade and to eliminate production losses due to outbreaks of foreign animal poultry diseases.

SCRAPIE PROGRAM

WVDA Animal Health will soon be slated for a required five-year Scrapie Review by USDA-APHIS, requiring on-site program demonstration and response for any subsequent corrective actions for review findings. This review is critical to successfully maintain West Virginia's USDA Scrapie Program "Consistent Status." This is important for stakeholders as WVDA examines market opportunities, interstate movement, and future program participation with the goal to eradicate Scrapie from the United States.

ANIMAL DISEASE DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORIES

Diagnostic laboratories in Moorefield and Charleston provide active frontline surveillance and detection for economically significant animal diseases. The Moorefield Animal Health Diagnostic Lab is an authorized National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) Lab and a National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory. The Moorefield lab conducted 217,657 tests during state FY 2020-21. NPIP testing includes Avian Influenza, Salmonella, and Mycoplasma. The Moorefield lab conducts NAHLN PCR testing for African Swine Fever, Avian Influenza, Classical Swine Fever, Foot and Mouth Disease, Swine Influenza Virus, and Virulent Newcastle Disease. The ability to conduct the NAHLN PCR tests enhances West Virginia, regional, and U.S. emergency preparedness and response capability and capacity in the event of an animal disease outbreak. In May 2020, the Moorefield lab obtained ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation. ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation is the international standard for testing and calibration laboratories. The Guthrie Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory conducted 9,125 tests during state FY 2021-22 with focus on livestock regulatory program diseases Equine Infectious Anemia, Brucellosis, Pseudorabies, Bovine Anaplasmosis, Johne's Disease, Bovine Leukosis Virus, and BVD. In 2023, WV was one out of two states that remained HPAI free.

STATE VETERINARIAN OFFICE

This office provides daily consultation to producers, veterinary practitioners and animal industry stakeholders for a wide variety of queries arising from both commercial and backyard operations. Veterinarians participate in the West Virginia One Health partnership which includes multiple state and federal agencies. Participants discuss issues such as rabies, arboviruses (EG-West Nile Virus), tick surveillance, and other potential problems which may affect livestock, wildlife, people, or the environment.

The State Veterinarian collaborated with public health officials investigating sick companion animal cases arising in households with confirmed human COVID-19 cases. Samples were collected on-site and forwarded for animal SARS-Cov-2 analysis. The office assesses veterinary biologics (vaccine) requests and three experimental vaccines, conditionally approved by USDA, are available in West Virginia for diseases affecting farmed deer, sheep, and rabbits. The office coordinated commercial poultry industry, interagency stakeholders, and agriculture-wide communications for the large-scale HPAI 2002-23 outbreak, as well as cooperative projects with Jackson County Regional Livestock Market, WVU Extension, WVVMA, and other animal industry stakeholders and their associations.

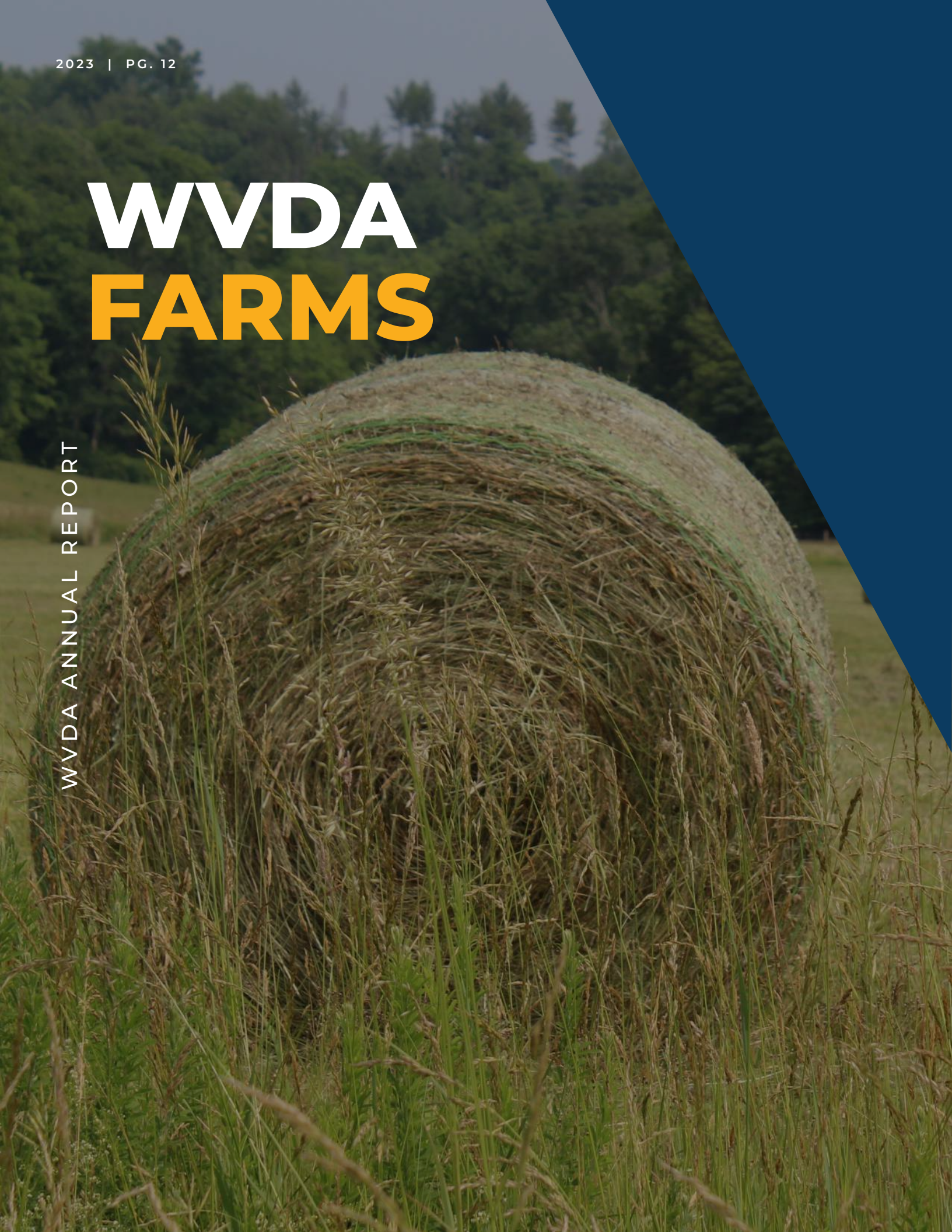
West Virginia's interagency Dangerous Wild Animal Board and multi-partner Livestock Care Standards Board are also supported by the State Veterinarian's attendance. The office frequently assists preparedness and response activities such as conducting official Foreign Animal Disease Investigations, gaining basic and advanced Incident Command System training, participating in state, regional, or national exercises and drills, and serving on several national organization committees including United States Animal Health Association and National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials

WV SPAY AND NEUTER PROGRAM

The WV Spay & Neuter program is present in all but four West Virginia counties and increased to 70 grantees awarded \$552,885.75. Alongside \$464,480.33 in grantee's matching funds, the number of alterations increased overall by 505. In total, grantees completed 10,279 surgical alterations on 5,049 felines and 3,354 community cat designated felines, and 1,876 canines. WVDA's spay and neuter Committee has worked with WV FOHO for grant funding to expand the program to address the overpopulation callaenege.

WVDA FARMS

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FARMS

HUTTONSVILLE, PRUNTYTOWN AND LAKIN FARMS

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) operates 9,700 acres of state-owned farmland at Huttonsville, Pruntytown and Lakin. The farms are primarily involved in the production of feeder cattle, which are marketed or transported to Huttonsville to be finished inside the 300-head enclosed feedlot. Last year over 90% of the cattle sold on the rail graded USDA Prime or Choice.

WVDA successfully bred and calved more than 500 beef cattle using both artificial insemination (AI) and natural service bulls. AI is being used to introduce new bloodlines and genetics at a faster pace into the herd with the plan to improve beef quality and production. The natural service bulls were all purchased through the WVU sponsored bull evaluation and sales. The bulls are tested and selected using feed-efficiency data. The farms also produced 3,375 tons of hay and haylage with a value of over \$300,000. Approximately 2,200 ton of corn silage was produced at Huttonsville, which is being used as feed.

WVDA continued its preventive animal health and vaccination programs, while also remaining Beef Quality Assurance Certified. WVDA continues to lead the industry on animal traceability by attaching RFID tags to all cattle. These tags allow all cattle to be traced throughout the farm system from birth to harvest. By utilizing animal traceability on WVDA farms, we can access animal health and production records and demonstrate the value of this technology to the industry. Livestock marketing options for WVDA cattle include various birth to table models which use the above traceability program. The WVDA cattle herd is striving to be the leader in a herd free of common diseases. Over the last five years enhanced culling to remove suspect cattle from the herd. The WVDA is now the only publicly owned herd free of common diseases.

Capital improvements continue to be made on all farms, including the upgrading of the automated feeding system in the feedlot. Both short and long-term plans are being followed to renovate cattle working and loading facilities. These improvements allow for low stress cattle movement and create a safe working environment for staff and our partners. Staff continue multi-year, on-going plans to renovate, rotate, and improve both pasture and crop ground, including mechanical and chemical methods. USDA NRCS has started its planning process to develop conservation plans. These plans will enhance our capacity to install conservation practices to facilitate grazing and nutrient management systems.

GENERAL MCCAUSLAND MEMORIAL FARM

The General McCausland Memorial Farm, located in Henderson, continues its mission to operate as a demonstration facility, primarily focused on beef cattle production. During the past fiscal year, the farm staff was responsible for the management of 90 spring calving cows which were bred to Angus, Semi-Angus and Hereford bulls who were purchased from the WVU sponsored bull evaluation and sales. Most of these calves were marketed locally at approximately 900 pounds; however, several were moved to Huttonsville to be finished in the feedlot. This gives WVDA the ability to collect carcass data that will facilitate farm staff in making cattle management decisions. This farm also produced 25 tons per acre of field corn and over 500 rolls of hay.

The General McCausland Farm partners with local and statewide FFA chapters to host several soils and land evaluation contest and training sessions.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AND WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

The state-owned farms have partnered with WVU Extension and the Davis College on a cattle breeding research project, using mostly cattle at Pruntytown and Huttonsville farms. This project functions by utilizing not only WVDA cattle but also farm records and staff to research feed efficiency in beef cattle. WVU utilizes WVDA-weaned steers and heifers for these research projects. This cooperative agreement allows the sharing of data and resources that not only provide for improvements to WVDA cattle herds but hopefully to cattle producers throughout the state.

The Lakin farm has continued its partnership with WVSU that allows WVSU to use five to 10 acres of cropland and high tunnels for research and education.

WVDA is a proud partner of West Virginia State University (WVSU). WVSU utilized WVDA's farms to carryout their field trials. WVSU has published their work from these field trials and their work is leading to a healthier population and more viable fresh produce.

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FOOD SAFETY AND FOOD BANKS

WVDA farm staff planted and harvested over 10 acres of garden plots at both Huttonsville and Lakin farms. These plots were used for hands-on Food Safety and Pesticide Training classes for WVDA staff and the public. These training classes were held at both Lakin and Huttonsville farms. Upon the completion of the training, more than 20,000 pounds of produce were donated to West Virginia food banks network.

CORRECTIONS

State-owned farms have agreements in place with West Virginia Division of Corrections to utilize inmate labor when available. During the past fiscal year, more than 17,000 hours of inmate labor was used within the farm system. WVDA considers the use of inmates as a partnership to not only provide much needed farm labor but also to teach inmates hands-on skills such as animal husbandry, fence building, mechanic skills and painting. Over 110 inmates participated in this training during the last fiscal year.

LIVESTOCK MARKETS / CATTLE MARKETING

Farm Administration continued to oversee the licensing of public markets, livestock dealers, and weighmen. The Farm Administration schedules and plans the annual meeting of livestock market owners and the WVDA Commissioner. This meeting is an opportunity to discuss any new regulations or initiatives USDA desires. The Farm Administration continue to work with livestock markets to schedule and advertise both spring and fall special calf sales.

CEDAR LAKES CONFERENCE CENTER

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CEDAR LAKES CONFERENCE CENTER

CEDAR LAKES CONFERENCE CENTER

Cedar Lakes Conference Center's fiscal year 2023 showed another jump in both revenue and confirmed overnight, daily and special events visits. Marketing efforts suggest both an upward trend in returning visitors as well as new first-time guests. Efforts continue to strengthen relationships with the community, county, state and out-of-state visitors by offering the facility to educational, civic, religious, state and others seeking to experience a great West Virginia destination. Cedar Lakes continues to host a variety of annual events which include the State FFA Convention, the Blacksmith, NA and Senior Services Conventions, band camps, special needs retreats, the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair, quilt camps, craft workshops, environmental training classes (for the entire state), family reunions, weddings, showers, birthdays, banquets and many others.

The Facility Improvement projects for this past year have included the acquisition of new kitchen equipment (walk-in freezer, four commercial grade refrigerators), new epoxy flooring and UV tinted windows in the Lakeview Dining Hall main room, interior upgrade to the outdoor Crafthouse restrooms (new plumbing, HVAC, floors), interior upgrades (50%) to Mountaineer Lodge, construction of the new FFA shelter, and a major renovation to Lakes Lodge. The miniature golf course received a much-needed update with new turf, obstacles, and custom painting from a local artist. Cedar Lakes is fortunate to continue to receive funding from many organizations including the Jackson County Commission, Jackson County Community Foundation, Cedar Lakes Foundation, State Future Farmers of America, and Pilgrim's Pride. For FY23, Cedar Lakes secured 338 group contracts consisting of 32 programs and 25,611 participants. The assembly hall expansion allowed FFA to have over 700 students at the 2023 state convention.





EMERGENCY RESPONSE READINESS

EMERGENCY RESPONSE READINESS

HOMELAND SECURITY UNIT (HSU)

The Homeland Security Unit (HSU) is assigned to the Executive Division of the WVDA. The unit provides training, guidance and preparation for emergency response situations that present or may present themselves to the department. Education of employees, stakeholders, and agriculture partners relating to awareness of disease, natural disaster or another emergency situation is paramount. Knowledge of available physical and human resources within the department and throughout the community are important keys to response and preparation. It is important to keep well-trained, well informed staff with equipment in good working order and sufficient supplies to respond quickly, if need arises.

The Following Reflects Activities of the HSU:

- Represents WVDA on numerous organizations including but not limited to: USDA State Emergency Board, WV State Emergency Response Commission, Kanawha-Putnam LEPC, State Interoperable Radio Network (SIRN), serve as SIRN RIC One chairperson, National Alliance of State Animal & Agriculture Emergency Programs (NASAAEP), Southern Agriculture Disasters Response Alliance (SAADRA), WV Emergency Management Division, and other related organizations.
- Serve as the Emergency Support Function (ESF) 11 and Agriculture Liaison for agriculture related emergency management organizations at multiple events, including preparation, training, table-top exercises, etc.
- Implement/train/coordinate WVDA's Incident Management Team and Incident Command System classes. Assist with training opportunities and various WVDA emergency plan development as a result of Animal Health's FADPREP grant funding.
- Participated in development and conducting of National Veterinary Stockpile tabletop exercise in Moorefield.
- Chair WVDA Safety Committee which assists with development and implementation of various safety projects.
- Work with WV Intelligence Fusion Center & serve as a Fusion Liaison Officer (FLO).
- Provide staff, transportation, equipment, and supplies to other WVDA divisions for assistance at various festivals and public events, including but not limited to the State Fair of WV, Mountain State Arts & Crafts fair, etc. Disinfect facility at State Fair and set up and remove command post for Animal Health Division, provide two-way radios, handwashing stations, animals panels, etc.
- Facilitate and assist in teaching Bovine Emergency Response Plan (BERP) classes. Two classes were held in October 2022 in Malden, WV. Work on continuing BERP program.
- Arrange/host/coordinate/teach bio-security, AED/First Aid/CPR, active shooter, two-way radio, agriculture all-hazards classes. Teach six AED/First Aid/CPR classes.

WVDA ANNUAL REPORT

FOOD SAFETY



FOOD SAFETY

In FY2023, WVDA Regulatory officers traveled over 144,127 miles across the state to collect samples and conduct inspections. Regulatory officers also participated in several outreach activities across West Virginia for consumers, industry, and schools. These include, but are not limited to, frozen dessert set-ups, hand washing demonstrations, school activities, judging eggs at schools, hands-on farm training and monitoring and set-up while working 4-H and FFA competitions. Regulatory officers attended many state and national training and meetings.

UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Two contracts with the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) were negotiated, signed, and initiated this fiscal year. These cover 12 Human Food Sanitation Warehouse Inspections (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) and seafood inspections. These contracts generate a total of \$11,841 in revenue.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING

Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) is a labeling law that requires retailers, such as full-line grocery stores, supermarkets and club warehouse stores, to notify their customers with information regarding the source of certain foods. WVDA maintains a contract with USDA to complete COOL inspections. Three Regulatory Officers conduct these inspections that require testing and certifications prior to completing inspections. During FY2023, 16 inspections across the state were conducted generating \$9,600.

FOOD AND DAIRY TESTING

Several state laws promulgate the inspection and collection of dairy samples for analysis. Soft-service ice cream samples were collected after inspection of manufacturing sites within West Virginia and tested for sanitary conditions. WVDA issued 691 Frozen Dessert Permits in the state and 610 Dairy Permits issued for Dairy Distributors for a total fee collection of \$17,325. Additional late fees were collected for a total of \$3,800. Total revenue collected for Frozen Dessert and Dairy was \$24,210. The laboratory received 4,404 frozen desserts and dairy product samples for coliform bacterial counts and standard plates from 1,107 facility inspections.

Regulatory officers assisted 15 manufacturers of soft serve ice cream with proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures. Under the Frozen Dessert and Imitation Frozen Dessert Program, sixty-two 24-hour shut down orders and four summary suspensions were issued due to product violations.

SUMMER LUNCHES

The dairy laboratory performs contract testing for the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Summer Lunch Program for samples collected from preparation sites and satellite sites located statewide. Food samples and milk were collected with 61 total components tested, 61 tested for coliform, 18 standard plate counts, and 43 tested for Salmonella species. Three milk samples were found in violation. This contract generated \$19,353.

FARMERS MARKETS

The WVDA was tasked with the regulation and inspections of all farmers markets in the state. We have provided inspections, registration, technical assistance and outreach and education to markets and vendors. During the past year, our Farmers Market Coordinator has registered 274 markets. There were 108 market inspections completed with 127 registered vendor permits and 14 vendor inspections at Farmers Market and 31 kitchen inspections. The Department will continue to work with industry to provide support and assistance to farmers markets across the state. READ has also provided 35 educational outreaches.

EGGS

WVDA received and processed 702 Small Egg Producer Permits in the state this fiscal year. Egg Distributor Permits processed for a total revenue of \$2,086.92. The total revenue for egg inspection fees assessed was \$44,723.14. Regulatory officers conducted retail egg inspections at 172 firms on 635 lots of eggs, issuing five embargos.

PRODUCE SAFETY

WVDA continued into year seven of the implementation of the West Virginia Produce Safety program. This year the FDA cooperative agreement (CAP) award continued to focus on three key delivery areas: farm inventory, inspection implementation and producer outreach and education.

Accomplishments included:

- Outreach at events reaching than 170,000 people statewide.
- Two training courses held at WVDA state farms involving produce safety related topics.
- Two Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) grower trainings.
- One Writing Your Food Safety Plan training.
- Met the 2023 target for outreach and education goals.
- Data acquisition and Program Manager positions filled.
- All covered farms inspected in 2022-2023.
- Farm inventory verification surpassed the Y2 milestone.

The program spanned three divisions and 15 WVDA staff. West Virginia met all program goals for year five with a target of inspecting all covered small farms in West Virginia. Funding for the program was provided by the FDA for \$390,000 in FY2023.

MANUFACTURED FOODS REGULATORY PROGRAM STANDARDS

The Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS) are a critical component in establishing the national Integrated Food Safety System (IFSS). The goal of the MFRPS is to implement a nationally integrated, risk-based, food safety system focused on protecting public health. The MFRPS establish a uniform basis for measuring and improving the performance of prevention, intervention, and response activities of manufactured food regulatory programs in the United States. The development and implementation of the standards will help federal and state programs better direct their regulatory activities toward reducing foodborne illness.

WVDA is in the fourth year of the federal funding cycle for MFRPS and is funded \$150,000 annually by the FDA. WVDA has seven full-time employees that conduct inspections for the MFRPS grant and plans to continue to sustain the current number of full-time food and seafood inspection staff. WVDA is in full conformance with the standards.

SELECT PLANT-BASED DERIVATIVE PRODUCTS (HEMP AND KRATOM PRODUCTS)

In 2023, the new Select Plant-Based Derivative Products (Hemp and Kratom Products) rules were established with the legislature. These guidelines are for safer hemp and kratom products and provides consumer protection standards for all products sold in West Virginia. The rule applies to all hemp and kratom products, regardless of the origin of manufacture. During FY2023, there were 1,031 registered hemp retailers bringing in \$102,600 in revenue and approximately 830 hemp products registered totaling \$16,560. Kratom was a new program added to the WVDA this fiscal year. Between kratom retailers, distributors and manufacturers, \$498,600 was acquired. The total for Select Plant-Based Derivatives was \$617,760.



AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY PROTECTION

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY PROTECTION

The Department employs five regulatory officers to collect fertilizer, feed, lime and seed samples throughout separate regions in West Virginia. All lime and fertilizer products must be registered with the WVDA before being sold into commerce in West Virginia. All regulatory officers are required to check for registration on each product that they sample and all products in the store. Regulatory officers have incorporated a “priority” sampling approach for sampling those products that have previous violations. They are sampled before other surveillance or compliance products.

UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

A contract with the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) was negotiated, signed and initiated this fiscal year for six BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) Rule Compliance Inspections and six VFD (Veterinary Feed Directive) inspections. This contract generated \$16,690.34.

WEST VIRGINIA COMMERCIAL FEED LAW

Under the Feed Law, there were 125 non-medicated feed samples, 16 medicated feed samples, and 112 pet and specialty pet food samples collected. Once collected, samples are delivered to the WVDA laboratory where several analyses may be performed including protein, fat, fiber, moisture, aflatoxin, and vomitoxin. In addition to the sampling, regulatory officers performed 178 inspections of feed manufacturers and retailers across the state. Forty-three violations were assessed during FY2021, with three embargoes issued for non-registration or non-compliance labels.

Registration for feed products:

- Commercial Feed Guarantor - 315 (\$135,920 generated).
- Large Package Pet Food (over 10 lb.) - 11,300 (\$160,945 generated).
- Specialty Pet Food (1#/under) - 1,087 (\$43,010 generated).
- Commercial Feed Manufacturing Permits - 43 (\$2,355 generated).
- Commercial Feed Distributing Permits - 500 (\$6,570 generated).
- Commercial Feed Tonnage - 301,656 (\$84,448 generated).

All feed, pet food, lime and fertilizer products must be registered with WVDA before it can be sold into commerce in WV. All regulatory officers are required to check for registration on each product that they sample.

FERTILIZER

Companies register their products with the WVDA, and the samples are analyzed to verify compliance with the label. In FY 2023, 244 fertilizer samples were collected resulting in four violations. A total of 36,507 tons of fertilizer were reported sold in West Virginia. Five Fertilizer Formulation Permits were issued. One hundred companies registered 4,209 products. There are 100 companies registering 678 soil amendments, compost, and horticultural growing media.

The primary and secondary containment of fertilizers rule establishes standards for fertilizers for the purpose of protecting the groundwater resources of West Virginia. We currently have 10 firms holding storage facility permits. No fees are associated with this permit. A yearly inspection was completed at the firms prior to issuing a permit.

LIME

Under the Agricultural Liming Materials Law, there were zero violations and fines. There were 43 lime manufacturers registered selling 101 lime products with 45,134 tons sold in West Virginia. WVDA has six licensed lime distributors registered in West Virginia, and the program revenue for the fiscal year is \$4,485.

SEED

WVDA Regulatory officers performed seed inspection across the state. If a seed product is found to be mislabeled or the germination date has expired, an embargo of the seed will be issued. Regulatory officers conducted 130 seed facility inspections in which they conducted 28 embargoes this past year. There were tons of seed potatoes sold in the state. There were no lots of seed potatoes embargoed. Four hundred and one seedsman are registered in FY2023, and 435 seed stamps for individual seed racks were purchased and mailed to retail and wholesale distributors. Seed poundage fees were collected on 291,572 pounds of Forest and Forage Seed along with Agricultural Crop Seed sold in West Virginia. The total seed revenue for FY2023 was \$135,091.71.

ANIMAL FEED REGULATORY PROGRAM STANDARDS

The FDA and the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) partnered to develop the Animal Feed Regulatory Program Standards (AFRPS). The feed standards establish a uniform foundation for the design and management of states' programs responsible for the regulation of animal food. Through implementing the feed standards, West Virginia's program was able to achieve and maintain programmatic improvements that help ensure the safety and integrity of the U.S. animal food supply.

Implementation of the feed standards also helped to ensure a uniform and consistent approach to animal food regulation among jurisdictions. The goal of the standards is to leverage resources and share common successes to build systems within state regulatory feed programs. WVDA was funded \$150,000 by the FDA in FY2023 for the program. The AFRPS program is in full conformance with the standards.

PESTICIDES CONTROL ACT

Pesticides play a significant role in the protection of our food and fiber. Insects and weed pests can reduce crop output and impact a grower's ability to provide a viable and profitable product. Worker and handler training is offered for agricultural and nonagricultural industries alike, to ensure safe and effective use of pesticides. Required annual agricultural Worker Protection Standard (WPS) training assistance is available for agriculture establishments. In FY2023 the Agriculture Health and Safety Coordinator provided training for 58 agriculture workers, 27 agriculture handlers, and three trainers.

In FY2023, WVDA's five Pesticide Regulatory Officers conducted 466 inspections of agriculture and non-agriculture establishments to ensure compliance with the Pesticide Control Act intended to protect citizens and the environment. These inspections provide regulatory oversight of licensed and unlicensed applicators and more than 14,400 pesticides registered for use in the state.

The Pesticide Regulatory Programs registered 1,592 commercial and public applicators along with 2,131 registered technicians. There were 436 licensed pesticide application businesses registered.

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FAX NUMBERS

WVDA	304-251-1000
WVDA	304-251-1001
WVDA	304-251-1002
WVDA	304-251-1003
WVDA	304-251-1004
WVDA	304-251-1005
WVDA	304-251-1006
WVDA	304-251-1007
WVDA	304-251-1008
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WVDA	304-251-1017
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WVDA	304-251-1049
WVDA	304-251-1050

WVDA LABORATORIES



LABORATORIES

AGRICULTURE MATERIALS

The agricultural materials laboratory analyzes a variety of agricultural products. These products include animal feed, pet food, pet and animal treats, forage, silage, fertilizer, liming material, and soil amendments. The majority of samples received are official regulatory samples taken by WVDA inspectors. The laboratory also receives service samples submitted by individuals throughout the state.

The laboratory analyzed 221 samples of animal feed, pet food, and forage products in the fiscal year 2023. These samples were collected as part of the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement and regular surveillance by READ's Regulatory Officers. Sample determinations included nutrition, mycotoxins, toxic and nutritional metals, *Salmonella spp.*, *E. coli* 0157:H7, and prohibited materials. These analyses were performed for compliance in labeling, adulteration, and contamination.

The laboratory analyzed 251 fertilizer and liming material samples. The fertilizer samples were analyzed for total nitrogen, direct available phosphate, and soluble potash. The liming materials were analyzed for calcium, magnesium, calcium oxide, magnesium oxide, calcium carbonate, magnesium carbonate, fineness, calcium carbonate equivalence, and effect neutralizing value.

The seed laboratory's main responsibility is to ensure the quality of seed products offered for sale in the state. The laboratory also verifies the ingredients contained and potential filth in a variety of animal and human food products. In fiscal year 2023 the laboratory analyzed 100 samples for germination, purity, noxious weeds, prohibited materials, filth, and ingredient identification. Seed samples that were shipped in interstate commerce and failed the WVDA's laboratory analysis were sent to the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service laboratory for confirmatory analysis.

FOOD AND DAIRY TESTING

The dairy laboratory received 4,069 frozen desserts and dairy product samples for coliform bacterial counts and standard plate counts. Of those samples, 869 were found to be violative. Four fluid milk samples and eight summer lunches were collected from retail sites or under contract testing.

The food chemistry laboratory analyzes a wide variety of products including ground meats and poultry, processed meats, smoked seafood products, dairy products, and several others. The purpose of the testing is to ensure that food products sold in West Virginia are compliant with regulations and guidelines set forth by the state, USDA, and FDA. The food chemistry laboratory received a total of 37 samples for nutritional analysis in fiscal year 2023. The laboratory also analyzed an additional 470 samples as part of the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement. The samples included baby food, dried fruits and vegetables, protein powders, carrots, sweet potatoes, dietary supplements, and other various commodities. They were analyzed for the presence of sulfites, melamine and toxic metals.

The microbiology laboratory provides bacteriological analyses for the Meat and Poultry Inspection Division (MPID) and the commercial meat industry inspected by the MPID as outlined in the USDA rules for "Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems." Sample types include carcass swabs/rinses, ground meat, ready-to-eat products, and various manufactured foods collected as part of the MFRPS Cooperative Agreement. These samples were analyzed for a variety of bacterial contaminants including, but not limited to, *E. coli*, *Salmonella spp.*, *Listeria spp.*, *C. jejuni*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*. A total of 1,587 samples were analyzed by the laboratory with 29 samples testing positive. The laboratory also analyzed an additional 400 samples as part of the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement. The samples included Hispanic-style soft cheese, granola, tahini, soft-serve ice cream, dried mushrooms, ground pork, ground beef, ruminant feed, poultry feed, dog kibble/treats and cat kibble/treats. They were analyzed for *Salmonella spp.*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *E. coli* 0157:H7, and prohibited materials.

HEMP

The hemp laboratory works with our Plant Industries Division to test hemp samples for Total $\Delta 9$ -THC compliance. Total $\Delta 9$ -THC is defined as $\Delta 9$ -THC + ($\Delta 9$ -THCA x 0.877). In fiscal year 2023, the laboratory received 89 hemp samples. The laboratory also analyzed 46 samples for law enforcement and 25 hemp product samples.

The WVDA laboratory can now quantitate 13 cannabinoids (including $\Delta 9$ -THC and $\Delta 9$ -THCA) and several toxic metals. As the amount and variety of cannabis products available to consumers continues to increase, the laboratory will continue expanding its capabilities to ensure products are safe and meet their guarantees.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

During the fall of 2020, the WVDA started the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) Cooperative Agreement. This is a five-year cooperative agreement from the FDA. The WVDA was awarded funding for the following tracks: Human Food Microbiology, Human Food Chemistry, Animal Food Microbiology, Animal Food Chemistry, Microbiology Capability/Capacity Development, Chemistry Capability/Capacity Development, and Method Development and Validation. These funds will allow the WVDA to update its equipment, expand its testing scope and continue to improve the overall quality of the laboratory.

In year three, the WVDA received \$709,993. A variety of commodities were analyzed, including animal and pet food, baby food, tahini, cheese, granola, ice cream, dried mushrooms, dried fruits and vegetables, protein powders, carrots, sweet potatoes, dietary supplements, and various other products. These products were analyzed for toxic metals, nutritional metals, mycotoxins, prohibited materials, sulfites, melamine, *Salmonella spp.*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *E. coli 0157:H7*. This work led to the international recall of dried apricot products. The funding in year three also allowed the WVDA to purchase new laboratory equipment and improve its facilities.

ISO ACCREDITATION

In fiscal year 2023 the WVDA READ laboratories were assessed for the methods in their scope of accreditation, which includes both microbiological and chemical testing.

The accreditation process involves the standardization of quality assurance practices regarding management and technical competencies. This designation allows the laboratory to assist the state in complying with the Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS) and Animal Food Regulatory Program Standards (AFRPS). The accreditation is also necessary to deem the laboratory technically competent to support analysis for USDA and FDA programs.

After receiving ISO accreditation. The WVDA laboratory has received additional contracts from several agencies and processing plants for laboratory testing.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

WVDA ANNUAL REPORT



ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

The Regulatory and Environmental Affairs Division's Environmental Laboratories, located in the Moorefield Regional Agricultural Complex, specialize in the analysis of surface water, soil, poultry litter and manure, drinking water and dairy. All laboratories participate in proficiency test sample programs in order to maintain certifications.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

WVDA's Nutrient Management Specialists worked this year to maintain and add new agricultural acreage managed under nutrient management plans. During this time, they worked with a total of 151 farmers, collected 1,750 soil samples, 53 manure/litter samples, and completed 136 nutrient management plans on 32,695.47 acres.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT LABORATORY

WVDA's Nutrient Management Specialists worked this year to maintain and add new agricultural acreage managed under nutrient management plans. During this time, they worked with a total of 151 farmers, collected 1,750 soil samples, 53 manure/litter samples, and completed 136 nutrient management plans on 32,695.47 acres.

WVDA Nutrient Management Laboratory analyzed manure samples for nutrient content as a service to farmers and aided in the creation of nutrient management plans. The information from the manure analysis was used in conjunction with soil test results to write a plan that enabled a farmer to maximize crop yields while minimizing the impact of land application on surface waters. Farmers are required to submit samples to keep the nutrient management plan current and meet the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Program Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP). The WIP includes detailed, specific steps each jurisdiction in the Chesapeake Bay watershed will take to meet the pollution reduction goals of the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) by 2025.

The Nutrient Management Laboratory also worked in cooperation with the West Virginia Conservation Agency's cost-share incentive programs that provide the farming community with resources to install Best Management Practices (BMPs).

SOIL TESTING LABORATORIES

WVDA established a soil testing laboratory at the Moorefield Regional Agriculture Complex in January 2016 to assist the nutrient management staff in developing nutrient management plans for West Virginia farmers. The lab achieved certification status through the North American Proficiency Test (NAPT) program in March 2016. This NAPT certification is required for soil test analysis by the NRCS Conservation Practice Code 590.

The Moorefield laboratory received samples collected by the nutrient management staff as well as the public and analyzed each sample for a routine panel of tests, which included six analyses along with a liming recommendation.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

In FY23, water quality monitoring continued on 16 streams in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle.

The frequency of monitoring is as follows:

- Three times per month - South Branch of the Potomac and Cacapon Rivers
- Two times per month - Lost River

- Once per month – Lunice Creek, Mill Creek (Grant County), Anderson Run, North Fork of the South Branch, South Fork of the South Branch, Patterson Creek, Opequon Creek, Sleepy Creek, Rockymarsh Run, Elks Run, Elk Branch, and Bullskin Run
- The 1,930 water samples that were collected from these streams for the 2022–2023 fiscal year were analyzed by the Environmental Technician and Environmental Laboratory for the following parameters: pH, conductivity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, nitrate, nitrite, ammonia, total phosphorus, turbidity, orthophosphate, TKN, total suspended solids, and fecal coliform bacteria.

Data collected by the Moorefield Water Quality Program has been used by a variety of groups including: the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, West Virginia Conservation Agency, the Chesapeake Bay Program Office, West Virginia University, and many non-profits and watershed organizations. This data has been invaluable for assessing water quality trends over a long period of time, as well as guidance for prioritizing installation of nutrient and sediment-reducing Best Management Practices (BMP) on agricultural lands.

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM (CBP)

On June 16, 2014, a new Chesapeake Bay Agreement was signed by all Chesapeake Bay Watershed jurisdictions. Over the past year, WVDA employees worked alongside WVDEP, WVCA, and colleagues in other Bay jurisdictions to accomplish the goals stated in the agreement.

Work continues with the West Virginia Chesapeake Bay Tributary Team, which began its work in April 2003. This group helps to coordinate the implementation of the state’s WIP. This effort requires ongoing education and outreach to encourage participation in cost share programs and Best Management Practice (BMP) implementation projects that help to protect and restore West Virginia streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

As a result of the hard work and accomplishments by the WVDA team and partners in West Virginia, positive feedback was once again received from EPA that nutrient and sediment reduction efforts continue to pay off. Water quality data collected by the USGS in the non-tidal monitoring program confirms that West Virginia has made significant water quality improvements, and West Virginia has already met its 2025 nutrient and sediment goals. West Virginia is the only state in the program to meet and exceed the 2025 goals.

SAMPLE AND ANALYSIS TOTALS FOR FY2023 (JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023)

SAMPLE AND ANALYSIS TOTALS											
	Water Quality		Microbiology		Litter/Manure		Soil Testing		Drinking Water		
Month	Analyses	Samples	Analyses	Samples	Analyses	Samples	Analyses	Samples	Analyses	Samples	
Jul-22	1908	159	461	144	94	5	564	188	64		64
Aug-22	2004	167	486	152	166	10	600	200	63		63
Sep-22	1908	159	461	144	134	9	552	184	62		62
Oct-22	1908	159	464	145	208	12	786	262	43		43
Nov-22	1548	129	429	134	134	9	417	139	45		45
Dec-22	1452	121	429	134	32	1	429	143	41		41
Jan-23	1812	151	464	145	62	4	327	109	50		50
Feb-23	1572	131	371	116	298	21	441	147	46		46
Mar-23	1560	130	410	128	450	34	843	281	57		54
Apr-23	1812	151	410	128	206	14	1212	404	63		58
May-23	1692	141	416	130	178	9	921	307	57		57
Jun-23	1848	154	448	140	146	8	492	164	51		51
Total	21024	1752	5249	1640	2108	136	7,584	2,528	642		634

FOREST HEALTH AND **PLANT** **INDUSTRIES**

WVDA ANNUAL REPORT



FOREST HEALTH AND PLANT INDUSTRIES

Plant Industries Division combats a wide array of native and non-native plant pests and diseases through extensive surveillance, regulatory and control programs, many as part of federal cooperative agreements. The division is broken down into two main program units: Agricultural Pest Survey and Forest Health Protection.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) SUPPORT

The Geographic Information System (GIS) Specialist supports all Plant Industries Division programs.

The GIS Specialist performs complex technical work in the development and operation of a multi-tier state geographic information system. The Division can analyze and visualize spatial data across the state using geospatial technologies managed by the GIS Specialist. Primary responsibilities include design and maintenance of spatial databases, data management, data collection, land analysis, and reporting of all current and historical spatial data for use in field operations, division reports, and public relations materials. The GIS specialist also produces digital and analog maps, manuals, data collection protocols, and quality controls within the context of geographic professional standards, agency programs, and policies. Additionally, the GIS Specialist assists other WVDA divisions in GIS related tasks.

- Used ESRI products (such as ArcGIS Desktop, ArcGIS Pro, ArcGIS Online, and Field Maps), Kobo Collect, and Avenza to manage and display all data collected by any staff member of the Plant Industries Division.
- Managed and supported mapping software on staff computers, tablets, and phones.
- Conducted analytical and statistical studies using collected spatial data for program reports.
- Managed the Forest Disturbance Mapping and Digital Mobile Sketch Mapping programs for West Virginia in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service.
- Updated and improved data collection and viewed software used by staff through conferences and meetings with educational institutions, private companies, and state and federal agencies.
- Used meteorological data to describe forest health issues and improved data collection efforts in adverse weather conditions.
- Managed and updated website content for all division programs.
- Used staff feedback to improve field survey operations.
- Upgraded data collection equipment such as tablets and tablet accessories used in field surveying.
- Collaborated with Michigan State University and Virginia Tech on federally funded nationwide projects to improve land and public health.
- Worked closely with USDA, USFS, and NRCS to mitigate the effects of invasive species such as spotted lanternfly and spongy moth.

AGRICULTURAL PEST SURVEY (CAPS) PROGRAMS

Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) Program

The CAPS program conducts surveys for insects, plant pathogens, and injurious weeds in field crops to detect any new, non-native plant pests and to monitor the impact of native agricultural pests. The program functions in a cooperative agreement with USDA-APHIS-PPQ on specific pest-control issues, supports export certification programs, and contributes data to the National Agricultural Pest Information System (NAPIS) and Integrated Plant Health Information System (IPHIS) computer databases.

- Traps were set at 10 sites in seven counties for five insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for one insect pest as part of an Exotic Wood Borer/Bark Beetle Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Ips sexdentatus* (Six-toothed bark beetle), *Ips typographus* (European spruce bark beetle), *Monochamus alternatus* (Japanese pine sawyer), *Monochamus urussovii* (Black fir sawyer), and *Hylobius abeitus* (Large pine weevil), as well as visual surveys for *Anoplophora glabripennis* (Asian longhorned beetle). No positives were discovered.
- Traps were set at 12 sites in four counties for three insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for one insect pest and one invasive weed as part of a Soybean Commodity Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Autographa gamma* (Silver Y moth), *Chrysodeixis chalcites* (Golden twin spot moth), and *Helicoverpa armigera* (Old world bollworm), as well as visual surveys for the invasive weed *Alectra vogelii* (Yellow witchweed) and *Diabrotica speciosa* (Cucurbit beetle). No positives were discovered.
- Traps were set at 12 sites in nine counties for three insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for two insect pests as part of a Corn Commodity Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Autographa gamma* (silver Y moth), *Helicoverpa armigera* (old world bollworm), and *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (false codling moth), as well as visual surveys for *Heteronychus arator* (black maize beetle), and *Diabrotica speciosa* (Cucurbit beetle). No positives were discovered.
- Traps were set at six sites in five counties for two insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for one insect pest as part of a Small Grains Commodity Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Helicoverpa armigera* (old world bollworm) and *Spodoptera littoralis* (Egyptian cottonworm), as well as visual surveys for *Diabrotica speciosa* (Cucurbit beetle). No positives were discovered.
- Traps were set at 20 sites in 16 counties for five insect pests and visual surveys were conducted for one invasive insect as part of an Oak Commodity Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Lymantria mathura* (Rosy moth), *Thaumetopoea processionea* (Oak processionary moth) and *Lymantria dispar asiatica* (Asian gypsy moth). An Oak inventory was also conducted at each of the 20 sites and data was recorded for 40 trees including host species, GPS location, and DBH. Visual surveys for general symptoms of the target pests were also conducted. No positives were discovered.
- Traps were set at 40 sites in 22 counties for five insect pests as part of an Asian Defoliators Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Dendrolimus pini* (Pine-tree lappet), *Dendrolimus sibiricus* (Siberian Silk Moth), *Dendrolimus punctatus* (Masson pine moth), *Lymantria mathura* (Rosy Moth), and *Lymantria monacha* (Nun Moth). No positives were discovered.
- Traps were set at eight sites in seven counties for seven insect pests as part of the Solanaceous Commodity Survey. Surveys were conducted for *Autographa gamma* (Silver Y moth), *Helicoverpa armigera* (Old world bollworm), *Neoleucinodes elegantalis* (Tomato fruit borer), *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (False codling moth), *Tuta absoluta* (Tomato leaf miner), *Chrysodeixis chalcites* (Golden twin spot moth) and *Spodoptera litura* (Cotton cutworm). No positives were discovered.
- Staff surveyed 25 nurseries in 19 counties for Sudden Oak Death (*Phytophthora ramorum*) collecting 262 foliage samples. All samples were negative.
- Visual surveys were conducted for the spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) (SLF) in all surveys.
- Spotted lanternfly monitoring sticky bands were set in “high risk“ areas near railroads and material movement. Bands were monitored every two weeks from May to October.
- Dozens of tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) sites were monitored for SLF across the state.
- New SLF populations were discovered in Ohio, Hardy, Grant, and Hancock counties. Delimiting surveys were conducted in an effort to determine the extent of the infestations.
- WVDA staff have worked alongside USDA during SLF treatment and eradication efforts.
- WVDA staff implemented presentations and displays at various large-scale events including the West Virginia State Fair, the National Boy Scout Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve, and the West Virginia Pumpkin Festival.
- Outreach materials were distributed to multiple state parks, schools, and welcome centers. These materials give information to increase public awareness of high-priority pests.

- SLF information packets were sent to 214 nurseries throughout the state.
- Information was distributed to multiple West Virginia agencies including the Appalachia Trail Conservancy, West Virginia Scenic Trails, West Virginia Port Authority, West Virginia State Rail and South Branch Valley Authority, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, West Virginia Division of Forestry, West Virginia University Extension, West Virginia Farm Bureau, West Virginia Beekeepers Association, West Virginia Department of Highways, and West Virginia Nature Conservancy.
- Presentations were given to various groups including the WV Christmas Tree Growers Association, WV Division of Forestry, WV Nursery & Landscape Association, Kentucky Forest Health Conference, Ohio Grape and Wine Conference, and several WV Master Naturalist Chapters.
- WVDA added SLF information to their website and on social media encouraging any suspect positives to be reported to bugbusters@wvda.us. WVDA also participated in regional bi-weekly SLF informational calls.
- Staff provided over 500 outreach filled information bags to West Virginia State Park Nature Centers to hand out to youth visitors.
- More than 1,500 handheld fans with information on SLF were distributed at various locations and events.
- Staff provided a variety of other outreach handout materials to several West Virginia State Park Nature Centers to hand out to visitors.

PLANT PEST REGULATORY PROGRAM (PPRP)

The PPRP works to prevent the movement of plant pathogens on nursery stock produced in West Virginia and nursery products imported into the state. The program includes registration and annual inspection of nurseries and nursery dealers, and the enforcement of state plant quarantines and orders. The Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread Regulatory Program is also operated by the PPRP through a cooperative agreement with USDA-APHIS-PPQ. In addition, the PPRP certifies domestic and international shipments of plants and timber products.

- Registered 115 nurseries and 387 nursery dealerships and conducted 320 nursery and/or dealer inspections, resulting in the stop-sale of 338 pieces of nursery stock because of injurious plant pests, plant quarantines, or lack of registration during interstate movement.
- Conducted 721 inspections and issued 2,399 USDA-APHIS-PPQ phytosanitary certificates for 4,611 shipping containers covering international log and lumber shipments.
- Conducted inspections for the purpose of issuing two state phytosanitary certificates for wood material destined for the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.
- Visited 98 sites to investigate the movement of articles capable of transporting the gypsy moth into uninfested areas.
- Collected 262 leaf samples and visited 25 nurseries or nursery dealers in 19 different counties for the Sudden Oak Death Nursery Survey.
- Enforced the WV White Pine Blister Rust Quarantine, WV Barberry and Black Stem Rust Quarantine, WV Gypsy Moth Quarantine, WV Noxious Weed Act, and the WV Non-Native Plant-Feeding Snail Quarantine.
- Trace forward inspections/contacts happened on four separate occasions, twice pertaining to *Phytophthora ramorum* with the USDA. Also, Tomato Fruit Virus and Rose Mosaic Virus were shipped to WV locations.

INDUSTRIAL HEMP

PPRP Unit also implements the registration process for the WV Industrial Hemp Program, collects crop samples for THC testing, and oversees the mitigation of crops that do not meet the requirements for industrial hemp.

- 120 full licenses to grow industrial hemp were issued for the 2022 growing season.
 - 71 varieties of industrial hemp were grown.
 - 16.2 acres were planted.
 - 30 lbs. for fiber.
 - 3,396 lbs. of flower material.
 - Minor amounts of propagative material (Seed and cuttings).

BLACK FLY CONTROL PROGRAM

The Black Fly Control Program has the responsibility of significantly reducing the black fly population in southeastern West Virginia without adversely affecting non-target aquatic organisms within the area of treatment. The control program is essential to keeping people and farms near the rivers safer from the organism's adverse bite. This is accomplished by monitoring water conditions as well as black fly larval development in southern West Virginia river system sites. Monitoring water conditions and larval development is crucial for determining the optimum time to conduct black fly control operations. Suppression activities target problem areas of the New, Bluestone, and Greenbrier Rivers.

- Conducted 11 aerial black fly treatments in 2023.
- Conducted 14 aquatic invertebrate and stream assessment monitoring trips.

PEST IDENTIFICATION LABORATORY (PIL)

The PIL is a cooperative effort of the entomology and plant pathology staff. It complements the pest survey and detection efforts of the APS Unit by providing expertise in the identification of insects, plant diseases, weeds, and other pests. The PIL also disseminates information on the pests identified and investigates problems considered significant from a biological, regulatory, or impact standpoint. PIL personnel maintain permanent reference collections and record systems of insects, plant diseases, and weeds. Pest control recommendations are provided for private individuals, businesses, and other government agencies when needed.

- Screened 152 trap samples for the presence of two species of exotic scolytid bark beetles, two species of exotic long-horned beetles, and one species of exotic root weevil for the CAPS (Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey) exotic Woodborer/Bark Beetle Survey program. None of the target pests were found.
- Screened 52 trap samples for the presence of three exotic species of moth pests for the CAPS Corn Commodity Survey. None of the target pests were found.
- Screened 91 trap samples for the presence of three species of exotic moth pests for the CAPS Soybean Commodity Survey. None of the target pests were found.
- Screened 11 trap samples for the presence of two exotic species of moth pests for the CAPS Small Grains Commodity Survey. None of the target pests were found.
- Screened 145 trap samples for the presence of three exotic species of moth pests for the CAPS Oak Commodity Survey. None of the target pests were found.
- Screened 330 trap samples for the presence of five exotic species of moth pests for the PPA Asian Defoliator Survey. None of the target pests were found.

- Screened 86 trap samples for the presence of seven exotic species of moth pests for the PPA Solanaceous Commodity Survey. None of the target pests were found.
- Conducted visual detection surveys for the invasive weed garlic mustard, *Ailaria petiolate*, in Mercer County for the Noxious Weeds Biocontrol Survey Program (JKGM).
- Provided insect museum information requests, specimen loans, specialized insect identifications, and other research related services to the National Museum of Natural History, US Forest Service, WV Department of Natural Resources, Clemson University, Sunny College of Entomological Science and Forestry, University of New Hampshire, University of Sopron Forest Pest Institute, Hungary, University of South Dakota, Washington State University, West Virginia University, West Virginia Entomological Society, West Virginia Master Naturalist Program, BugGuide.net, iNaturalist.org, and WVDA personnel.
- Handled 1,757 pest calls, 903 pest specimens, and 12 information requests. All pest specimen information was entered into the National Plant Diagnostic Network database.
- Provided one adult and three youth educational programs.

FOREST HEALTH PROTECTION PROGRAMS (FHP)

Forest Insect and Disease Survey and Detection Programs

- Conducted Thousand Canker Disease visual surveys statewide.
- Conducted statewide beech leaf disease (BLD) surveys. Long-term monitoring plots were monitored at eight locations and one new plot was established. BLD was detected in Hancock County in 2020 and has spread from the original site to other areas in Tomlinson Run State Park. BLD was located this summer in Ohio County.
- Processed numerous samples submitted by field staff, extension agents, other government agencies, and the public using diagnostic tools such as PCR and ELISA.
- Treated 1907 hemlock trees at six different sites and treatments will continue throughout the fall and next spring.
- Elongate Hemlock Scale is now found in eight counties: Fayette, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Kanawha, Monongalia, Preston, Mercer and Wood and are now confirmed positive for EHS.
- Oak anthracnose and anthracnose of other hardwoods were found throughout the state.
- *Xylella fastidiosa*, Bacterial Leaf Scorch, was confirmed in Hardy and Grant Counties.
- Spotted Lanternfly is now present in 10 West Virginia counties: Berkeley, Jefferson, Hampshire, Morgan, Mineral, Hardy, Grant, Taylor, Hancock, and Brooke.
- Four long term monitoring plots were established for oak decline in Pocahontas, Greenbrier, and Monongalia counties in 2022 and monitored in 2023. One new plot was established in Morgan County.
- Elm zigzag sawfly surveys were conducted in the northern panhandle and northcentral part of the state. It was found in Monongalia County.



LYMANTRIA DISPAR (SPONGY MOTH) PROGRAM

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) *Lymantria dispar* (Spongy Moth) Program is, by far, the largest single Forest Health Protection (FHP) program under the WVDA. It is divided into two parts, the *Lymantria dispar* (Spongy Moth) Cooperative Suppression (GMCS) and Slow the Spread (STS) Programs, both of which are carried out in cooperation with the USDA-FS. Under the GMCS Program umbrella with the USDA-FS, the WVDA conducts the Cooperative State-County-Landowner (CSCL) Program in the generally infested area of the state. The STS Program operates in the transition zone between the leading edge of the main infestation and the uninfested zone where adult males are only occasionally found.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture has two objectives in its Spongy Moth Program. The first is to retard the spread of the pest into non-infested areas of the state through the Spongy Moth Slow the Spread (STS) Program and, second, to suppress gypsy moth populations in infested areas to limit, as much as possible, defoliation and tree mortality through the WVDA Spongy Moth Cooperative State County Landowner (CSCL) Program. The WVDA Spongy Moth Program minimizes the adverse impact on West Virginia forest resources. We preserve aesthetic values and protect people from the annoyance and health problems that can occur when in contact with large numbers of gypsy moth caterpillars.

GMCS Accomplishments:

- Forest Disturbance Monitor was used to determine Forest Disturbance areas. Ground visits were made to the disturbance areas and 16,265 acres were determined to be caused by *Lymantria dispar*, also known as Spongy Moth or Gypsy Moth. Areas reported by the public or by WVDA staff were also checked in the defoliation survey.
- Ground surveyed 118,832 acres of private and state lands in West Virginia signed up by landowners and managers.
- Completed 1,141 1/4-acre plot spongy moth egg mass density surveys and the egg mass viability study.
- Visited 3,207 landowners for spongy moth presence.
- Aerial treatments were conducted on 2,688 acres in Morgan County.
- Set up and manned gypsy moth displays at local county fairs and published multiple gypsy moth articles and news releases.
- Presented gypsy moth invasive species presentations at schools, clubs, and campgrounds.

STS Accomplishments:

- Set 4,254 gypsy moth traps covering 9,828,576 acres.
- All traps have been removed from the field, and 85,971 male gypsy moths have been caught. This is just short of doubling the catch from 2022.
- Staff worked at various festivals and events including Ag Day at the Capitol, the Hunting and Fishing Show, West Virginia Arts & Craft Fair, National Hunting and Fishing Days.
- Completed 10,388 trap site visits.
- Placed electronic traps at five locations which took daily photos of the inside of the traps to better determine moth flight timelines. These traps were part of a flight study by researchers at Virginia Tech.
- Gave presentation at Glenville State College and West Liberty University resulting in the recruitment of several summer employees.
- Worked with seasonal staff remotely (email, text, phone) as much as possible to limit the number of staff and the frequency of visits to office buildings.

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY PROGRAM

The spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) was introduced into the United States from China and first detected in the United States in 2014. The insect has spread since its introduction into multiple states including West Virginia. As of October 10, 2023, spotted lanternfly is found in 10 of West Virginia's 55 counties. These counties are Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral, Hardy, Grant, Taylor, Hancock, and Brooke. The spotted lanternfly has the potential to cause significant damage to West Virginia's forests, agricultural crops, and ornamental plantings. The insect also aggregates in large numbers causing a nuisance, particularly in urban settings. In 2023, the WVDA has continued efforts to control spotted lanternfly in counties where the insect has been confirmed and continues to monitor areas of the state where lanternfly has yet to be confirmed. The WVDA is working to remove small tree-of-heaven by means of herbicide application and treats large tree-of-heaven with a systemic insecticide. A contact insecticide is used in areas where the insect appears in large numbers.

WVDA has placed traps throughout the state to assist in monitoring efforts. The goal is to locate these traps in areas where hitchhiking spotted lanternfly are likely to appear, such as high-traffic business parks, hospitals, railways, etc. WVDA staff also complete visual surveys across the state to determine if the insect is present in areas not known to be infested. WVDA staff work to educate and provide outreach materials to the people of West Virginia so that West Virginians are informed of the pest and proper control strategies to mitigate spotted lanternfly infestations and spread.

Spotted Lanternfly Program Accomplishments in 2023:

- WVDA staff have conducted over 1,065 visual surveys for spotted lanternfly across West Virginia.
- Approximately 50 spotted lanternfly traps have been installed during the 2023 field season by WVDA Staff across West Virginia. These traps are to be monitored every two weeks.
- 585 acres of tree-of-heaven have been treated for spotted lanternfly as of 10/10/2023.
- WVDA conducted an extensive state-wide educational campaign with billboards, outreach materials, and signage.
- WVDA staff also attended 19 events to promote spotted lanternfly awareness.



FOOD COMMODITIES

WVDA ANNUAL REPORT



FOOD COMMODITIES

FOOD DISTRIBUTION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture's Food Distribution Program provides economic support to West Virginia school-age children and to those in need through distribution of USDA Commodity Foods. Commodity foods are delivered to two food banks, Mountaineer Food Bank (MFB) in Gassaway, and Facing Hunger Food Bank (FHFB) in Huntington, who serve approximately 400 food pantries and more than 100 other agencies across West Virginia. USDA Foods are 100% American grown and meet the highest safety and nutrition standards. Ongoing updates are made to ensure that all USDA Foods meet the dietary guidelines for Americans, including reduced levels of fats, sodium, and sugar. USDA Foods help support American farmers, helping keep local agriculture strong and stimulating the economy.

The USDA Commodity Foods Distribution Center for West Virginia is responsible for receipt, storage, management, oversight, statewide distribution and delivery of USDA Foods. Throughout the school year, the center receives an average of 1,413,001 cases of USDA Foods and the cases have an average estimated value of more than \$9.2 million. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture also delivers USDA sponsored Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetables to the schools on a bi-weekly basis. The value of these fresh fruits and vegetables is more than \$2.5 million. Commodity foods are delivered to 53 county school systems and around 50 private schools and agencies across West Virginia.

Recipient agencies included 725 public and private schools, 40 child and adult care programs, and 32 summer feeding programs which are held in county schools, community camps, WVU Extension, and 4-H programs.

The Food Distribution Program Also oversees the Emergency Food Assistance Program as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. These two federally funded programs aid in supplying USDA commodities to food banks and food pantries throughout the state for citizens in need and the elderly. The TEFAP program brings in more than \$5 million of free food to the food banks each year. The CSFP currently has a caseload of 10,000 boxes of food being delivered to seniors throughout the state, in need each month.

USDA programs are based on an entitlement value process that is set forth by the USDA. This value is compiled on various aspects including the federal rate, area population, and economic standing. West Virginia participates in many USDA funded programs. The WV Department of Agriculture oversees The Emergency Assistance Food Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Feeding Program (CSFP).

TEFAP is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food at no cost. TEFAP is available in all 55 counties in WV. During FFY23 WV received an entitlement for TEFAP of \$2,043,797 to purchase food for the two foodbanks in WV to be dispersed to the multiple food pantries and soup kitchens throughout the state. This allowed a total of 1,855,656 pounds of food to be purchased and brought into WV for citizens in need. In addition to this entitlement value, WV received \$6,197,543 worth of BONUS USDA commodities that were offered to the state in the amount of an additional 4,223,673 pounds. Along with the TEFAP program and the bonus commodities, WV also received USDA commodities from the Commodity Credit Corporation (TEFAP CCC) at the value of \$4,750,311 and totaling 3,43,319 pounds.

During FFY23 WVDA passed-through \$1,056,237.61 in TEFAP administrative funding to the state's two food banks from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, for expenses associated with transporting, storing, handling, repackaging, processing, and distributing USDA Foods. An additional \$90,980.83 in administrative funding was passed through to the food banks during this time for expenses associated with TEFAP CCC commodities, and \$20,013.71 was passed through as part of TEFAP Farm to Food Bank (FTFB). FTFB is a federally funded (USDA) program that's purpose is to reduce food waste by capturing donated food; build relationships between hunger relief organizations and agricultural producers, processors, and distributors; and to provide food to those who need it.

CSFP works to improve the health of low-income persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods. Currently, WV is distributing 10,000 boxes of nutritious food to low-income seniors in our state. The Commodity Supplemental Feeding Program is geared toward the elderly in WV that fall below the poverty line. Individuals that meet the criteria are offered a 30-40-pound box of food each month to help supplement their diets. These boxes are compiled of protein items, dairy, fruits, and vegetables. CSFP is not based on entitlement, however, it is based on the caseload amount that WV is approved for. This caseload is generated from the request of each foodbank as to the amount of elderly that they serve and can efficiently deliver each supplemental box to per month. For FFY23 WV received 1,142,622 pounds of USDA commodities at a value of \$746,821.

During FFY23 WVDA passed-through \$901,896.00 in CSFP administrative funding to the state's two food banks from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, for expenses associated with transporting, storing, handling, repackaging, processing, and distributing these USDA Foods to seniors.

Also, during SFY23 WVDA passed-through \$406,000 to MFB and FHFB from funding appropriated by the Legislature.





AGRICULTURE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

AGRICULTURE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANTS

WVDA awarded \$258,636 in Specialty Crop Block Grants to five projects with the FY 22 Farm Bill funding. Some of the projects awarded included funding for market competitive hops production through shared equipment and the West Side expansion project.

SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program certified 198 participating farmers to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to senior citizens and WIC recipients. A total of 17,800 booklets, worth \$50 each, were sent to senior centers for distribution. An additional 1,000 booklets were available for distribution and the vouchers went from \$30 to \$50 per eligible participant. The redemption rate was approximately 79.3%. The total impact for the State of West Virginia is approximately \$578,890.

USDA FARM-TO-SCHOOL GRANT

WVDA was awarded \$112,106 in FY 23 Farm to School funds. These funds were awarded to continue the farm to school efforts within West Virginia, as well as work on the goals and objectives outlined in the Farm to School Strategic Plan. Objectives included continuing to fund a Farm to School coordinator, providing local producer training, updating and expanding the F2S website, and host a Farm to School Summit. WVDA worked closely with the West Virginia Department of Education to continue to support comprehensive farm to school programming including local procurement and agricultural education.

WEST VIRGINIA GROWN

The state's branding program for farm and food products continued to grow, adding 82 members since Jan. 1, 2023. For the first time, membership included restaurants, retailers and supporters.

In the coming year, more restaurants and retailers, along with farms and value-added food producers, will be able to enjoy the benefits of membership. Those benefits include use of the popular WV Grown logo, inclusion in the WV Grown Directory, and inclusion in special events, such as the Winter Blues Farmers Market and the State Fair Country Store.

A brand awareness campaign will be conducted in the coming year to increase public recognition of the brand and the message behind it.



VETERANS AND HEROES TO AGRICULTURE

The Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture program is dedicated to the integration and support of veterans, firefighters, law enforcement, emergency services personnel, and first responders entering or currently working in agriculture to benefit their health and welfare, as well as the state's agricultural economy. Through invaluable partnerships with agencies, organizations, and farmers across the state, 450 members received opportunities for education, training, scholarships, funding, and mentorships spanning various topics and skill levels.



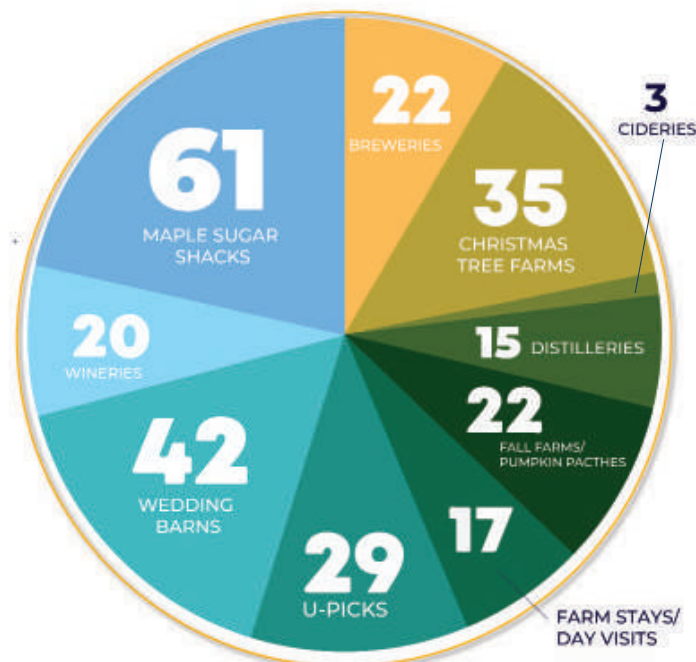
The Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture Grant Program (VHAGP) awarded \$24,000 to groups and organizations working to support veterans and heroes in the agriculture sector (Future Generations University - \$12,000; Hops Meadow Farm - \$5,300; Tree Dragon Farm - \$3,500; Happy Ranch Farm - \$3,500). The program hosted its inaugural Pitch Competition in March at Cedar Lakes Conference Center awarding \$60,000 in funding between 16 participants to start or expand their agribusiness. Through a partnership with the Farmer Veteran Coalition (Homegrown by Heroes) and WV Grown, veteran members are now eligible to use the blended mark on their products. WVDA provided 15 scholarship awards to individuals across the state looking to grow their knowledge.

The Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture program was proud to partner with West Virginia University Health Affairs Institute and Mindful Badge to provide Mindfulness-Based Resilience Training (MBRT) to 24 members. The goal of MBRT is to provide individuals with positive coping strategies to regulate negative emotions that are precursors to occupational burnout or post-traumatic stress episodes. Veterans and Heroes continues to build and develop partnerships with key service providers to ensure members are provided the best possible resources. The program also seeks to further promote the development of agricultural industries, products, and marketing opportunities across the state.

AGRITOURISM INDUSTRY POISED FOR GROWTH

Agritourism has continued to grow in West Virginia in the past three years. With more than 300 agritourism operators spread across the Mountain State. The Agritourism Association has been established and has its first group of officers. WVDA and WVU Extension held its first Agritourism Initiative course since before the pandemic and had over 40 students in attendance for the six-week course. The industry continues to grow and expand operators through new and expanding farms.

*** DOES NOT INCLUDE: Farmers Markets and Farm to Table Restaurants**



WVDA ANNUAL REPORT

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The mission of the Administrative Services Division is effective management of financial and human resources as well as physical facilities for the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) and the West Virginia Conservation Agency (WVCA). It also provides fiscal administrative support for related entities, including the West Virginia Agricultural Land Protection Authority (WVALPA), WVDA's Rural Rehabilitation Loan Program, and other boards and committees organized under WV Code § 19.

The three key areas of this division (Fiscal Management, Human Resources, and Building and Grounds) are responsible for interacting with all other agency divisions as well as a variety of external entities in carrying out day-to-day operations or special projects.

FISCAL/HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The Fiscal Management section is responsible for budgetary, accounting, procurement, payroll, insurance, and grants management functions of the WVDA and related agencies. For the State Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2023, the Fiscal Management section processed expenditure transactions totaling \$44.6 million for WVDA and associated entities. This section also provides key decision support and assists with the strategic planning of future agency operations by evaluating funding needs and analyzing existing resources.

Human Resources activities support the Executive Division's staffing initiatives and encompass management of personnel (including recruiting, coordinating interviewing and hiring); managing salaries, benefits, and personal services budgeting; providing for training and employee relations solutions; monitoring wage and hour (FLSA) compliance; reporting on work-related injuries; and oversight of other leave programs such as Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Parental Leave Act, Military Leave, and Leave Without Pay. This functional area also assists with the development and review of administrative policies and position descriptions to ensure employment information remains current and compliant.

Recent notable activities and projects carried out by this section include:

- Presented immersive training to managers and supervisors on policies and best practices for timekeeping, leave, workplace harassment and bullying.
- Continued efforts started in the previous fiscal year to present an immersive new employee orientation to new hires (in addition to the customary one-on-one new hire orientation) to give in-depth information on agency operations, policies, benefits, information technology, and other areas.
- Coordinated with the State Auditor's Office/wvOASIS Payroll Team to plan and deliver UKG timekeeping training for agency supervisors and timekeepers.
- Streamlined new hire processing by implementing a new online onboarding platform to allow incoming full-time staff to review and complete certain new hire documentation electronically.
- Provided independent monthly review and reconciliation of 10,483 P-card transactions, totaling \$3,968,212.
- Tracked 189,425 staff hours through UKG Activity Form entries for grant reimbursement or special projects.
- Attended training and continuing education presented by the State Auditor's Office, Purchasing Division, Offices of the Insurance Commissioner and Public Employees' Insurance Agency for various state government administrative functions and processes.
- Worked with Communications Division to promote full-time, temporary, and internship opportunities via social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.
- Participated in career fairs at West Virginia University, Marshall University, Fairmont State University, West Virginia State University, and Glenville State University for full-time and internship recruiting.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

The Building and Grounds section of the Administrative Services Division provides professional services to ensure continuity of internal operations at the Guthrie Agricultural Center at Guthrie (Guthrie) and other WVDA-owned facilities throughout West Virginia. This section provides certified expertise in areas such as plumbing, electrical, carpentry, HVAC, and wastewater treatment. The purpose is to ensure the power, building climates, water and sewer requirements of the facilities function smoothly and meet the needs of the complex. Other services include security, custodial, grounds maintenance for the safety and appearance of the GRDAC, and snow removal with salt applications for sidewalks, parking lots and roadways.

Some notable accomplishments this year were:

- Ongoing evaluation and planning to address backup power needs for the Guthrie complex.
- Completed restroom renovations in Guthrie Building 1.
- Completed roof replacement for Guthrie Building 5.
- Performed maintenance and upgrades to Guthrie GATR equipment staging site and planned for perimeter fence upgrades.
- Provided planning and hands-on support for building update/renovation projects at agency locations in Moorefield, Inwood, Cedar Lakes, and Parkersburg.

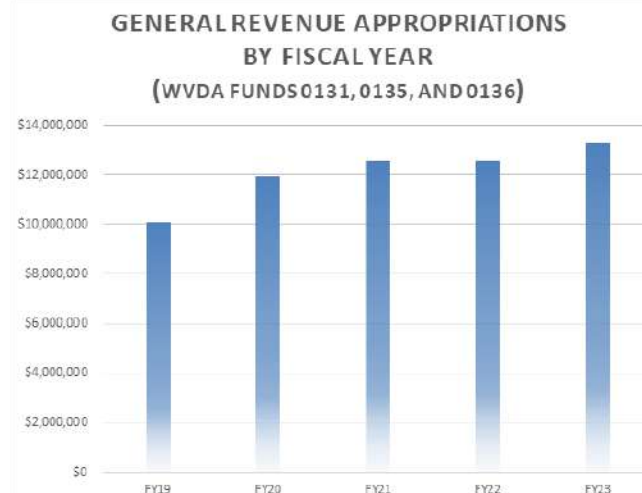
FISCAL POSITION

Many of WVDA's programs strive for self-sufficiency to reduce the reliance on General Revenue resources appropriated annually by the WV Legislature. This is a necessity, as the cumulative effect of past budget cuts resulted in a downward trend in baseline General Revenue funding levels for several consecutive years. At the same time, operating expenditures have risen steadily, which has required the use of Special or Federal Revenue sources to fill the gap and maintain statutory agency operations.

General Revenue

Beginning in State Fiscal Year 2019, WVDA experienced a slight increase in total General Revenue appropriations, which continued through State Fiscal Year 2021. Fiscal Year 2023 saw no significant increase in revenue appropriations.

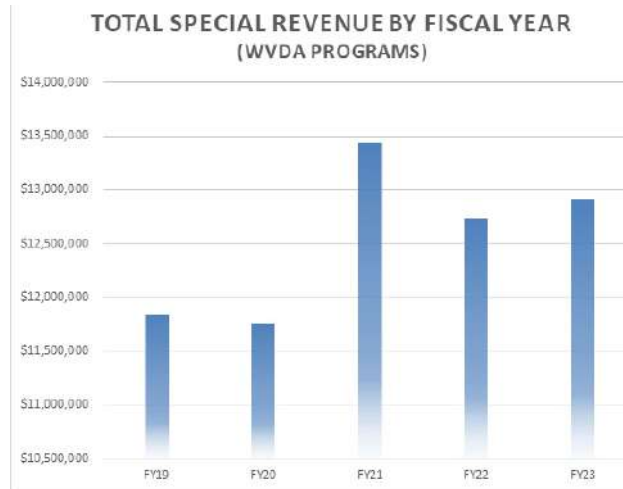
The increases in appropriations were not in broad, general-purpose funding categories. Instead, revenue is a result of funding that is dedicated to a very specific purpose (such as across-the-board salary increases for existing employees) or a specific program (such as the Milk Program statutorily transferred from the WV Department of Health and Human Resources).



Special Revenue

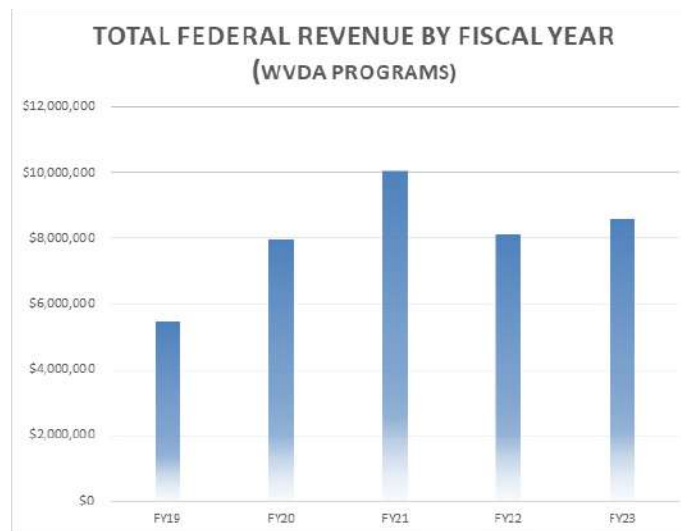
After a trend of steady Special Revenue increases in various programs in previous years, State Fiscal Year 2023 revenue remained relatively stable compared to the preceding fiscal year, which experienced a slight downturn.

In most cases, Special Revenue funding has statutory restrictions to a single program or purpose, to capture revenue and support expenses of those specific areas.



Federal Revenue

Federal funds, in the form of grants or cooperative agreements, are extremely beneficial and critical to WVDA operations, as they support existing programs that may be un- or under-funded or provide a means to develop new programs to support the state's agriculture community which would not otherwise exist. Additionally, limited General Revenue funding is leveraged as a required match for valuable federal funds for various programs and projects. As shown by the following graph, WVDA federal revenue has slightly increased in the most recently ended fiscal year, but trails behind Fiscal Year 2021, most likely due to a constriction of various specialty funds that originated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Use of federal funds comes with many benefits but also with challenges. Proper use of external funding requires extensive programmatic and fiscal management to ensure that funds are used for the intended purpose within the specified performance period, in a manner that complies with federal regulations and requirements. Federal funds are typically made available on a year-to-year basis, and the continuation of funding is dependent on the availability of funds and priorities that exist at the federal level.

WVDA ANNUAL REPORT

RURAL REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM

RURAL REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM

The Rural Rehabilitation Loan Program (RRLP), under WV Code §19-1-11, is a valuable program to promote investment in the agriculture industry in this state. Loans made by this program may be used for various agricultural endeavors in West Virginia, such as:

- Starting, purchasing or expanding a farm operation
- Assisting farmers who have suffered financial setbacks from natural disasters
- Operators that need additional resources to redirect or maintain profitable farming operations
- Any other agricultural purpose determined important to West Virginia's economy by the Commissioner

APPLICATIONS

Applications are reviewed by a committee consisting of one WVDA employee, along with four members of the public, including one member who owns an agricultural business, two members with business loan experience, and one member who is a CPA with a public accounting practice. The RRLP has a current total loan portfolio of over \$3 million, and the loan committee continues to solicit and evaluate loan applications throughout the year to support additional opportunities. Applicants apply in response to advertisements in the Market Bulletin, which is published by WVDA, through working with Agricultural Business Development department staff, and through referrals from WV Farm Service Agency representatives who are working with potential borrowers on agricultural loans in WV. During State Fiscal Year 2023, four borrowers paid off existing loans and two new loans were approved.



AGRICULTURE STATISTICS

WVDA ANNUAL REPORT

AG STATS

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)

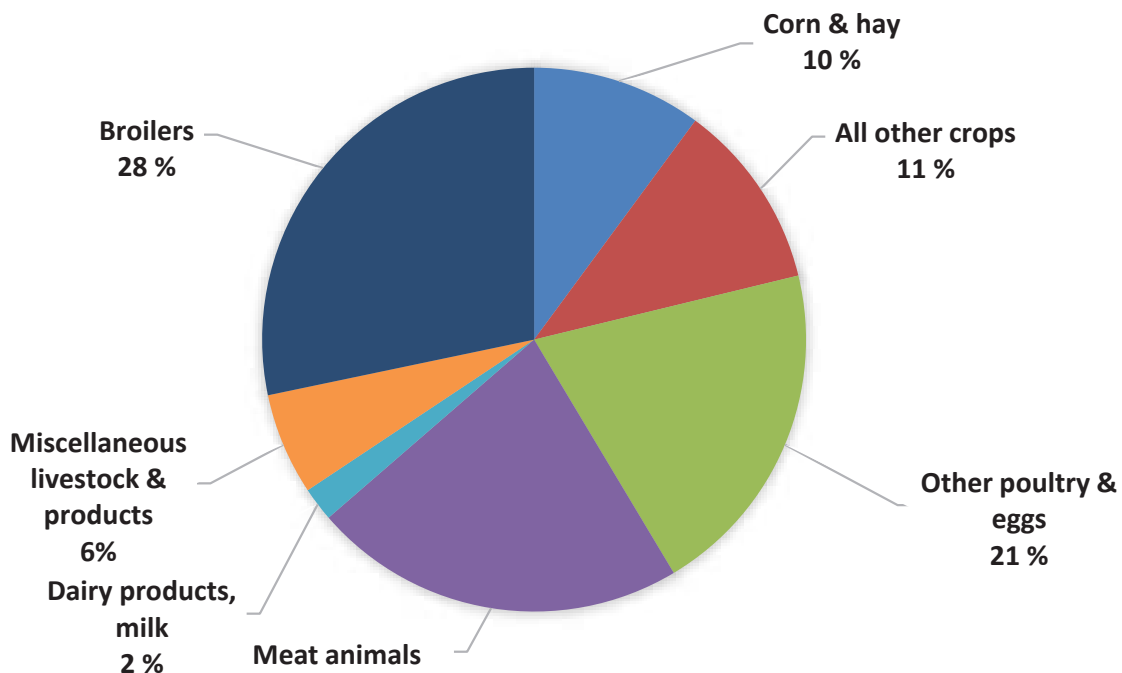
The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is one of 29 agencies under the umbrella of the United States Department of Agriculture. NASS is responsible for making the official, unbiased estimates of agriculture in a timely, accurate, and useful manner. We have 850 employees nationwide who are responsible for the publication of over 450 reports on an annual basis, as well as the five-year Census of Agriculture. In addition, we have about 3,000 (2,400 field and 600 phone) enumerators nationwide who collect the data from the agricultural producers used for these reports.

The West Virginia field office is considered a division within the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. This relationship with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture is through a cooperative agreement that has provided a working environment for joining the resources and facilities of the USDA and the State of West Virginia to accomplish mutually beneficial tasks since 1915. We have developed and actively work to ensure we keep strong, mutually beneficial cooperative agreements with State Departments of Agriculture, Land Grant Universities, Boards of Agriculture, the Cooperative Extension Service, the Farm Service Agency, and Farm Bureau, to name a few, across all 50 States. The West Virginia office has two state employees, two federal, and 11 field enumerators. The 2022 Census of Agriculture data collection concluded in June 2023 and data will be released starting in February 2024.

The 2022 cash receipts from farm marketings for all agricultural commodities in West Virginia totaled \$904,339,000, an increase of \$206.3 million from 2021. Receipts from marketing livestock and livestock products accounted for 79.0 percent of the State total. Cash receipts from crops accounted for 21.0 percent of the 2022 total.

The largest contributor to the agricultural marketings in the State continues to be poultry and eggs. Cash receipts from the poultry industry, which includes broilers, eggs, turkeys, and farm chickens, accounted for 49.0 percent of the State total. The second leading contributor was cattle and calves which accounted for 22.0 percent of the total in 2022.

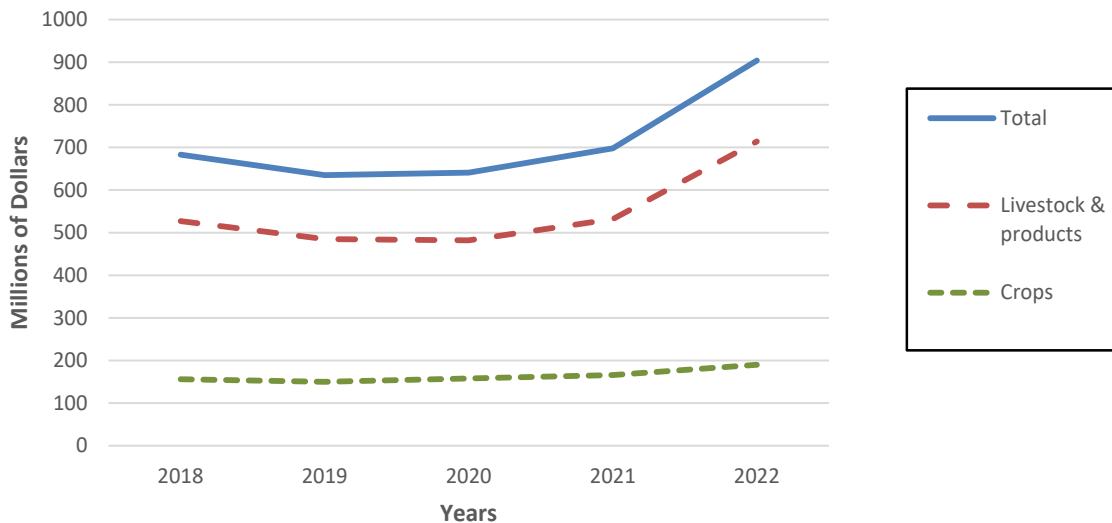
Cash Receipts: Selected Commodities, West Virginia, 2022



West Virginia Cash Receipts from Farm Marketings: 2018-2022 ^{1/}

Commodity	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
(000) Dollars					
Livestock and products	527,416	484,815	482,454	531,927	714,287
Meat animals	178,880	160,963	174,100	177,087	199,974
Cattle and calves	178,085	160,160	173,431	176,169	198,818
Hogs	795	803	669	918	1,156
Dairy products, Milk	17,876	16,192	15,225	13,213	18,323
Poultry and eggs	281,800	258,701	244,366	291,432	443,610
Broilers	176,924	139,433	98,020	137,362	253,555
Chicken eggs	54,681	55,512	56,688	58,331	64,879
Farm chickens	1,026	761	345	273	1,607
Turkeys	49,169	62,995	89,313	95,466	123,569
Miscellaneous livestock and products ^{2/}	48,860	48,959	48,763	50,195	52,380
Trout	1,005	1,116	840	978	1,193
Honey	961	946	1,052	1,326	1,433
Mohair	1	2	2	2	2
Wool	129	131	105	104	117
Other animals and products	46,764	46,764	46,764	47,785	49,635
Crops	155,946	150,335	158,463	166,105	190,053
Food grains (Wheat)	944	-	-	-	-
Feed crops	56,207	54,318	62,445	70,043	91,707
Corn	18,549	20,060	23,806	25,980	34,109
Hay	37,657	34,258	38,639	44,063	57,599
Oil crops (Soybeans)	11,772	-	-	-	-
Fruits and nuts ^{3/}	-	-	-	-	-
Apples	-	-	-	-	-
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-
All other crops ^{4/}	87,023	96,017	96,018	96,062	98,345
Maple products	357	-	-	-	-
Floriculture	-	-	-	16,790	18,021
Mushrooms	117	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous crops	86,549	96,017	96,018	79,272	80,324
All commodities	683,363	635,150	640,918	698,031	904,339

Cash Receipts: Major Commodities, West Virginia, 2018 - 2022



Cash receipts reflect sales of commodities from farms where produced within a calendar year irrespective of the year of production. Data as of August 31, 2023. Values are rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals may not add due to rounding. ^{1/} Means not available and in a forecast year indicates that insufficient data exists to forecast cash receipts for that commodity, and the amounts are instead included in the aggregate forecast totals. In an estimate year ^{1/} indicates that commodity survey data is not available, and the amounts are instead included in either the 'miscellaneous crops' or 'all other animals and products' category. Beginning in 2021, any cash receipts for industrial hemp are included in the 'miscellaneous crops' category. ^{2/} Includes equine, sheep, and all other livestock. ^{3/} Includes miscellaneous fruits and berries. ^{4/} Includes greenhouse/nursery, Christmas trees, oats, vegetables, tobacco, and other crops. Source: USDA, Economic Research Service <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/farm-income-and-wealth-statistics.aspx>.

NOTES



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